

# *Conversations*

A Variety of Letters, Emails, Texts, & Sundry Odd 'n Ends



**MICHAEL J. HOLSHOUSER**

Conversations  
A Variety of Letters, Emails, Texts, & Sundry Odd 'n Ends  
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Pronunciation: Holtzhowzer

*All have the express written encouragement  
To distribute this creation freely to any and all  
Who have the eyes to see and the ears to hear  
The mystery in which each and every one  
Equally participates in so many ways*

# Preface

## Greetings,

This is a collection of letters, emails, texts, and other correspondence with a variety of family, friends, acquaintances, strangers, and sundry others through the years since 1989 when these writings began to come to mind. No specific dates, no specific order, to give a sense of Billy Pilgrim timelessness this so-it-goes existence has become.

Kicking it off with “My Back Pages” by myself, and the Bava brothers, Mark and Chris, and the collective perception the three of us have on our small home town of Hughson, California.

This work is blogged at:

## Conversations

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<https://conversationsyajekim.blogspot.com/>

Writing has been an enjoyable process ever since I first began toying with prose; scribbling poetry, keeping journals, corresponding with friends and acquaintances during the college daze. The philosophical/mystical/whatever-you-want-to-call-them thoughts, that have been popping into mind since 1989, have always been very out-of-the-blue spontaneous. Nothing planned or forced about them. They are being shared on the off chance that others may find them of interest, though, quite frankly, it really does not matter if no one else ever even reads them, for I am, first and foremost, my own audience. I got mine, so to speak. I played my little part. I had my share of fun. And it is, as it has ever been, up to each to discern their own, on their own.

There are really no followers in this Don Quixote quest; only earnest seekers, who waylay their desires and fears and dreads, enough to discern that which is the end to doubt, the end to dueling with windmills. “Yay” if it is your fate to figure it out. “Oh well” if it is not. And “so it goes” either way, really. Ecclesiastes 1:2 is always a good reminder: “Vanity of vanities,” saith the Preacher, “Vanity of vanities. All is vanity.” Awareness can only, with great effort, regain control, regain sovereignty, from the usurper, imagination, creator of all that is time, creator of all that is space. Creator of all that is illusion, has never been anything more than illusion, will never be anything more than illusion. Only as real as the given moment.

“The Stillness Before Time” is the original work that came together in 1992, including mostly aphorisms, an essay, a newspaper question-and-answer, ten reflections, and lists of both movies and books. Though an early self-published version, long since edited and expanded, can be purchased at major booksellers, a downloadable copy is available, no charge, at the link below. There are also links to a variety of blogs of other creations by me, along with links to many writings of a similar nature, by thinkers and seers from across all times, across all geographies. “The Ponderings of Yaj Ekim” is the second published book, and is both blogged and available as a PDF download.

The “Breadcrumbs” titles, published annually since 2015, all include the core chapters: Leftovers, Soundbites, Breadcrumbs. In the Breadcrumbs chapters, I unleash thoughts of a more personal nature than in the other two. All just to show I was ensconced in a living, breathing, relativity mundane, oftentimes foolish, mortal mind-body. An actor playing the hand that was dealt; same as everyone else, vain as

everyone else. No need to sculpt me into more than I was. No need for myths, nor legends, nor fables, nor miracles, nor cult followings, nor any other fictions, any other absurdities, over to which the human mind, and all its imaginary history, has so often given itself. The Breadcrumbs chapters prove me again and again to be yet another Shakespearian player, as full of the limited and arbitrary as anyone else born into this dream of space and time. So please be sure not to shape me, or these many random thoughts, into some dogmatic absurdity. Use them as a launchpad, not an orbit.

“The Return to Wonder” blog is a compendium of aphorisms not included in the three other works: The Stillness Before Time, The Ponderings of Yaj Ekim, and Breadcrumbs. It originally totaled 3,000 pages formatted in 300 ten-page chapters written since 1990-ish. A gradual editing that will likely never be completed, is changing that dynamic into something of a mishmash.

Please note that this sort of wordplay is very haphazard, way too much work to put into any order. Probably best read it in bits and pieces in the here and there. One of those open-to-any-page works. Especially well-suited for coffee shops, coffee tables, and porcelain thrones.

Also note that all writings are always subject to updates and editing, so if you are interested in the most current version – before this house of cards comes tumbling down, and the world grows large again – downloading PDF copies every once and a while might be a reasonable discipline. This applies especially to the current year of Breadcrumbs, which could well be an annual project until the last wheezing breath, though frankly, the temptation to stop writing entirely is not off the table. It is a pleasant way to pass some of the countdown remaining, but it is unlikely there is much ground that has not been wandered by this frame of reference far more than enough already. No matter how many times Sisyphus rolls the boulder up the mountain, it is more than a little doubtful that the blind men and their true-believer followers, will ever discern, ever realize, ever embrace, the elephant in the middle of the room, without fabricating some new form of absurdity. It is the way we roll, it is the way we have always rolled, it is the way we will, far more than probably, always roll. Every species has its limitations, and we have in this mind’s eye, far-exceeded ours.

That said, if you do find these many thoughts at all worth preserving, for whatever times are ahead for this world and all its life forms, please feel free to share them with others who might also appreciate them. Else they may well swiftly slip back into the timeless oblivion from whence they came.

So it goes, either way. I played my part, I said my piece, I had my fun.

All the best,

M

P.S. For best viewing online, using the largest screen you have available to explore my little theme park, is suggested. Scrolling down and down on a phone screen is just not going to give you the same entrée.

P.P.S. Regarding the name Yaj Ekim ... It is just a reverse spelling of the first and middle names ... Michael Jay Holshouser ... Mike Jay ... Yaj Ekim.

P.P.P.S. Coincidentally, make of it whatever you will, or will not, Yaj is an Indian boy’s name meaning worshipper, sacrifice, another name for Shiva, a sage. And Ekim is a Turkish name for October meaning

“sowing” (of seeds). All kinds of absurdity can be read into that by the many so-inclined – none of which was in mind when I came up with the idea to reverse the letters to my name. See P.P.S. for details.

P.P.P.P.S. Yes, I am Shiva. And so are You. No, I am not Shiva. And neither are you. Irony and paradox rule.

## **The Stillness Before Time Website**

The Stillness Before Time  
Reflections From a Fellow Sojourner  
<https://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/>

There is really only one Way.  
It is without division or boundary.  
It is without name or theology.  
Awareness is its scripture.  
Here now, its venue.  
You, its witness.  
Your life, the journey.

A PDF is available at:  
<https://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/thestillnessbeforetime.pdf>

## **Main Blogs**

The Stillness Before Time  
Reflections From a Fellow Sojourner  
<https://thestillnessbeforetime.blogspot.com/>

The Ponderings of Yaj Ekim  
<https://theponderingsofyajekim.blogspot.com/>

Breadcrumbs 2015  
Bits and Pieces From a Dream of Time  
<https://breadcrumbs2015.blogspot.com/>

Breadcrumbs 2018  
Bits and Pieces From a Dream of Time  
<https://breadcrumbs2018.blogspot.com/>

Breadcrumbs 2019  
Bits and Pieces From a Dream of Time  
<https://breadcrumbs2019.blogspot.com/>

Breadcrumbs 2020  
Bits and Pieces From a Dream of Time  
<https://breadcrumbs2020yajekim.blogspot.com/>

Breadcrumbs 2021  
Bits and Pieces From a Dream of Time  
<https://breadcrumbs2021.blogspot.com/>

Breadcrumbs 2022  
Bits and Pieces From a Dream of Time  
<https://breadcrumbs2022.blogspot.com/>

Breadcrumbs 2023 & Beyond  
Bits and Pieces From a Dream of Time  
<https://breadcrumbs2023.blogspot.com/>

The Return to Wonder  
Field Notes From the Unknown  
<https://thereturntowonder.blogspot.com/>

### **Breadcrumbs: The Original Blog**

Breadcrumbs: The Original Blog  
[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_28.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_28.html)

### **Other Blogs by Michael**

Michael's Rabbit Hole  
A Selection of Breadcrumbs & Other Aphorisms  
<https://michaelsrabbithole.blogspot.com/>

The Call of the Eternal  
A Conversation With My Self  
<https://thecalloftheeternal.blogspot.com/>

Imagination: The Great Usurper  
<https://imaginationthegreatusurper.blogspot.com/>

Lost in Translation  
The Human Paradigm's Linguistic Muddle  
<https://lostintranslationyajekim.blogspot.com>

The Gordian Knot of Ethical Thinking  
<https://thegordianknotofethicalthinking.blogspot.com>

Jesus on Prophets  
What Any Seer Likely Faces Returning to the Cave of Origin  
<https://jesusonprophets.blogspot.com>

Aftershocks Autumn 2024  
<https://aftershocksautumn2024.blogspot.com/>

Of Meaning & Purpose  
Ponderings About the Futility of It All  
<https://ofmeaningandpurpose.blogspot.com/>

Frames of Reference  
Peering Through the Windows of Perception  
<https://framesofreferenceperception.blogspot.com/>

Of Noise & Silence  
Contemplations on the Vibrations of Consciousness  
<https://ofnoiseandsilence.blogspot.com/>

Mystery, Mystery & More Mystery  
<https://mysterymysteryandmoremystery.blogspot.com/>

Imagination, Imagination & More Imagination  
<https://imaginationandmoreimagination.blogspot.com/>

Doubt, Doubt & More Doubt  
<https://doubtdoubtandmoredoubt.blogspot.com/>

Science, Science & More Science  
<https://yajekimscienceandmorescience.blogspot.com>

History, History & More History  
<https://historyhistoryandmorehistory.blogspot.com/>

Patterns, Patterns & More Patterns  
<https://evenmorepatterns.blogspot.com/>

Reincarnation, Reincarnation & More Reincarnation  
<https://reincarnationandmorereincarnation.blogspot.com/>

Standouts From 'The Return to Wonder' Edit  
Selections From the First Sixteen Chapters  
<https://standoutsfromthereturntowonderedit.blogspot.com/>

Of the Human Journey  
Along with 'Got God?' and 'Ten Reflections'  
<https://ofthehumanjourney.blogspot.com/>

To Be, or Not to Be  
<https://thetobeornottobeseries.blogspot.com/>

The Mystery of the Mystery  
<https://themysteryofthemysteryseries.blogspot.com/>



Who Was the First?

<https://thewhowasthefirstseries.blogspot.com/>

The Real is Discovering

<https://therealisdiscoveringseries.blogspot.com/>

59 Moments to The Way It Is (And Is Not)

The Scribe's Guide to the Great Whatthe#\$\*!?

<https://59momentstothewayitisandisnot.blogspot.com/>

Definitions

An Incomplete Selection of Contemplative Definitions

<https://definitionsyajekim.blogspot.com/>

Conversations

A Variety of Letters, Emails, Texts, & Sundry Odd 'n Ends

<https://conversationsyajekim.blogspot.com/2021/>

Titles, Titles & More Titles

<https://evenmoretitles.blogspot.com/>

Even More

Titles, Titles & More Titles

<https://theevenmoreseries.blogspot.com/>

Sketches of the Once Upon a Time

A Few Epiphanies and Other Hallmark Moments

<https://sketchesoftheonceuponatime.blogspot.com/>

The Corollaries of Yaj Ekim

<https://corollariesyajekim.blogspot.com/>

Possible Last Words & Epitaphs

<https://possiblelastwordsandepitaphs.blogspot.com/>

The Standard Ripostes

The Scribe's Go-to Responses to This and That in the Day-To-Day

<https://thestandardripostes.blogspot.com/>

My (Not Quite) Haiku

<https://mynotquitehaiku.blogspot.com/>

Once Upon a Christmas

<https://onceuponchristmas.blogspot.com/>

Ditties for the Bluegrass Pyre

<https://dittiesforthebluegrasspyre.blogspot.com/>

A Short List of Books for the Up and Coming  
Some Written Works That May Help Get the Young up to Speed  
<https://listofbooksfortheupandcoming.blogspot.com/>

Spam Responses (a.k.a., WTF Is This Shit!?)  
<https://spamresponsesakawtfisthisshit.blogspot.com/>

# Conversations

## MY BACK PAGES

By Michael Holshouser

A personal preface to Mark Bava's essay – My Back Pages – about growing up as farm boys in the small rural town of Hughson during the 50's and 60's written for the 2007 Centennial:

I was born and raised in the small rural community of Hughson, California, working my way from kindergarten through high school with a little over a hundred peers at all four school sites: Hughson Elementary, Lebright Middle School, Emily J. Ross Junior High, and Hughson Union High School. For the first seven years of my life, our family of four (Horace, Beverly, and a sister, Ann, a little less than two years younger) lived on what was then a cul-de-sac on the east end of East Pine Street. When my widowed grandfather, Horace Senior, married Martha Sinclair in 1960 and moved to her place, we moved to the thirty-acre family peach ranch on Hatch Road.

Suddenly, I was a farm boy living in an old wooden ranch house a mile northwest of town, and life changed dramatically. Within a year I was driving an old gray and battered Ferguson TE20 tractor, spring-toothing and putting up and taking down levies; staying up all night irrigating opening and closing gates, listening the water trickle toward the ends of checks with my father; hoeing weeds and pulling suckers off walnut trees interplanted between the peach trees; grading peaches during harvest, and picking up props at day's end; walking rain or shine with my sister to the Mountain View bus stop a quarter mile away; watching three channels of black and white television reruns in the front living room; digging underground tunnel hideaways covered with plywood; shooting birds in the bushes and fish in the canal with a BB gun; climbing trees and frolicking with dogs and cats; exploring an aluminum corrugated shed filled with tools and whatever; wandering the surrounding countryside planted with peaches, walnuts, almonds, and grapes; converting the second floor of the tank house into a fully-stocked-with-dirt-clods fortress keep; driving a Willy's post-World War II civilian jeep on a winding and dusty orchard-wide racetrack with my little dog, Jerry, sitting in the passenger seat; sobbing my eyes out on a hot day digging a shallow grave in the roadside orchard, burying Macho, who had finally chased one too many trucks on the busy Hatch Road; carrying out pitched dirt clod sorties with other farm boys, and playing rousing games of tag with them all summer in the canal just across the road at the Tully Road bridge and upstream falls. It was a Mississippi out the front door, and a jungle out the back one. A blend of Mark Twain's Huckleberry Finn and Rudyard Kipling's Mowgli, without a Pap Finn or Shere Khan.

Breadcrumbs: Life Resume

[http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_68.html](http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_68.html)

Breadcrumbs: Photo Gallery

[http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_17.html](http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_17.html)

Ferguson Tractor, Old Commercial

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ELQgEa\\_JXJQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ELQgEa_JXJQ)

Willys Jeep Commercial

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u7Sle8X4EZM>

And the thing to realize about all the physicality of those younger years, is that all the pain and bother – all the hot and cold, all the choking dust driving the tractor, all the gnats and itchy peach fuzz grading peaches, all the splinters picking up props, all the cuts and scratches and tears and bruises and crunches and burns handling equipment, and all the tedious long hours of all of the above – is that the discipline to finish a task, the capacity to endure suffering, the ability to one-step-after-another abide a mundane pace, as well as the recognition of the intrinsic relationship with nature, have all played a huge underlying role in the life lived since. Gumption, grit, resilience, stamina, ingenuity, dependability, steadfastness, critical thinking, problem-solving, and can-do-it-will-do-it attitude, are concepts that ring true in this mind. And are significant factors in the evolution of the frame of reference that has sculpted the philosophical-mystical writings that have poured out since 1989.

\* \* \* \*

Fellow Class of '72 alumni, Mark Bava, who also lived on East Pine Street, and was also a son of a local farmer, caught Ray Bradbury's "Dandelion Wine" flavor of it all in an essay he wrote for the Hughson Centennial in 2007.

My Back Pages

<https://markbava.blogspot.com/2006/07/writings.html>

Mark's Blog

<https://www.blogger.com/profile/04781808645805571682>

Dandelion Wine

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dandelion\\_Wine](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dandelion_Wine)

Hughson Union High School Class of '72

<https://www.facebook.com/Hughson-Union-High-School-Class-of-72-301790023189950/>

Hughson Historical Society

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Hughson-Historical-Society/169357353116469>

Hughson Union High School

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hughson\\_Union\\_High\\_School](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hughson_Union_High_School)

Hughson, California

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hughson,\\_California](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hughson,_California)

Stanislaus County, California

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stanislaus\\_County,\\_California](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stanislaus_County,_California)

California

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/California>

## MY BACK PAGES

by Mark Bava

"The boys were chasing the city truck  
spraying DDT  
It kept the mosquitoes down ...  
That stuff won't hurt 'em none  
I heard the neighbor lady say ..."

James McMurtry  
from the song "12 O'clock Whistle"

In the central valley town of Hughson, California, canal swimming was a recognized talent. One could almost become hailed in comparable stature to surfing champions on the coast for their prowess in the water. And just as surfers wore nicknames such as Duke, Woody, or Steamboat, we had ace swimmers with names like Frog, who could stay underwater at length, and were rumored to have performed feats that made local legend such as diving from high bridges, or shooting the most gnarly and dangerous waterfalls. To keep the flow of the water controlled over the downhill grade of the terrain, these waterfalls, or "drops," were built at various stages along the large cement irrigation canals that crisscrossed their way through Central California from upland reservoirs, bringing precious water to the valley farm lands below. The most popular falls and bridges also had their nicknames, like Double Drop, The M, or Russell's, named after the family who lived nearby. These favorite spots would often be magically crowded with guys drinking beer and showing off as girls in bikinis watched on. And just as the surfers cruised the coast to check the waves and action in their favorite bays, we would cruise to see who and what was going on at our favorite swimming spots. Some of the waterfalls were larger than others, and most were forceful enough to drown an expert swimmer unless one knew the currents well. Despite the fact that a number of people who accidentally fell in or drove their cars in were drowned every year, we grew up swimming in these canals and prided ourselves in our skill to navigate the rushing waters. But even for us, there were some falls with the fury of Niagara that remained unconquered.

Playing tag was the main pastime, with rules and boundaries conceived in some organic fashion within the unique parameters of a large cement canal, rushing waterfalls, canal banks, and catwalks. Aside from tag, another reckless sport was "shooting the falls," which was daring to see who could go over the falls either head or feet first, or on inner tubes or some other random floating object.

Years later at a Hughson class reunion, a suggestion that some of us go swimming in the canal for nostalgia sake was met incredulously with the fact that no one swims in these canals any longer because it is now recognized that pollutants and pesticides infest these waters, not to mention the liability issues that come into play in today's lawsuit-happy world. It's another bygone era. We took chances then, and no one was sued when kids got seriously injured trying to water ski behind cars or dive off telephone poles into the canal. As far as the pesticides, in the town of Hughson, California, as in the Texas hometown of songwriter James McMurtry, on blistering hot summer days we would peddle our bikes behind a cool mist of DDT coming from the back of the "Mosquito Man's" truck whenever he came to town spraying to keep the local mosquito population down. Back then, DDT was recognized as some kind of miracle chemical that was even sprayed on immigrants arriving at Ellis Island to insure that they didn't bring foreign germs with them into our shining new country. Which was equivalent to believing an advertising slogan at the time that smoking L&M cigarettes was "just what the doctor ordered." And just as McMurtry's song

suggests, our parents sat outside oblivious, fanning themselves with their evening cocktails in hand gushing, "oh, loooooook ... awwww, how cuuuute ... kids ... Mosquito Man ..." and would laugh at how adorable we all looked smiling in ecstasy riding along in a cool, wet cloud of pure DDT. From those episodes, I have often stopped to wonder if that is why I have remained free of many viruses now feared. That by all odds, I should have contracted long ago with all my excessive bad habits through the years. Maybe DDT was a miracle drug of some kind.

Hughson was founded in 1907. It was named after Hiram Hughson, who owned much of the land at one time. The Indians had referred to it as "a place of sleep," and it wasn't really much more than a whistle stop along the Santa Fe railroad line. For no apparent reason, its main street is the remarkable width of a four lane freeway, which is absurdly wide for only being seven blocks long. The buildings that lined the street bore facades much like towns of the old west, but of concrete rather than wood. This was the style of architecture that was typical of California valley towns in the early 20th century, that is now being replaced by the latest architectural contribution to the modern Americana aesthetic: the strip mall.

In 2007 the town will celebrate its centennial. There will be a parade down Main Street, the unveiling of a life size bronze sculpture of a migrant peach picker, and a "bean feed" among other events. Somewhere deep in the nostalgia of this small town was this cherished annual event called The Bean Feed that is being resurrected from the annals of Hughson history that was little more than what its name implies: a town feed of beans and a slice of white bread with butter on a paper plate. But the Bean Feed was a festive occasion. It equaled some of the local harvest parties where a pig would be sacrificed and roasted underground by some distinguished Mexican cooks, pallets of Lucky Lager beer would arrive, mariachi bands would play, and everyone got drunk and danced while us kids tried to sneak off with six-packs of beer.

There was something unique about this small town and the people it produced that is hard to put your finger on. Not that anyone will point out anyone of national importance from there, or a celebrity like neighboring Modesto with its George Lucas who epitomized his town with the movie American Graffiti. But much like the Lucas movie, coming of age in Hughson around that era had a very similar flavor of that which was portrayed that infused its people with a rare down to earth quality that you rarely find in today's neurotic world.

The town on weekend nights was the scene of adolescent youth courting, flirting, getting drunk, and creating general mayhem ... cruising in cars back and forth on Main Street, making U-turn after U-turn at each end and cruising back again, eventually pulling up to others who were parked either along the street or in the dirt parking lot of M & M's Drive-In that took up the whole block at the top of the street. M & M's was our Mel's Drive-In, except occasionally some daring soul would fly into it's dirt lot with their car doing wild donuts and "rooster tails," satisfied at creating an enormous cloud of dust.

Across the street, standing side by side were the town's only two bars. One of these bars was frequented by Mexicans, and the other one by whites, and only a "bad ass" dared to go in either one. In valley towns like Hughson, you were either the toughest, had the fastest car, could drink the most, or risked some other dare devil craziness to prove your manhood ... that you were "bad." Fights and town rivalries over sports and anything else were the fashion. There were always "rumbles" between town football teams in school parking lots after the games, and to even be caught cruising in a neighboring town could prove threatening.

On top of that, the town had a bit of its own racial tensions. Despite the demographic breakdown offered

by consensus figures, in Hughson it seemed you were either Italian, Portuguese, Mexican, or "Okie." The Italians had come there to be farmers, the Portuguese to be dairymen, and the Okies were those who had poured in from Oklahoma after the Dustbowl to work the fields in classic Woody Guthrie narrative, to be replaced by the Mexicans years later. There was friction between the latter that probably started over jobs. We knew little of the kind of prejudice that was prevalent towards blacks back then, or of the anti-Semitism discussed in WWII history for example. We had no "Afro Americans" in that town. We had mixtures of everything else. All we knew was that "Negros" produced most of the hit records on the charts, and thought to be Jewish was just another religion. But there was this racism between the Okies and the Mexicans and the two town bars frequently erupted in violence on the street outside.

The town was violent, but only to a point. I watched people get in fights, friends get killed racing cars, and saw a policeman lie dying on the street, shot in a thwarted bank robbery attempt of our little town bank that shocked the town to its core. It was still the Old West fifties style to be sure, but we never locked doors, and the only big robbery we had heard about until then, was when the owner of the Five and Dime was rumored to have previously tried to tunnel into the same bank that was next door. For the most part, the most we feared was getting caught smoking in the school bathroom. Guns were for hunting or shooting mailboxes and stop signs, and they were readily available on our farms but no one could even dream of using one for assault, and certainly not to bring to school or town. It was all fists and feet.

Farming was the industry and peaches were king. The town once held the title of Peach Capital of the World (in cling peaches as Georgia held the title for freestone peaches). The town came alive in the summers as the harvest approached. It was hot, tipping three-figures on the thermometer. We were out of school and working on family farms buzzing in the middle of the season with their smells of Mexican food and sounds of Mexican music filling the air from farmhand cabins. We eagerly waited for when we could sneak away and go swimming in the canals, race cars, or cruise town in the hopes of finding a party or joining the ranks of couples making out on canal banks. On Sundays, neighboring Italian farm families got together following mass for huge meals at long tables with homemade wine and piles of ravioli.

It was a Norman Rockwell portrait of the golden age of postwar bliss. A little ambition would buy the American Dream. Fathers worked and mothers stayed home raising the kids. We had rotary phones, party lines, and operators who knew family names. There were no answering machines to get a message if you weren't home. The latest news was commonly spread word of mouth or through town gossip, and much of that was from Hamilton's Cafe, the community nerve center where farmers convened every morning to discuss their crops over breakfast. Families watched the same TV shows like Bonanza, Leave it to Beaver, Have Gun Will Travel, Twilight Zone, Ed Sullivan, and Combat, a WW2 series showing the last just war our fathers had just won. Our mothers watched Jack La Lane, As the World Turns, and Queen for a Day, which had to be the most politically incorrect thing since Al Jolson wore blackface. We saw Mysterious Island for 10 cents at our local movie theater. Gas was 37 cents a gallon. We could burn piled leaves in our yards. Dry cleaning and milk were delivered to your door, and the town doctor, a man who seemed to know everything, made house calls. It was all the latest in the modern nuclear age with TV trays, kidney shaped tables, and the Space Race.

Teenagers watched American Bandstand and did the Twist. There was some hushed war in Korea that we knew little about. And then came something called the Cuban Missile Crisis, and our town doctor who knew everything proudly built a fully functioning concrete bomb shelter and began rotating stocks of canned goods.

Soon after came the British Invasion and Mod was the fashion. We started watching Laugh In and Walter

Cronkite began to talk about another hushed war in a place called Vietnam. Eventually that war began to claim even the lives of children from this town not on any maps that few had even heard of. People started to wonder as we started hearing of protests.

I watched Woodstock at the local drive-in theater as the 1967 Summer of Love arrived in our town in 1969. Marijuana started to replace booze, and we piled in cars to cruise country roads with nicknames like The Crooked Mile to smoke joints safely away from authoritarian eyes with our 8 tracks blaring, listening to the Rolling Stones, Ten Years After, and Led Zeppelin. There were no local police, and we had driven trucks and tractors since the age of 10, and many of us could drive as early as Junior High School. Just as was portrayed in American Graffiti, we lived in our cars, but all of a sudden cruising became slower as we got more stoned.

I tried LSD, listening to Iron Butterfly's "In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida" over and over on my portable phonograph. I started wearing fringed jackets, paisley Nehru shirts, suede moccasins, or black Beatle boots, and I watched our town become less violent as people cruising in cars flipped peace signs instead of the finger. Rivalries and fighting stopped, replaced by brotherhood and our attempt at being flower children. As we neared graduation, we began to think about the draft and our options other than following the war blindly. We saw JFK assassinated, followed by Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy. We saw civil rights movements and civil disobedience. It was the beginning of the end of the last innocent generation, and I was about to graduate.

Following graduation, our doctor who knew everything took his life, followed by my father, whose increasing bouts of depression from a little-known syndrome called Manic Depression become too chronic for him to bear. With little time to think, the family farm was sold to pay the inheritance taxes, and with what was left, I went off to art school and to see the world, eventually moving to the coast. I never lived here again.

I never grew up. I never had kids. The rare times I have returned were either for a class reunion, a funeral, or a quick sentimental journey down Main Street when passing within proximity on my way somewhere else, and when I did, I sometimes wondered why anyone settled here in the first place. I have been physically, mentally, and spiritually almost everywhere. I've had my picture taken with Jackie and Aristotle Onassis on the island of Capri. I've sunk a ship in the Caribbean, shot the rapids of the Pequari River, been thrown into a dungeon in Bangkok, and made the pilgrimages to Burning Man in the Nevada Desert. I think I've been a puppet, a pauper, a poet, a pawn, and maybe not quite a king, but to this day, no matter where I am, there is a maudlin feeling that comes over me with the end of a summer and the coming of fall. It's hard to shake. It's ingrained in me. It's the feeling of a time when the winds come, and the leaves fall off the peach trees, leaving nothing but bare branches as they go dormant for the cold season ahead. The Mexicans would leave town on their sojourns back home for the winter, and the farm would become a deserted wasteland. The canals would go dry. Everything seemed to go black and white. And with all of this, I would have to face going back to school and wait for spring ... when everything would blossom, the Mexicans would return, the music would begin, and we could go swimming in the canals.

Mark Bava is an event producer, musician and artist now residing in Carmel California.

\* My Back Pages - song by Bob Dylan (1964)

"Ah, but I was so much older then, I'm younger than that now ..."



\* \* \* \*

An article in the Ceres Courier announcing the Hughson Centennial:

Hughson Celebrates Its Centennial This Weekend

<http://www.cerescourier.com/archives/53932/>

## HUGHSON CELEBRATES ITS CENTENNIAL THIS WEEKEND

By Jeff Benziger

September 19, 2007

Hughson turns 100 years old this month and there will be a celebration worthy of a hundred-year wait on Saturday, Sept. 22.

A full day of celebration is being organized by the Hughson Historical Society, the Hughson Centennial Celebration Committee, and the city of Hughson. "A Small Community With A Big Heart" is the guiding theme for the free event, which includes an all-day Main Street fair, that is open to the general public.

Hughson's township was filed in 1907. It didn't become an incorporated city until 1971.

From 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Hughson Avenue will be converted into a fair. Free entertainment will be offered as well as displays of vintage automobiles, tractors and motorcycles. A Dust Bowl Days display will be available as well as commercial booths for shoppers. Food booths will feed the crowd.

A parade at 11 a.m. will pay tribute to Hughson's past and will feature a wide range of antiques vehicles including a Wells Fargo stage coach.

Activities for the children will include a petting zoo, pumpkin maze, jumping bins, kiddie tractor pull, and Centennial Children's Area.

A larger-than-life statue of a peach picker, called "The Harvest" - commissioned by Oakdale artist Betty Saletta - will be unveiled at 4 p.m. on Saturday, Sept. 22 at the corner of Charles and Hughson Avenue. The intersection has recently been rehabilitated into a showcase intersection complete with brick, planters and street furniture. Donors who helped pay for the statue will be recognized on bronze plaques at its base.

Inscribed paving bricks honoring or memorializing family or friends were sold to help raise funds and will be a central part of the Centennial Plaza design.

Hughson was once known for the peaches grown in its fields, hence the harvester was seen as an appropriate tribute.

A time capsule with memorabilia from 2007 will be placed at Centennial Plaza.

"Years ago Hughson used to have a Tractor Rodeo and free beans so we're going to have that again," said Jean Henley, a member of the Hughson Historical Society.

Free peaches will also be given away.

The Hughson Historical Museum, located in the old Gillette Hotel which was moved from downtown Ceres in 1907, will be open for the day. The museum is located on Hughson Avenue.

A wide range of other food will be available for purchase, as well as centennial DVD's, T-shirts, polo shirts and hats. Shirts and hats may be purchased in advance at Bank of the West in Hughson or at the event.

A limited number of bronze maquettes of "The Harvest" are still available. A portion of the purchase of these 18-inch versions of the finished sculpture goes to the Hughson Historical Society.

\* \* \* \*

Chris was the older brother of Mark Bava, the Class of '72 alumni who wrote the Hughson Centennial essay above. I only have one vague memory of Chris when I was four-ish years old, when he accidentally banged my forehead with a golf club back swing as he was practicing on the front lawn of their East Pine Street home. He had told me to get back, but a half step or two wasn't far enough, and I ran home screaming and bleeding, and still have the vague shadow of a small scar. We re-connected a lifetime later when he somehow ran across my writings online. A curious serendipity that two neighbors from little old East Pine Street in little old Hughson, California – who ended up living very different lives – both ended up becoming philosopher-mystics of the god-mind sort.

-----  
Hey, Chris,

Long time no hear. What news from the LA zone?

-----  
Hey, Mike,

How you doing, my friend? My life continues to be a chaos of insanity with occasional breathes of fresh air. The LA club was sold some 5 years ago, was a great run as we were pioneers in making downtown LA a new hip destination spot. As with everything you can't have up without down, no one sided coins in this universe ... the downside, after several severe incidences of pain, a dentist whom liberally prescribed Oxycontin, while I had 17 years sobriety. Little did I know it merely takes 4 days to land one in the horrific net of opiate addiction replete with the same agonizing withdrawals I had when doing mountains of smack. I wasn't a happy junkie, not now, having tried several detoxes, clinics, and other modules of detox unsuccessfully, I suppose I simply relented and as everything I do became excessive ... combining all sorts of dangerous potions. Settling on an opiate base line, highlighted with excessive Ketamine use ... a psychedelic drug that only 1% of users become frequent abusers of, as it is initially very frightening, then rather intellectually interesting, at least I found it so.

Anyway, our beautiful loft with all our wonderful, healthy friends were being quickly replaced with a much more subterranean, criminal element. Eventually, desperately wanting an out, I had tried several ibogaine treatments in Playas Mexico (interesting treatment, check it out, you tube ibogaine and or google [ibogaine.org](http://ibogaine.org)) a powerful psychedelic that works by creating new brain pathways ... I brought 5 (including myself), 3 addicted to opiates, my wife a 37 year nicotine user/abuser ... 3 opiates addicts to this day are still clean, my wife dropped smoking the day after her treatment ... and me? Well, after each treatment I

would zip back to LA where my friend and neighbor lived, is one of LA largest suppliers ... well needless to say, ibogaine isn't absolute magic ... the beat went on.

Anyway, we decided to get out of that environment and now knowing Playas, as well as wishing to help our friends and their struggling ibogaine center, we decided to move here, Playas de Tijuana ... the best kept secret in Baja, we have a penthouse, in a small condo (only 15 units) ours in three floors, smack on a beautiful beach ... the top floor, all glass facing the ocean ... with a large wonderful deck ... the economy, while naturally being impacted by that idiot/criminal Bush is so much more affordable than California. But my addiction, while decreased on the one hand, increased on the K side ... apparently my behavior became frightening to everyone but me ... I guess, traipsing around the gritty areas of TJ ain't a safe practice at 3 a.m. ... though I lived in the lower east side of NYC for a year ... and despise what Giuliani has done to NY ... sanitized it, removed the soul which was grit and grime ... turned Times Square into a fucking theme park. Happy tourists eagerly shopping, no more wild characters spicing up the scenery, the pimps all likely jailed along with their hookers ... replaced with tour guides. foot long hot dogs and vendors selling inane t-shirts "I survived Times Square NYC" Almost as nauseating as Vegas. Don't get me going about Giuliani, a disgrace to my Italian heritage ... how he used 9/11 to climb the ugly political power game ... not the hero the media portrayed him as but a mere poser ... ask any of the heroic NYC firemen. The creep utterly sanitized the very soul of my favorite city.

Imagine a crime-free world, first of all an absurd notion unless one happens to be a re-born Christian or an Islamic fundamentalist is entirely fantasy, will never be and if it could it would hell on earth ... no Shakespeare, no ee Cummings, Erza Pound, Dostoevsky, or Bob Dylan ... Burroughs, Corso. Forget about Ginsburg. Guess you could eliminate every film except Disney fairytale's ... even then ... you'd have to eliminate Little Red Riding Hood, all of Hans Christian Anderson ... without conflict one has little or no fuel for creativity. So my archetypical current villain besides Bush and his cohorts is Giuliani. This is what happens when power hungry folks get ahold of Democracy and decimate it for their own needs ... God knows why anyone who banks multi millions needs more, and will send young men into harms way, allowing them to perpetuate racism and death. It is beyond me, only that folks become so blinded by chasing an image that they become helplessly attached to attempting to become something they never can ... after all you cant become a basketball star, you can only do basketball ... ain't any sentient being who can meta morph into something that ain't.

Sorry, for my digression, anyway my increasingly odd behavior was alarming to both my wife and Mark, they talked me into interning myself into an Mexican Rehab ... well job done, I am clean and sober ... and have a cause and grist for the mill for a crazy screen play which is almost complete. While this place indeed got me clean any jail cell or locked closet could have accomplished the same ... this beat anything Kafka could've dreamt up ... not to rattle on, I will only capsule my initial internment ... while their web site, highly photo shopped showed happy folks, horse riding, walking very lush gardens, happily sitting in green lawns chatting away. In fact, I was roughly grabbed by four cholo types, rushed down a long tunnel, thrown into what could only be described as a dungeon ... one bare light, so bug infested I had to stick food on the walls to keep the earwigs out of my bed, nothing to read ... certainly no TV or radio ... no human contact with the exception of a staff member only after I would beat on the walls calling them every name I could dream up ... and given Haldol (a medication reserved in the US for patients suffering from generally schizophrenia along with Thorazine called in the US "chemical straight jackets" and whatever else, that caused me to faint twice, once splitting my head open leaving a pool of blood. Was kept down there for 12 days, while they called my wife daily with ONLY negative reports "Christopher is not getting with the program, he has trouble with authority, has threatened to bomb the clinic, etc." Throwing my entire family into a depression, thinking perhaps I had suffered some permanent

brain damage, allowing me no contact with family members or anyone else.

When finally allowed above ground, we had to participate in inane "therapies" such as equine therapy and zoological therapy, no module I had ever come across ... I asked what good is riding a horse backwards for a lap around this fucking corral do? They assured me it was excellent for a host of stuff including helping to make new neurological connections that may have been damaged by drugs ... well strike me dead, this is certainly a newcomer on the forefront of psychology, huh? They also had chickens and sheep, I asked "therapy" they answered yes, therapy. Anyway, it is an outrage, people are being held against their will over 50% for weed ... weed?! Why? One "therapist" told me in no uncertain terms, THC could leave one permanently impotent ... WHAT? Well, I'll be damned, you certainly better relay this info to the majority of California residents who voted an overwhelming yes to medical weed ... we certainly wouldn't want to trade migraines for the inability to get it up ... I asked what about females? Frigidity, or they get a free ticket ... they seemed a bit baffled ... and said weren't sure but weed was bad, bad, bad! I was considered rebellious ... while I found much of it absurdly hilarious ... I am outraged by their money agenda and how easily they are able to trick the families of these Mexican families. Not Mine, but it took 3 weeks before I could have any contact, and they tried their best to interfere and obfuscate my transmissions when finally it became clear we are all outraged and plan to form official complaints to the consulate, and confront Issac at his office demanding changes. You see, in Mexico, two family members without any legal 3rd party can have another family member committed. In the 60's, in south Italy this could be accomplished by either 2 family members, or two public officials ... one American girl had been locked in an medieval insane asylum for some 5 years before it came to light that family members were committing other family members who had for example epilepsy, for which they were ashamed, etc.

Anyway, probably more info than you need or expected. Anyway, today my health is back, I am looking forward once again to pursue my creative interests and enjoy the surf, looking into promoting benefit concerts to aid our friends ibogaine clinic ... and of course, get back on track with my Advaita teacher and looking forward to a hug by Ammachi in San Ramon ... hopeful her schedule remains the same. In June for 2 weeks at the sister ashram in San Ramon ... I have had the great good fortune to have seen her more than a 100 times ... twice I was able to meet U.G. Krishnamurti, not to be confused with UK Krishnamurti ... U.G. was a wild man ... called himself a spiritual terrorist ... he yelled at me, "Don't you fucking see, there are no problems, the problems are the solutions!" Great! On the U.G. website [www.ugkrishnamurti.org](http://www.ugkrishnamurti.org) you can visit the video archives, in particular "I am a barking dog" where he yells at a Indian film maker "Your trouble, is you want to fuck this bitch, why don't you do something?!" He never advertised his presence, you could only meet him by some synchronistic incident.

So there we are, the long and short of it all. Hey, anyone know what's become of Terry Morgan and/or his sister Joanne? John Galt? Kenny Doberenz? I now understand why as we get older there is a tendency toward becoming more serious ... like Gurumayi said in a talk while I was in Ganeshpuri ... "Life isn't a game you win, it is a game you lose ... you lose your hair, your looks, your friends, and then your life." I'm astounded often when asking that question about old amigo's to hear "Oh, she died from cancer, oh, and he died from a stroke" ... all us baby boomers are one in all "Knocking on heaven's door." While I've escaped the long specter of death it amazes me, a good 60% of those I know who have lived the way I had ... are no longer with us, many more brothers and sisters are lingering away in some prison. Forget the fact that nicotine kills some 450,000 annually in the US, 10,000 of which are innocent bystanders. What drug out there can claim such stats even per capita? I have a friend, former professor at Berkley who received life without possibility of parole for a few kilo's of cocaine ... while many, many Colombians only got 10 years for multiple tons ... I really love our constitution as our founding fathers had written it ... not a country anywhere that is as radical as ours ... but it is sad, sad to see how in particular Bush has

simply decimated something so good with his Patriot Act ... I suppose we are almost at that point where the empire shifts from West to East ... empires come and go ... but ours seems to be fading faster than most ... who cares? We live in such a small world, can easily go anywhere quickly and conveniently.

Ok, time to get on our electric scooters and hunt for my precious menudo, if ever you are down south of the border, please, please let me know, you're most welcome to stop by, hang out and relax in very relaxing environs.

Warmest Regards,

Chris

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Chris,

Wow, what an amazing adventure! Boggling. Harsh. At least you seem to have found some light at the end of the tunnel. Kudos to your family and friends for sticking with you throughout.

Never met U.G. Krishnamurti, but did read a couple of his books toward the end of my stay teaching at J. Krishnamurti's Oak Grove School in Ojai back in the late 80's. Definitely one of the many wake-up callers. I'd read and listened to J. Krishnamurti for years, but he was dead by the time I got a teaching credential, and going down there was less about him than playing out the teaching game in an interesting environment. Oak Grove was a pleasant experience, but after two years I was done with both it and teaching. Moved up to Chico for a decade, over to Arcata for eight months at Humboldt State, and then back to Creative Alternatives in Stanislaus County.

Coincidentally, I ran into John Galt last week here in Turlock working at Custom Locksmith & Alarm at 522 East Main Street, Turlock CA 95380 (209) 668-3606. He sold the hardware store several years ago, and has been trying to figure out what to do since. Said Susan is widowed up north raising her children. No help with any of the others you mentioned, but of my own classmates, many are dead or in poor health, as well. Such a brief stay this mortal theater offers – so much of it filled with such inane pain and suffering.

Well, back to work. Thanks for sharing your story. Quite a life you've led, Mr. Bava, quite a life.

Keep in touch, and take care,

Michael

\* \* \* \*

Response to Mark Bava, a fellow K-12 Hughson Class of '72 alumni, as well as one of the neighbor kids on East Pine Street up until age seven, when we moved out to the peach ranch on Hatch Road:

Mark,

Came back to the Valley in 2000 to work for Creative Alternatives, and be closer to the parents as they wander through their end-game.

Yes, I did read your centennial piece. It was great. Brought back all sorts of similar memories. That commonality is what has been fun about spending time once in a while with Esther and Marcia. Esther just emailed me that this Sunday, Russell Wallers wants to join us.

Wondered how the restaurant adventure would work out for you and Chris. It sounded like an interesting plan, but not an easy line of work, that's for sure.

Sounds like we've both lived Peter Pan lives. Still am at this end, I suppose, but I think the worst of the mid-life crisis part is pretty much behind me. No regrets about not having a partner or children. Never really felt a strong calling for it.

And for you, the artist's life, it strikes me that there are worse things.

Doubt you have much reason to travel over here, but if you do, feel free to call and we'll do some coffee or brewskies or whatever.

Ciao,

M

\* \* \* \*

Facebook Messenger response in 2015 to Lilliana Bava-Braico after her sons, Chris and Mark, were killed in an automobile accident:

Just watched the YouTube trailer. I knew Chris was doing a lot of photography, but didn't really click that it was for a documentary, and so powerful from the cut of the trailer. What a hell it is for so many people. And why wouldn't Charles Shaw give Chris credit for credit due? What a world. I am so weary of humankind at times. Netflix doesn't have it on disk at this writing, so I will hook up on streaming to watch it in the near soon. Glad you brought it up.

Google Search: Exile Nation: the Plastic People

<https://www.google.com/search?client=safari&rls=en&q=Exile+Nation:+the+Plastic+People&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8>

Some nice reviews if you scroll down a bit:

Amazon Prime: Exile Nation: The Plastic People

[https://www.amazon.com/Exile-Nation-Plastic-Chris-Bava/dp/B00POTA9DK/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1523398200&sr=8-1&keywords=Exile+Nation%3A+the+Plastic+People](https://www.amazon.com/Exile-Nation-Plastic-Chris-Bava/dp/B00POTA9DK/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1523398200&sr=8-1&keywords=Exile+Nation%3A+the+Plastic+People)

I don't know if you will remember, but my only memory of Chris on East Pine Street was the time he accidentally kiboshed me with a golf club. He was practicing his swing out in your front yard. My own dang fault, of course. He told me to get back, and I didn't understand what was going on. The backswing caught me above the forehead hairline, and I ran home screaming. Don't know how old I was; probably anywhere from three to five. I'm pretty sure he felt really bad, and brought bed-ridden me a nice little gift as an apology, probably your doing. Have always treasured that little battle scar. The hairline has receded enough to barely see it .

\* \* \* \*

Mark Bava and his brother and sister-in-law, Chris and Cat Asche, were killed in an auto accident on October 20, 2012. According to Lilliana Bava-Braico, Mark and Chris's mother, the woman who was driving, Amoreena Brannum, was first charged with three counts of vehicular manslaughter. When it was discovered that Brannum had been told not to drive while on prescription drugs, the charges were changed from misdemeanors to felonies. With that she ran, and was found seven months later in a homeless shelter, pregnant. The judge put her under house arrest until after the baby was born. After several continuances, the judge seemed to be leaning towards a time-served judgment, until it was brought to her attention that the woman had posted a number of comments and photos on social media that showed an utter lack of remorse for her actions. After more legal maneuvering, the decision on whether or not to have the issue go to trial was transferred to another judge. Lilliana asked me to write a letter of support, which is posted below.

Mark Bava, Chris Bava & Cat Asche Memorial Page  
<http://anonsalon.com/bava/>

Mark & Chris Bava Memorial  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h5eZkxiAmEk>

DUI Case Surprise  
<https://www.facebook.com/sara.maurer.12/videos/947600192070304/>

Woman in San Jose DUI crash that killed 3 people to stand trial after Facebook posts  
[www.kron4.com/news/video-woman-who-was-expected-to-get-time-served-in-san-jose-dui-crash-that-killed-3-people-now-going-to-jury-trial\\_20180306103347300/1012981845](http://www.kron4.com/news/video-woman-who-was-expected-to-get-time-served-in-san-jose-dui-crash-that-killed-3-people-now-going-to-jury-trial_20180306103347300/1012981845)

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Honorable Eric Scott Geffon  
Superior Court of Santa Clara County  
75 East Santa Clara Street  
San Jose, CA 95113

May 23, 2018

Dear Judge Geffon,

The issue before you on whether or not to have this tragic incident go to trial, to potentially mete out further punishment for Amoreena Brannum, a woman who killed three people, is not an enviable one. To sentence her to further time, or let her move on with her life, is the question.

I am originally from Hughson, California, near Modesto, was in the same class as Mark Bava, and lived on the same cul-de-sac until our family moved to our peach ranch when I was age seven. Chris was a few years older, and we didn't become friends until we connected online sometime in the early Y2K years. I never met Cat, Chris's wife, but was aware of her through Chris's correspondence and online posts. Mark and Chris were two bright stars: both thinkers, both artists, both with many friends, both living giving

lives, both committed to caring for their mother, Lilliana, age 87, who now lives alone in senior housing in Carmel.

From what I understand, the woman who destroyed the lives of Mark, Chris, and Cat has never apologized to either Lilliana or the Court, and has essentially moved on with her life, unpunished, unrepentant, self-righteous, as if the accident was not her fault, perhaps as if it never even really happened. Just an inconvenient, annoying mess, like bugs splattered across a windshield.

From my perspective as an elder in the tribe, the values our culture, our republic, were founded on have gradually descended into a state of narcissistic, hedonistic, sociopathic anarchy. What kind of society have we become to let a woman get away with negligent homicide – driving impaired and uninsured, and this not her first accident – to play the system and get off essentially scot-free? What kind message is being sent to society? What kind of message is being sent to her family, to her friends, to her child? Who will hold the tide if not the judiciary?

Some links to get a sense of Mark:

Mark Bava (19 August 1954 - 20 October 2012)

Hughson Union High School Class of '72

<https://www.facebook.com/301790023189950/photos/a.301810946521191.64321.301790023189950/446697825365835/?type=3&theater>

Mark's Facebook Page

<https://www.facebook.com/mark.bava>

Mark's Blog

<https://www.blogger.com/profile/04781808645805571682>

My Back Pages

<https://markbava.blogspot.com/2006/07/writings.html>

Some links to get a sense of Chris:

Chris's Facebook Page

<https://www.facebook.com/cbava1>

Official Trailer: Exile Nation: The Plastic People

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ewi9jX4286g>

Google Search: Exile Nation: the Plastic People

<https://www.google.com/search?client=safari&rls=en&q=Exile+Nation:+the+Plastic+People&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8>

Amazon Prime: Exile Nation: The Plastic People

[https://www.amazon.com/Exile-Nation-Plastic-Chris-Bava/dp/B00POTA9DK/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1523398200&sr=8-1&keywords=Exile+Nation%3A+the+Plastic+People](https://www.amazon.com/Exile-Nation-Plastic-Chris-Bava/dp/B00POTA9DK/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1523398200&sr=8-1&keywords=Exile+Nation%3A+the+Plastic+People)



I realize there are many things to be weighed in the decision about Amoreena's future, but for my part, I urge you to have the issue go to trial, and allow a jury of peers to decide.

Respectfully,

Michael Holshouser

mjholshouser@gmail.com  
209-416-7193  
1112 Cedar Creek Drive, Unit 4  
Modesto, CA 95355-5213

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with Lilliana Bava-Braico on the whether or not the judge was sending Amoreena Brannum, the killer of her sons and daughter-in-law, to trial for felony vehicular manslaughter:

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Moi:

Hey, hey ... Checking in to see if the judge has made a decision on the trial.

-----  
Lilliana:

Hi Michael – no word yet!!!! Hope for a decision in July now! XO

-----  
Moi: Have we got in enough letters to add weight to the cause?

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Lilliana:

I'm disappointed we couldn't get a letter from the Hughson Historical Society – their excuse was they were too busy preparing for a dinner event and then there were summer vacations – hard to understand – one person in a half hour on their letterhead could have done it, but oh well ... and Jenene was going to write and get 20 of her people to write was forgotten about like her forgetting to get you Mark's article – know she's busy. But thankfully we have yours representing their home town. We did get a good response in the beginning that should get the Judges attention. Thanks for asking and your help Michael.

-----  
Moi:

I guess most people are just too overrun in their lives anymore to deal with things outside whatever rut they've settled into.

rut1 | røt |

noun

1 a long deep track made by the repeated passage of the wheels of vehicles.

2 a habit or pattern of behavior that has become dull and unproductive but is hard to change: the administration was stuck in a rut and was losing its direction.

rut

noun

1 the car bumped across the ruts: furrow, groove, trough, ditch, hollow, pothole, crater.

2 he was stuck in a rut: boring routine, humdrum existence, habit, dead end.

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Lilliana:

I remember it well, that collective rut – I paid my dues, it was one of my reasons for leaving Hughson!

-----

Moi:

Hardly know anyone there in any meaningful way anymore. It's not even close to being the same town I grew up in.

-----

Lilliana: Wow – and I thought it was only me!

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Moi:

Nope, I'm only here until Mom departs, and then it's up to Arcata or Eugene, or some such out-of-Dodge place.

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Lilliana:

Good for you!

-----

Moi:

And she's still going almost 89-strong, so I'm not betting I'll ever escape.

-----

Lilliana: Take her with you – that’s what my boys did, people wrote of us that we traveled as a pack!

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Moi:

Alas, she has no interest in leaving Motown. All her bridge buddies are here, and she's never been much for adventure. It's a curious thing to have lived the life I have, coming from such domesticated roots.

-----

Lilliana:

Oh, too bad. Wow, you must have fell very far from your roots! Lucky you have the gift of writing to sustain you in the meantime then.

-----

Moi:

It is the salvation that the inexplicable shaped to its own purpose.

Lilliana:

I relate to that – my art has been my salvation through this journey – painting, like writing is a lonely profession by necessity, but you can do it anywhere.

-----

Moi:

The creative mind is a wondrous thing. Both Ann and I have spent our lives creating in a variety of ways. Ours comes largely from Dad’s side. The Kurtz clan is more German Brethren scientific-rational in its roots. Mom – great soul that she is – shakes her head, and says she’s never created anything in her life. Bridge, mysteries, and television are her outlets. So that nature-nurture mix of art and science is what played out in my life and wordplay. The haphazard forays into drawing, painting, sculpture, and theater have never been anything like what you and Chris and Mark were called to do. Your levels of intrigue are enviable.

\* \* \* \*

Response to a letter from Mikki Larrick, a friend from the Waterford years:

Hey, Mikki,

Yes, I got the snail mail, but hadn't responded yet because it got mixed up with some other stuff for a few days. Just found it again last night.

Yes, I remember well the journey north and the Portuguese diesel. We've got a lot of good memories together. All the horse rides, Greeley Hill, walks along the canal bank, photography expeditions, times with your family ... it was a great time in my life.

The spiritual thing is a constant for me. It has been like wine gradually aging my whole adult life. Am always flipping into awareness of the mystery we play out. Have almost 1700 pages of aphorisms transcribed in my computer, and another twenty or so notebooks waiting, waiting.

Created a web site for the original work, "The Stillness Before Time," while at Humboldt State, and just put it up at a new dot-com address in the box below.

Have stopped by the horse show a couple times. Ran into your clan, of course, and will probably go down Sunday afternoon to watch the branding competition.

Was hoping you'd be coming down, but looks like not. Be sure to let me know when you do.

Take care,

Michael

\* \* \* \*

A 1979 memory of a cattle branding with the Johnny and Betty Roen clan of Waterford written in 2001:

#### THE GATHERING

It was long ago, and how they had come to be there, I cannot clearly recall. Perhaps we had gathered them that morning in the surrounding foothills, or maybe they had been collected the day before. But somehow a small herd of mothers and their children had been gathered and placed in a holding pen. They were nervously making the sounds cows make as they milled about in their temporary lock-up.

The holding pen was connected to a smaller corral. We had all collected there for the past hour or so, and were waiting to begin. It was a moderate group of men, women and children of all ages. The men in cowboy hats and spurs, some on horses some on foot. The women in trim blouses and tight jeans.

The area outside the fenced area was littered with pickup trucks and horse trailers. There was a relaxed festivity in the air. These were all friends, and this was a gathering, an annual tradition in their world.

At some signal I did not see, several men on horses entered the holding pen and began with sure, regulated precision to separate the children from the mothers. The nervousness erupted into panic as the separated couples began to bawl their fear.

Without much ado, there were now two groups. The mothers were driven to an area further away, and held at bay by the men on horses. The calves were driven toward the entrance of the main corral, their panic increasing, though they were as yet unaware of the horror awaiting them this day.

Within the pen, men both on horses and on foot were patiently waiting for their entry. In a smoking fire pit in the corner of the corral were a handful of metal brands turning a bright reddish-orange in the coals. A variety of other tools, including knives, needles and medicine bottles were laid out on a small bench nearby.

Outside the corral the women and on-lookers along the fenceline gossiped about their lives and each other. The children watched or played nearby. There was earnestness punctuated by occasional laughter. After a bit they would begin preparing lunch, which would be served on the tailgates of several pickups.

As soon as all the bawling calves were in the pen, the morning's work began. In some sort of unspoken, tacit agreement understood by men who had done this all their lives, the two cowboys on horseback picked out their first mark. A lasso twirled in the air. The lead cowboy aimed for the head, and after a try or two, had the creature by the neck. The other cowboy now whirled away, aiming for both rear feet, though one would do.

At that, the two horses began backing up as they had been trained, the ropes wrapped around the saddlehorns, pulling the bawling creature into a defenseless position. The ground crew now rushed in, and using twists, pulls and pushes, wrestled it down on its side, and sat on it in such a way that it was completely immobilized. The man at the head pulled the noose off the neck and put it on the front legs.

At this, the cowboys signaled their mounts to back up until the heifer was stretched out into as vulnerable a position as any four-legged creature could ever imagine. What was before a frightened bawl, now became a piercing scream of absolute terror. The other calves in the corner shared the fear with their own cries.

Now, as the cowboys and horses held their position, other members of the ground crew, including me, quickly headed from the corner with the point of this day. A needle or two filled with various immunizations were quickly, one might say unceremoniously, jammed into the haunch. A red-hot brand, whoever's these calves belonged to, was held for several seconds against the rump as the hair and flesh sizzled, popped and smoked. The stench of the burning wafted throughout the corral.

If the young calf was so unfortunate as to be male, the next minute made the first a walk in the field. Its horns were clipped with some device akin to bolt cutters, and to stop the gushing blood, another glowing metal rod pushed harshly into the head to cauterized the wound.

And then the most ignoble act any male can ever imagine, a ground worker's hand grabbed its maleness, and with only the briefest pause, used a sharp blade to slice off the testicle sack, irrevocably changing the creature's destiny to that of a steer whose future was to play out as a slab of meat in one grocery store or another. The sack was unceremoniously tossed onto the ground for the dogs, and the testicles into a bucket near the branding iron pit.

For the remainder of the morning, this scene played out over and over again in the dusty pen, How many calves were branded on that day, I cannot be sure. Perhaps over fifty; perhaps as many as a hundred. Cowboys took turns on both horseback and as ground crew. There was, of course, a sense of friendly competition to see who was most proficient with their horses and lassos, and who could wrestle down the creatures with the least effort. There was laughter and joking throughout the earnestness of the work. At no point can I recall anyone even noticing the terror of their victims.

We broke for lunch at noon. Sandwiches, chips and whiskey, and the delicacy we had all that morning worked to harvest, fried and seasoned as tasty as anything I've ever eaten. Mountain oysters some call them. With the screaming still ringing in my ears, I ate several.

It was a harvest celebration of sorts, shared by friends as they came together to help each other accomplish the annual deed in the hills and fields wherever they had cattle grazing. These men and women had spent their lives doing this. It was as normal a rite as harvesting peaches and walnuts had been for me on a small farm a different universe only fifteen miles away. Their horse was my tractor. They graded the calves in the pen as I had peaches in the field. They ate dust and poured sweat as ranchers no differently than I had as a farmer's son.

And yet, in all my youthful work I had never once heard a scream, nor inflicted pain upon another life form in quite that way. Yes, I had BB-gunned birds, gigged frogs and fish, terrorized cats, wrestled dogs, and squashed insects as any boy might. But somehow that day was as indelible for me as anything I have ever witnessed. It may well have continued into my dreams for several days, and though the details have faded, as all details do in time's passing, I have never forgotten the essential horror I had for the first time witnessed.

A year later, about the same time but a different location, I joined my friends for another branding. And that day, and on all since, I too, did not hear the screams.

\* \* \* \*

An inspired couple night's worth of blugrassy ditties that came out while wandering from group to group with Mikki Larrick at the 2018 California Bluegrass Association (CBA) Spring Campout at the Stanislaus County Fairgrounds in Turlock, California. Sent a copy to Mikki for use in her songwriting – she calls them hooks – as well as anyone else with whom she cared to share them. And now blogged and pdf-ed for anyone else who might happenstance upon them in the dreamtime ahead.

California Bluegrass Association  
<https://www.cbaweb.org>

Facebook: California Bluegrass Association  
<https://www.facebook.com/californiabluegrass/>

Ditties for the Bluegrass Pyre PDF  
<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/dittiesforthebluegrasspyre.pdf>

## Ditties for the Bluegrass Pyre

Michael J. Holshouser

CBA Spring Campout  
Stanislaus County Fairgrounds  
Turlock, California  
April 2018

*Sit back, good friends, hear some random thoughts,  
And feel free to use 'em and/or abuse 'em as you like.*

The players played afire into the wee-rising hours:  
Fiddles 'n banjos 'n guitars 'n mandolins 'n basses 'n more.  
And I listened as true and full as true as full in this graying mind allows.

Holding on to nothing sets me straight.

The light in the window is drawing me home.

Hadn't a clue till fate ran me into you.

Lord, don't take me yet, I ain't been paid.

How deep the song is the light of you.

With or without you, I am free, babe.

Life's a rabbit hole, done left me feeling mean.  
Took me places I never, never should have seen.  
Ain't no rewind button for the shoulda-coulda-woulda.

The rain, it washed me pure and clean.

The whim of fate is the hue of you.

I'm done, this body has tortured me long enough.

Blessed are the meek ain't my way.

The monster's in me, Momma, I'm sorry to say.

That girl, she done led me down a hard, hard trail.

The breeze, it felt so good across my suffering cheek.

This jingle's for you, now get out of my way.

The moon, it woke me, and I was out the door.

What bluegrass done for me, well, it just ain't right.

The coon was a-running till my dog's first bite.

Had no clue till she disappeared into the night.

Good thing I didn't come home, I'd have shot 'em both.

Bought my girl a ring, and she pawned my soul.

In my eyes, the bluegrass gaze; in my mind, the bluegrass daze.  
We danced round the fire till the sun's first light.  
The truth, it ain't never what it seems.  
Missed my calling till one night it found me sitting next to you.  
I am the outlaw in my girl's worst dreams.  
Fingers and thumb strum the tune.  
The tapping foot draws out the song.  
The lies, the lies, will you ever stop spinning them my way?  
The mountain trail takes me home.  
Pushed her out the hayloft to set myself free.  
Woke up to Jack Daniels still stinging my tongue, blurring my mind.  
Friday night's high turned into the Monday morning blues.  
Willie Nelson left on the bus last night.  
This drifter's arms will set you free at the morning light.  
My momma, she's the first and last woman for me.  
Don't know why you said goodbye.  
Sold my soul again last night.  
It was with this song that I met the dawn.  
I'm home again, woman, but not for long.  
Stupid is stupid, oh say can't you see.  
Girl, I thought you said you'd set me free.  
The Rabbit Hole is spiraling me down, down, down again.  
How true is true? How false is false? And what's the lie between?  
Can't you see what you mean to me?



Would have told her if she'd let me stay.  
Left the squalor of the city lights for the country bluegrass song.  
This old snap-crackle-pop back, it sure ain't what it used to be.  
My favorite old dog, he treed that coon.  
The mystery born in you, was born in me, too.  
That pearl necklace, it done broke my heart.  
The root of life, it runs deep in me.  
That rising moon made my dog and me howl for joy.  
The preacher's daughter, what she done to me.  
Excuse me, my banjo calls.  
The drifter's song set me free.  
Did I just hear another honey-tongue lie?  
Won't you sing that pretty song out loud again.  
The different you, the different me, I am you and you are me.  
Cry, baby, cry, just don't say goodbye.  
She came to me in a sky-blue cotton dress.  
Tell me it ain't true, and I'll believe the lie.  
That Jack burns my tongue just right tonight.  
Damn you, Willie, play on, play on.  
How sweet the sound, the stream in me.  
The future of time is but a song in my mind.  
She made me cry, so I stayed another day.  
The last song let my dreams run free.  
Jezebel, Jezebel, please, please, leave me alone.

The wandering caravan alit with bluegrass fire travels across the land.  
How true the true, how false the false.  
Sing that song again for me, my friend.  
Higher highs, lower lows, you bring 'em all home, girl.  
Whoever said love is forever never met you.  
Lead me on, pretty girl, and I will follow like the dog I am.  
One, two, three, four, the tune carries the floor.  
Reflections, what do they mean?  
Every creek a Mississippi traveling to the sea.  
Music, it sets me free.  
The nomads of bluegrass ride again.  
The limb broke, and I died.  
Banjo or fiddle or guitar or mandolin, the big brown bass strums along.  
That pony don't care much for me.  
The harmonic string finds its chord.  
Malarkey met its definition in you.  
It's a cold world, Momma, and I am so alone.  
Without you, what would I do?  
Just another silly song while the river streams on.  
Was it A? Was it D? Can't remember for the life of me.  
Nurse that beer, smoke that song.  
Best walk away, girl, don't ask why.  
Country songs, they set me free.  
The door opens, the door closes, be sure to watch your toes.

The demon in your eyes makes my blood run cold.  
American Apple Pie, it's done lost its sheen.  
Bliss, what was that again?  
The glint of sunlight cast me over the rainbow.  
Girl, who's that boy staring at you?  
I sing this song because it came to me last night.  
The devil's strumming left me cold.  
Walking on water in my dreams.  
Sorry, Dan, it ain't true.  
That river, was it a trickle? Was it a flood? I cannot remember.  
Dreams asunder pluck my strings.  
That twang makes me feel good.  
Drifting down the Tuolumne was my destiny.  
That banjo, it be too heavy for me.  
Honky-tonk girl, don't say goodbye to me.  
Sorrow fills me like the wind does a tree.  
Oh, Lord, the world took me away from you.  
The peas, they are green; the corn, it is yellow.  
The train, it choo-chooed on down the line.  
The fiddle played extraordinaire through the dawn's early light.  
That guitar, she taught me her tune.  
Pawned my guitar for a ticket out of Memphis.  
You say that you love me, but it sure ain't true.  
Your kisses leave me colder than a morning dew.  
Me and my dogs, we howled at the moon all night.

The sun, the moon, they don't care.  
Your beauty, my beast, what a team we make.  
The butler and the maid, they walked up the stairs.  
Green eggs, green ham, cooked extra special fine.  
The sorrow, it don't need more rain.  
Heaven hath no fury like a born-again shrew scorned.  
Thing One, Thing Two, what on earth did you do?  
Hello, goodbye, what does that mean?  
Them hunting dogs missed the coon sleeping in the log.  
Oh, Gabriel, Gabriel, where hast thine horn gone?  
Bit off more than I can chew, and the devil, he's collecting, with interest due.  
Daddy told me, "Run, boy, run, hell hath no fury like your mother scorned."  
Walking along the wave-battered shore left me feeling just right.  
Tunes, more tunes, and even more tunes, set the night ablaze.  
Pass the ham, and then the corn, and then the peas.  
The peas, it was passed after the ham and corn.  
The moon, it made me howl all night.  
Keeping your nose on your own face looks best to me.  
Midnight deflection is nothing more than a reflection in my mind.  
Bluegrass heaven ain't for me.  
This dog day dummy has his sights set on you.  
Dreams follow me home, and you are their queen.  
Perish the thought afore it perishes you.  
The mountains beckon me home so far away.

How a butterfly set me free.  
She left me down and out, and then I met you.  
Sleeping alone, it ain't so bad next to you.  
Country boy, take me home.  
Country girl, take me home.  
Say what you will, home, it be free.  
How sweet the blues are to me.  
Mountains of smoky blue strike my soul true.  
The dream, as long as it is short.  
Don't ask, don't tell, is the best policy for them who would be free.  
That Kentucky moonshine left me feeling mean.  
Letting stupid be stupid surely ain't ever the good Lord's way.  
My girl slammed the door for good last night.  
Drifting down the river set my soul free.  
The smoky green burns well in my mind tonight.  
She held me through the night till the morning light.  
I'd have stayed if I'd known you loved me.  
You came home before I could leave you.  
Today's headlines are tomorrow's sorrows.  
All your promises were the same lies you told her.  
Loyal to all and none, I burned a trail home free.  
When you said you loved me, I believed it all true,  
But it was a from-the-get-go lie I finally saw through.  
Promised you everything, and it was never enough.

Held you close, dear, as close as close allows,  
And still you left me all alone, crying and sighing,  
Before the morning sunlight through the window streamed.

Yet another face in which vanity will find harbor.

It weren't me, babe, it weren't me. I swear my lie through and through.

Left the city for a mountain, and this life, it weren't ever the same.

Sang it true till I met you.

Left you once, left you twice, third time's the charm, unless you call me back again.

Un-caged, flying free, remembering again how little I care.

Only you? I don't think so, kiddo. I'm a dog, a dog through and through.

Believed you when you said it was over, but then the door, it didn't slam.

You love me, I love you, let's say it again to prime it true.

Strumming them chords, he's a bluegrass player.

You knew I was gone before I left.

I knew you were gone before you left.

Ain't killed nobody today, but not for want of thinking about it.

The twang lingers in my mind, and on paper words flow, and then more again.

Another slice of dream tucks me in its seam.

The sneeze that brought the house down.

The wolf blew and blew and blew, and then, voilà, he was stew.

Went home, passed out, woke up next to you.

Never knew how good a good friend could be, till I became good friends with you.

If leaving was the plan, best it was your idea.

The joke, it wasn't funny to me, but I guffawed just the same.

If kisses were sand, we'd be lying on a beach.

Stopped coming by so long ago, when you made it clear I'd never be in your show.

Oh, you're still here? Why? No, don't answer that. Just let the door hit you at least once on the way out.

If you knew how to read my mind, you'd know I'd told you it was over oh so long ago.

Bet you wouldn't treat me this way if I was a rich movie star.

Immortal soul, mortal body, forever young playing the gray.

Bad news, good news, it don't ever feel the same.

Twang, twang, the fiddle sang, the guitar joined in, and then the mandolin.

Say what you will, loving you ain't no crime.

The morning light found me alone and free again.

Sift through the sand, and you'll find my mind.

Can't hear you, and not just because I don't want to.

Hesitate too long and I'll be gone.

They say the good die young, so at least I know I won't ever be as old as you.

Wherever I set this pillow is my home.

I sang your song, now you sing mine.

You'll find me at the end of the long and winding road, through two gates and a door.

The only thing that makes your being gone better is you thought it was your idea.

The ice cracked, and I died.

So long ago you were handsome and bold, but now you're just a couch potato leeching my soul.

The players came and went and found each other anew, happily strumming, happily singing, and the crossing moon never even once noticed.

Roses are red, violets are blue,  
I'll sing a song if you sing one, too.

The happiest rose is the one you never picked.

You said you loved me, but it was just a ploy.  
Now I'm forever ruined, and you think it funny.

I thought you'd be mine, I believed you'd be true.  
Now you're just another scar in my bittersweet mind.  
I won't miss the pain, darling, no, I won't miss the pain.

Dittyfest, dittyfest, higher and higher and higher upon the dittyfest pyre.

I loved you once, I loved you twice,  
But you said with a kiss it would never be enough,  
And left me for a cherry red pickup  
And my former best friend.

Hadn't a clue till I met you.

The song ain't mine, the song ain't yours;  
It belongs to anyone with an ear for verse.

Wandering here, wandering there, the tunes, the tunes, in every cranny, from every nook.

The difference between you and me is just a thought or two or three.

Alone in their own worlds, the players all play along.

Did I leave you? Did you leave me? Can't remember, but we're done-all-done just the same.

Hadn't heard that one before, but it sounded the same.

The morning lark strums the fiddle in my head.

Half-baked ain't bad at all.

A Christmas tree is dying to come home with you.

How sad the song that says you left me.

He was a lamb when his wolf weren't calling.

A tear came, and I was lost again.

The dog howled, the cat yowled,  
And the band played on and on and on,  
Until well past the break of dawn.

I left you, you left me, till we came together again under the old oak tree.

Drifting along, my heart has lost its song.

Forgive me, darling, and I'll be happy again.



“Awesome!” was the last thing she said.

Lawman, lawman, lock me up or get me home, I’ll be drunk just the same.

So far away, so long ago, the show, the show, it changes so.

I said, “Stop, let me be.”

You said, “But I love you!”

And I cried out, “I just want to be free.”

Notes for you, a community true.

Did I fall in love? Did I fall in lust? The difference ain’t that much.

I thought I left you behind, but you followed me home anyway.

The highway ain’t no Yellow Brick Road,  
But it be Oz in the mind a-trucking along.

Heard the call, and ignored it, as I so often manage to do.

You stole my heart, you stole my mind, your kisses, they left me blind.

I said, “Stop, please stop, don’t go, I love you.”

But you slammed the door, drove off with a roar, and I was all alone again.

Grabbed a beer, some chips, turned on the television,

And waited for Kate to stop by.

Mix it up; it ain’t nobody’s song.

Lord, don’t take me yet, I ain’t been laid.

Guess I’ll just stay the same man you left. It’ll probably keep working.

Pieces fall, pieces scatter; rest assured I’m still yours through it all.

Nowhere to go, nothing to be, and no plans to change.

Only birds and fishes and spiders are freer than I.

That weren’t the plan in my head, so I’m moving on. Please resist the urge to follow.

Here tonight, gone tomorrow, enjoy me now in your candlelit nest,

For I’ll be gone before the sun peeks through the garden window.

And then I saw her ring.

I left you, darling, so you’d be free.

Time weaves along in me, along in you,  
So we sing the song, and believe it true.

This little old heart hadn't never felt love till I saw your sweet face.

You locked me out like the dog I am.

Told her I'd love her forever, and then never saw her again to prove it.

Drifters drift on, nice guys hang around.

Who wins, who loses, just a state of mind.

The dog sniffed here, the dog sniffed there.  
The coon slipped away and lived another day.

Sitting here a-listening, it's all music to me.  
The gift of time ain't mine to give  
But for the attention, the reflection,  
I lend your strumming rhyme.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with Mikki Larrick on a "Checking In" email I sent:

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Moi: Haven't heard back from you. Things okay?

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Mikki:

Sorry! I just got back from 9 days in Grass Valley for the bluegrass Festival. Not much party, a whole lot of work! Orchards are planted and we are babysitting the watering. Everyone is fine, getting the garden back on track. Apricots are getting ready. I should have enough to can. Two kids birthday parties this weekend. Going to be hot. I'll send a few pix. Thanks for checking back.

-----

Moi:

Busy-busy! Going to have to take a nap to balance out my universe. Forgot when that bluegrass festival was happening. Probably a few extra daze on both ends for you've since you've joined the management team.

So has my wordy manifesto been of any use to your song-writing efforts?

-----

Mikki:

I haven't had the proper time to go thru them. Brief review shows promise! I'll let you know!

-----

Moi:

No worries, just curious. It was a fun few daze of creativity, and, as always, my first and foremost audience is always myself. Attached is a cover for it.

Glad things are going well. Keep on keeping on.

Ciao, ciao,

M

-----

Mikki:

Cool. Hahaha!

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from Ninos David:

Where German is still spoken in the US

<https://www.dw.com/en/where-german-is-still-spoken-in-the-us/a-49535403>

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Moi:

My mother's ancestors were Brethren stock that migrated out of the pre-revolutionary Pennsylvania zone. Granddad and Grandma Kurtz were from Ohio and Kansas, and were steeped in Christian lore. Mom remembers her grandmother speaking German. When Granddad and Grandma graduated from McPherson College that her father ran in Southern California, they got married, had three girls, and gradually slipped away from the church. They were both teachers, and moved up to Modesto when the girls were still young. According to Mom, they never found any congregation they liked. Granddad was a science professor at Modesto Junior College, so I suspect he didn't have much use for religion long before he graduated from college. Dad and Mom never attended, either, but had my sister and I go for a couple years to a Methodist Sunday school near our suburban home in Hughson. I remember my Dad once said it was so that we would have a sense of a driving force in our culture. When I was seven, we moved out to the peach ranch north of town. Mom asked if I want to keep going to Sunday school, and I said no. Didn't attend anything again until the occasional here and there with a friend during the early college years. As insipid and meaningless to me then as it is now.

Studebaker

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Studebaker>

The German ancestors of the Studebaker family first arrived in the United States at the port of Philadelphia on September 1, 1736, on the ship Harle, from Rotterdam, Holland. They included Peter Studebaker and his wife Anna Margetha Studebaker, Clement Studebaker (Peter's brother) and his wife,

Anna Catherina Studebaker and Heinrich Studebaker (Peter's cousin). Albert Russel Erskines's History of the Studebaker Corporation, recorded that a Peter Studebaker and his father (also named Peter) were taxed in 1798–1799 as wagon-makers. John Studebaker, father of the five brothers who began Studebaker Corporation, was the son of Peter Studebaker Jr.

I think my Grandfather's Kurtz line came from Germany via Switzerland, on the run from Lutheran persecution. Not sure of any details. All European records were lost during the World Wars last century.

\* \* \* \*

A hodgepodge of banterings with Len Howard of Henderson, Nevada, during our online relationship that began through Facebook in 2012. Not in any particular order, and in his case only, my responses only. He many times commented on how much I'd written, and that he was surprised that I wasn't better known, to which my answer is generally a better-someone-else-than-me so it goes. Len passed away at age 82 on April 5, 2018, at Nathan Adelson Hospice. He was born January 3, 1936, in New Jersey, to Morris and Lillian Cohen.

Facebook: Len Howard  
<https://www.facebook.com/lenhoward36>

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Hey, hey, Len,

Thought I'd touch bases and see how things are going these daze. You seem to be hanging pretty regularly online. Still, hopefully, in reasonable health for the sand still wafting away in the hourglass.

As you implied in one of your comments, I've been on the non-caring side of things as far as all things wordy goes. Been a lot more quiet in a good portion of the daily wander. More and more into the Ramana Maharshi approach to the mystery of it all. Writing down all the ditties that have come to mind these last twenty-plus years has been great fun, but there has definitely always been an ebb and flow to the interest level. As Lao Tzu said, "A strong wind does not blow all morning." And right now, this wind is very definitely in low-ebb mode.

Most everything I've written has been posted in one online zone or another. Finally getting down to the dregs in the transcription/editing process. Only four or five hundred pages to go, and relatively few new ditties pumping out in any given day. So, if it has any value to the future – which I think we both agree is not going to be very pretty; certainly not a world to which I'd want to return – I leave it to others to pass it on, or not.

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All I can say is I certainly didn't seek this out. Pretty amazing considering that I didn't even come from a religious background, or any reason to believe or not believe in anything. Quite content from the get-go just to be. Just a small-town farm kid with an orchard out back and a canal across the street. Things just sort of happened – an endless series of adventures here and there that streamed to further adventures there and here – and the words just sort started coming, and kept coming, and keep coming. And believe me, I am in as much awe as you.

Nice being anonymous, though. The thought of being known wherever I go, of being onstage chatting it up with the crowd, or having to put out some polished package, or accidently create some dogma, would

be even more bother than it already is. Fortunately, there are plenty of very insightful people out there who are far more eager than I to do such things. Me, I get to sit in coffee shops and bars, walk beaches, valleys, mountains, city streets, and run occasionally, randomly, into unsuspecting strangers who have eyes to see and ears to hear an anonymous stranger. And then I wander on, still anonymous. It isn't about me. Perfect.

And as far as this body goes, I'm just getting underway in the fourth quarter, and it don't look pretty. My Mom has had several eye operations for cataracts and glaucoma. She's 85, hasn't done much harm to her body, and has good insurance. Me, I ain't got nothing but a decent toss in the genetic lottery. Had one of those radial keratotomies back in the 90's that's gradually going south. The knee is wobbly from a foolish slip off a curb, and the rest of the body is snap-crackle-popping its way to oblivion. The time of time of consequences is underway. Waaaah!

When I think about how things have happened in this life, much of it is because I had no big agenda, no definite calling. Came from unambitious, humble peasant stock – farmers, preacher and teachers is how I've heard us called – and there was nothing I desperately wanted or needed out of life. Everything has generally always come or happened of its own accord, and I tried very hard to participate as fully as possible in what I now call a touchy-feely three-dimensional dream. Though I attempted many times to foster one ambitious mode or another, generally the path of least resistance has been the one most often taken. Accepting whatever was offered or suggested or came to mind if it was at all interesting. Moving on whenever I was done with it, or picking myself up, dusting off and finding another horse if it had tossed me about, which many an adventure has. Nothing really spectacular or extraordinary or at all magical, just a natural-born aimless, relatively anonymous wanderer who somehow, through the quirk of all things mystery, gradually, without fanfare, began the long and winding journey within. If I was young and met myself now, there would likely not be a hint of recognition.

"Woke up again this morning" and "Well enough" are among the pat answers to "How's it going?" these daze.

I figure the final and biggest challenge in life is being content with however it's played out. Looking back it certainly seems like many, many lives were packed into just this one. The rolodex of memories is beyond counting, even with all the ones that have been lost, or so faded as to leave me unsure whether or not they even happened.

-----

No worries. There's so much out there already, so whatever you pass on is good enough. As I've said before, I don't have much ambition for playing the marketing game, so probably the only way it's going to get dispersed is through you and a few others who've found it interesting.

Am slowly fiddling with putting together another book using a good-sized chunk of the 600-page monster I sent you a few weeks ago. Lots of editing to be done, and new stuff still dribbling out daily. It'll probably start off being a downloadable PDF posted on my website and Facebook page like I did with "The Stillness Before Time." Would probably self-publish it through Lulu.com to sell on Amazon.com and other online booksellers once I get it all formatted good and proper.

Eventually, if I last so long, I'll put the whole 3,000-plus page compendium on the Return to Wonder blog for time to do with it what it will. About a thousand pages is already posted in ten-page chapters, though I wouldn't mind re-editing it, too.

The Return to Wonder  
<http://thereturntowonder.blogspot.com/>

Lots more to do before the worms get me, that's for sure. A quiet little hobby while there's breath to do it.

Enjoy the weekend.

Ciao, ciao,

M

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Women are indeed amazing creatures. Often joke about thanking god every day that I was born a man. Many are called, but only half of us are chosen in this genetic lottery. Ergo, beauty parlors, malls, and two-story, five-bedroom mortgage pits. Have attempted a variety of relationships – some of them quite torturous – but never really had a strong call to play out the domesticated life. Women confine you with their many security-oriented limitations is how I've come to see it. No way could I have lived the life I have with a female, kids, a house, and a nine-to-five in tow. Love 'em, but only occasionally, and from a distance.

My approach to existence – without ever having planned it – seems to have been to eat, drink and be merry until it no longer owned me. A drink-wine-eat-chocolate-until-you-puke philosophy. A narcissistic hedonist – as I think we all are, I should note – I did everything, bought everything, imbibed everything, and grabbed for the next vine when I was done. No bucket list because I just did whatever occurred to me to want to do. Free will looking forward, fate looking back.

Heavens and hells or reincarnation or oblivion, I wouldn't really pretend to know – agnostic is the only honest answer in my thinking – though I am inclined to predict it is the latter, that the essence is immortal, but this form is just a one-shot deal. Didn't ask to be here, ain't praying to be staying is my glib answer to it anymore. But if I was offered a return ticket to this theater of the absurd, the only thing I might consider would be to be a sailor capable of going solo around the world, but only after making enough money as a professional hunter-seeker middle linebacker to buy the boat. Mercenary, assassin, and/or spy might also be enticing.

Above, you talked of feeling like a sham at times, but I frankly could say the same. This mystery we're exploring leaves us all somewhat schizophrenic in my thinking. We all get splinters from straddling the fence in our trial-by-fuck-up lives. From what you've shared of your existence, I think you've done some amazing things. You've witnessed all sorts of interesting people, played out all sorts of adventures, enjoyed a fulfilling relationship, and your postings reflect a great deal of insight about it all, so I certainly wouldn't say you've anything to feel a lesser buddha about.

As for my writings being known, it all seems so passé anymore. So many have already said so much, and many much more eloquently. The world at this point is so full of babble that relatively few are inclined to look up from their dumb phones to hear anything true. Perhaps all my jabber only proves how earthbound I am. Consider myself more a peon scribe playing out the Johnny Appleseed template than any full-on buddha. Amusing myself by toying with history, mirage that it is. Have given away hundreds, perhaps thousands of copies of the original work, and everything will be available for free online if I don't get

snuffed out before wrapping things up. Relatively anonymous, no followers, no group, and hardly anyone knows anyone else, so the the potential for dogma is minimized. Yes, I am very much a part and particle of this very laughable nothing-new-under-the-sun absurdity.

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I read "Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance" eight times in ten to fifteen years during the twenties and thirties, and each time it was a new book with parts I had absolutely no recollection reading anytime prior. An amazing, brilliant work by my reckoning. It has often been in my thoughts in the years since. Took it with me on a flight across the country a couple weeks ago, and enjoyed just doing the ye old open-it-up-anywhere-and-start-reading mode. I've decided it's one of my travel books for the foreseeable future. Am not sure why I never sparked with "Lila," but I probably should sit down and give it another go, too.

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They just keep drip-drip-drip coming. All online in one place or another at this writing, to what I-know-not-care-not end only time will tell.

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Regarding "The Stillness Before Time" book published by Lulu:

Lulu: The Stillness Before Time

<http://www.lulu.com/shop/http://www.lulu.com/shop/michael-holshouser/the-stillness-before-time/paperback/product-23266988.html>

Hah! It's been out I'm not sure how many years now, and I'm still anonymous (Thank GOD) and less than \$40 richer. Fortunately, it ain't about the money, or the notoriety. I just like writing and putting together little projects that come to mind. Can't even imagine how many thousands of hours I've spent on it all. What we do with our lives.

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Feel free to share anything you like. I'm not looking to ever make any money on anything I've written. Just tossing it out into the vapor to whatever end.

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I've been told by a few publishers, including Ram Dass's, that this sort of aphoristic thing doesn't really sell well. And me a total unknown, to boot. But if you think your sister-in-law might see it differently, I say send it to her. There's over twenty years worth in the hopper if anybody's interested in tapping into it.

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It's a sad truth that a good dollop of cynicism always cheers me anymore.

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It's a curious thing how seemingly every heterosexual man in the world – me included, of course – has it in their head that they are god's gift to women. It's almost embarrassing anymore to go out to a bar scene, or even a coffee shop, and watch even the greying, fat, bald, and toothless ones playing out their fantasies on the sweet young things, to whom – unless power, fame and fortune are in the mix – they are all but invisible. Life is harsh, boys, get over it.

It's actually something of a relief to be done with the insanity of the brain below the belt line. Put myself in way too many more than foolish situations with some real characters, to put it nicely, and shudder to think what would have happened if the Apollo had ever landed.

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I've been back in the home zone since 2000 so that I could help the parents through their endgame. Dad passed in February last year, and Mom is still going strong. I've been blessed, I can assure you.

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It's that state of mind thing. The dark side only touches you if you let it. But it is interesting to witness the whole show. I have many times wandered Walmarts and other nighttime resorts just to watch the minions of the night. One of my favorite jobs was a six-to-six taxi driver shift up in Chico back in the 90's. A lot of interesting characters out there in the wee hours. No doubt a pretty safe stint compared to one in New York City, but there were a few iffy rides, to be sure. Made it to age fifty-eight, so I'm feeling pretty good about things.

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As for the future of our kind and the world, this is something I wrote recently to an old girlfriend:

I figure the human drama will just continue to get more and more absurd. My guess is that you and I will probably be out of here long before it really hits the wall. Humankind is a cancer that the world, irrevocably changed on its face, will passively abide until we hit the edge of sustainability. Oil is still the most significant factor in my mind, and to keep it flowing at the pace it is, we will do anything and everything possible to tap whatever's left. So who can even begin to accurately predict when what I call the Great Fall will actually come. Malthus was no doubt ultimately right, it's just that our genius at tool-making has thus far always been able to expand the limits, and keep that dike from bursting.

But the apex of what the world offered our plundering nature is undoubtedly behind us, and the human paradigm will at some point, quickly, steeply, harshly decline. I suspect the pandemic so many fear will just be good old starvation. Every dystopian scenario imaginable will likely play out somewhere across the planet. Those who survive, if any do – impossible to be sure mammalian life will even make it with all we've done and are doing to change the balance – will wander the ruins scrabbling in whatever way the given geography allows. Those who currently live as their ancestors did, or quickly rediscover how to work with whatever nature still allows, will persist far longer than those clustered in what we so vainly call civil-ization. Whatever happens, it won't be pretty anywhere is my suspicion.

This is a book I read back in the college years

Earth Abides

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Earth\\_Abides](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Earth_Abides)

And from it the Ecclesiastes 1:4 quote: Men go and come, but Earth abides.

Apocalyptic and Post-Apocalyptic Fiction

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Post-apocalyptic>

Wikipedia: Thomas Robert Malthus

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas\\_Robert\\_Malthus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Robert_Malthus)



Wikipedia: Malthusian Catastrophe

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malthusian\\_catastrophe](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malthusian_catastrophe)

Wikipedia: An Essay on the Principle of Population

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/An\\_Essay\\_on\\_the\\_Principle\\_of\\_Population](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/An_Essay_on_the_Principle_of_Population)

Wikipedia: Human Overpopulation

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human\\_overpopulation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human_overpopulation)

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Not sure what your views on the endgame are, or what you will be open to enduring before you get out of here, but this is a link to a variety of Final Exit articles that I have posted on my Facebook page. My little Kevorkian bit.

Final Exit and Related Links

<https://www.facebook.com/notes/michael-holshouser/final-exit-and-related-links/10151914308010912>

My preference is completely alone at midnight with a helium tank, or my Colt Python with a weight tied to an ankle at the deep end of a pool or lake ... High on something very nirvanic, after a most excellent steak and lobster dinner, a high caliber bottle of Zin, and several shots of something fine whiskey. I aim to be as close to immortality as mortality allows, unless, of course, the seatbelt won't unbuckle and the flames get to me first, in which case, as Bokonon (a.k.a., Kurt Vonnegut) wrote in Cat's Cradle: "Expect a very human performance."

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I do appreciate your passing it on. Guess I call it babble because I've been writing down pretty much everything that comes into mind for the last twenty-plus years. Spend a few hours of most days transcribing and editing, and at this point it all seems sort of enjoyably ho-hum. There are well over three thousand pages worth on the computer at this writing, and several more ditties as I call them often percolate onto paper on any given day. A lot of it is just wordplay as far as I'm concerned, but there are, as you've seen, a fair share of thought-provokers in there, as well.

Haven't quite figured out what to do with it all other than to give it away. This sort of thing isn't especially marketable according to any publishers who've gotten back to me. It's not Harry Potter, I always say. And as I'm a relatively anonymous character by default, it would be very challenging to make a traveling salvation show out of it. Beside which, there are so many high-powered, slick marketing machines out there already, that anything I have to say would be redundant and much less polished.

So, it's become more of a pleasant hobby than anything else. I just post some of it on my home-brewed website, a couple Facebook pages, a few blogs, and then head out for long wanders with index cards and pen in tow.

If you're interested, I'll shoot you a PDF copy of the almost six hundred pages that have bubbled up the last couple years. There's still a lot of editing to do, but you'll be welcome to take a look at it and share anything you like.

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I didn't date much in high school. Less than a handful of times, actually. Too shy at the time. The first time I partied with the peers was graduation night in '72 on our little small-town main street. I was the first date for one who recently contacted me on Facebook. She evidently had quite the crush on me, to which I, of course, was quite oblivious. Told her she was lucky to have met the guy she did. I would have never worked with me. She was a staunch Christian and never left Hughson. Raised three kids, and is as pleasantly parochial as you could imagine.

Anywho, this is what I wrote her when she asked if I'd ever considered marrying and having children:

At some point in the late twenties, I kinda-sorta of thought to myself that if I met someone who I really liked, and they wanted children, I might consider venturing that direction. But I was never very good at settling down for long in a domesticated scene - too many adventures out there calling me this way and that - and at this writing I have absolutely no regrets not bringing innocence into this world with the direction our kind has take it. In fact, I'm quite pleased that I didn't. I have often jokingly said that I love my kids too much to bring them here.

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Last back-and-forth with Len:

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Moi:

Hey, Len,

A fun little graphic on the off chance you haven't seen it, and also the babbleon whoo-hoo since the turn of the year.

Breadcrumbs: The Unfolding Next Round

[http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_52.html](http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_52.html)

Ciao, ciao,

M

[Graphic for Guru U, the online university for wannabe gurus, the most recession-proof job available today]

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Len:

Hey, brother,

You certainly have made up for lost time. First of all; Guru U is a blast. I would love to share it if there was some way you could send it ... it's hysterical. As to the other material ... it's equally as great. They seem to have an interesting "edge", and me, being an edgy guy, appreciates it and will share little gems with my classmates at Guru U. Hope you're well ... whatever that means at this time of life. Of course, I'm older than you, and I don't know at what point a person starts to resent others asking, "How are you?" My latest reply is, "How the hell do I know? I'm not a doctor." This seems to elicit a bit of laughter from

some, but they all are surprised that I don't go any further into my medical report. I figure, if they're lucky, they too will be 80 someday and realize what an insane question that is. Thanks for all this stuff! You're prolific beyond reason. Keep it up.

Ciao,

Len

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Moi:

All I have to say about the snappin' and cracklin' and poppin' anymore is, "This getting old is sure getting old." And what a wearisome thing it is to hang with too many shriveling whiners anymore. I moan and groan enough in my own head without having to hear everyone else's endless patter of woe.

And as far as all them words go, they keep coming of their own accord. I just carry paper and pen, and write 'em down when they bubble into mind. I could stop doing it, but I ain't got nothing better going on, so what the hey, it fills some of the time.

\* \* \* \*

And to wrap it with a good closer from one of the many enjoyable interactions during the six-ish years that Len and I corresponded before his death at age 82. He passed away April 5, 2018, at Nathan Adelson Hospice. He was born January 3, 1936, in New Jersey, to Morris and Lillian Cohen.

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Len:

Michael ... your brilliance will last a lot longer than will we ... I am so happy that you learned the alphabet ... and that you are truly my friend:

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Moi:

Along with a moderate ABC education in small rural town Hughson, California, you can also thank Roland Russell for nonchalantly suggesting in early already mind-shaking college: "Mike, why don't you write poetry; it's kind of fun." There was also a brief stint running the Waterford News early out of college, where I quickly learned to always have pen and paper and camera at hand as I wandered through the small-town metropolis and surrounding countryside searching for newsworthy fare. As for any brilliance, as you call it, it seems to be more about being something of a receiving unit, with the discipline to write down most the things that come to mind, along with a certain knack for word association, coupled nicely with an adroitness with word processing, greatly aided by the spellcheck and thesaurus functions. As to whether what I have written will ever be well known, or make any real difference in the future of humankind, or the welfare of the planet and all our fellow earthlings, I have many doubts and no time machine. A little too late to make the difference I would be seeking, anyway. I am afraid we are a little too whacked out at this stage of the game to turn the Titanic a less toxic direction. So, I have come to consider it an enjoyable diversion that fills some of the existential reverie, and am content that a few people in the here and there like yourself find it interesting.

\* \* \* \*

Len's last post on his Facebook page on March 1, 2018:

I have been weakened beyond the point of reason. It's all I can do to drag my bony ass over to the computer. There is no way to shut the pain off. Tomorrow's MRI should shed some light. Thank you all for your thoughts and well wishes. I can feel them all. May you be eternally blessed. Namaste.

Facebook: Len Howard

<https://www.facebook.com/lenhoward36>

\* \* \* \*

Len's Obituary written by Trinidad Roman:

Len Howard, 82, of Henderson, passed away April 5, 2018, at Nathan Adelson Hospice. He was born January 3, 1936, in New Jersey, to Morris and Lillian Cohen. Who better to tell us about Len's life, then Len, so this is what he wrote:

"It was my wife's idea and over the last half century, her logic has held sway in mutual decisions and so I went with Therese's suggestion. After reading an obituary that I had written at the request of the family of a friend, she came to me with a request. I want you to write your own obit since I wouldn't even know where to begin." Preposterous idea right? But the more I thought about it...well, why not? It really is a shame that far too few people checking out here ever have the chance to say "Goodbye" and to tell those with whom they have shared a little piece of planet Earth, where their head was after this very strange trip we call, "Life." I would like to be brief, but brevity was never a strong point with me. Perhaps that explains why I chose the field of Communication as a vocation. Man's biggest problem has always been his failure to properly communicate, so I gave it a shot. Was it my best shot? Well, sometimes it was and other times I fell short in my own expectations. From my very first job as a "morning radio Disc Jockey in the State of Montana, my mouth took me all the way to New York City, where for two years I held sway at WPIX-FM and enjoyed increasing popularity in that role. At the same time, however, I began to study Eastern Philosophy ... and like most things I tackled in life, I went all the way. Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, taught me how and where to search for who I was when I wasn't busy being me. Their common bond of selflessness being the path to enlightenment intrigued me as it kept pushing me inward. It was the late 60's and that search was shared by many of my peers. We lived communally, meditated and tried experimenting in Ego Death. I mention all these things because they set the scene for what was to become the biggest and most rewarding challenge of my life. In 1970, after being together for seven years, the ex-Dune's dancer and the gypsy disc jockey were blessed with a son who they named, Dylan. He was a special child. So special, in fact, that his brain damage that occurred during the birthing process, was to prevent him from ever taking a step...ever holding a spoon, ever sitting or standing, ever controlling any of his bodily functions. We fought for the right to raise him ourselves and mostly because of his mother's strength and determination were able to 'mainstream him into society." He became our true spiritual guide and gave us infinitely more than that which we could ever provide him. Dylan died in September 1994, two days before his 24th birthday. He enjoyed many things in life from going to Wet-n-Wild, to Rebel basketball games, to which his father owned the rights and for which he did the radio play-by-play. In order to support his rather expensive lifestyle, Dylan's mother and I worked hard to create cash flow. We invested and were principles in several local radio stations, produced programs for Public Television and in his mom's case, stood on her feet for all those years, managing the most successful of the Marshall Russo ladies clothing chain. It all went for Dylan's community support and although leaving us with very little at life's end, was hands down, the most rewarding endeavor of our life as a family. I was not an easy

person to know or to get along with, and for that, I am truly sorry. Although I might not have the right to ask for forgiveness, I do so willingly. I found resisting temptation to be a very difficult challenge and was oft times less than successful. Oddly enough, if given the opportunity would probably make the same decisions. In my later years and because of my Eastern Philosophical experience, I found the correlation between it and Esoteric Judaism of my birth, as they both seemed to dovetail on a much higher level of cosmic consciousness. My heroes have been few, but I kept them close. Therese and Dylan top the list and are followed by Alan Watts and Dr. Timothy Leary. I have had a hand full of close friends in my life for whom I would gladly sacrifice all that I possessed at any given moment, but only a few. I assume my burial will be simple and small and will be officiated by Chabad Rabbi, Mendy Harlig, who, along with his family, became love objects in my later years. So, Therese ... that's what you wanted, that's what you got. I don't believe in the afterlife but if I'm surprised, somehow, I know that you will be by my side. You were so much more than I deserved. May the Tao/Ayn Soph watch over you. I'm reminded of a little pressed flower in a frame that you gave me and I would like to pass it along, "Life is short ... Eat dessert first"."

Len was preceded in death by his parents; and his son, Dylan. He is survived by his wife, Therese; his daughter, Ellen; and grandchildren, Rachel and Noah. Graveside service will be at noon Sunday April 8, 12 pm at Palm Valley View Memorial Park, 7600 S. Eastern Ave., Las Vegas, NV 89123. In lieu of flowers, donations in Len's memory, can be made to the Chabad of Green Valley/Henderson.

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Response to Bart Marshall about his current projects, and how I started writing:

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Moi:

It's been a few years since I read the Bhagavad Gita, so I'll be looking forward to it. Spent some time this morning reading up on the other thinkers you mentioned. Though I hadn't heard of J.J. van der Leeuw, I'm familiar with the Theosophical Society and Krishnamurti, who was one of the early influences in the post-college era. I attended a few of his talks in Ojai in the late 70's, and taught 5th grade a couple years at Oak Grove School after his death in the late 80's. During the second year I finally hit the world-weary wall, and that, coupled with a concussion and fellow teacher giving me a copy of Nisargadatta's "I Am That," reset the course into seer-mode and all the many adventures and writings since.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with author Bart Marshall after contacting him online about a new translation of the Bhagavad Gita he's working on getting published:

Amazon: Bart Marshall

[https://www.amazon.com/Bart-Marshall/e/B00MCJS522/ref=sr\\_ntt\\_srch\\_lnk\\_1?qid=1523803189&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.com/Bart-Marshall/e/B00MCJS522/ref=sr_ntt_srch_lnk_1?qid=1523803189&sr=8-1)

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Moi:

Yo, Master Bart ... What's the word on your Bhagavad Gita book? Been checking every once in a while on Amazon, and still no luck ... Hope all's well, or at least well enough.

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Bart:

Hey Michael, I have several books backlogged, including the Gita, because I'm going probably going to switch publishing strategies. In the meantime, I'd be glad to send you a PDF copy if you like. What's your email?

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Moi:

Perfect, thanks. My email is mjholshouser@gmail.com. Challenging to know how to put things out there nowadaze. What are some of the others you're working on?

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Bart:

Hey Michael,

Here's the Bhagavad Gita PDF. Three of the others are existing books/letters I've edited into new versions, one is my own story/essays, and one is a book I've helped a friend of mine write. (He's coming tomorrow for a week so we can record an audio book of it.) I'll attach a page of cover drafts I have for them. Thanks for your interest!

Bart

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Moi:

Yay! It's been a while since I've read the Gita, so I'm looking forward to the clarity you bring to such things.

What sort of publishing strategies are you looking at?

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Bart:

Looking at lots of things right now. I think I want to move off CreateSpace, and I need to consider the audio book distribution aspect now that I'm starting to do that. There's a lot of new options since I last researched it.

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Moi:

Just finished the first two chapters. Bam! You've nailed it. Definitive is the word. Congrats.

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Bart:

Thanks, Michael. I'm glad it's hitting home for you. You probably don't need me to mention this, but please don't share it with anyone. Things have a way of ending up on the internet and I would like to make a few bucks from it when finally published. :) Thanks!

-----  
Moi:

No worries, I appreciate your trusting me with it. Really great reading it again. The clarity and strength of your translation deeply resonates, as it has with your other works. I am especially fond of your interpretations of the Ashtavakra Gita and Tao Te Ching. Whether or not they make bank, they are all admirable gifts to whoever the mystery is aligning to awaken.

Have pretty much chosen just give away my stuff because I'm not energetic enough to market it. Published the original 50-ish page work using Lulu, and am wondering if you think CreateSpace might be a better option if I can ever manage to rekindle some ambition.

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Bart:

Thanks again, Michael. Those are my two favorites, as well. Yes, CreateSpace is fairly easy to use and plugs right into Kindle and the Amazon sales channel. I am just considering something more independent now that my title list is growing and I'm adding audio books. I may end up just staying with them, however, and distribute audio books another way.

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Moi:

So many things to choose from anymore. It was so much easier when there were just three black and white channels, and you could look under a hood and see the engine.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with author Bart Marshall after discovering an email in the draft section that I thought at been sent ages before:

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Moi:

A Long Overdue Email

Bart!

Just discovered an email in my drafts that I thought I'd sent ages ago. In it, I said your translation of the Bhagavad Gita is spot on, and Verses Regarding True Nature is a classic for whatever ages are ahead in this human dreamtime. One Hundred Two Haiku inspired the My (Not Quite) Haiku verses below.

I see on Amazon you've got some other stuff I need to look into. Many thanks for all the good work you've put out there. Your knack for catching the essence of so many of history's seers is an amazing

talent.

Hope all is well enough.

Regards,

M

MY (NOT QUITE) HAIKU

Hot coffee on lips and tongue,  
steams the glasses, too.  
I draw another sip.

A garbage truck roars  
down the rutted street,  
Its wake swirling spring dust.

Strolling down the sidewalk,  
An oblivious youth passes a landscaper  
intently mowing a strip of lawn.

In my patio, typing away,  
A lone dove quietly feeds on seed  
Scattered maybe an hour ago.

Ninos said I should give him something.  
A dilemma, until I finally found something  
He didn't already have.

John Williams in my ears.  
A soundtrack to the universe  
dancing and prancing all about.

On good and moderate days, I agape all things.  
On an ill-tempered day, well,  
let us not go there.

You want my love?  
Then you must share it  
with the rest of the mystery.

When was it I stopped crying?  
When I saw the universe  
for the dream it is.

This moment  
is all I could ever imagine



letting go.

Three joggers pass by,  
minding the social distancing  
marking this modern time.

Drifting down the river of time,  
I wonder at its mystery  
And the falls ahead.

Can any cloud be more dark  
than the stoical cynicism I bear  
towards the dream dancing in my mind?

Sometimes I laugh hard and long.  
Whether with or at,  
I'm not telling.

The mailman cometh.  
Netflix, bills, and all sorts of throwaways.  
Santa Claus in blue.

The universe is an ever-mutating show of quantum design  
How it came to this, how it continues on,  
Only fools imagine knowing.

What is there to transcend,  
When the moment from which awareness peers,  
Is every figment you could yearn to be.

A long life.  
So many agonies, so many ecstasies.  
A new day underway.

At the sink, eyes closed,  
I brush well-worn teeth.  
What an immensity, that chasm.

P.S. It occurred to me you might not recognize my email; it's been a few years.

Michael Holshouser

The Stillness Before Time  
<http://thestillnessbeforetime.com/>

-----

Hey. Michael,

Good to hear from you, and thank you for the kind words about my books. Your haiku are wonderful. I love that form. In my writing these days I am nearing completion of a memoir/teachings book (finally), and am about 2/3 of the way through creating a new version of the Bible, the King James Reader's Version. I've been chipping away at it for three years and it will probably take one more to finish. Not sure exactly why I tackled it, except that I seem to have been "told" to do it. :)

All is very well here, thanks, and I hope the same for you.

Bart

-----

Moi:

Always interesting the creative enterprises each of us feels inclined/inspired/driven to mold into some sort of reality. Definitely a mystery in the mystery. I'm thinking your taking on the Bible is probably the most ambitious of all the translations you've done. Maybe you'll root out a nondualistic message I've never discerned in Middle Eastern lore. Wasn't raised with any hardcore religious catechism, so I've been able to study anything and everything with a relatively detached eye. Seems to me as though Judaism, Christianity, and Islam were all corrupted by a sense of separation from the source, which just doesn't work for me in any way, shape, or form.

My vague assumption from the bits and pieces of history that I've read is that the division began with Zoroaster of Ancient Persia, but I will easily stand corrected. I consider the Bible a historical document, of sorts, but it ultimately just one of the countless narratives – none really any greater or lesser – human minds have concocted since cognition/imagination blossomed in the frontal lobe. Boggling how many deities, how many heavens and hells, how many fearful delusions, our ancestors have invented and worshipped since migrating from the jungles of long ago.

Anywho, good luck with getting it done and out there in the near soon. Maybe with your insightful vision, it will become the new standard for biblical studies, and more enlightening than the history in this mind has thus far traveled.

-----

Bart:

Yeah, I'm not much for religion of any kind—Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity... But the core books of these traditions have had an incalculable influence on humanity and history, and none more so than the Bible. All I do with the texts I translate is try to help them say what they intend to say as clearly and directly—and hopefully poetically--as possible, thus precluding the need for commentary and preaching. It is my hope that my translations speak directly to the reader without the need for "expert" interpretation. The Bible is in sore need of this. Working with it does not imply belief, anymore than translating Bhagavad Gita implies acceptance of the caste system.

I'm attaching a PDF of my "Ecclesiastes" if you're interested in seeing what I'm up to...

-----

Moi:

Yes, the core books, well translated for serious inquiry, are all that matter. Religion is what middlemen do.

Thanks for the PDF. Of the few books I've read in the Bible, Ecclesiastes is my favorite.

-----  
Moi:

Just watched your interview with Conscious TV ... Great articulation of your journey.

Can't seem to access the BATGAP interview, even though I'm on their mailing list. Will try again another time.

-----  
Moi:

Just found you on Youtube.

-----  
Moi:

Another thing I meant to tell you way back when in that unsent email, was that in your Bhagavad Gita translation, the 14.9 verse seems to be missing. You may have already corrected it in more recent editions, but just in case.

In the Penguin Classic version by Juan Mascaro, it reads:

Satva binds to happiness; Raja to action; Tamas, overclouding wisdom, binds to lack of vigilance.

-----  
Bart:

You are right, Michael. I just checked. Don't know how that happened. I will correct that in the file, and may in fact re-publish because of it. Thanks!

-----  
Moi:

Happy camping.

-----  
Moi:

Yo, Bart,

Have really enjoyed reading your Ecclesiastes translation. As usual, spot on. Thanks for sharing,

Not that I am any expert on grammar and such – much of my enjoyment of writing is learning how little I know – but I spotted a few things I might do differently. Would you be okay with me sending you some notes?

M

-----

Bart:

I would love that, Michael. Thank you. I really appreciate you taking an active interest!

-----

Moi:

What you're doing, what you've already done, is so amazing, I don't mind contributing some time to its being everything you want it to be.

-----

Bart:

Thanks so much, Michael. I truly appreciate it.

-----

Moi:

The Book of Ecclesiastes Edit

Hey, Bart,

Here are those grammar thoughts, done in red, both pasted below and in an attached PDF.

Commas are my favorite grammar challenge; one of those mysteries of the English language that everyone sees differently. I probably lean toward the use-as-many-as-you-can camp. Writing has been a huge enjoyment in this existence, but I make no claims about being any sort of linguistic expert, so don't take my word on anything.

The verse numbers in red are formatting that seems to need a slight realignment. Son of David seems to be somewhat inconsistent in his approach to it, but who really knows how things were linguistically two thousand-plus years ago. History is always interesting, but filled with so many different perceptions that it becomes incredibly absurd to argue over anything even done a few seconds ago.

Keep up the good work. You call it taking orders, I call it a hobby. Same difference, methinks.

Ciao, ciao,

M

P.S. For your amusement:

Breadcrumbs: The Unfolding Next Round

[http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_52.html](http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_52.html)

## Chapter Two

2:12

So, I decided to look directly at wisdom, and madness, and folly.  
Else, what further can a man do after he's become king,  
other than more of that he has done before.

## Chapter Three

3:16

Moreover, I saw that in the places where there should be justice,  
there is wickedness, and in places where there should be righteousness,  
there is wickedness there as well.

3:22

Therefore, I perceived that there is nothing better for a man  
than to rejoice in his own works each day. That is his portion.  
For who can say what might come after this?

## Chapter Four.

4:2

Therefore, I deemed the dead, who have already died,  
more fortunate than the living, who are yet alive.

## Chapter Five

5:2

Do not be rash with your mouth, nor hasty in your heart  
to utter things before God. God is in heaven and you are on earth,  
therefore, let your words be few.

5:17

What profits a man for all his chasing after wind,  
if all his life he eats in darkness, fear, sorrow and wrath?

## Chapter Six

6:5

Moreover, he has never seen the sun, nor ever known anything.  
Therefore, he has greater rest than the living,

#### Chapter Seven

7:14

In the day of prosperity be joyful. In the day of adversity,  
remember that God sends one as well as the other.  
No man can know what comes next for him.

#### Chapter Eight

8:6

A wise man's heart discerns the right time and the right way,  
for to every purpose there is right timing and right action.

8:7

Man's ignorance of this brings him great misery,  
for he knows not what shall be, or when it shall come.

8:13

and that it shall not be well for the wicked because they do not fear God.  
Though their days may be prolonged, they shall be lived in shadow.

8:15

So, I commend mirth, because a man has no better thing on earth,  
than to eat, drink, and be merry.  
That shall sustain him for all the days God gives him under the sun.

#### Chapter Nine

9:6

Also, their love, and their hatred, and their envy has perished.  
They shall no more have a portion in anything under the sun, forever.

-----

Bart:

Hey Michael,

Thank you! My use of commas is generally more sparing than yours, and sometimes tends to be in the service of rhythm and breath. In the case of the “therefore”s they create a pause where I don't want one. But I have inserted several of your suggestions, basically, the “moreover”s, which actually do need the pause. The seemingly offset verse numbers are because I sometimes chunk the text into visual verses that bridge or break the actual verses. The numbers are in the correct spot but just don't look it. Good eye to catch that!

Again, thank you so much for your active interest. I truly appreciate it!

Bart

-----

Moi:

Did a scholar really find an early copy of the Ten Commandments?

<https://www.livescience.com/early-ten-commandments-biblical-text-claim.html>

-----

Moi:

Whenever you get to it, please send me your rendition of the missing Bhagavad Gita 14.9 verse so I can insert it in my copy.

-----

Bart:

Will do, Michael. I'm almost finished the memoir/teachings book and will get to it right after, while I let the book age before final edit.

-----

Moi:

Sounds good.

-----

Bart:

Hey Michael,

Here's Gita 14.9. Thanks for noticing and giving me a heads up it was missing.

The force of goodness  
binds one to happiness and contentment.  
The force of passion  
binds one to desire and activity.  
The force of ignorance  
obscures knowledge, and binds one to illusion.

Bart

-----

Moi:

Excellent! Thanks!

-----

Moi:

Re: Becoming Vulnerable to Grace: Strategies for Self-Realization

Mission accomplished! Congrats!

-----

Moi:

Man, what an existence you've played out! Full as it's been, my story is tepid in comparison.

-----

Bart:

It's been interesting, for sure. Still is ... :)

\* \* \* \*

A couple back-and-forths with Joseph McMahon of Bayside, New York, after friending me on Facebook:

-----

Joseph:

Hi Michael, really enjoying your writings ... resonating ... lovely pointings ... Thank you for your friendship.

-----

Moi:

Thanks, and welcome aboard.

-----

Joseph:

Hi Michael,

I am reading through your writings in 'The Pondering of Yaj Ekim' and I must say, it is quite lovely. It is a very deep seeing written with a simplicity that only clarity could make possible in writing about such things. What you write about resonates very profoundly with me. I know exactly what you are saying and am 'with' you every word along the way.



I know what you have come to know and see what you have come to see, but it seems like, here, the 'fan blade is still slowly spinning to a stop' after the plug has been pulled.

I love the simplicity and profundity of your writing. What you point to is mind-boggling and yet simultaneously no-mind says nothing is happening. There is no mind to be boggled. How does one speak of these things? I think you have found a beautiful way.

-----  
Moi:

I like your fan blade analogy. It's been an interesting process. Could turn off the tap, but then thoughts keep a-bubbling into mind in the here and there, and I enjoy writing enough to always have pen and paper at the ready. So, no end in sight for the time-being. Thanks for the thoughts.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with Joseph McMahon on an article I sent:

-----  
Moi:

Here's an article I think you'll appreciate:

Awakening from the Autobiographical Self

<https://theheartofconsciousliving.wordpress.com/2015/08/21/awakening-from-the-autobiographical-self/>

-----  
Joseph:

Hi Michael, funny, I've been sitting here reading your book for the last half hour ... really loving it ... I'll take a look at the link when I get home ... Thank you!

-----  
Moi:

Sitting in my neighborhood Starbucks transcribing yesterday's ramblings. Putting together an updated PDF of this year's babble for the website titled, 'The Unfolding Next Round' – Over 400 pages, so far. Will send you the link when it's up and running.

-----  
Joseph:

Ha! I'm in my neighborhood Starbucks, too! A lot of discernment and contemplation/peace can be had in the busy marketplace for a quiescent mind ... I look forward to the link.

-----  
Moi:

A friend turned me onto Denny's, Sambo's, Hobo Joe's, and the like, back in early college, and coffee shops have been my forum ever since.

-----

Joseph:

There is something about being in the midst of activity and being thought-free simultaneously ... this is why I really enjoy your writings ... you seem to be able to express it ... I can't ... at least not yet ... I seem to have landed in a sort of emptiness ... I can appreciate the movement of mind but I'm drawn to the non-movement of mind ... and then, what is left to say.

Moi:

Wake up ... fall asleep ... wake up ... fall asleep ... is how it is for me. I go back and forth between the time-bound and the timeless like a ping pong ball. That's why the articulation keeps simmering. Haven't quite hit that point where I'm ready to play Buddha in a park, or stare at a wall all day.

Joseph:

Hi Michael, sounds familiar ... I call it a non-abiding awakening ... it feels like one can only go just so far and then something else has to sort of take over and finish it off ... surrendered ... living in both worlds ... today was 4th of July and we had company ... I was keenly aware of both the concept of 'July 4th' and the non-existence of it throughout the day while interacting with family and friends ... it just doesn't feel 'finished' yet here.

Just finished reading the link you sent me ... very clear and succinct ... yes, the 'new' awakened voice bantering in the head as the new 'me' ... another layer of the onion to peel.

-----

Moi:

Consciousness is a beast that will not easily die ... Happy, oh happy, 4th of July.

Last night's dittyfest while picnicking solo, waiting for the fireworks at the nearby university to begin.

## LEFTOVERS

If you had but eyes, your universe would be but sight.  
If you had but an ear, your universe would be but sound.  
If you had but a mouth, your universe would be but taste.  
If you had but a nose, your universe would be but smell.  
If you had but skin, your universe would be but touch.  
And what would your universe be with but a mind?

\* \* \* \*

It is eyes that create light and shape and color.  
Ears, sound; tongue, taste; nose, smell; flesh, touch.  
What would your universe, your world, be

With even one less, much less all.

\* \* \* \*

The mind ever tries to control the what is, but it never can, never has, never will,  
Because the space-time born of consciousness is not real,  
Never has been, will never be.

\* \* \* \*

The world will do everything it can  
To drag you back to its illusion  
Inspired by your delusion.

\* \* \* \*

What is an eclipse but one relatively large piece of orbiting dust  
Getting between another relatively large piece of dust and a nuclear-powered flashlight.  
Yet another relatively inflated example of much ado about nothing  
In the relativity of the human absurdity.

\* \* \* \*

Humankind's domestication of this garden world  
Is but a relatively temporary reign.  
Darwin will rise again.

\* \* \* \*

Nothing really matters,  
Nothing really does not matter,  
Matter being what it is, and what it is not.

\* \* \* \*

What some call negativity, pessimism, skepticism, doubt, cynicism,  
To the rational mind of the critical thinker, is merely the way it is.

\* \* \* \*

hierophant | 'hī(ə)rə, fant |  
noun

a person, especially a priest in ancient Greece,  
who interprets sacred mysteries or esoteric principles.

## SOUNDBITES

How many so-called great warriors have never fought the greatest battle within?

\* \* \* \*

What a great deal of work it takes to do nothing well.

\* \* \* \*

How much does imagination require to see it is but an illusion?

\* \* \* \*

How focused ambition must be in order to fulfill great desire.

\* \* \* \*

A few deep breaths can inspire greater courage than any set of neuron sparks.

\* \* \* \*

How can you imagine any speculation but less true?

\* \* \* \*

All that gluttony and you're still hungry!?

\* \* \* \*

To a true believer, it really matters, and woe unto those who differ.

\* \* \* \*

True contentment is being at peace with the everything that is nothing all the while.

\* \* \* \*

Layers of subtlety are the hallmark of a sage's thinking.

\* \* \* \*

What is death but a dream forever extinguished.

\* \* \* \*

Desire will carry on for as long as you are driven mad by its siren call.

\* \* \* \*

You are the quantum breeze.

\* \* \* \*

Is that all? Seriously!?

\* \* \* \*

Consciousness an insatiable beast that will not easily die.

\* \* \* \*

No projection of imagination, no matter how lucid, how fearless, has ever been real.

POSSIBLE TITLES

A Rumor of Existence

\* \* \* \*

Lives of Pain

\* \* \* \*

The Time-Bound Mind

\* \* \* \*

The Human Absurdity

\* \* \* \*

Quantum Breeze

\* \* \* \*

The King's Whore

\* \* \* \*

The Queen's Whore

BREADCRUMBS

The ability, the courage, to walk up to total strangers and start a conversation,  
Was a talent that Lyle displayed again and again to his shy friend.  
It was but an ember when he departed so very young;  
A gift parlayed in many ways ever since.

\* \* \* \*

I have worked very hard to do nothing.

\* \* \* \*

Christine once called me a hierophant:  
A person, especially a priest in ancient Greece,  
Who interprets sacred mysteries or esoteric principles.

\* \* \* \*

There was an epoch to witness, to write,  
And disperse across the planet in the many ways  
This contemporary dreamtime offered.  
This is what I was born to do.  
How utterly amazing  
To have been given the opportunity.

-----

Joseph:

Great stuff ... I like the last paragraph ... I think it may be true.

I just added you to a group I started several months ago. I think you will find it interesting. It's only purpose is to point to silence as a doorway to what the Sages are pointing to – the thought-free state of no-mind. There's a pinned post that explains the guidelines if you would like to post something... otherwise, it's just worthwhile to enjoy the quotes.

-----

Moi:

Not sure how the group thing works nowadaze on Facebook. Just found a page full of invites I'd never spotted before. Does the one you started have a name an/or link?

-----

Joseph:

'Maha Mauna' (Great Silence)

-----

Moi:

Not finding it on my group invite list. Maybe get me the link.

Just uploaded the PDF of this year's first six months.

The Unfolding Next Round (Updated Quarterly)

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/theunfoldingnextround.pdf>

-----

Joseph:

It's funny, it's saying 'something went wrong' and cannot add you right now ... who knows ... I'll try again later or you can just search for the group 'Maha Mauna'.

Thanks for the link to your next upload ... I'll take a look.

-----

Moi:

Found it and accepted the request. Had left off the (Great Silence) part when I was searching before.

Maha Mauna (Great Silence)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/166379210455377/>

Looks good, thanks!

-----

Joseph:

You may find inspiration for future topics/writings ... very respectful group ... no bickering or debating ... not even dialoguing ... it's a private group and I just invite people I think might appreciate it ... enjoy.

-----

Moi:

Ever run across this one?

Sarlo's Guru Rating Service

<http://web.archive.org/web/19991128202942/www.globalserve.net/~sarlo/Ratings.htm>

-----

Joseph:

No, I don't think I've seen this one ... I saw one similar to it though ... I think it was called Guru Ratings?

It says that the search function was 'discontinued' ... that makes it a little difficult to navigate.

-----

Moi:

Haven't looked at Sarlo's site for quite a while. He covers a lot of ground. Lots of names of all the players, plus and minus. There might be some other websites out there doing the same thing, but this is the only one I'm aware of.

What's amazing is how much of this sort of thing is out there, which is the big reason I don't put any big effort on pushing my stuff. Whatever redeeming value it has will have to grow its own legs. The proof is in the pudding, so to speak.

In case you haven't seen it, this was one of the many things put together when I was a full-fledged Facebook junkie in the not too long ago. Links to all sorts of things if you scroll down the timeline a bit.

Michael's Little Warehouse of All Things Amusing, Absurd & Profound

[http://www.facebook.com/note.php?note\\_id=390323775911](http://www.facebook.com/note.php?note_id=390323775911)

-----

Joseph:

Thanks Michael, I thought I saw it a while back but I'll take another look.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with Joseph McMahon on a follow-up to a previous conversation:

-----

Moi:

Hey, Joseph, a little edit on one of the above:

The universe is a quantum matrix; a timeless, indivisible, indelible, vibratory theater.

Every life form has its own unique relationship with its enigmatic mystery.

In humankind, it is through the eyes that the mind discerns light;

Ears, sound; tongue, taste; nose, smell; flesh, touch.

What would your cosmos, your world, be,

With even one or two or three less, much less all.

-----

Joseph:

Hi, Michael, when I first read this (in your book?) I felt the last sentence was a little awkward for me to read – even though this may not be what you changed ... when I reread the last sentence, I whispered to myself at the end of the sentence ‘What would your cosmos, your world be, with with one or two or three less, much less all (of these)’.

The writing is consistent with your ability to speak about the unspeakable (which I truly enjoy).

-----

Moi:

Scroll up a bit. It was a rewrite of one that I wrote a few nights back at the 4th of July fireworks show.

-----

Joseph:

Okay yes, I see it ... you expanded on it a bit.

-----

Moi:

This sort of thing blurs together. Can't imagine trying to even get through the just over 4,800 pages that have drip-drip-dripped out in the last not quite 30 years, much less remember where anything is located.

-----

Joseph:

I don't know how you do it. You definitely have a talent for it.

-----

Moi:

Whether it be writing, music, painting, dance, architecture, science, athletics, cooking, war, or any other art, we are all receiving units for whatever calls us, is how I've come to see it. And for some, it's just a bar stool or a couch.

-----

Joseph:

Yes, I agree, I feel the urge to share but I also intuit that it's not quite done yet ... the understanding is not abiding ... the problem with this orientation though, is that one may keep saying this until they drop the body ... this is the rub with waiting to be ‘done’ ... no end to seeking the ‘finish’ line.

-----

Moi:



If there is a finish line, will you know when you pass it? Or care?

-----

Joseph:

No, the finish line will evaporate with the irreversible abundance ... One doesn't know that one does or doesn't know ... Or cares.

-----

Moi:

It never having been a race or contest of any sort, but more of a conundrum that required no solution.

-----

Joseph:

Yes, I'm playing with the idea that maybe I'm just playing (as the Self) ... I usually just wind up in silence when I contemplate waiting or manifesting... even though I recognize that 'I' 'do' nothing ... a conundrum indeed.

-----

Moi:

Sometimes we are a human being playing Self, and other times Self playing a human being.

An article my cousin Steve sent:

Generation wealth: how the modern world fell in love with money

<https://www.theguardian.com/global/2018/jul/08/generation-wealth-how-the-modern-world-fell-in-love-with-money>

And my response:

The road of excess leads to the palace of wisdom. You never know what is enough until you know what is more than enough ~ William Blake

BrainyQuote: Greed

[https://www.brainyquote.com/search\\_results?q=greed](https://www.brainyquote.com/search_results?q=greed)

-----

Joseph:

Yes, I can see (in my own experience) how it can feel like that when the mind is moving ... and yet silence does not admit of anything whatsoever... I seem to have touched something beyond all language, all ideas, all movement of mind, and it is difficult for me to entertain any ideas that I know what this display is.

It sounds worse than it actually is ... when the fear that arises when the mind is stopped ceases ...

then this no-mind can be touched and there is not such a strong attachment to move with the movement of mind ... But this can feel sort of empty ... dead one moment, blissful the next.

-----

Moi:

I can't imagine that we all don't have moments where we're more attuned than others. The trick is not to bother about it. As Krishnamurti used to say, if you find yourself not paying attention, pay attention to the inattention. A couple favorite Rumi quotes: Out beyond ideas of wrong-doing and right-doing, there is a field. I will meet you there. When the soul lies down in that grass, the world is too full to talk about. Language, ideas, even the phrase each other, doesn't make any sense. And the other: You are not a drop in the ocean. You are the entire ocean in a drop.

Off to the gym for some pool time. Good chatting. Ciao, ciao.

-----

Joseph:

Peace, thanks for the dialogue.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with Facebook connection Joseph T. McMahon:

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Joseph:

Hi Michael. I'm thumbing through your 'Stillness Before Time' book. I really enjoy coming back to it now and then. I have a question for you. I can't find myself. I don't just mean as a mental understanding or conclusion. The felt sense of 'I am' has been gone for a few years. There is no mental or physical sense of self – though certainly the play goes on; like 'my' typing this to 'you'. I've been struggling to stay grounded (be still) while things settle. But it doesn't feel like things are settling. It feels more like being on a row boat without paddles in the middle of the sea. The sea will never be a pond. Have you experienced this on your journey? I ask because I feel that there is a different tone when one's felt sense of self disappears along with the understanding. So, one can have the understanding but still have a felt sense of self or 'I am'. Less disorienting, I sense. When both disappear, there is nothing to hold onto. I don't know what I expect to hear back from you for asking this. I guess it just wants to be asked of you.

-----

Moi:

Pondering a response. Likely some in-the-world-not-of-it-in-the-world-of-it blend. Every moment its own as-the-world-turns-don't-worry-be-happy adventure. Will get back to you soon.

-----

Joseph:

Thank you ... feels like 'Free' but can't 'know' it ...

-----

Moi:

I think only in pure awareness can we even consider ourselves free, and the irony/paradox is that you don't even know it, don't even care about it. Consciousness (a.k.a., imagination) is a perpetual trap, no matter how it plays. Is there free will, or simply being free of will? Most of us do not live in caves, so it is hard not to be drawn back into the illusion/delusion as long as the awareness inhabits any given body. And does it matter, really? I imagine even the so-called Buddha must have slipped off the razor's edge more than a few times daily.

I certainly make no claims to being any sort of master in this soiree. The fact that I babble on and on proves how often I am sucked back into playing the dream real. A woman I knew back in the Chico daze said I was a hierophant, which seemed as accurate as anything else I've come up with.

hierophant | 'hī(ə)rə, fant | noun a person, especially a priest in ancient Greece, who interprets sacred mysteries or esoteric principles.

Wikipedia: Hierophant

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hierophant>

-----

Joseph:

Yes, there's no line. No distinctions, yet ... then words fail ... I like your babbling ...

-----

Moi:

It's been an interesting part of the last thirty years.

-----

Joseph:

Yes, 'I' get hooked into stories and yet I see it all from some other level/non-localized place and that one that sees all is not an I. Crazy and frustrating to talk about.

-----

Moi:

The challenge is not to torment your Self over it.

-----

Joseph:

I was just typing this when I saw what you just wrote: The frustration is that there is an 'I' that says there's no 'I' and it's right!

-----

Moi:

Here's a blog link to this year's babble since June:

The Unfolding Breadcrumbs 2019

[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_52.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_52.html)

-----

Joseph:

Thanks Michael. I'll take a look when I get home.

-----

Moi:

And the PDF of the first six months of 2019: Breadcrumbs 2019 (First Six Months).pdf

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Joseph:

Thank you!

-----

Moi:

Enjoy, and go easy on your Self as much as possible: No goals, just process. As I recall Krishnamurti saying, when you find you are not paying attention, pay attention to the inattention.

-----

Joseph:

I remember a few years back I had just come back from the store and my wife asked me where I was and I couldn't understand the question. I said "I'm here." When I heard the words come out of my mouth I thought "that can't be right ... why can't I feel like I was somewhere else?" Time, location, the story of 'me' has never been the same. It's like I'm waiting for something to click or for a last piece of a jigsaw puzzle to fit into place. Been waiting about 5 years. Doesn't look good. Sorry, now I'm babbling. Thanks for listening. It's good to have someone to reach out to once in a while when one starts slipping to one side of the other of the razor's edge (as you put it). Someone who knows I'm not crazy.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with Facebook connection Joseph T. McMahon:

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Moi:

Hey, Joseph, long time no write, not spending much time on Facebook these daze, just remembered your group page, posted some of my links on it, how's life at your end?

Maha Mauna (Great Silence)

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/166379210455377/>

Hope that's okay, by the way. Just read your rules of engagement in the About section, and not sure doing what I did fits.

Looks like you've built up quite a following.

-----

Joseph's comment to the post:

Michael is someone whose depth of spiritual insights has influenced his writings in a way that is refreshing and unique. The PDF is free to download and I recommend it.

-----

Moi:

Thanks for the blurb. PDF's on everything, no charge.

-----

Joseph:

Hi Michael, it's a funny thing about creating a group about Mauna (Silence). I also have another group called The Embodiment of Silence – and I can't really share anything that feels authentic – because it seems that talking about it tends to take one away from it. I have had a very profound shift – which I wouldn't even call an awakening because that word seems to me to mean an 'intellectual and conceptual' understanding these days. Something shifted at the core which left the ability to reference it to the thing that would reference itself 'transparent'. I have a lot to say but no way to say it. When I read what I just wrote, I see why I can't write about it. The stillness and silence of thought-free beingness continues to deepen and shine of itself more brightly nevertheless...

-----

Moi:

Sounds like you're on the right track to me. Yay if you are able to give yourself over to it completely. I only keep writing because the thoughts keep coming, and it's a pleasant diversion/distraction/hobby. Whether or not it will ever take wing, I have absolutely no clue, or concern. As for your writing down something eventually, who knows what might come to mind or not before your window of time is done.

-----

Joseph's Post on his Facebook Page:

Facebook: Joseph T. McMahan

<https://www.facebook.com/joseph.t.mcmahan>

WHAT CAN BE SAID?

Anything I might say to affirm or deny any aspect of experience would be imagination. Any description I could give you would be imagination. The absolute stillness of being, unmoving, neither for nor against anything at all, imagining nothing at all, resting in the Peace of thought-free being, is all that is known.

Not imagining life as an experience happening to an entity. Not imagining concepts of infiniteness, silence or formlessness. Nor concepts of duality and non-duality. Neither having experience, nor not having experience.

Just a still-point. A sweet-spot of thought-free pure being. The Peace beyond all understanding – and all description. In That, there is no understanding, because there is no one to ‘imagine an understanding’ of anything. Mind stilled beyond an imaginer.

-----  
Moi:

Seems spot on to me.

As far as words can take it, anyway.

-----  
Joseph:

It seems that at the end of the day, the truth is – there is no truth – that can be put into words. It’s a private experience for the 'no-self' Self, which is the same as saying that it is an experience for no-one. Therefore, it cannot even be said to be private. So much for words describing what can't be described. I think I would like to write about it nonetheless, but I rarely feel satisfied with descriptions after I write them. On occasion I do feel that I have written something that goes, as you say, "as far as words can take it". I like to write and I feel a maturing in my writing as more clarity comes from resting thought-free. So oddly, the less thoughts (i.e., words) I have, the more words come. Forcing it from above the neck doesn't work at all, and I am never satisfied with that type of writing when I do that. Lately, I have realized that my best writing happens when I really haven't said anything at all. When I use the word formless I haven't really given it a shape; when I say it is silent, I haven't given it a sound, when I say it is unlocalized, I haven't said where it is/isn't, when I say it is borderless, I haven't given it a size, etc. I realized not too long ago that every description a sage gives – is really no description at all, as such. Where will one find this thing with no shape, size, location, etc? I am sometimes accused of thinking I know what 'This' is in non-dual communities and I ask them "what have I really said?" Its really quite funny when one thinks about it.

-----  
Moi:

The mind is drawn to silence, to stillness, to eternity, but churns on and on.  
Despite all assertions to the contrary, consciousness doesn't really want to let go  
Of its imaginary time and space creation.

Here it is again, a little more polished for posting:

The mind is drawn to silence, to stillness, to eternity, but churns on and on.  
Despite all assertions to the contrary, consciousness does not really want to let go

Of its imaginary, of its illusory, of its ever-kaleidoscoping quantum space-time creation.

Challenging not to make mountains out of molehills with all this questing, all this finding. The question always boils down, I suppose, on whether to be, or not to be. We're all ultimately on our own, and that aloneness is not an easy place to stay for long.

The posting version:

Challenging not to make mountains out of molehills with all this seeking and finding.  
The question always boils down on whether to be, or not to be.  
We are all ultimately on our own,  
And that aloneness is not an easy place to stay for long.

You're a good muse, Joseph, thanks.

Don't worry, be happy ... Sounds trite ... But is true if you can manage it.

-----

Joseph:

I think Someone once said "in the world but not of it". I always enjoy chatting with you Michael.

-----

Moi:

Ditto back to ya.

Here's that last one again:

Don't worry, be happy ... may sound somewhat trite ... but is sound advice if you can manage it.

Out it the patio dittyfesting away. A little uploading time, and then off to the pool at the gym across the street.

-----

Joseph:

Enjoy!

-----

Moi:

Ciao for now, enjoy the evening!

Breadcrumbs: The Unfolding Next Round [https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_52.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_52.html)

One of the first ditties I wrote this year, that sort of applies to your thoughts on writing.

If you are perusing philosophical thoughts such as these,  
Then you have to some degree realized you are a witness to the mystery.  
You are seer, mystic, oracle, hierophant, eye of the unknown peering out upon creation.  
Perhaps you will even become a scribe, a future-past fellow of the Dead Poets Society,  
Or an artist of some other genre, who may well impart a vision in a way no other has.

Just an FYI that I just put in a request to join your Embodiment of Silence group.

Embodiment of Silence  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/699916680434664>

-----  
Joseph:

Thanks for sharing the above 'ditty'. It does apply, I think. The desire to 'do' doesn't last very long. So, if it is to be, I sense that it will have to come of its own accord. At least that's the way it feels.

P.S. I added you to the Embodiment of Silence group – which as you can see – is quite silent. I have tried to engage the group but I think they'd rather be quiet. Which is perfect. JC Tefft has made quite a few posts, with similar results.

-----  
Moi:

I'll add my link post and see if it draws any fire.

JCT is definitely into it.

So, is that caricature of you on the graffiti wall an actual work, or the output of some sort of software?

-----  
Joseph:

Hi, Michael, the wallpaper was from an app that allowed you to upload your image and it would make a graffiti wallpaper out of it. I have had it a few years. Not sure where I found it, but I haven't seen anyone else with it since. Would make a good 'memorial' wall paper I think.

-----  
Moi:

It's a nicely done caricature of you., hopefully not on a memorial wall too soon.

-----  
Joseph:

Who knows? I have surrendered the fate of the body to nature. I do what I can to take care of it.



-----

What it is.

\* \* \* \*

First email to Sarlo in 2008:

Sarlo's Guru Rating Service

<http://web.archive.org/web/19991128202942/www.globalserve.net/~sarlo/Ratings.htm>

Sarlo,

Was online looking up Ram Tzu, and somehow ran into you. A very interesting set of reflections you've mustered!

I am neither master nor wannabe. Below is a link to an aphoristic work that came out of the day-to-day since 1990-ish. Lots more in the can. Not all that known, and don't really need for it to be, but thoughts just keep bubbling to mind in any given daily wander, and I, for the enjoyment tinkering with words gives, just keep jotting them down. Usually share a spiral-bound hard copy or website address in serendipitous fashion with friends, acquaintances and strangers who seem open to pondering such things. No followers, no organization, no bothers.

The Stillness Before Time

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/>

I'm hoping maybe you, who has obviously taken a pretty serious look at things, can knock some sense into me, tell me to give it up, so that I can get on with my life, such as it is.

Thanking you in advance.

Ciao,

Michael

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with Sarlo regarding his guru rating service website:

Sarlo's Guru Rating Service

<http://web.archive.org/web/19991128202942/www.globalserve.net/~sarlo/Ratings.htm>

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Howdy Ekim,

The wheels of Guru Ratings grind slow these days but I've got around to listing you today, on my Literature page at <http://web.archive.org/web/19991128202942/www.globalserve.net/~sarlo/Ratings.htm>, and the New Listings page and alphabetical listings lead there.

Best Wishes on your continued sojourning, Sarlo

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Sarlo,

Your website, grind that I can understand it being by now, has always been an enjoyable wander, and I thought it would be amusing to at least get an honorable mention in the rankings of absurdity, so thanks. Can't say I'm much of a guru/philosopher in any sort of big way by any means. Life just sort of gradually shaped this mind into the thinker/writer zone, and for the last 25 years it has been something of a hobby to scribble down the ditties that always seem to pop into mind in the here and there. Not at all interested in setting up an ashram or creating some traveling salvation show. Way too many doing the glossy marketing thing already by my reckoning, and not always to right purpose as you have many times pointed out. Plus, I value anonymity and solitude way too much to give it up for all the bother of wandering stages, hawking books, and comforting the weepy. So, silly as it all is in this vanity faire, putting it out there no-charge on the web in these-our-modern-times has been the obvious compromise.

Thanks for doing what you do. Keep on keeping on as best ye may.

Best wishes,

M

Website

The Stillness Before Time

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/>

There is really only one Way.

It is without division or boundary.

It is without name or theology.

Awareness is its scripture,

Here now its venue,

You its witness,

Your life the journey.

A PDF copy can be downloaded at:

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/thestillnessbeforetime.pdf>

Main Blogs

The Stillness Before Time

<http://thestillnessbeforetime.blogspot.com/>

The Ponderings of Yaj Ekim

<http://theponderingsofyajekim.blogspot.com/>

The Return to Wonder

<http://thereturntowonder.blogspot.com/>

Breadcrumbs

<http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/>

## PDF's

The Stillness Before Time

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/thestillnessbeforetime.pdf>

The Ponderings of Yaj Ekim

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/theponderingsofyajekim.pdf>

The Return to Wonder

(Major edit underway – New copy colored blue)

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/thereturntowonder.pdf>

Breadcrumbs (Compendium)

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/breadcrumbs.pdf>

Breadcrumbs 2018

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/breadcrumbs2018.pdf>

Breadcrumbs 2019

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/breadcrumbs2019.pdf>

Breadcrumbs 2020

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/breadcrumbs2020.pdf>

Breadcrumbs 2021

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/breadcrumbs2021.pdf>

Patterns, Patterns & More Patterns

<http://thestillnessbeforetime.com/patternspatternsandmorepatterns.pdf>

History, History & More History

<http://thestillnessbeforetime.com/historyhistoryandmorehistory.pdf>

Science, Science & More Science

<http://thestillnessbeforetime.com/sciencescienceandmorescience.pdf>

Conversations

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/conversations.pdf>

Definitions

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/definitions.pdf>

Titles, Titles & More Titles

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/titlestitlesandmoretitles.pdf>

Ditties for the Bluegrass Pyre

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/dittiesforthebluegrasspyre.pdf>

(Please note that all writings are subject to annual updates and editing, so downloading current PDF copies every year or so might be a good idea if you want the most current version. This applies especially to the Breadcrumbs compendium, which is likely an ongoing work until the last wheezing breath)

## Recent Breadcrumbs

The Unfolding Next Round (Current ditties unpublished elsewhere)

[http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_52.html](http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_52.html)

Standouts from “The Return to Wonder” Edit

Standouts from the Return to Wonder Edit (thestillnessbeforetime.com)

## Breadcrumbs Blog Posts

Preface

[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_28.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_28.html)

Breadcrumbs

[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_82.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_82.html)

Leftovers

[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_11.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_11.html)

Soundbites

[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_63.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_63.html)

Corollaries

[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_31.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_31.html)

Possible Last Words & Epitaphs

[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_34.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_34.html)

The Standard Ripostes

[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_39.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_39.html)

List of Top Books for the Up and Coming

[http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_79.html](http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_79.html)

59 Moments to The Way It Is (And Is Not)

[http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_83.html](http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_83.html)

The Unfolding Next Round (Current ditties unpublished elsewhere)

[http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_52.html](http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_52.html)

Of the Human Journey

[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_6.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_6.html)

Got God?

[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_33.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_33.html)

Ten Reflections

[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_21.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_21.html)

Standouts from the Return to Wonder Edit

[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_8.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_8.html)

Links

[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_18.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_18.html)

Life Resume

[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_68.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_68.html)

Photo Gallery

[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_17.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_17.html)

Books

[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_50.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_50.html)

Movies

[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_73.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_73.html)

Quotes Worth Pondering

[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_1.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_1.html)

Spam Responses (a.k.a., WTF Is This Shit!?)

<https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction.html>

Facebook

Michael Holshouser

[https://www.facebook.com/michael.holshouser/?show\\_switched\\_toast=0](https://www.facebook.com/michael.holshouser/?show_switched_toast=0)

Michael's Little Warehouse of All Things Amusing, Absurd & Profound

<https://www.facebook.com/notes/344174083313569/>

Le Fichier Circulaire de Michaël (Michael's Circular File)

<https://www.facebook.com/LeFichierCirculaireDeMichael?ref=hl>

Yaj Ekim

<https://www.facebook.com/yaj.ekim.1>

Hughson Union High School Class of '72

<https://www.facebook.com/Hughson-Union-High-School-Class-of-72-301790023189950/>

## Blogger

Michael Holshouser

<https://www.blogger.com/profile/12270094801824803661>

## Twitter

Michael Holshouser

<https://twitter.com/YajEkim>

## Sivana East

Michael Holshouser

<https://blog.sivanaspirit.com/author/mjholshouser/>

## Instagram

Michael Holshouser

<https://www.instagram.com/mjholshouser/?hl=en>

## Other Blogs by Michael

Patterns, Patterns & More Patterns

<https://evenmorepatterns.blogspot.com/>

History, History & More History

<https://historyhistoryandmorehistory.blogspot.com/>

Science, Science & More Science

<https://yajekimscienceandmorescience.blogspot.com>

Titles, Titles & More Titles

<https://evenmoretitles.blogspot.com/>

Sketches of the Once Upon a Time

<https://sketchesoftheonceuponatime.blogspot.com/>

My (Not Quite) Haiku

<https://mynotquitehaiku.blogspot.com/>

Once Upon a Christmas

<https://onceuponchristmas.blogspot.com/>

Ditties for the Bluegrass Pyre

<https://dittiesforthebluegrasspyre.blogspot.com/>

## Odds and Ends

Final Exit

<http://finalexitandrelatedlinks.blogspot.com/>

The Four Agreements

<http://donmiguelSFiveAgreements.blogspot.com/>

The Blind Men and the Elephant

<http://theelephantandtheblindmen.blogspot.com/>

Of A Philosophical Nature

<http://ofaphilosophicalnature.blogspot.com/>

The Joyful Curmudgeon

<http://thejoyfulcurmudgeon.blogspot.com/>

Quotes, Quotes & More Quotes

<http://quotesaplenty.blogspot.com/>

Le Fichier Circulaire de Michaël

<http://michaelscircularfile.blogspot.com/>

50 Rules Kids Won't Learn in School

<http://50ruleskidswontlearninschool.blogspot.com/>

How to Work in Any Environment

<http://howtoworkinanyenvironment.blogspot.com/>

12 Rules You Can Live By

<http://12rulesyoucanliveby.blogspot.com/>

Election 2016: The Rise (and Fall?) of Donald Trump

<https://theriseandfallofdonaldtrump.blogspot.com/>

Eight Translations of the Ashtavakra Gita

The Heart of Awareness (Byrom)

<http://theheartofawareness.blogspot.com/>

Ashtavakra Gita (Marshall)

<http://theashtavakra.blogspot.com/>

Bitten by the Black Snake (Schoch)

<http://bittenbytheblacksnake.blogspot.com/>

A Duet of One (Balsekar)

<http://aduetofone.blogspot.com/>

Ashtavakra Gita (Richards)

<http://anotherashtavakragita.blogspot.com/>

Astavakra Samhita (Wood)  
<http://astavakrasamhita.blogspot.com/>

Ashtavakra Gita (Vedic Scriptures)  
<http://ashtravakrageeta.blogspot.com/>

Ashtavakra Gita (Shastri)  
<http://ashtravakrageeta.blogspot.com/>

PDF's of Ashtavakra Gita: I Am Shiva

Ashtavakra Gita: I Am Shiva  
<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/ashtavakragitaiamshiva.pdf>

I Am Shiva Comparison Chart  
<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/iamshivacomparisonchart.pdf>

PDF's of Eight Translations

The Heart of Awareness (Byrom)  
<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/theheartofawarenessbyrom.pdf>

Ashtavakra Gita (Marshall)  
<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/ashtavakrafitamarshall.pdf>

Bitten by the Black Snake (Schoch)  
<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/bittenbytheblacksnakeschoch.pdf>

Ashtavakra Gita (Richards)  
<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/ashtavakragitarichards.pdf>

A Duet of One (Balsekar)  
<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/aduetofonebalsekar.pdf>

Astavakra Samhita (Wood)  
<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/astavakrasamhitawood.pdf>

Ashtavakra Gita (Shastri)  
<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/ashtavakragitashastri.pdf>

Ashtavakra Gita (Vedic Scriptures)  
<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/ashtavakragitavedic.pdf>

Translations of Other Ancient Writings

Ashtavakra Gita: I Am Shiva



<http://ashtavakragitaiamshiva.blogspot.com/>

Tao Te Ching: Verse One

<http://taotechingverseone.blogspot.com/>

Tao Te Ching (Marshall)

<http://theperennialway-taoteching.blogspot.com/>

Bhagavad Gita (Marshall)

<https://bhagavadgitamarshall.blogspot.com/>

Yoga Sutras (Marshall)

<http://yogasutrasbypatanjali.blogspot.com/>

Dhammapada (Marshall)

<http://buddhasdhammapada.blogspot.com/>

The Book of Ecclesiastes (Marshall)

<https://21ecclesiastesmarshall.blogspot.com>

Song of the Avadhut (Abhayananda)

<http://songoftheavadhut.blogspot.com/>

Avadhut Gita (Shastri)

<http://avadhutgitabydattatreya.blogspot.com/>

Atma Bodha (Chinmayananda)

<http://theatmabodha.blogspot.com/>

The Essence of the Ribhu Gita (Ramamoorthy & Nome)

<http://theribhugita.blogspot.com/>

Yoga Vasishta Sara (Ramasramam)

<http://yogavasishtasara.blogspot.com/>

Crest-Jewel of Discrimination (Madhavananda)

<http://crest-jewelofdiscrimination.blogspot.com/>

Mandukya Upanishad & Mandukya Karika of Gaudapada (Panoli)

<https://mandukyaupanishadpanoli.blogspot.com>

Gaudapada: Advaita Vedanta's First Philosopher (Jones)

<https://advaitavedantasfirstphilosopher.blogspot.com/2020/02/on-tradition.html>

Writings by Bart Marshall

Verses Regarding True Nature

<https://versesregardingtruenaturemarshall.blogspot.com>

One Hundred Two Haiku  
<https://onehundredtwohaikumarshall.blogspot.com>

Translations of Ancient Writings by Bart Marshall

Ashtavakra Gita  
<http://theashtavakra.blogspot.com/>

Tao Te Ching  
<http://theperennialway-taoteching.blogspot.com/>

Bhagavad Gita  
<https://bhagavadgitamarshall.blogspot.com/>

Yoga Sutras  
<http://yogasutrasbypatanjali.blogspot.com/>

Dhammapada  
<http://buddhasdhammapada.blogspot.com/>

The Book of Ecclesiastes  
<https://21ecclesiastesmarshall.blogspot.com>

\* \* \* \*

Hey, hey, Sarlo,

Another round of silliness coming at you. Two score and fifteen-ish pages parlayed into five chapters, all posted in Breadcrumbs: Leftovers I, Leftover II (One-Liners), Possible Titles, Corollaries, and Possible Last Words & Epitaphs. Randomly pick thoughts from the two Leftover sections are being used to wrap the “Ponderings of Yaj Ekim” book that I’ve been slowly putting together. Am aiming for 501 pages, 480 already uploaded. Eventually, there will a downloadable PDF on the website, and maybe a self-published version with an ISBN number for sale on Amazon if I get to it.

Breadcrumbs  
<http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/>

The Ponderings of Yaj Ekim  
<http://theponderingsofyajekim.blogspot.com/>

Enjoy the day.

M

P.S. This for you from the Corollaries section:

Sarlo:  
Effing the Ineffable.

Yaj Ekim's Corollary:  
Effing away.

And from Possible Titles:  
The Halls of Sarlo

P.P.S. Feel free to tell me to stop if you're not into getting these random dittyfests. One of these daze maybe I'll just turn off the faucet, but for now it is, as I said before, an interesting pastime.

\* \* \* \*

Response to Sarlo on the compliment about all the work it took to write this:

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Moi:

Don't know that I'd call it work. More of a hobby, really. Thoughts just sort of come to mind, pen sets them to paper, and the keyboard does the rest. Just over 4,000 pages in a variety of blogs at this writing. An enjoyable process, but it's highly unlikely that anyone but me will ever read it all.

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Howdy Mike,

Thanks in return for your enjoyable replies and the link. Calling what you "do" a hobby (sans horse of course) looks like a detached but useful perspective, and yes, it's good to "give something back" to the whole. Nice that you've found that balance.

Namaste, Sarlo

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with Steven Kruger who I met in December 2014 in Union Square in San Francisco:

Steven,

It was very enjoyable chatting with you yesterday. You are a rare find in my plebeian world. I've added the Pinker and Ayer books to my next Amazon order, linked up with your bio in the New York Arts, and in a Google search spotted a couple links to your Google+ page.

Not that I expect it will be all that interesting to you with all you've imbibed in the philosophical world, here's the link to my silliness:

The Stillness Before Time  
<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/>

A 50-page PDF can be downloaded at:  
<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/stillness.pdf>

Another book I've been blogging as it comes together:

The Ponderings of Yaj Ekim

<http://theponderingsofyajekim.blogspot.com/2010/05/ponderings-of-yaj-ekim.html>

And a blog that will eventually be a compendium of everything else:

The Return to Wonder

<http://thereturntowonder.blogspot.com/>

The final full day in the city underway. Whoo-hoo.

Enjoy the day as best ye may.

Ciao, ciao,

M

P.S.

A link to Macrobiotics and other food links in my Little Warehouse:

Food Issues

[https://www.facebook.com/note.php?note\\_id=101915615911](https://www.facebook.com/note.php?note_id=101915615911)

Michael's Little Warehouse of All Things Amusing, Absurd & Profound

[http://www.facebook.com/note.php?note\\_id=390323775911](http://www.facebook.com/note.php?note_id=390323775911)

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Steven:

Hi Michael,

I'm delighted to hear from you so soon. I haven't looked yet at your writings but will definitely do so shortly and get back to you. I like your titles, nicely poetic and not trite. Whether I'd agree or not, I can't tell at this point, but it is extremely unusual and a pleasure to meet a regular person who, simply put, is an independent thinker!

Most people "educate" themselves into a standard viewpoint of the world, choose one of several politico/ethical options from the template and proceed on to be unthinking partisans, as if moving through life were the result of choosing an athletic team to follow. This is just as true at Princeton and in the corporate suite as in the central valley! Interesting philosophical minds are rare, period!

I came home to take a quick look at Ayer's Language Truth and Logic, whose introduction can be found on Google Books Preview – and my heart sank! It is short, yes, but way too technical. I had forgotten. My best advice would be for you to look up something like "God" or "morality" in the index and see if you can wade through it for a few pages. He gives one the technical logic (including symbolic equations) used by physicists. Anything you can't express that way doesn't interest him much. What you and I would call "philosophy of life" he considers unaddressable. This is the book which threw out the baby with the bathwater! Maybe it is only interesting now for that reason. The great "systems" of Plato, Hegel and Kant

gather dust in its wake ... Ever since, academic "philosophy" has been about quantum mechanics.

But you will enjoy the Pinker book much more, I think, as he manages to address religion and virtually all historical cultural artifacts which might influence life, along with making his primary argument that life is much safer and less murderous now. Another really readable and also amusing but serious book is Christopher Hitchens' *God is not Great – How Religion Poisons Everything*.

My own point of view on God and metaphysics is very simple and derives from the German philosopher Kant's notion of the reality we see versus the reality of "things in themselves". (Kant ultimately went off in contradictory directions, later trying to prove what he had demonstrated couldn't be proved, because it was dangerous in the 1700s to write as an agnostic ...)

But I express his essential argument this way: We perceive reality through the senses, which alter it, like a meat grinder. (We, and all creatures, hear differently, see colors differently, experience touch slightly differently, etc.) Traditional philosophy is like trying to figure out what a steer looks like by examining the ground chuck coming out of the meat-grinder. We are on the wrong side of the "processor" to say anything too profound. We are stuck, so to speak, with a pile of bricks and tasked to describe the building ... no can do. "Big bang?" Sure ... but ... er um ... just what went "bang"? We are on the wrong side of all of it!

So my essential position is that we cannot come up with "the meaning of life", since we are part of the thing we are trying to define. But we can see if the conclusions we reach about life work well in life itself and are consistent with each other. "Meaning for life" works much better as a concept. We can study which social arrangements lead to happier people and which economic arrangements to a more contented and longer life, etc. There is a great arena for reason. But it has its limits. On the other hand, mysticism, I find, is ultimately vague and subjective. So I guess my "philosophy" is to manage the "ground chuck" as intelligently as possible!

Sorry to go on. I'll read up on you next!

Cheers.

Steven

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Steven:

Hi Again,

I just took a look at "The Stillness Before Time". Your writing is extraordinarily beautiful and genuinely poetic! You have a real talent. It is hard to write well this way without sounding woozy. If Eric Hoffer, the longshoreman philosopher, could write books of aphorisms, so can you. Looked at from the point of view of the academic tradition, you would be considered a Platonist or Hegelian.

Plato's notion in the "theory of forms" was that our perceptions are approximations only of the real thing, but all that we know. Hegel would have been even closer to you: All life is mind, and our thoughts and existence are part of the one great mind. Or as a Princeton professor said at a lecture about the late 19th century Hegelian-American philosopher C.S. Peirce, "You are God but just don't happen to know it!"

You have a lyrical gift that is extraordinary. I'd be curious to see what music appeals to you in the same metaphysical way, if any. I tend to wax poetic when I write about music, but am otherwise relentlessly logical!

Steven

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Moi:

I've never had anyone who knows as much about philosophy offer any feedback, so it is very interesting to hear your reflections. All these thoughts – about 3500 pages at this writing – just pop into mind as I'm wandering through any given day, and life shaped me into writer enough to enjoy the process of jotting them down, and later working them on the word processor into what you see. Very stream of consciousness, I suppose it might be called. Definitely not a partisan of any particular school of thought. Been doing it since '89 when all I'd done in life just seemed to coalesce into this way of seeing things, and the words started coming.

And as far as music goes, I'm very eclectic. Have 70 gigs or so of all sorts of genres in my iTunes collection. Hard to say I favor any particular one all the time. My walkabout playlists when I do the iPod thing have hundreds of tunes that wander across all boundaries.

Guess I need to go read some Plato, Hegel, Kant, Ayers, Pinker, Hitchens, Peirce, and Hoffer to see what you're talking about. Philosophy 101 back at Modesto Junior College from an old codger named Markoff, probably in the first or second semester, was as far as I got in the Ivory Tower, so lots of homework ahead.

Thanks again for your thoughts.

Ciao, ciao,

M

P.S. About to head off to dinner, but it occurred to me you might find what I call my "life resume" of interest. Something I started at some point years ago when I realized I was not living out this existence in any sort of prescribed way.

Michael Holshouser: Life Resume

[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_68.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_68.html)

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Steven:

Well, I note a common denominator. Much of it involves you as a performer! Perhaps a byproduct of an amiable personality. For someone who didn't want to raise another guy's DNA, you seem to have spent a lot of time with children!

S

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Steven:

Hitchens and Pinker are fun. But if you go after Plato or Hegel or Kant, or Peirce – or even want to read Ayer's nitpicky linguistic stuff, I fear boredom and ponderousness will kill you for one reason or another! I spent years wading through all of it. You might want just to read an excellent general history, instead. There is a wonderful "History of Philosophy" by Copelston, in several paperback volumes. He was a Jesuit, but fair to the atheist philosophers, which many of them tended to be! His books can make the argument of any philosopher simple to understand, while doing full justice to the subtler points. And as you go along, it is roughly chronological, so you see how ideas and theories evolved.

I probably should lay out a fairly profound point, though: Just as some actors become actors to lose themselves and find love, and some just hope to imitate accents and personalities convincingly, a genuine academic philosopher is not looking for a philosophy to supply good feeling or ecstasy or eternal life or solace for a coldhearted childhood. That's where the readership for Deepak Chopra and the new age seems to be coming from – a religious motive.

The academic philosopher wants instead a rigorous explanation for how things actually work and for how we perceive them, irrespective of whether it makes us feel good or not!

Philosophy was rudimentary science at first, in Plato and Aristotle's time, but necessarily more methodological as the centuries passed and more in conflict with religion. And if philosophy of this verbal sort has now become the handmaiden of quantum mechanics, it is easy to understand why it no longer addresses any human concerns and has largely gone out of existence – replaced by critical reasoning courses at school and the updated Darwinism of the pet scan!

We no longer view the brain, after all, as a black box and debate free will by microanalysing what we say. We can see, instead, that one part of the brain decides to do something before the rest of us is aware of it. We can study DNA and explain tendencies of all sorts. We can see the site of "positioning disorders" and detect brain damage which makes the swami think he floats on the ceiling in his sleep. And we can identify sociopathy and the seats of empathy ... so who needs philosophy?

This gets me in trouble with New Age women and their astrology and tarot cards, of course. I did triumph once, though. A bipolar woman-friend was put on anti-psychotic medication and became totally normal.

"How did you know you were normal, I asked."

"I stopped reading Tarot cards", she said

But one does need a reasonable approach to life, and like you I seem to begin with Darwin!

Cheers.

S

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Steven:

I forgot to address music. I was thinking that Walt Whitman's expansive words and your writings have some of the same sweeping sense of hope to them.

I don't know if LONG pieces for symphony orchestra, enormous chorus and two singers would appeal to you, an hour long one ... I normally don't care for anything but instrumental symphonic music ... but there exists a wonderful symphony characterized by sheer metaphysics masquerading as being about the sea: "A Sea Symphony" by Ralph Vaughan Williams is in four parts, most set to Whitman and one section called "on the beach at night alone", set to Matthew Arnold's famous "Dover Beach". The last section (or "movement", the proper term) is titled "The Explorers" and can really sweep you away in exhilaration. It has a similar uplift to your stuff.

Please don't bother with this, if I'm being overbearing dumping all this info on you. I don't mean to play professor! But I was really struck with your writing.

S

Ralph Vaughan Williams: A Sea Symphony  
<http://youtu.be/Lp4G5vtdSWc>

Walt Whitman text from A Sea Symphony by Ralph Vaughan Williams

I. A Song for all Seas, all Ships

Book XIII: Song of the Exposition

[from verse 8]

Behold, the sea itself,  
And on its limitless, heaving breast, the ships;  
See, where their white sails, bellying in the wind, speckle the green and blue,  
See, the steamers coming and going, steaming in or out of port,  
See, dusky and undulating, the long pennants of smoke.  
Book XIX: Sea-Drift: Song for All Seas, All Ships  
Today a rude brief recitative,  
Of ships sailing the seas, each with its special flag or ship-signal,  
Of unnamed heroes in the ships – of waves spreading and spreading far as the eye can reach,  
Of dashing spray, and the winds piping and blowing,  
And out of these a chant for the sailors of all nations,  
Fitful, like a surge.

Of sea-captains young or old, and the mates, and of all intrepid sailors,  
Of the few, very choice, taciturn, whom fate can never surprise nor death dismay.  
Pick'd sparingly without noise by thee old ocean, chosen by thee,  
Thou sea that pickest and cullest the race in time, and unitest nations,  
Suckled by thee, old husky nurse, embodying thee,  
Indomitable, untamed as thee.

Flaunt out O sea your separate flags of nations!



Flaunt out visible as ever the various ship-signals!  
But do you reserve especially for yourself and for the soul of man one flag above all the rest,  
A spiritual woven signal for all nations, emblem of man elate above death,  
Token of all brave captains and all intrepid sailors and mates,  
And all that went down doing their duty,  
Reminiscent of them, twined from all intrepid captains young or old,  
A pennant universal, subtly waving all time, o'er all brave sailors,  
All seas, all ships.

## II. On the Beach at Night, Alone

Book XIX: Sea-Drift: On the Beach at Night Alone

On the beach at night alone,  
As the old mother sways her to and fro singing her husky song,  
As I watch the bright stars shining, I think a thought of the clef of the universes and of the future.

A vast similitude interlocks all,

All distances of place however wide,  
All distances of time,

All souls, all living bodies though they be ever so different,

All nations,

All identities that have existed or may exist

All lives and deaths, all of the past, present, future,  
This vast similitude spans them, and always has spann'd,  
And shall forever span them and compactly hold and enclose them.

## III. (Scherzo) The Waves

Book XIX: Sea-Drift: After the Sea-Ship

After the sea-ship, after the whistling winds,  
After the white-gray sails taut to their spars and ropes,  
Below, a myriad, myriad waves hastening, lifting up their necks,  
Tending in ceaseless flow toward the track of the ship,  
Waves of the ocean bubbling and gurgling, blithely prying,  
Waves, undulating waves, liquid, uneven, emulous waves,  
Toward that whirling current, laughing and buoyant, with curves,  
Where the great vessel sailing and tacking displaced the surface,  
Larger and smaller waves in the spread of the ocean yearnfully flowing,  
The wake of the sea-ship after she passes, flashing and frolicsome under the sun,  
A motley procession with many a fleck of foam and many fragments,  
Following the stately and rapid ship, in the wake following.

## IV. The Explorers

Book XXVI: Passage to India:

[from verse 5]

O vast Rondure, swimming in space,  
Cover'd all over with visible power and beauty,  
Alternate light and day and the teeming spiritual darkness,  
Unspeakable high processions of sun and moon and countless stars above,  
Below, the manifold grass and waters, animals, mountains, trees,  
With inscrutable purpose, some hidden prophetic intention,  
Now first it seems my thought begins to span thee.

Down from the gardens of Asia descending radiating,  
Adam and Eve appear, then their myriad progeny after them,  
Wandering, yearning, curious, with restless explorations,  
With questionings, baffled, formless, feverish, with never-happy hearts,  
With that sad incessant refrain, Wherefore unsatisfied soul? and Whither O mocking life?

Ah who shall soothe these feverish children?  
Who Justify these restless explorations?  
Who speak the secret of impassive earth?  
Who bind it to us? what is this separate Nature so unnatural?  
What is this earth to our affections? (unloving earth, without a throb to answer ours, Cold earth, the place of graves.)

Yet soul be sure the first intent remains, and shall be carried out,  
Perhaps even now the time has arrived.

After the seas are all cross'd, (as they seem already cross'd,)  
After the great captains and engineers have accomplish'd their work,  
After the noble inventors, after the scientists, the chemist, the geologist, ethnologist,  
Finally shall come the poet worthy that name,  
The true son of God shall come singing his songs.

[from verse 8]

O we can wait no longer,  
We too take ship O soul,  
Joyous we too launch out on trackless seas,  
Fearless for unknown shores on waves of ecstasy to sail,  
Amid the wafting winds, (thou pressing me to thee, I thee to me, O soul,)  
Caroling free, singing our song of God,  
Chanting our chant of pleasant exploration.

O soul thou pleasest me, I thee,  
Sailing these seas or on the hills, or waking in the night,  
Thoughts, silent thoughts, of Time and Space and Death, like waters flowing,

Bear me indeed as through the regions infinite,  
Whose air I breathe, whose ripples hear, lave me all over,  
Bathe me O God in thee, mounting to thee,  
I and my soul to range in range of thee.

O Thou transcendent,  
Nameless, the fibre and the breath,  
Light of the light, shedding forth universes, thou centre of them.

Swiftly I shrivel at the thought of God,  
At Nature and its wonders, Time and Space and Death,  
But that I, turning, call to thee O soul, thou actual Me,  
And lo, thou gently masterest the orbs,  
Thou matest Time, smilest content at Death,  
And fillest, swellest full the vastnesses of Space.

Greater than stars or suns,  
Bounding O soul thou journeyest forth;

[from verse 9]

Away O soul! hoist instantly the anchor!  
Cut the hawsers – haul out – shake out every sail!

Reckless O soul, exploring, I with thee, and thou with me,

Sail forth – steer for the deep waters only,  
For we are bound where mariner has not yet dared to go,  
And we will risk the ship, ourselves and all.

O my brave soul!  
O farther farther sail!  
O daring joy, but safe! are they not all the seas of God?  
O farther, farther, farther sail!

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Moi:

Back in Turlock. All unpacked and settling back into the Valley routine. Whoo-hoo.

Lots of thoughts on everything you've written, as well as Whitman's poem and the symphony, but it will have to wait until tomorrow's morning coffee time at my nearby Starbucks. All very enlightening and great fun, a new level of intrigue for my graying mind, so no worries about your playing "professor." I'd actually almost jokingly called you that in my last posting.

So, more tomorrow.

G'night,

M

\* \* \* \*

Moi:

Wednesday, Wednesday

Yo, Steven,

Back in ye old Geerbucks as I call it because it is on Geer Road in the north side of town near Stanislaus State. How different Turlock is from San Francisco.

Quite a poem by Whitman, and I've been listening to the symphony, sometime watching it, as I write this. Observing Oramo with his baton doing the movements you explained, understanding a bit better what a conductor does for the first time ever. What an amazing thing to lead so many instruments and voices with such dexterity.

As I told you, I feel pretty unread when it comes to Western classics, poetry, and philosophy. My only contact with Walt Whitman, other than his page on BrainyQuotes, was his "The Beasts" poem, with which I have always resonated.

The Beasts

I think I could turn and live with animals  
They are so placid and self-contained,  
I stand and look at them long and long.  
They do not sweat and whine about their condition,  
They do no lie awake in the dark and weep for their sins,  
They do not make me sick discussing their duty to God,  
Not one is dissatisfied,  
Not one is demented with the mania of owning things,  
Not one kneels to another,  
Nor to his kind that lived thousands of years ago,  
Not one is respectable or industrious over the whole earth.

I was much more drawn early on to Eastern thinking – though somewhat westernized because of the Theosophical Society influence, Krishnamurti was big for me during the 20's – and I think the reason why Western writing didn't click is because it is so thick, so heavy, so intellectual. Yes, I'm bright, but this brain has never functioned at the calculus level, and has always just sort of gone blank trying to read anything too convoluted.

And despite being steeped in a Judeo-Christian culture, surrounded by all its countless splinters, none of it ever even began to ring as true or important. Raised on the farm as I was, nature and its laws have always been bonafide enough for me. And so the writings of Buddhism, Taoism, and Hinduism seemed much more on the mark than what was offered in our part of the world. When I read the "Dhammapada," "Tao Te Ching," or "Ashtravakra Gita," the thoughts thoroughly resonate to the core. I think Herman Hesse, Robert Pirsig, various New Age writings, and sundry friends and acquaintances, first got me looking that

direction. The trail is all very dim in the memory banks at this writing. The booklist and movie links on my website offer breadcrumbs to the tale.

Looked up Copelston's "History of Philosophy" series on Amazon. Definitely highly rated by those who have purchased them, but looks like way more than I'm ready to chew on at this stage of the game. In my library, I have "Plato and a Platypus Walk into a Bar" by Cathcart and Klein, which I read this last year, and "Looking at Philosophy" by Donald Palmer, which is sitting in the pile on my kitchen table, the bookmark about a third of the way through. Both nicely succinct for my purpose – and Wikipedia is always handy for a quick overview, as well – but I am easily distracted by the this-and-that of the given day, so many things are started and restarted, or started and inevitably find their unfinished way back to the shelf.

Ultimately, though, I've come to see all consciousness as the same ball of energy imagining itself real. Stepping back into the timeless awareness that is witnessing it all is the moment-to-moment journey. All science, all philosophy, all religion, all anything, is ultimately only meaningful in the ball of consciousness. The mystery is prior to all measurement, all speculation, all conclusion. It is what I have come to see as quantum awareness – that which is prior to consciousness, that which is the cosmic mind – that is to be discerned by those most earnest in their quest.

So, it seems to me that an agnostic stance, a state of unknowing, is the only genuine way to look at the big picture. Belief and atheism seem to imply that something is known, which just is not really possible as you noted in your big bang metaphor. There is ultimately no logical answer to the origin, however it happened. There is nothing mind can ever grasp, ever know, with any surety. One can only surrender to the awareness in the ethereal so-it-goes moment playing out in the sensory mind.

And in these times where Darwin's "survival of the fittest" has been temporarily waylaid by the "thriving of the inadequate," we must endure watching the human drama play out its dystopian decline. You say my writings have a sense of hope about them, which is somewhat curious to hear, since I feel like I have become much more pessimistic as I've learned more and more what is going on across the board.

How wonderfully naive I was coming out of high school into the college years. Very Candide-ish, indeed, during much of my early life. Suppose I still do have something of a "we must cultivate (what's left of) our garden" attitude. Generally amiable, as you say, but a darker and darker, wry, irony-and-paradox-rule vision, of where we as a species are taking our little show. The Joyful Curmudgeon, I often call myself anymore.

As to my life journey, a good deal of the resume is me trying to find my calling, my niche. Very restless, very energetic, very no-holds-barred. Many experiences one after another tucked under the belt. Once something got old, usually after a couple years at most, I would move on. Worked with children quite a bit, as you noted, perhaps because, as my father several times said, we are a family of "farmers, preachers, and teachers." Finally realized I was too much a generalist to stick with any one thing, and – other than the thread of these writings that have trickled out these last 25 years – stopped looking for that career that would stick. Some callings are without a paycheck, I suppose we could say.

So, another day in this touchy-feely-three-dimensional dream underway. Time to go home, hook up the Youtube symphony to my speakers, and watch Oramo & Crew again. Will give some other Williams works that I discovered in my iTunes collection -- including "Fantasia On Greensleeves" – some ear time, well.

Thanks for firing up the cylinders.

Ciao, ciao,

M

P.S. The Ashtavakra Gita is one of my all-time favorite works at this writing, and I often pass on the seven translations I have blogged. A comparison spreadsheet of the last "I Am Shive" chapter is also attached.

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Wikipedia: Ashtavakra Gita  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ashtavakra\\_Gita](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ashtavakra_Gita)

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The Heart of Awareness (Byrom)  
<http://theheartofawareness.blogspot.com/>

Ashtavakra Gita (Marshall)  
<http://theashtavakra.blogspot.com/>

Bitten by the Black Snake (Schoch)  
<http://bittenbytheblacksnake.blogspot.com/>

A Duet of One (Balsekar)  
<http://aduetofone.blogspot.com/>

Ashtavakra Gita (Richards)  
<http://anotherashtavakragita.blogspot.com/>

Astavakra Samhita (Wood)  
<http://astavakrasamhita.blogspot.com/>

Ashtavakra Gita (Vedic)  
<http://ashtravakrageeta.blogspot.com/>

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Steven

Hi Michael,

I'm glad you don't mind all the "professing" of the would-be professor. Though I always have approached thought through the rationalists rather than through the mythic storytellers, like you, I am struck by how much we have landed in the same place. Three big battles with cancer and an uncooperative body, in

general, have dominated my life, and I have been ultimately unlucky in love, so I too have become a bemused observer/participant, fortunately just as eager to be alive as I would have been, had things turned out well!

Remarkable chart you sent. I suppose what bothers me about traditional mystic thought is its resignation and seeming passivity. I want to act like a laser of rationality and logic – get the earth moving along like a Beethoven symphony – and then be a contemplative to boot!

Art one level, I think industriously about what would make for a better society. At another, I just accept being alive. Doctrines like "original sin" never succeeded in making me feel guilty for just being me, as nature made me. I doubt a cockroach or a dog would ever come up with the notion of imperfection. No dog twists himself into pretzels wondering if he is being "doggy" enough! We should improve ourselves – through reason – but not self-flagellate.

Of all the books I recommended, I think the Hitchens will be the easiest read, that and Pinker. You'll get a lot out of them. They are just regular, normal books anyone could read.

I'm glad the Vaughan Williams didn't displease you. The conventions of singing with trained voices take some getting used-to. Even I still don't care much for opera, because of its artificiality. RVW's best "Greensleeves" type English piece is the "Fantasia on a theme of Thomas Tallis", about 15 minutes long and guaranteed to make women fall into your arms (maybe)! It is on YouTube, in its best performance, with Andrew Davis and the BBC Symphony. You'll like that a lot.

Yes, conducting is the most complicated job of traffic direction that exists. But the artistry is really in rehearsal, where you get them to phrase your way. You can play the same passage done by ten different conductors and hear it done ten very different ways. That is why classical music depends so much on criticism. An Elvis gets Elvis right, because he is Elvis. But Beethoven isn't around. He just left instructions, sometimes confusing ones!

Cheers.

Steven

\* \* \* \*

Moi:

Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis

Youtube Search: Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis

[https://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=Fantasia+on+a+theme+of+Thomas+Tallis](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=Fantasia+on+a+theme+of+Thomas+Tallis)

\* \* \* \*

Moi:

We're putting an end to religion: Richard Dawkins, Bill Maher, and the exploding new American secularism

We're putting an end to religion: Richard Dawkins, Bill Maher, and the exploding new American

secularism

[http://www.salon.com/2014/12/20/were\\_putting\\_an\\_end\\_to\\_religion\\_richard\\_dawkins\\_bill\\_maher\\_and\\_the\\_exploding\\_new\\_american\\_secularism/](http://www.salon.com/2014/12/20/were_putting_an_end_to_religion_richard_dawkins_bill_maher_and_the_exploding_new_american_secularism/)

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Steven:

We are, indeed. My favorite reassurance is the Economist magazine, which pointed out a while back that each year 1% of the world's population stops believing in a supernatural, interventionist God. This goes with the rising of IQs, where 100 today would have been 130 in 1914. More people are thinking abstractly. It doesn't hurt, either, that we have Islamist fanatics as enemy no. 1. They are good examples of how unreasonable all religion is, even if nobody says so openly.

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Moi:

If they fatwa me, I'll sling one back at them.

It is not the strongest of the species who survive, not the most intelligent, but those who are the most adaptive to change ~ Charles Darwin

When Kids Stop Believing in Santa

[http://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2014/12/when-do-kids-stop-believing-in-santa/383958/?google\\_editors\\_picks=true](http://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2014/12/when-do-kids-stop-believing-in-santa/383958/?google_editors_picks=true)

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Steven:

Something tells me we are adapting! I stopped believing in Santa around 8, but got in trouble explaining thunder to my fifth-grade teacher as "clouds clapping their hands" and recall, when corrected, being mad at my mother for telling me something so idiotic!

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Moi:

To be so innocent, so trusting, what was that like, anyway?

-----

Steven:

I was fortunate that way. I can say that with the exception of the tooth fairy and Santa, I never heard my parents tell a lie, either to me or to anyone else. I've never quite accepted the notion that some parents aren't like that.

-----

Moi:



I have no recollection when my belief in Santa Claus or the Tooth Fairy came to a close, so I'm guessing I wasn't all that invested in it as long as there were presents under the tree or spare change under the pillow.

-----

Steven:

I just stopped believing but cannot recall the incident. My father stopped believing when Santa turned out to be wearing his father's shoes.

\* \* \* \*

Moi:

Wikipedia: The Cliff Notes of These Modern Times

Hey, hey,

Another day in the lazy life of moi. A Christmas celebration with old friends this afternoon, but otherwise not much going on. Hit the 450-page mark in my "Ponderings" blog, so I'm taking a bit of a break browsing some of the Wikipedia summaries on the thinkers and their works that you recommended. Probably enough for my purpose, slothful impurist that I am. Very challenging following the long and convoluted trail that Western philosophy has wandered, that's for sure, especially when just "being" has long since gotten to be more than enough in the grand anymore. One friend up in Chico used to call me "Zen Mike."

Enjoying some more drizzle over here. Over nine inches, so far. Amazing, considering we barely had more than a couple during the end-of-year months these last many years. Global Weirding, to be sure.

Didn't catch when was it you were heading across the bay. Was it during the coming winter months, or next spring?

Back to the intellectual chewfest.

Ciao, ciao,

M

Christopher Hitchens  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christopher\\_Hitchens](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christopher_Hitchens)

God Is Not Great  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/God\\_Is\\_Not\\_Great](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/God_Is_Not_Great)

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Frederick Copleston  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frederick\\_Copleston](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frederick_Copleston)

A History of Philosophy

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A\\_History\\_of\\_Philosophy\\_\(Copleston\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A_History_of_Philosophy_(Copleston))

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Steven Pinker

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steven\\_Pinker](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steven_Pinker)

The Better Angels of Our Nature: Why Violence Has Declined

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Better\\_Angels\\_of\\_Our\\_Nature](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Better_Angels_of_Our_Nature)

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A.J. Ayer

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A.\\_J.\\_Ayer](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A._J._Ayer)

Language, Truth, and Logic

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Language,\\_Truth,\\_and\\_Logic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Language,_Truth,_and_Logic)

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Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Georg\\_Wilhelm\\_Friedrich\\_Hegel](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Georg_Wilhelm_Friedrich_Hegel)

The Phenomenology of Spirit

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Phenomenology\\_of\\_Spirit](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Phenomenology_of_Spirit)

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Immanuel Kant

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Immanuel\\_Kant](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Immanuel_Kant)

Critique of Pure Reason

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Critique\\_of\\_Pure\\_Reason](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Critique_of_Pure_Reason)

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Plato

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plato>

The Republic

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Republic\\_\(Plato\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Republic_(Plato))

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Steven:

Hi Michael,

Have you ever thought of taking your many pages and organizing the aphorisms around a topic? Choosing the best ones? You could create a slim little book, as Hoffer did. The whole idea about pithy observations is that less is more...Perhaps you need to edit or be edited, the way novelist Thomas Wolfe was! He used to submit thousands of pages, dropped on the floor by the pound next to his typewriter, and Scribner's managed to craft novels out of them.

I couldn't remember "Cliff's Notes" to save my life, but that was my recommended solution for you. I didn't think of Wikipedia, but of course, that is what we all use now. I consult it for composers and their works, sometimes. Usually, Wikipedia gets it right, though it is written by the public, so sometimes it misses things. But the links you included here are very solid.

Reading philosophy has always been nightmarish. A few philosophers are easy, such as empiricists David Hume and John Stuart Mill, writing in English and stressing clarity. And Aristotle's Ethics is easy. He studies happiness by analyzing happy people, the way we moderns would. But the empirical side of all their work turned into Ayer's mathematical stuff after a few hundred years. Hume spent a lot of time studying why a billiard ball moves, when another strikes it, and what it is that we mean by causality. These days, that sort of thing has turned into equations. Mill wrote about Liberty and the greatest good for the greatest number in society. That has become political science and moved out of the philosophy department.

The philosophers who stressed a big system explaining everything, meanwhile, became totally confusing (lots of luck reading Hegel!) And the Existentialists, being French and German, wrote impossible nonsense as their rebellion against the rest. Sartre's "Being and Nothingness" contains sentences like "Nothingness is a noughting nought". I studied under Walter Kaufmann, the existentialist expert and editor of all the anthologies one reads, and even he admitted Sartre often wrote sentences that ceased to have meaning.

Then there are the real popsie fringe players, like Chopra on the mystical side and the novelists like Hesse, not taken seriously as Philosophers, because any 12th grader can knock holes in their logic, if not always the wisdom therein.

And you have Ayn Rand, whom I studied a bit. I've always wanted to ask Alan Greenspan, who was a Rand "disciple", how he could believe all human beings were born "tabula rasa", important to her ideas about free will? And yet we now have DNA explaining all sorts of tendencies at birth, including altruism towards ones family and country. This is a fatal flaw in her philosophy of the self-actualizing and independent individual ... She thought Beethoven's music misguided and immoral because it featured sadness at times. She tried to prove that operetta music was better. A modern cynic would say she was born tone-deaf with bad DNA! She thought, as well, that people choose their sexuality and had a scathing description of gays. Poor observation and intuition on her part. Truman Capote did not choose to be born with a girl's voice and manner ... Rand's rigid logic is forgotten, perhaps, by those who find her novels inspiring. And she killed socialism very effectively in her books, showing how poorly it worked. In a general sort of way, she contributed to the modern understanding that individuals generally help society best by pursuing their own interests. And college students still love the all-or-nothing approach. But the question in philosophy, it seems to me, is always what have we proved? We remain, in an ultimate sense, unable to pick through the ground chuck and describe the steer.

For this reason, it seems to me, we need a context for philosophy. It can't be absolute, because we don't know what we are talking about beyond life and earth. If we posit that we want to live on earth and live

longer and better, with fewer of the things which make life unpleasant, then we can be logical indeed and effective. That is where the Steven Pinkers become useful, helping us achieve what we want for society. But I suppose we now must call everything, from common sense to economics "political science".

"Philosophy" has become a metaphor for our view of life. More like "psychology". But as an academic attempt to explain life, it failed and is now largely dead. "Largely dead" is a notion Ayer would no doubt destroy linguistically, leaving nothing behind for us to think about!

I'm enjoying the forgotten notion of rain these days. And I always wait for the next twist from the guilt-ridden climate "scientist" Cassandras.

I don't travel again until Feb 1-15, when I will be in England, catching the Berlin Philharmonic on tour there. Quite the reward trip, at a high level of luxury. High Tea at Fortnum and Mason now costs \$200. Glad I won't be paying for it, nor for my hotel on Dolphin Square, where regional members of Parliament stay when in London. I'll probably be back East for my Exeter 50th reunion for a few days at the end of May. Then I will be three weeks in Germany, by invitation of an old German couple. not the same, sadly, as being invited by a German girlfriend in 1997!

Well, time to go to the post office between raindrops. Let me know if The Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis pleased you.

Cheer.

Steven

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Moi:

It is certainly very interesting to run into someone who is so well-read in the philosophy arena. I guess the thing I'm most curious about is how my babble fits into it all, given that it is really a product of its own mix of influences from across so many times and venues. I am something of a solo act at this writing by my reckoning. Nothing all that new, of course, just another variation of the nothing-new-under-the-sun refrain.

I agree with what you are saying about trimming things down into smaller bites for easier readability. At one point back in the 90's when I was up in Chico, a book agent someone turned me onto suggested the same thing. That was when I put together "The Stillness Before Time," which has thirty pages of 250 aphorisms, along with another twenty essays and lists. But the feedback I have gotten from a few publishers along the way, is that, although they like it, this sort of aphoristic writing is not cha-ching marketable. It is not Harry Potter, I have often said.

So, unless I put together some sort of Chopra-Hitchenson-Whitman-Rand-Sartre-Krishnamurti-Ram Dass-Rashneesh-Ramtha-Et Cetera roadshow and cultivate a loyal, deep-pocket following -- for which I have absolutely no ambition or interest -- this little hobby will likely just go hand-in-hand with moi into the grand oblivion. Which, as I've said previously, is okay by me. It has been an enjoyable pastime, and that's enough for this reckoning. Meanwhile, I'm just putting it out there no charge for whoever comes upon it, letting time do with it what it will.

Looks like another day in the dream is done. Off to nadaville.

G'night,

M

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Steven:

I've faced the same problem about publication. I toy with the idea of a memoir, but who would read it? My mother used to say people like reading about Lincoln, about doctors, and about dogs, so I should surely write Lincoln's Doctor's Dog and get rich!

Off to a Christmas cookie-baking party, featuring, no doubt, an over-the-hill gang of women.

S

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Moi:

Wafting in the remnants of estrogen toxicity. Bake on, brave knight.

-----

Steven:

I can't do more than boil spaghetti water, so I am bringing a cheesecake. It will probably be the only man's cheesecake there!

-----

Moi:

Boiling rice and beans is about all the cooking I do at this end. Any other intake is akin to grazing through whatever's available in the cupboards and fridge. Took a couple six-packs of Shock Top beer and a bag of Nacho Doritos to yesterday's afternoon of holiday celebration with a clan I adopted in my youthful years.

\* \* \* \*

Moi:

Dance, Monkeys, Dance

Three videos I always like to pass on.

Dance, Monkeys, Dance

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xLNA7MRdjlw>

Man

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WfGMYdalCIU>

In the Fall

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A-rEb0KuopI>

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Steven:

Very clever! Nothing like animals to be poor ecologists ... I don't view man as being different and worse, landing from outer space and wrecking the place, though. To me, he is just another animal, uncaring and messy to the environment, with a bit more empathy, but plenty of destructive tendencies. At least we cook our food and don't try to eat our prey while still alive. No other animal exhibits even that much consideration! The idea implied, though, that animals care about the environment and we don't is original sin nonsense.

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Moi:

We are just DNA doing what DNA does. Tack on consciousness, and you have the good, the bad, the beautiful, the ugly, in spades beyond counting.

\* \* \* \*

Moi:

Religion's smart-people problem: The shaky intellectual foundations of absolute faith

[http://www.salon.com/2014/12/21/religions\\_smart\\_people\\_problem\\_the\\_shaky\\_intellectual\\_foundations\\_of\\_absolute\\_faith/](http://www.salon.com/2014/12/21/religions_smart_people_problem_the_shaky_intellectual_foundations_of_absolute_faith/)

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Steven:

This is the most succinct approach to the topic I have read--and gives the best reasons for disbelief -- namely the ones any fool can think of but generally chooses not to!

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Moi:

I figured you would consider it a dialed-in piece of work. It never ceases to amaze me when I meet any intelligent person -- especially one steeped in science -- who still embraces one religious delusion or another. I have often enjoyed saying, "I've read yours, now you read mine," as I hand them one of my website business cards. Bwahahahahaha ...

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Steven:

I think the problem of religion is that we are wired to believe our parents unconditionally up to a certain age. If they tell us about God during that window, it is hard to get rid of the notion. My parents didn't talk about God much, and it was easy for me to say the whole thing seemed unreasonable at an early age.

-----  
Moi:

Ditto. "Nature is my god" is what someone (whose name I can't remember) said, .

Out the door to the movies. Whoo-hoo.

-----  
Moi:

I believe in the cosmos. All of us are linked to the cosmos. Look at the sun. If there is no sun, then we cannot exist. So nature is my god. To me, nature is sacred. Trees are my temples and forests are my cathedrals ~ Mikhail Gorbachev

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Steven:

Nature is sacred but also cruel and largely not interested in you....it needs to be tamed. Now that is not a popular view, but our desire to tame it is natural! And we are a natural product of nature, as is what we produce. I love the fact that they found polymers in outer space. Our plastic world is natural!

-----  
Moi:

Yes, we are nature, and might makes right, but I doubt we can long abide well our penchant for covering the garden with cement, asphalt, and countless other linear creations. We have forever changed the face of our one and likely only home, and not in a pretty way by my reckoning. But, oh well and so it goes.

\* \* \* \*

Moi:

James Carroll on disarming the memory of Jesus: "America threatens the world with violence in ways that no other country does"  
[http://www.salon.com/2014/12/20/james\\_carroll\\_on\\_disarming\\_the\\_memory\\_of\\_jesus\\_america\\_threatens\\_the\\_world\\_with\\_violence\\_in\\_ways\\_that\\_no\\_other\\_country\\_does/](http://www.salon.com/2014/12/20/james_carroll_on_disarming_the_memory_of_jesus_america_threatens_the_world_with_violence_in_ways_that_no_other_country_does/)

Wikipedia: James Carroll  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James\\_Carroll\\_\(author\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Carroll_(author))

Wikipedia: Constantine's Sword  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constantine%27s\\_Sword\\_\(film\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constantine%27s_Sword_(film))

Netflix: Constantine's Sword  
[http://dvd.netflix.com/Movie/Constantine-s-Sword/70073043?strkid=269228858\\_0\\_0&strackid=3a7500258dd21342\\_0\\_srl&trkid=222336](http://dvd.netflix.com/Movie/Constantine-s-Sword/70073043?strkid=269228858_0_0&strackid=3a7500258dd21342_0_srl&trkid=222336)

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Steven:

Very interesting, if you still want to try to believe and wade through the difference between Roman middle-east politics and religious philosophy. I applaud Carroll for pointing out that what we consider moral points about money changers, etc, had to do with practical and political life at the time, not doctrine. But in actual fact, I don't care about that world much and don't think shepherds from 2000 years ago have anything to teach us. Jesus can be anything we want him to be, but I'll never think of him in living my life. I don't honestly care what people think he was ... to me, he was probably a sociopathic narcissist, like Bill Cosby or Al Sharpton!

Some of the anti-semitism argument falls flat with me as a New Yorker living for decades in a half-Jewish city. People do not hate immigrant groups because of their religion. People hate them because of the way they behave. Whoever spoke about Muslims in the USA or cared or knew, until they started killing people?

Most of the anti-Jewishness I heard growing up was of the kind where well-behaved people found not the Jewish religion, but Jewish attitudes slippery: an attitude of cheat preemptively before being cheated. This behavior is characteristic of low trust economies, like those of Italy and the Middle-East and Africa. But such guardedness is exhausting to deal with in daily life ... and so, many people didn't want to have anything to do with Jews in business. Quotas popped up.

Secondarily, people distrusted the Jewish socialist philosophy. Many Jews I know had parents who met in Communist summer camps in the Catskills. We forget that 10% of the US population was sympathetic to Communism in the 30s-40s. The most visible ones were Jewish: the Rosenbergs (atomic spies) and less known, the Undersecretary of the Treasury, Harry Dexter White. He died of a heart attack around the time he was to appear before the Un-American Activities Committee. But he showed up in the Venona Papers, the KGB files on US spies for Russia. It turns out the Vice President, Henry Wallace, was also a Soviet spy.

We live in better times. Imagine if Joe Biden turned out to be an Iranian spy...inconceivable!

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Moi:

The Middle East is the brain tumor of the world as far as I'm concerned. Judaism, Christianity, Islam, and everything that has splintered off from their shadow, is just an unfolding horror story for whatever future is left in the human epoch. I've had very few direct dealings with the Jewish culture – Mexicans and Assyrians are the minority groups in this neck of the woods – but it has no doubt had a huge influence on all our lives in ways beyond counting. My brother-in-law came away very bitter from a large business deal with some Jewish folks – I think from the East Coast, likely New York – ten or so years ago. Hitler and crew didn't come out of a vacuum in their genocidal mania. I've been known to irreverently joke that Woody Allen should make a movie about Jesus starring himself.

And on and on, I'm sure.

And yet doesn't it all boil down to how similar we are in our differences, how different we are in our similarities? Like every other life form, we are just patterns of nature playing out our little programs for as long as our very mortal containers will allow.



Coincidentally, some good propaganda arrived this morning from a true believer I met a month or so ago here at Geerbucks. Another one of those seemingly intelligent ones who's practically frothing at the mouth.

Love the Jewish People

<http://www.chick.com/m/reading/tracts/readtract.asp?stk=1000>

And to ease the inanity, one of my ditties from the "Ponderings" blog book:

It may well be less "The horror! The horror!"  
Than it is "The absurdity! The absurdity!"

Enjoy the day as best ye may.

Ciao, ciao,

M

-----

Steven:

Perfect description: brain tumor! We may be getting good with targeted therapies, though ... we shall see. Back in the old days the hijackers would calm down and admit they wanted to study dentistry in Chicago. Maybe after we flatten ISIS long enough, the tumor will go into remission.

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Moi:

Don't expect me to be putting any money down on that bet!

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Steven:

Well, we can treat it like diabetes and achieve "maintenance".

-----

Moi:

We can start calling drones insulin.

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Steven:

Better than having them drop packages on our heads and crash into our houses. I was always amused as a child that popular magazines of the day thought we would all have helicopters in our driveway. Can you imagine the drunken and noisy air traffic at 2 a.m. Saturday nights?

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Moi:

Getting home is already sometimes fuzzy enough without adding a third dimension.

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Steven:

Exactly. They weren't thinking. They used to advertise Chryslers in the early 50's for having an all-steel dashboard, too. Terrific for an all-steel head, I suppose.

\* \* \* \*

Moi:

Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis

I finally looked up the Youtube link you recommended on the "Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis". Just downloaded the 3:52-minute BBC excerpt version that I found the iTunes Store, as well, so here it is, along with a few others it turns out I already had in my iTunes collection. It was used in "Master And Commander: The Far Side Of The World," one of my many favorite movies. Have both the DVD and CD, and have enjoyed "Fantasia" without knowing its origin many times.

Looks like they are also using it in the new "Fifty Shades of Grey" movie (in which the soundtrack appears to be entirely classical music) coming out on Valentine's Day, so, popular book that it was, what you said about women swooning may well go bonkers in 2015, perhaps on a hysterically herd-ish scale. Whoo-hoo.

Youtube: Vaughan Williams Fantasia on a theme of Thomas Tallis HQ

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ihx5LCF1yJY>

Youtube Search: Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis Sir Andrew Davis

[https://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=Fantasia+on+a+Theme+by+Thomas+Tallis+Sir+Andrew+Davis](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=Fantasia+on+a+Theme+by+Thomas+Tallis+Sir+Andrew+Davis)

Thanks for bringing it to my attention. "Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis" now has its own playlist for my many solitary wanderabouts.

Ciao, ciao,

M

P.S. Or should it be written HERd?

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Steven:

I see you've found several of the good performances. Maybe you should try them out on different women! Here are three other Vaughan Williams favorites: The Symphony No. 5, "The Lark Ascending" and "Five Variants of Dives and Lazarus". All are girl-food! The Fifth Symphony, written during the war, is amazingly serene and one of the great twentieth-century works of art. Enjoy! If you wonder where

Vaughan Williams stands, he is the strongest example of the "English Pastoral" movement, irreverently known as "cow looking over a fence" music. Then in his symphonies, he got much bolder and drivingly powerful. But his small pieces are these beautiful impressionistic things. I wrote program notes to the Fifth Symphony for an Oregon Symphony Pentatone CD (not available for free on YouTube). But here is the text below.

S

Vaughan Williams-Symphony No. 5 in D major

<http://youtu.be/q9YoEETzYsE>

<http://youtu.be/UJjwXf9Q6U>

<http://youtu.be/yEIJ873QItw>

The Vaughan Williams Fifth Symphony, composed between two far more violent works, is one of the most evocative pieces of music ever written—timelessly English--profoundly and gently sincere. It floats in upon the listener with soft motto horn calls, as if from a modal dream peopled with chords of smoke and fugues of fog. It inhabits a world of indistinct shapes moving through blacked-out streets, shadowy church gardens in the moonlight, and harbor mists. Yet no menacing or tragic vista is revealed in what Vaughan Williams depicts. Through everything muted and uncertain in 1943 wartime England, one senses only a deep reverence for beauty and the human heart. This is a work of cherished normality.

The symphony introduces itself with a harmonic ambiguity which sets the mood for the whole work and establishes its sense of mystery: foghorns in D, repeatedly tamped down by low Cs from the strings. For several minutes the music seems unable to emerge from the mist, as tendrils of gloom landing like tumbleweeds in the basses pull it down into the darkness. There is an almost Sibelian rumination to it. Indeed, the work is dedicated to Sibelius. But then, in one of the most open-hearted modulations in all of music, the symphony surges forward in E major, as though uttering Alleluia from Vaughan Williams' hymn, For All The Saints. This is the moment where the music moves into sunlight and green fields for its long journey--and listeners realize they have fallen in love.

Vaughan Williams' use of harmony is always historically-minded and as unifying as anything in Schoenberg. But deconstructing it may be no more revealing of its intuitive simplicity than attempting to measure kisses with calipers. Suffice it to say that the first movement is developed with rigor and evocation. Fugal moments woven of filigree and shafts of light build to a windswept anticlimax of shuddering strings in octaves; the central horn climax expands bits of the Alleluia into a grand coming together of all that is good and noble, and the music proceeds warmly and confidently back towards the enveloping mystery from which it came. As the movement concludes, sounds fade away like harbor ferries merging with the horizon. Only fog and a few bits of light remain. Welcome to the night.

The Scherzo, which follows, hearkens back to its counterpart in Vaughan Williams' 1914 London Symphony, where a gaggle of Cockney revelers dance to accordions in the street, but this time we are on a blacked-out journey through an air-raid warden's world. We travel in feathery gloom, where things go bump in the night. Unrecognized objects jump out at us from the dark and disappear again. A moment of boisterousness from a pub spills into the street, its illumination a violation of law, but its crude energy humanly reassuring. Then, as if we turn the corner, it all vanishes.

“He hath given me rest by his sorrow, and life by his death.” With these words from Pilgrim’s Progress, Vaughan Williams sets the stage for the moonlit consolations of the Romanza. This is music of modal beauty to rival the Tallis Fantasia, hushed, profoundly consecrational and of incomparable warmth. Towards the end, a violin solo as timeless as England itself and reminiscent of The Lark Ascending puts the listener to rest like a lullaby.

The symphony concludes with a unifying passacaglia, which is one of music’s tried and true “confidence tricks”. Like a magician picking your pockets while distracting you, it repeats itself relentlessly, only you don’t notice. The music is now definitely on a D major journey, and a confident one, though leavened by unearthly quiet moments along the way. It comes at last full-circle to the mysterious horn calls with which the symphony began, now grand and capable of defeating the timpani, whose thunder tries to pull the music back down in key--only to give way at last to one of the most celestial and moving of all epilogues.

It is as if the symphony takes you lovingly by the hand to lead you home. And as you approach its doorstep, it seems as though the music would slow down for a proper goodbye. But instead, with a tiny push forward, the penultimate two chords let slip your fingers – and break your heart.

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Moi:

If I am not a cow, what am I?

You are my classical advent, Professor K. I am not a great student, but I am a student. I shall check out your Vaughn Williams links in some very near soon.

What a great serendipity to have met you.

And perchance there would be a woman enter my fourth quarter life, she would have to be very young, very beautiful, very intelligent – in the way these eyes see youth and beauty and intelligence – and promise never to age or change or be the shrew. Even the greatest Genie would be challenged by that only very rare concoction.

P.S. And no children, either. I love them too much to bring them here.

-----  
Steven:

Thanks for the kind words.

It's serene to be a cow! I chew my cud a lot, as well. Having failed in certain big ways and been handicapped medically in others, I nonetheless do not fail at being an observer at this stage of life – while I chew – so to speak.

I have leaped from promise to the satisfactions of gravitas without the intervening inconvenience of success!

My sympathies over the woman problem: I spent the day with an interesting 62-year-old woman friend, well off, beautiful house, multilingual, multi-traveled, single, no children I even liked her dog. But I have no desire to sleep with her. She's kept her figure, but ... no thanks. You have to age together with a woman. Then she will look the same to you as the day you met. But meet her at 62 and -- no way!

But I'd feel foolish taking anything other than a passive interest in 25-year-olds. 38-year-olds still ogle me in the street, though, so perhaps there is hope! To the extent that one wants sex to be the byproduct of mutual desire, it is not hard to determine from women's glances in the street what one's "level" of attractiveness is. Of course, older men traditionally bypass that level with money, but I don't have enough to be a sugar daddy, so I have to compete fair and square. 40 would be nice. She'd still be pretty at 50, And then, who would care? I'd be 77!

With that cheerful thought!

Steven

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Moi:

So many things beyond our control, but I suppose there is grace in knowing you could have been a contender were the fates not so remorselessly cruel.

I'm happily single, all but invisible anymore.

-----

Steven:

Especially if one was told so objectively and can also see it was so in moments of truth-to-self ... I substantially live in my fantasy as the conductor I might have been.

I'm happily single, but the way a refrigerator is happy on "energy conservation" mode. I'd like even better to operate again on full power, so to speak.

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Moi:

What more can anyone do but his best in the winds of all the adversities of his brief existence?

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Steven:

I generally agree. The problem is, one knows that occasionally one delivered less than one's best! And one kicks oneself for slack moments. One suspects them as the cause of one's failure, even if they aren't.

S

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Moi:

Alas, those daze of youthful vigor are in wakes long lost in the currents of time.

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Steven:

I've still got a lot of the vigor – for now – but wonder what would be the point of getting too ambitious about anything for the long term.

S

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Moi:

Lots of different directions my life could have gone many times, too.

Who can guess what adventures are ahead in this fourth quarter?

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Steven:

That's true enough! One thing is for sure. It is easier to be happy at this age. One is serene from experience and secured from torment by adults. To one's amazement, one is the adult.

S

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Moi:

I think we can rule this one out.

Woman appears in court after road rage captured on camera

<http://www.kcra.com/news/local-news/news-sierra/woman-appears-in-court-after-road-rage-captured-on-camera/30377450>

I think I said somewhere during our intro, that the final and perhaps greatest challenge in life, is being content with who you are and what you've done.

I think I'm off to zzz-land.

G'night,

M

\* \* \* \*

Moi:

## The Road Less Traveled

[Graphic of meme: I chose the Road Less Traveled. Now, where the hell am I?]

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Steven:

I love it!

S

\* \* \* \*

Moi:

Michael Shermer: Baloney Detection Kit

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eUB4j0n2UDU&feature=share>

With a sea of information coming at us from all directions, how do we sift out the misinformation and bogus claims, and get to the truth? Michael Shermer of Skeptic Magazine lays out a "Baloney Detection Kit," ten questions we should ask when encountering a claim.

The 10 Questions:

1. How reliable is the source of the claim?
2. Does the source make similar claims?
3. Have the claims been verified by somebody else?
4. Does this fit with the way the world works?
5. Has anyone tried to disprove the claim?
6. Where does the preponderance of evidence point?
7. Is the claimant playing by the rules of science?
8. Is the claimant providing positive evidence?
9. Does the new theory account for as many phenomena as the old theory?
10. Are personal beliefs driving the claim?

\* \* \* \*

Moi:

Of Heart and Mind

The heart knows nothing whatsoever of silence. In fact, it is not separate from the mind, both the mind and heart are in a constant state of change from moment to moment. Those who are too identified with the heart have enjoyed pretending as though it is the ultimate phenomenon of life, it is not.

What you are calling the heart is just the emotional dimension of man, and to become identified with your emotions is just as blinding and intoxicating as becoming identified with your thoughts. If you want to know of that which is seeing through your eyes and hearing through your ears, you will have to discover that dimension within you which is not of the mind and not of the heart, which cannot be grasped by any name.

Amir Mourad

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Steven:

And the trouble is, people insist on giving it a name ... everything from "gestalt" to "God".

S

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Moi:

Naming keeps us from having to looking any further. Tag anything with a label and you eliminate the bother, and have license to do with it whatever you please.

-----

Steven:

I have a lot of fun telling Christians there is no such thing as "sin". It upsets their whole apple cart of doing exactly what intolerant people have wanted to do for thousands of years – namely, disapprove of everyone else. Take away the value of a few words like that and you paralyze them!

S

-----

Moi:

I call it original separation. Imagine that newborn exiting the womb, the sudden sensory overload, gasping for that first breath, and not even one word for it.

-----

Steven:

Makes you wonder what cells say to each other when they split! I have a friend who upset the nuns at school by asking, "When a starfish separates and becomes two starfish, which one gets the soul?" Oops.

S

-----

Moi:

Brainfreeze.

\* \* \* \*

Moi:



Evolution and Our Inner Conflict

<http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/06/24/evolution-and-our-inner-conflict/>

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Steven:

Arthur Koestler once wrote a book called "The Ghost in the Machine", an attempt to explain the destructiveness of humanity. In it he hypothesized that we are both individual atoms and molecules belonging to some larger whole. He coined the term "holon" to describe us. It means something that is both individually whole but also part of something larger. That always seems to be the conflict.

S

-----

Moi:

And the monkeys don't want to be monkeys.  
They want to be something else.  
But they're not.

Last line in the "Dancing With Monkeys" video

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Steven:

Exactly! I don't need to be something else. But I do need to be reasonable about being the creature I am!

S

-----

Moi:

Patterns within patterns within patterns ... ad infinitum.

-----

Steven:

The trick is to get us all enjoying our patterns by weaving a nice friendly tapestry from them – not by killing everything else with a different pattern. All philosophy can do is remind us: Here are the mysteries. We can't solve them. So here is how we deal with life on earth and with the lack of just such a purpose as religions presuppose.

S

-----

Moi:

The mind evolved as a problem-solver, and has to create insoluble problems because serenity is just too hard to bear.

-----  
Steven:

That must be the answer. But I've solved mine to the point where serenity is just fine!

S  
-----  
Moi:

Ditto ... at least as often as possible.

\* \* \* \*

Moi:

Aldous Huxley on Music

Ran across this in my collection of quotes. You likely know of it, but just in case ...

After silence, that which comes nearest to expressing the inexpressible is music ~ Aldous Huxley

Hope all's well.

M

-----  
Steven:

Hi Michael,

Huxley was an interesting thinker. I read years ago most of his early novels, including Brave New World. I expect music serves to express everything to those with an ear!

I'm off today to London for two weeks: a junket paid for by my editor. I'll be at the Dolphin House Hotel, where members of Parliament stay when in town, and have lined up a series of plays concerts, museums and restaurants--all, fortunately, paid for! He'll be traveling with his girlfriend, who insists on having high tea and patronizing expensive restaurants. My only difficulty will be to find food not just expensive, but healthy!

Hope you are doing well and listening to symphonies!

Cheers.

Steven

-----  
Moi:

Haven't read near as much Huxley as you, but what I have touched base with has certainly made an impact.

You mentioned the London trip back when we met at Union Square. What a sweet adventure. Am actually getting the same opportunity in April with the woman friend I mentioned. A ten-dayer in the Hyde Park zone. Nothing like having good friends who can afford such things.

And no worries, got some good classical in the mix when I'm not enjoying the sound of silence.

Have a most excellent time.

Ciao, ciao,

M

-----

Steven:

It seems we both benefit in the same way! London is freezing but still fascinating. I'm booked into about five gourmet restaurants and five concerts.

Some pictures I took below. I'm staying in the nighttime "moonscape" ... Notice also the blue rooster dominating Trafalgar Square!

Cheers.

Steven

-----

Moi:

First I'd heard of it. Surprisingly, the critics seem to be taking it fairly well. I see it as a sure sign that Britannia no longer rules.

Wikipedia: Hahn/Cock

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hahn/Cock>

Hope it's a little less chilly in April.

-----

Steven:

It is usually like SF, not cold, just less sunny.

S

\* \* \* \*

Moi:

Bach and Handel by the Modesto Symphony

Hey, Steven,

Just an FYI that I got to listen to some Bach and Handel the other night. A friend I ran into there would have liked it to be more meaty, but I enjoyed it.

Bach:

Violin Concerto No. 1 in A minor, BMV 1041 (1717-23)

Handel:

Concerto Grosso in C minor, Op. 6, No. 8 HMV326 (1739)

Water Music Suite No. 1 in F Major HWv 348 (1717)

Modesto Symphony

<http://www.modestosymphony.org/>

Gallo Center for the Arts

<http://www.galloarts.org/>

Went with the same friend, Eileen, who's taking me to London for her daughter's run in the London Marathon. At this writing, we'll be staying at the London Marriott Hotel near Grosvenor Square. She's not too happy with the room, so that may change.

Hope you've had a great time in your week over there.

Ciao, ciao,

M

-----

Steven:

Handel and Bach these days are performed usually with small groups in an original 1650s style. But I prefer the famous arrangement by Hamilton Harty for full orchestra. This may be what your friend thought of as "meaty". See below. You may want to skip the guy explaining things, but this rich orchestration is hard to find on YouTube.

S

Mr.Music – Handel-Harty: Water Music Suite

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o89QRsqqkQ&feature=youtu.be>

-----

Moi:

Maybe that was what he was talking about. There were only 21 players.

Thanks for the link. You still over there, or back in time for our little drenching?

-----  
Steven:

I'm still in London, staying at Dolphin House. Two bedrooms and two baths, living room and kitchen are \$325 a day. A great bargain. It is near the Pimlico underground stop, walking distance from the Tate. You should try it. Still 3 concerts to go!

Some photos below.

S

-----  
Moi:

Dolphin House looks nicely located, but Eileen is quite attached to Marriott, and is using a bunch of points to cover most of the bill. Two bedrooms would be nice, though. I likes my space. Will pass on the tip just in case.

Nice pics.

\* \* \* \*

Moi:

Tonic of Wildness

Hey, Steven,

Touched base with an old friend from the Ojai daze. This is a Youtube video on Thoreau that he created several years back that you might enjoy in the wild streets of San Fran.

Tonic of Wildness: Adapted from Henry David Thoreau  
A One-Man Show of Thoreau by John Christianson  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7cyK4B-Qxq0>

The London trip is about a month away, and in the meanwhile, a road trip next week to see friends up in Chico. Whoo-hoo.

Hope's all's well.

Ciao, ciao,

M

-----

Steven:

Hi Michael,

This is really nicely done and worth listening to. I noted with amusement, though, as an urban person, that I feel about London and city life the way he feels about the pond!

I hope you do, too, on your forthcoming visit. If you can manage it, get your friend to take you to high tea at the Corinthia Hotel. The building used to be the British Admiralty. It is known to connoisseurs but less famous in guidebooks than the Dorchester, which tends to collect "improperly" dressed tourists!

Cheers.

Steven

-----

Moi:

You mean my ratty t-shirt and tobacco-stained baseball cap won't do?

-----

Steven:

Actually, it will! That, (says he snobbishly) is the problem! I got a kick out of being formal this time. A German girl tried to pick me up at a lunch restaurant, so I think it worked. See my "costume for success"(!) At the Corinthia I drooled over the most beautiful and perfectly dressed girl being entertained at the next table. It never hurts being mistaken for a stuffed shirt in England!

Cheers.

-----

Moi:

That is an upscale, warship-looking place, and I'd say you fit right in, Herr Kruger. Must be that Prussian blood. Will definitely add it to the list of possibilities.

-----

Steven:

Another great one is Claridge's Hotel. But get someone else to pay!

S

-----

Moi:

How much more Europe offers than our little poof of history. Hope my knees and back can hold up to everything I want to see and do.

-----

Steven:

Indeed! Here is another spectacular tea spot: the Wolseley, at 160 Piccadilly. The Brits built a car by that name for a time, and this used to be the showroom.

S

\* \* \* \*

Moi:

Around and About in London

Hey, Steven,

It's going on three-ish in the morning here. Waiting for a half a sleeping pill to kick in. Eileen and I are going at the tourista thing at a relatively relaxed pace. Using the Underground, taxis, and foot power to get around. Did Tower of London yesterday, the Wallace Collection the day before, and the Churchill War Rooms and a stroll around St. James Park and Buckingham Palace, followed by the musical "Beautiful" about Carole King the day before that. Walkabouts around the London Marriott Hotel Grosvenor Square area, including Hyde Park, are filling in the gaps. Dinner at the nearby three-Michelin-star Le Gavroche last night was probably one of my most elaborate food experiences ever. I think we're leaning toward the Museum of London today, and on Thursday I'll be spending time with a fellow named Russell, who I've been communicating with online since 2010.

Below is the map of possibilities in the quickly diminishing time we have left. Friday and beyond look like the Maritime and British Museums, and whatever else rises to the top of the list. The London Marathon is on Sunday, and the long journey back will begin on Monday. Clicking on the stars will show what's what where.

Google Maps: London

<https://www.google.com/maps/@51.5066189,-0.1446676,13z?hl=en>

So, all is well at this end. Could spend the rest of my life here and not see it all.

Ciao, ciao,

M

-----

Steven:

Sounds like a wonderful trip. Look into a restaurant called OXO on the South Bank, past the Tate Modern on top of a housing complex. The view of St. Paul's and across the Thames is to die for. You should have a drink at least.

Wasn't it Samuel Johnson who said anyone tired of London was tired of life?!

Best.

S

-----

Moi:

Yeesch, I forgot all about the Tate, and the Victoria and Albert ... and ... and ... and ...

I thought I was tired.

-----

Steven:

Great lunch in those places, too! Good for people watching.

S

-----

Moi:

It's all been a people-fest, that's for sure. Am thinking about letting Eileen go home alone and living in Youth Hostels the next few months.

-----

Steven:

Brilliant! I'm told that even without being part of the Euro, you can easily get a British employer to hire you anyway – if that becomes necessary. It is only a matter of filling out a form saying you are requested. Or so I'm told ... Wish I could afford it at a slightly higher level than hostels!

S

-----

Moi:

What would have been brilliant is if I'd thought about it and prepared ahead of time. Unfortunately, this point just wouldn't be quite the right time. Did it thirty years ago with a backpack and a thumb, but other commitments, Mother matters, and a tarnished knee waylay my more impulsive nature. Would certainly be easy enough otherwise. Don't even think I'd need to do seek out a would-be employer. Just go to the U.S. Embassy a few blocks away and extend my visitor visa a week or three. Seems like it would be easy enough, at least in the good old pre 9/11 daze.

-----

Steven:



Well, you can always go back later. Just the price of an air ticket. Not easy to cut traces as simply past thirty-five, though.

S

-----

Moi:

No such thing as traces in the way back when. Getting back into gypsy travel mode is definitely an option once me Mum is gone. Put everything in storage and just let go. Just living off the meager winnings, anyway, it really doesn't matter where.

\* \* \* \*

Moi:

National Geographic Videos

Dazzling Time-Lapse Reveals America's Great Spaces

<http://video.nationalgeographic.com/video/short-film-showcase/america-timelapse-vin?source=relatedvideo>

'80s America Was Epic From Above

<http://video.nationalgeographic.com/video/short-film-showcase/80s-america-was-epic-from-above?source=relatedvideo>

-----

Steven:

Great stuff! But where are the rooftops of London? I'd trade the Grand Canyon for that!

S

-----

Moi:

London buildings at ground-level were great viewing, but I didn't find the rooftops or skyline all that enticing. Cranes and infrastructure projects everywhere. Eight-plus million people (8,416,535 according to Wikipedia) is a lot to keep up with, that's for sure. Probably best not to know too much about what lies beneath.

-----

Steven:

You are right. Nothing of a skyline like Manhattan. Some of it is still Dickensian. I recall one tube stop where the trains come through in semi-open air. You can see an old brick building above, set at a precarious angle, with windows facing right down into the station – clearly still somebody's little room. Everything is piled on top of everything else.

S

-----

Moi:

An amazing thing to walk through so many layers of history, and they not all that old in comparison with so many other geographies. Spanish missions and gold mines do not for ancient create.

\* \* \* \*

Moi:

Hunter S. Thompson Quote: The music business is a cruel and shallow money trench, a long plastic hallway where thieves and pimps run free, and good men die like dogs. There's also a negative side.

-----

Steven:

Actually, one of the remarkable things about the world of classical performers is how high-minded and nice a world it actually is. There is almost none of the skullduggery one expects from the rock world. The people who rise to the top in classical music are the people who deserve to be there. It is almost impossible to be a phony and succeed. And you don't rise by downplaying or disparaging the competition. In the pop world, you can bribe and cheat and screw your way to something, and claim some sort of success. And you can create a phony product, like Elvis' daughter releasing a video where you can't hear her voice through the orchestration – did she even have one? This is the nice thing about classical art. It has standards. If you don't meet them, it doesn't matter whom you know or how much money you have put out.

S

-----

Moi:

I would have suspected as much, but I'm not privy to the behind the scenes enough to be sure.

And does that apply to the audience, as well?

-----

Steven:

There is always some tension between what sophisticated listeners want, sort of upper-middlebrow stuff, the musical equivalent of contents in *The New Yorker Magazine*, and what the chi-chi avant-garde wants to hear, which most audiences tend to hate. There is also management telling one to do more warhorses to sell tickets. But that sort of debate occurs within museums, also. You'll never have a museum with only the *Mona Lisa* and a *Pieta* in it. And you won't have a good orchestra just playing the 1812 Overture and Beethoven's Fifth. The musicians, themselves, want more than that. But a great orchestra is a museum.

High art is dedicated to reason and proportion, and the symphonic world gradually vets music with those

same standards. It is a bourgeois art form. I say that proudly. Upper-middle-class life is dedicated to what will last. We may judge a building differently after fifty years and admit it into the canon of great buildings. We vet music the same way. We test it for staying power in the minds of reasonably serious listeners. I don't know if any of this answers your question about audiences. But I will say this: they are not fickle, like pop audiences. Once you decide you like a Monet, you don't suddenly decide not to like it. With Britney Spears, I'm not so sure!

S

-----

Moi:

That answers it very well. A perspective that fits what I've observed in my casual involvement with the music world, but one I could never hope to articulate as well.

Thanks,

M

\* \* \* \*

Moi:

Stephen Walter, the artist mapping London's shifts, stories and secrets – in pictures  
<http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/gallery/2015/may/10/stephen-walter-the-artist-mapping-londons-shifts-stories-and-secrets-in-pictures>

-----

Steven:

Quite funny stuff hidden in those, like "least obese adults".

S

-----

Moi:

It will give London locals and former tourists something to do with their magnifying glasses in the middle of the night.

\* \* \* \*

Moi:

Another Round of Silliness

Another round of silliness for your amusement, all written since the London trip in late April.

LEFTOVERS

What are the sensory organs – eyes, ears, tongue, nose, flesh – of any mortal vessel  
But readers of the ever-streaming colors, flavors, tastes, smells, and textures.  
What is any universe but awareness witnessing the creative handiwork  
Of the mind's analysis of the data the nervous system weaves?

\* \* \* \*

As with any organism great to small born into this whirling garden world,  
Human consciousness seeks out similar wavelengths within the spectrum of possibilities,  
Thus preserving, spreading whatever notions, whatever memes, are harbored in the given mindset.  
To discern one's conditioning, and perchance to be free of it, or at least aware of it,  
Requires a skeptical, introspective nature of the highest order.

\* \* \* \*

How many things will you steal before you discern the meaning of honesty?  
How many deceptions will you spawn before you discern the meaning of integrity?  
How many people will you harm or destroy before you discern the meaning of compassion?  
How much life will you live before you realize every act ripples out far and wide?

\* \* \* \*

Every age has it conscious witnesses whose artistic endeavors  
Leave behind many creations in thought and deed  
For as long as subsequent times abide.  
Some quickly disappear,  
And others become huge monoliths.

\* \* \* \*

Might be better to call 'The Truth' by some other sound  
– The Way, The Mystery, The Indivisible, The Great Zambini, or some such sound –  
So as to avoid making the error of believing it is any kind of thing,  
Rather than the ungraspable enigma that it is.

\* \* \* \*

Within the unfathomable immensity of the quantum matrix, holograms abound:  
Mirages, hallucinations, illusions, visions, delusions, fantasies, figments.  
Where the unreal is made real, form after kaleidoscoping form.  
Where every Kansas is an Oz, and every rope a snake,  
Until with a sharpened blade of discernment,  
The Gordian Knot is cut, and all again real become.

\* \* \* \*

What is news but gossip with varying levels of exhortation to give it an aura of great importance.  
Why we give attention to unfolding events across the world, or even across town,  
Is the mystery of the monkey-mind and its evolutionary roots.

\* \* \* \* \*

Assume that just about everyone has a number, an algorithm,

No different than any cow or pig or chicken in these our modern times.  
You are free to say or do pretty much anything as long as you don't talk too loud,  
Or do something annoying, something disruptive, to the powers that be,  
Such that your name flashes on some bureaucratic screen,  
And the jungle's bogeymen are unleashed.

\* \* \* \*

Consciousness is the movement within a bubble of manifest awareness,  
Whose brief mortal dreamtime allows the grand quantum mystery  
To witness its Self in whatever way the genetic lottery allows.

\* \* \* \*

Light gets in your eye; sound, in your ear; taste, in your mouth;  
Touch, in your flesh; smell in your nose; a universe in your mind.

\* \* \* \*

What is an orgasm but the mind's most innate high,  
A very present, very pleasurable detonation in the timeless now.  
A disintegration, a dissolution, of any sense of self, of any sense of separation.  
Is it any wonder our species gallops the edge of obsession about everything to do with it?  
Sexuality is the wellspring, the underlying force, the fulcrum of human history.  
Power, renown, prosperity, the creativity of art, science, technology,  
All have come about as aphrodisiacs to its gratification.  
And all of it the evolutionary outcome  
Of the genomic ambition to abide evermore.

\* \* \* \*

No set of writings, no persona, no group,  
Should ever be accepted thoughtlessly as some authority.  
Everything should be approached vigilantly, rationally, with a critical eye.  
You are captain of the given mind-body to which you are witness.  
Take control of your helm, navigate your own course.  
History has its place, but you are here now.

\* \* \* \*

So many faces come and gone in the rolodex of life.  
So many moments spent together, so many things shared.  
What happened to them all, what stories unfolded into destiny?  
The things we can never know of our dreamtime are many and large.

\* \* \* \*

Every eye, a subjective filter.  
Objectivity is the ruse of idealistic notion.  
No matter how detached, how indifferent the endeavor,  
It is ever seen through the personal coloring of the conditioned mind.

\* \* \* \*

What are all human beings but liars, cheats, thieves, murderers, and anarchists.

At the cradle of the genetic lottery, we are the jungle from which we were spun.

\* \* \* \*

The awareness upon and within which consciousness skates  
Is an unfathomable mystery prior to and beyond all measure.

\* \* \* \*

That any given windfall or disaster is construed as some deity's will  
Shows the depth of absurdity to which the monkey-mind is capable.

\* \* \* \*

What is so dysfunctional, so surreal, about the human species,  
Is its obsession with what others think, and what others think about them.  
Groupthink has been a mainstay of our survival in this dreamtime,  
But its interminable absurdities are beyond measure.

\* \* \* \*

The inexplicable expanse is as much within as it is without  
When the line between inner and outer in awareness dissolves.

\* \* \* \*

To all who caste themselves upon high, who herald themselves greater,  
Know well there are many who reside on the level playing field  
Who do not and will never subscribe to hollow pretense.  
Might may make right, but it does not make true.

\* \* \* \*

Existence creates many questions, answers to which often raise many more,  
And on and on knowledge bounds into its fabricated future.  
What is the parable of Adam and Eve  
But the plucking of knowledge from the garden,  
And then carrying on with whatever it imaginary whirl concocted,  
Eventually swirling into the marvel and madness of these our so-called modern times.

\* \* \* \*

Change up the sensory field:  
Look with your ears, listen with your fingers,  
Feel with your nose, smell with your tongue, taste with your eyes.  
In a quantum mystery already well beyond the pale,  
What is there that is not conceivable?

\* \* \* \*

Unless you have managed to achieve the higher percentiles,  
Best to be practical and frugal, best to live within your means.  
Exorbitant debt can get unmanageably ugly way too very quickly.

\* \* \* \*

This universe, this world, was not created by meekness,

By fear, by hope, by political correctness, by any absurdity whatsoever.  
The vagaries of the human condition are but a hiccup in the unfolding eternal theater.

\* \* \* \*

When even more beyond counting ever leaves it unsatisfied,  
How can a monkey-mind ever but bemoan its discontent?

\* \* \* \*

From the eternal eye of awareness  
Through the sensory plays of all existence,  
An infinity of universes are created.

\* \* \* \*

The sovereign moon orbits absolutely, indivisibly, inescapably indifferent  
To all the vanities playing out on the spinning dust ball  
With which it has long danced.

\* \* \* \*

Do you think any worm chewing on your eyeball in some future past  
Would ever care any more about you than you do that chicken?  
Everything is fare for one indifferent beast or another.

\* \* \* \*

Best to introspect your own cabaret before judging another's.  
We are all cousins of the same puddle, we all live in glass houses.

\* \* \* \*

Is the me you think you know the me I think I am?  
Of course not, nor would the visa-versa ever be bona fide, either.  
We are all one-of-a-kind imaginary universes, each and every one at center stage,  
All of it happening in a quantum sort-of-maybe way.

\* \* \* \*

Nobody learns but through discipline and diligence.  
No teacher can teach a student who refuses to learn.

\* \* \* \*

If you seek a personal relationship with some deity,  
Then get to know your one and only Self  
At whatever level you aspire.

\* \* \* \*

Consciousness is an insatiable force.  
Were it to heartily devour the entire universe,  
Were it to experience absolutely everything imaginable,  
It would not be enough, it would still yearn for more, more, more.

\* \* \* \*

Same old story in yet another tale.  
The cast, the crew, the stage, has changed,  
But the patterned narrative is very much the same.

\* \* \* \*

Once the course of any stream or river is set,  
Its path is not easily changed much less undone  
But through Mother Nature's most diligent efforts.

\* \* \* \*

Awareness is the immortal connection  
That indivisibly transcends all creations great to small,  
Across all heavens, all hells, further than any eye but one will ever see.

\* \* \* \*

In the streaming course of human events,  
Time tends to do more things with a lifetime of creation  
That the lifetime itself could ever hope to attain.

\* \* \* \*

What a cruel, absurd joke it is  
To be recognized or acclaimed for anything.  
The intrinsic is the highest order.

\* \* \* \*

A great curiosity, a great absurdity, about this two-legged drama  
Is why so many are so concerned what others think or do.  
What is all this judgment but a survival mechanism  
Bred into being in the jungles of long ago.  
Yay or nay, it is ever entangling.

\* \* \* \*

All concepts, whether of some god,  
A horse, a chair, a rock, or some abstract quantum formula,  
Are born of limitation because they can never be more than formulations of consciousness.  
No sound will ever be more than a sound, no perception will ever be real,  
Including the you that you in mind-body believe so real.  
It is all a dream born of imagination.

\* \* \* \*

If history has proven anything,  
It is that far too many always manage  
To talk themselves into just about anything.

\* \* \* \*

What to do when you no longer want anything from this world or any other?  
Why, nothing, of course.



\* \* \* \*

Very dubious whether our seemingly innate attachment to the past,  
To whatever tradition, to whatever time and geography, we might subscribe,  
Is leaving many if any real options in the future just round the bend.

\* \* \* \*

Every living thing from great to small  
Imparts a teaching, a vision, a totem, a talisman,  
To any with eyes to see and ears to hear.

\* \* \* \*

Once you are free of karma, whatever happened  
To reach this timeless, ephemeral moment, no longer matters.  
Here you are, the one in the same, as liberated as you care, or uncare, to be.

\* \* \* \*

How many times has it been said or written:  
The world is for those who lack imagination.

\* \* \* \*

Are you really this form, this mind-body?  
Or is it merely a vehicle for consciousness to play out its dream,  
And you nothing more than a passenger, a witness,  
Awareness timelessly observing it all.

\* \* \* \*

Even the sharpest, most strident blade cannot pierce the awareness never born.  
Timeless, changeless, ageless, indivisibly, immortally indifferent to any stab or slice.

\* \* \* \*

How some minds spend their existence in the ecstasy of creative fire,  
And others abide unable to lend more than an occasional spark,  
Is a mystery for which spectators tithe a great deal of coin.

\* \* \* \*

This spinning garden is both womb and graveyard,  
And the existence between but a wormhole  
In the grand matrix of oblivion.

\* \* \* \*

Ego is the source of all flaws, the playground of all flaws, the upshot of all flaws.  
What other creature across this world daily carries such a burdensome weight.

\* \* \* \*

Star stuff come unto life.  
Thou art quantum, thou art god, thou art whatever,  
Forever and evers beyond.

\* \* \* \*

Call it chance, call it fate, call it destiny, call it what you will,  
Every existence is fashioned by an never-ending series of flukes.

\* \* \* \*

Just because someone is foolish enough to promise the future  
Does not mean you have to be foolish enough to believe it.

\* \* \* \*

Science and technology stand on the shoulders of all those who have come before.  
Turtles all the way down, so to speak, and all the way up,  
For as long as the dream plays out.

\* \* \* \*

What is the Buddha mind, the eternal mind,  
But the mind that thinks without thinking, sees without seeing,  
Hears without hearing, feels without feeling, smells without smelling, tastes without tasting.  
The sensory theater is but an ephemeral, ever-kaleidoscoping dream.  
A quantum play, nothing more, nothing less,

\* \* \* \*

Imagination imagines itself real, but it is not.  
It never has been, and will never be,  
More than figments of mind.

\* \* \* \*

This entire playground, this entire universe, is but fodder, chaff,  
In the discernment of this kernel of awareness, this ultimate Self.  
To discover you are the entire ocean in one drop is the brass ring.

\* \* \* \*

All creatures great to small are born of the same mysterious source,  
And, in that ultimate reality, all are quite equal in this mortal fray.

\* \* \* \*

No one is truly free in this mortal human paradigm.  
Ultimately, all are bound by one frame of reference or another.  
Bound by geography, culture, religion, language, gender, conditioning, events,  
Capacities and limitations, ambition, opportunities, ad infinitum.  
Like it or no, that's how the genetic lottery rolls.

\* \* \* \*

To learn from history is one thing, to allow the past to dominate the present, another.  
Every generation must play the hand they are dealt in the time they are allotted.  
Your ancestors had their time, you have yours, your progeny will have theirs.  
The traditions, the patterns, that worked at one point may not in another.  
To grapple with the present with a mind that is present is the highest order.

\* \* \* \*

If there is a goal in all this, then surely this here, this now, is it.  
A grand theater in which you, a drop in all, are the all in a drop.  
The real and only you, sovereign, absolute, indivisibly immaculate.

\* \* \* \*

When it comes to the grand infinity of it all,  
Always paint the largest picture you can imagine.

\* \* \* \*

Existence is a countdown until your inevitable return to oblivion,  
Until the complete and utter annihilation of your universe.  
Death is just tapping the Ruby slippers and going back to Kansas,  
Charon transporting you across the River Styx to the nothingness of Hades.  
However it is said, the void is from whence you came, and where you inevitably return.

\* \* \* \*

Imagine all the life forms on this garden planet,  
And realize you are of the same clayness as each and every one.  
Look out into the sea of stars, and realize the same.  
All are cousins of the same source.

\* \* \* \*

Treat your Self.  
Be here now.  
Bliss out.

\* \* \* \*

This entire manifest play is based on constant change,  
Constant movement, constant consumption, constant evolution.  
Only the ever-present indivisibility of the quantum matrix stays the same.

\* \* \* \*

Ooh, ooh, mystery.  
Ooh, ooh, brain freeze.

\* \* \* \*

What is sex, what is an orgasm, but stimulation,  
Friction, by your own hand or another's.  
Cloaked with every imaginable justification of mind,  
But really nothing more than the most primal urge to procreate  
Playing out the genetic lottery's ultimately meaningless pursuit of immortality.

\* \* \* \*

What is this phenomenon called life  
But a collection of extremely vague notions,  
To which an completely imagined self is so attached.

\* \* \* \*

The best teaching is spontaneous, anonymous,  
Where teacher and student connect deeply,  
And perhaps never see each other again.

\* \* \* \*

What need to have some group, some herd, corroborate the obvious?  
What need to teach, to illuminate, that which cannot be taught?  
What need to pretend that which will only ever be pretend?

\* \* \* \*

Who cares, really, what happened in some way back when.  
Here you are, right now, take a break from time, be free.

\* \* \* \*

What would have happened to all these thoughts  
If they had been written a few thousand years ago,  
During the earlier stages of the human contagion.  
How quickly Ponzi schemes sideline late-comers.

\* \* \* \*

Someone spins a parable, the future calls it scripture,  
And if enough glom on, it may even become a religion.  
Dogma, idolatry, persecution, and mayhem to follow.

\* \* \* \*

Every geography in its own time is its own brand of modern,  
All likely equally resistant to other renderings of the same.

\* \* \* \*

Nature's dogma is the unwritten law determined and enforced by quantum mechanics:  
Irrevocable, irreversible, unalterable, unchangeable, immutable, undeniable,  
Incontrovertible, indisputable, permanent, binding, absolute, final.

\* \* \* \*

Time to get another trim, cut another nail.  
Time to eat another steak, drink another bottle of wine.  
Time to take another jaunt, another walk, another shit, another piss.  
Time to fill out another form, smog another car, pay another bill, tie another shoe.  
Time to abide another discussion, cast another stone, suffer another wound, die another death.  
How many times does one need to do something to catch the drift?

\* \* \* \*

Somewhere in time, somewhere in space,  
Some mind first said it, first wrote it, first built it,  
Different mind, same mind, all derived of the same essence.

\* \* \* \*

Assuming any survive the dystopian now daily unfolding,  
They will be walking in the ruins of greed and self-absorption  
Unlike which the world and all its critters have ever seen.

\* \* \* \*

Ultimately, the final task is to let go  
All you have done, all you have not done,  
All that the world is, all that the world is not,  
And just quietly wander on in unutterable solitude.

\* \* \* \*

You are but a fleeting window in the seed principle's theater of dreamtime.  
Think what you will of its inexplicable mystery, you are but a player,  
And all your conclusions, all your assumptions, mean nothing.

\* \* \* \*

Once you quiet, once you calm, once you still, all the many notions,  
What is there but awareness free of any sense of other.  
Anything less is just singularity knocking.

\* \* \* \*

Sometime genius is noted in its own time, sometime later, often not at all.  
The whimsy of consciousness is unending in the passage of time born of mind.

\* \* \* \*

What is birth but the beginning of a dream, and death its end.  
And ever the great and powerful Quantum of Oz  
Before and after and between.

\* \* \* \*

Joy, bliss, ecstasy, heaven, nirvana, paradise, insight, illumination,  
Delight, elation, harmony, rapture, happiness:  
Yours for the seeing.

\* \* \* \*

Time streams toward its inevitable expiration.  
Insects will not be caring about such things.

\* \* \* \*

The pleasure of youth is taking so much for granted.  
The challenge of aging is watching entitlements evaporate  
Like a dewy morning giving way to the afternoon sun.

\* \* \* \*

The mystery, the unknowable you truly are, is utterly anonymous.  
Identity is but the temporal fabrication of consciousness,  
Of imagination, and its secular attachment to form.  
The source, the awareness, is prior to time, prior to mind,

And the rare who fully discern it abide in the unassuming solitude,  
The sovereign, unconditional, indivisible, immortal aloneness of eternal life.

\* \* \* \*

How much desire, how much fear is ignited by the chemistry  
Invoked by the tension of poor breathing, of oxygen deprivation.  
Unleash your Dragon: Breathe fully, breathe boldly, breathe aware.

\* \* \* \*

There are always subtleties within subtleties within subtleties.  
No one ever achieves excellence any first time,  
Nor doe anyone ever truly know everything about anything.  
Attaining mastery always takes practice; the beginner is always a beginner.

\* \* \* \*

Has anybody liked me? ... Must ... check ... phone ...  
Has anybody liked me? ... Must ... check ... computer ...  
Has anybody liked me? ... Must ... check ... phone ...  
Has anybody liked me? ... Must ... check ... computer ...  
Has anybody liked me? ... Must ... check ... phone ...  
Has anybody liked me? ... Must ... check ... computer ...  
Has anybody ... anybody ... anybody... anybody... anybody...

\* \* \* \*

What does it take to waylay the conditioning  
But the momentary attentiveness called by some eternal life,  
That which is prior to the mind-body, and the dream to which it is so attached.

\* \* \* \*

Who can out- Confucius Confucius?  
Who can out-Lao Tzu Lao Tzu?  
Who can out-Jesus Jesus?  
Who can out-Buddha Buddha?  
Who can out-Mohammed Mohammed?  
Hemmed in by the sages of the ages, we are, we are.

\* \* \* \*

Every existence will at some point be extinguished,  
And all the while, the matrix absolutely indifferent.

\* \* \* \*

Rest assured all ye who would envy and resent them,  
The one-percenters and their minions are just as prone to pooping  
And peeing and heartburn and lunacy and suffering and dying as everyone else.

\* \* \* \*

The horror, the absurdity, the inanity.  
What world is worth saving if it was even possible?

What can any hostage in this madcap monkey-mind asylum do  
But find what serenity and satisfaction they can in the empty squalor of it all.

\* \* \* \*

Young-juicy-sweet becomes old-shriveled-tart.  
One is good for stew, the other for gnawing.

\* \* \* \*

Given a reasonably vigorous body, an intelligent mind, and a certain fearlessness,  
You may well be able to experience an agreeable statistical sampling  
Of everything possible within the human paradigm.

\* \* \* \*

The universe has been ingeniously crafted  
That you might reach this point in time,  
And become conscious witness to the play.  
The price of the ticket: ecstasy, agony, death.

\* \* \* \*

So many families with squalid, pathetic tales.  
What is that proverb about blood being thicker than water?  
What might that mean if twists of irony and paradox were to tinge the brew?  
Is it thicker than the water of the womb? Is it thicker than the milk of the mother's breast?  
Or is it perhaps the blood bond, the covenant between the truest of friends?  
Are those we choose more important than the ones we are given?  
Is a bond in blood thicker than both water and milk?

\* \* \* \*

Can you ignore the pain, the slings and arrows of aging and dying?  
Can you rest easy in the ever-youthful fountain of awareness within?

\* \* \* \*

From the serenity of your mother's womb,  
You big-banged into your expanding universe.

\* \* \* \*

Will you shut off the switch of your mind-body existence for your Self?  
Or will it be shut off for you in the serendipity of time?  
Only Mister Grim the Reaper knows.

\* \* \* \*

Eternal life is the instinctual default for all life forms,  
And though many creatures may exist with some sort of sense of time,  
Humankind is so immersed in it as to need religion and every other form of distraction  
To offset the pain and suffering that a clock full of memories inspires.

\* \* \* \*

Every mind imagines a world to which its nature-nurture,

Its capacities and limitations, its frame of reference, subscribes.  
No one can be more or less than what the genetic lottery has allotted.  
Any rubber band, no matter how elastic, can only stretch so far.

\* \* \* \*

If there is no other, then what matter what any think of you, or you of them.  
Learn whatever you wish, experience whatever you want,  
But it is all for naught by winter's end.

\* \* \* \*

Show me some supreme being that does not include you,  
And I will call it just another hollow absurdity born of mind,  
Another idol to whom one tithing or another is likely due.

\* \* \* \*

Yet another war created by chicken hawks, agencies out of control,  
And a foreign policy that blows willy-nilly in winds of greed and self-absorption.  
And a nod to Hunter S. Thompson's quip about the music world: There's also a negative side.

\* \* \* \*

Quantifying, measuring everything imaginable, what is the point, really?  
Being ever-present with this inexplicable sojourn,  
Now that is a challenge, indeed.

\* \* \* \*

Time and space is but a fabrication of the neuron trails and memory cells.  
The nothing more, nothing less of quantum trails playing the indivisible real.

\* \* \* \*

The Way is simplicity its Self.  
Only you make it complex.

\* \* \* \*

So many sermonizing from some pulpit of their minds: 'Don't do this, don't do that.'  
All based on utterly absurd, often contradictory notions written thousand of years ago,  
Warnings of a go-directly-to-hell naughty list kept by some Santa Claus up in the clouds.  
Well, any defensive lineman worth his salt knows to push back or work around the block.  
There is not any dogma, any on-high authority, that means squat to those bent on discovery.

\* \* \* \*

What is the universe, but very tiny, very brief sparkles,  
In the grand infinity of the inexplicable eye of awareness.

\* \* \* \*

To be at peace, to be merged into the ultimate awareness  
That this mortal dreamtime offers in each and every streaming moment.  
What greater quality of mind could there be than the intangible brass ring of eternal life.



\* \* \* \*

Spend your life helping others wake up to a larger perspective?  
Why bother them if they are content in their stewpot of suffering?

\* \* \* \*

If you take your body, your vehicle, your temple, your meat machine, for granted,  
It will only be too unhappy to again and again, in many ways,  
Remind you of the error of your ways.

\* \* \* \*

Go to that state of solitude, that awareness before to time,  
That eternal here-now prior to consciousness,  
Where no other has never abided.  
That placeless place,  
The source code of creation.

\* \* \* \*

Curious how so many work so hard to help others who will not help themselves.  
How many times do you pick someone up before you realize gravity is stronger.

\* \* \* \*

Martyrdom tends to raise the dead to far greater heights  
Than they could have ever hoped were they mere mortals.

\* \* \* \*

World views are like assholes, everyone's got one.  
Sometimes they work out fairly well,  
And sometimes they don't.  
So it goes.

\* \* \* \*

A so-called spiritual experience,  
No matter how inexplicably comforting or reassuring,  
Does not for indelible truth make.

\* \* \* \*

What are you but imagination attached to a manifest dream.  
Still the many thoughts the senses inspire, and be a faceless one.

\* \* \* \*

Different geographies, different cultures, different languages, different livelihoods, different clothes,  
Different foods, different sports, different creeds, different absurdities,  
Different this, that, and the other thing,  
Same monkey.

\* \* \* \*

Pure awareness, agnostic, totally attentive,  
Fully absorbed in the eternal moment,

Is the highest state of beingness.

\* \* \* \*

What is any history, any saga, any memoir, any narration,  
But a set of partial perceptions of one mind or many,  
Precisely asserted by one storyteller or another.  
What really occurred in any given here now  
Is likely always a dubious assumption.

\* \* \* \*

Exceedingly challenging to hold on to something as ephemeral as nothingness.  
To be or not to be ... requires an acumen far more artless than most minds allow.

\* \* \* \*

Were you not so attached to all the perceptions about your imaginary cosmos,  
Of the given existence it could doubtless be asked: Did it ever really happen?

\* \* \* \*

Sticky wickets at every turn, in every nook and cranny.  
Vanity's rainbow casts a net far and wide and deep.

\* \* \* \*

All the pretty boys and girls always touting their good fortune,  
Until they, too, inevitably rejoin those less favored by the lottery.

\* \* \* \*

Listen to all the birds, and realize their little brains,  
Doubling-doubling-toiling-and-troubling in bird consciousness,  
Are in actuality not all that different than your own.  
We are all cousins of the same puddle,

\* \* \* \*

The big bang, genesis, whatever you want to call it,  
Is still underway, and very much includes you.

\* \* \* \*

To the ultimate witness, the awareness prior to all dimensions,  
It has never at all mattered who-what-where-when-why-how about anything.  
That has always been, and will ever be, for the play of consciousness to sort out, however it will.

\* \* \* \*

What here after or here before can there possibly be,  
When there has never been anything but here now.

\* \* \* \*

Is there really such a thing as a soul?  
Or is it merely the same quantum awareness,  
The same nothingness, equally permeating everything?

\* \* \* \*

You are the same awareness, the same oneness  
That has witnessed all eternity and its countless creations.  
Only imagination lost in vanity pretends otherwise.

\* \* \* \*

Even the most vile foe is teacher to you and you to he.  
There is no happening that has not played its part  
In your reaching this moment in dreamtime.  
You may not much care to offer heartfelt thanks,  
But the truth of it best be acknowledged for what it is.

\* \* \* \*

To which modern time might we be referring?  
All modernity has its moment in each and every mind,  
And all are forever lost the very instant they become memory.

\* \* \* \*

To all those who class themselves higher, greater, more substantial,  
Know that behind your back, or after you have left the room,  
There are many who snigger at your inflated absurdity.

\* \* \* \*

If you were in a jungle, and had not learned the means, the tools, necessary for your survival,  
How long do you think others would share the boon of their skill in the hunt?  
Every bird must leave the nest flying upon their own wing.  
Anything less is not the Way of Eden.

\* \* \* \*

\* \* \* \*

\* \* \* \*

## SOUNDBITES

What is the sun, what is the universe, but a tiny, brief sparkle in the infinity of your quantum sea.

\* \* \* \*

Look out into the void beyond the pale, and discern your shadow.

\* \* \* \*

We are all cousins of the same puddle, and star stuff before that, and before that, who can say?

\* \* \* \*

Ultimately, the real you has witnessed it all.

\* \* \* \*

Why should you ever blindly accept anything you cannot for your Self scientifically verify?

\* \* \* \*

Is any deity worth its salt as vain as we?

\* \* \* \*

Any path to glory is but another story cast into the dusty wind of time.

\* \* \* \*

Consciousness is a web of its own making, with filaments linking every mind.

\* \* \* \*

You are as free as you manage your mind.

\* \* \* \*

Both enticing and repulsive at the same time.

\* \* \* \*

Step back and watch that life you pretend with the detached eye of awareness you really are.

\* \* \* \*

Everything is God, and how can you not be part of everything?

\* \* \* \*

Nature tells you everything you need to know without a single word.

\* \* \* \*

Rich man's game, poor man's fight.

\* \* \* \*

We all swim out to the depth we are most inclined, most comfortable.

\* \* \* \*

Where is the line between any us and them?

\* \* \* \*

The indolent mind is the breeding ground of superstition, dogma, delusion, and other absurdities.

\* \* \* \*

Assumptions all.

\* \* \* \*

The weight of history makes pawns of the living.

\* \* \* \*

What certainty can science attain in a sea of variables?

\* \* \* \*

This is all big bang.

\* \* \* \*

What is any hero but one who waylays all thought of consequence.

\* \* \* \*

The vapor of nothingness pretending it is somethingness.

\* \* \* \*

Define cute, and who the hell came up with pink?

\* \* \* \*

What a cruel joke it would be to bring someone back from the serenity of death.

\* \* \* \*

Most only escape into larger, more comfortable prisons.

\* \* \* \*

How quickly, how seamlessly, how timelessly, the future becomes the past.

\* \* \* \*

An inconvenient truth, indeed, indeed.

\* \* \* \*

The vapor of intelligence is the quantum fever come to life.

\* \* \* \*

The art of self-deception: And how good are you at lying to your Self?

\* \* \* \*

The level of intrigue to which you subscribe is the level of intrigue you will endure.

\* \* \* \*

A mindful mind is an empty mind.

\* \* \* \*

So much more stressful to be a human becoming than it is to be a human being.

\* \* \* \*

Mesmerized, polarized, demonized, terrorized.

\* \* \* \*

The orgasm is imagination's explosion into oblivion.

\* \* \* \*

A good idea belongs to everyone.

\* \* \* \*

The decision is long since made, and we are, alas and so it goes, well past the veil of no return.

\* \* \* \*

So predictable as to be yawnworthy.

\* \* \* \*

Yet another non-issue to distract the mob.

\* \* \* \*

Pretense is the harbor of vanity.

\* \* \* \*

There is no inner, there is no outer, there is only the clarity of awareness.

\* \* \* \*

Has any war really ever been about anything more than avarice?

\* \* \* \*

It is the absurdity of fools to think genius can be educated.

\* \* \* \*

In consciousness, you are just another monkey; in awareness, well, that's another matter.

\* \* \* \*

The thoroughly modern moment.

\* \* \* \*

Truth is greater than any fiction, but you must get past all the stories to discern it.

\* \* \* \*

So many people, so late in the game.

\* \* \* \*

Truth is greater than any deity and requires no followers.

\* \* \* \*

Brighter does not mean wiser, nor dimmer, lesser.

\* \* \* \*

This, that, and the other thing, always bubbling into mind.

\* \* \* \*

What is the universe but a sparkle in your eye.

\* \* \* \*

If being cool is being stupid, might a good idea to pass.

\* \* \* \*

What is and what is not, same thing.

\* \* \* \*

You cannot free any who will not break their own chains.

\* \* \* \*

Greed and vanity daily mock the lessons of history.

\* \* \* \*

A little fasting might be good preparation for the daze ahead.

\* \* \* \*

You are a human being by design only.

\* \* \* \*

You are the only thing personal in the grand indifference of it all.

\* \* \* \*

No faster way to domesticate, to tame, to lessen the fear of wildness, than to feed it.

\* \* \* \*

Some eyes become older than the stars.

\* \* \* \*

Entitlement across this modern world is coming to a close for many if not most.

\* \* \* \*

Your skull is the finite edge of your infinitely imaginary universe.

\* \* \* \*

Pretty hard to see your Self when you don't really exist, and the eye that sees doesn't either.

\* \* \* \*

Truth is the only real gold.

\* \* \* \*

Eternity is an awfully long timeless to stay still, ergo, genesis.

\* \* \* \*

What has any Hallmark holiday become but a manic frenzy of obligatory consumption.

\* \* \* \*

Rare is the monkey-mind that fully embraces change.

\* \* \* \*

If it is not free and clear, it is not true.

\* \* \* \*

Irony and paradox rule the roost the most subtle and profound ways.

\* \* \* \*

Existence is but an intoxicating dream, an illusion which few have wit to set true.

\* \* \* \*

Give yourself over to it, be here now unto thy Self.

\* \* \* \*

It is through the reflection upon the looking glass of imagination that all is seen and unseen.

\* \* \* \*

What moral of any story cannot stand alone.

\* \* \* \*

What are words and numbers but sound given concept.

\* \* \* \*

Wacko is as wacko does.

\* \* \* \*

The obvious is not for many if not most, much like common sense is to fewer than common allows.

\* \* \* \*

It's a mob-eat-mob world.

\* \* \* \*

You need not be an expert in something to see which way the wind blows.

\* \* \* \*

Anybody can write a story, true or no.

\* \* \* \*

Between black and white, an ocean of gray.

\* \* \* \*

Are you really as (your word here) as you are starting to look?

\* \* \* \*

Nuances come and go, but the gist remains the same.

\* \* \* \*

Awakening to the greatest reality is a whole brain thing.

\* \* \* \*

Self-absorption makes possible every absurdity imaginable.



\* \* \* \*

How insatiable the one-percenters and their minions.

\* \* \* \*

Any Supreme Being worth its salt must surely be greater than any earthly claims.

\* \* \* \*

No pedestal for our kind, sorry.

\* \* \* \*

A tincture of absurdity is remedy to the same.

\* \* \* \*

More is never enough for the insatiable mind.

\* \* \* \*

Wisdom is the distillation of many foolish blunders.

\* \* \* \*

Smoke gets in your mind.

\* \* \* \*

What a luxury it is to not have to care.

\* \* \* \*

Awareness is indifferent to what plays out in its hollow ground.

\* \* \* \*

Our kind, our unkind.

\* \* \* \*

Death is always just offstage, sharpening its scythe, waiting for its cue.

\* \* \* \*

Star stuff as far as the mind can see.

\* \* \* \*

The farthest reaches are not that far in the great and small of it all.

\* \* \* \*

The pretense, the pretense.

\* \* \* \*

What are beginnings and endings but markers of mind of journeys between.

\* \* \* \*

Even the smallest blade can carve its way to the heart.

\* \* \* \*

If something is true, why would it matter who said it or when?

\* \* \* \*

Just another bacteria swarming to the edge of the petri dish.

\* \* \* \*

Like fire, like smoke.

\* \* \* \*

In what way back when did the first hint of imagination flicker?

\* \* \* \*

Get over your Self.

\* \* \* \*

Each of us creating our universe, one moment at a time.

\* \* \* \*

The Wizard will know, Toto.

\* \* \* \*

Awareness is the touchstone of existence.

\* \* \* \*

Play on, Nero, play on.

\* \* \* \*

And what is the point of clinging to a paradigm that is no longer functional?

\* \* \* \*

Breed on, maggots.

\* \* \* \*

There are the clever, and then there are the assholes.

\* \* \* \*

What you will is bound by what you can.

\* \* \* \*

We all have our little piece of jungle.

\* \* \* \*

Not everyone pulls out their wallet when Hallmark beckons.

\* \* \* \*

What is the world, the universe, but a habit formed by the conditioning of time.

\* \* \* \*

Is a relationship in a power struggle one worth abiding?

\* \* \* \*

Who is educated but s/he who has learned to learn.

\* \* \* \*

Every limb has its regulars.

\* \* \* \*

Yet another betrayal spins into future past.

\* \* \* \*

It's just your DNA talking.

\* \* \* \*

The dead can only live through you.

\* \* \* \*

Who can forever protect those who cannot or will not fend for themselves?

\* \* \* \*

It will keep on going the way it is until the giving world has nothing left to give the taking people.

\* \* \* \*

Self is not self.

\* \* \* \*

And then consciousness lost the reigns, and all evaporated into nothing again.

\* \* \* \*

You have arrived.

\* \* \* \*

Regarding the human drama, is it really headed in any direction you want to sojourn?

\* \* \* \*

The senses are mesmerizing deceivers in this quantum dream, and the mind the willing deceiver.

\* \* \* \*

A still mind is an empty set unto its Self.

\* \* \* \*

What is freedom but a state of mind to which even detachment is without attachment.

\* \* \* \*

Yet another break-away moment.

\* \* \* \*

You can bet you are in other people's minds as they are in yours.

\* \* \* \*

If pink is beauty, what color is ugly?

\* \* \* \*

Some just have hard lessons ahead, no two ways about it.

\* \* \* \*

What is identity but the wind of imagination.

\* \* \* \*

Any fool can pull a trigger.

\* \* \* \*

Living for likes, what in some deity's name is the point of that?

\* \* \* \*

Archetypes all.

\* \* \* \*

To enjoy your own company, now that's a piece of heaven.

\* \* \* \*

Desire and fear: Do you play with them, or they with you?

\* \* \* \*

The limits of science are the limits of mind.

\* \* \* \*

Always beginning, always ending, consciousness is like that.

\* \* \* \*

The whimsy of neurons and glands is ceaseless.

\* \* \* \*

An awful lot of effort for all the nothing you can hold onto.

\* \* \* \*

What need have the dead for vanity, theirs or yours.

\* \* \* \*

Friendship without debt is the best.

\* \* \* \*

To the far reaches of whose mind are you traveling?

\* \* \* \*

All knowledge is spun from the nothingness of the awareness prior to imagination.

\* \* \* \*

Oh, joy, more pain, how droll.

\* \* \* \*

Nothing to portend, nothing to defend.

\* \* \* \*

What is a chameleon but a dancer in whatever mists arise.

\* \* \* \*

Getting old gets old.

\* \* \* \*

What is any given moment but another set of perceptions quickly vaporizing into vague memory.

\* \* \* \*

Beneath the indifferent sun and moon, above the indifferent ground, unceasing drama.

\* \* \* \*

So much foolery from one mind to another.

\* \* \* \*

Between Mother Nature and nasty mean people, in general, your screwed.

\* \* \* \*

What a knack the mind has for creating every sort of bother.

\* \* \* \*

The past cannot own you but through your own consent.

\* \* \* \*

Ignorance and stupidity do not suffer mockery well.

\* \* \* \*

Is it really all about owning what you no longer want much less need?

\* \* \* \*

No one teaches anything unless the student takes the bait.

\* \* \* \*

An entire universe is moving in your mind.

\* \* \* \*

More than a few untraceable memories in every mind.

\* \* \* \*

Every flower is only born once.

\* \* \* \*

The keyboard is the stylus of these modern times.

\* \* \* \*

Just being, how amazing it is not enough for so many.

\* \* \* \*

\* \* \* \*

\* \* \* \*

## POSSIBLE TITLES

The Quantum Dissolution

\* \* \* \*

Woke Up Again This Morning

\* \* \* \*

The Absurdity Gene

\* \* \* \*

The Buddha Complex

\* \* \* \*

The Jesus Complex

\* \* \* \*

The Anarchy Syndrome

\* \* \* \*

The Folio

\* \* \* \*

Awareness: The Quantum Socket

\* \* \* \*

The Paradigm

\* \* \* \*

The Shell Games

\* \* \* \*

The Cosmic Medley

\* \* \* \*

The Aliens Among Us

\* \* \* \*

Alone Again, Naturally

\* \* \* \*

Playing the Gray

\* \* \* \*

Darwin Interrupted

\* \* \* \*

The Narcissist

\* \* \* \*

The Point of No Return

\* \* \* \*

1001 Distractions

\* \* \* \*

Pots and Kettles

\* \* \* \*

The Wizard Will Know, Toto

\* \* \* \*

The Statistical Sample

\* \* \* \*

A Sparkle in Mind

\* \* \* \*

Unchained

\* \* \* \*

The Morass of Ignorance

\* \* \* \*

The Empty Set

\* \* \* \*

The Etchings of History

\* \* \* \*

The Theme Park

\* \* \* \*

The Vanity of Imagination

\* \* \* \*

The New Balance

\* \* \* \*

The Emperor Wears No Clothes

\* \* \* \*

It Be Showtime

\* \* \* \*

The Itinerant Fool

\* \* \* \*

The Stillness of the Womb

\* \* \* \*

The Habitual Mind

\* \* \* \*

Six Feet Under

\* \* \* \*

A Mob-Eat-Mob World

\* \* \* \*

The Game Face

\* \* \* \*

As the World Turns

\* \* \* \*

But I Digress

\* \* \* \*

The Quantum Tales

\* \* \* \*

Absurdity is the Wordy

\* \* \* \*

The Constant Quantum



\* \* \* \*

The Thoroughly Modern Moment

\* \* \* \*

The Faceless One

\* \* \* \*

The End of Time

\* \* \* \*

Truth or Consequences

\* \* \* \*

The Upshot of Mind

\* \* \* \*

The Winter of Discontent

\* \* \* \*

The Esoteric Absurdity

\* \* \* \*

A Good Idea Belongs to Everyone

\* \* \* \*

The Inconvenient Truth

\* \* \* \*

Blade Runner

\* \* \* \*

Holy Schmoly, Batman

\* \* \* \*

A World Without God

\* \* \* \*

A Sea of Flaws

\* \* \* \*

The Scratch of Time

\* \* \* \*

The Attrition Games

\* \* \* \*

The Harbor of Fate

\* \* \* \*

The Harbor of Vanity

\* \* \* \*

The Way

\* \* \* \*

The Mystery

\* \* \* \*

The Lone Ranger

\* \* \* \*

The Indivisible

\* \* \* \*

The Great Zambini

\* \* \* \*

The Petri Dish

\* \* \* \*

Beyond Thunderdome

\* \* \* \*

The Archetype

\* \* \* \*

Surfing the Day

\* \* \* \*

Waiting for Santa Claus

\* \* \* \*

The Grand Ponzi Scheme

\* \* \* \*

The Buddhameister

\* \* \* \*

The White Rabbit

\* \* \* \*

The Cheshire Cat

\* \* \* \*

The Mad Hatter

\* \* \* \*

The Caterpillar

\* \* \* \*

The Red Queen

\* \* \* \*

The Quantum of Oz

\* \* \* \*

The Book of Life

\* \* \* \*

The Tributaries of Time

\* \* \* \*

The Dystopian Now

\* \* \* \*

The Smoke of Existence

\* \* \* \*

The Rat Cage

\* \* \* \*

The Sun of Indifference

\* \* \* \*

The Pawns of Time

\* \* \* \*

The Son of Santa Claus

\* \* \* \*

The Shoals of Mind

\* \* \* \*

The Wormhole in Time

\* \* \* \*

Of Everything and Nothing

\* \* \* \*

The Original Sinless

\* \* \* \*

The Indifferent Indivisible

\* \* \* \*

Fly, Monkeys, Fly

\* \* \* \*

The Esoteric

\* \* \* \*

The First Vanity

\* \* \* \*

The Life of Now

\* \* \* \*

The Win-Lose Game

\* \* \* \*

The Win-Win Game

\* \* \* \*

Think on These Things

\* \* \* \*

Write Your Own Book

\* \* \* \*

Oblivion's Wormhole

\* \* \* \*

So Be It

\* \* \* \*

The Collusion of Mind

\* \* \* \*

Holy Schmoly, Batman!

\* \* \* \*

The Dragon's Den

\* \* \* \*

Darwin Shrugged

\* \* \* \*

The Much Ado

\* \* \* \*

The Sun of Now

\* \* \* \*

The Fruit of Eden

\* \* \* \*

Patience, Mildred

\* \* \* \*

The Nadaville Express

\* \* \* \*

The Way of Eden

\* \* \* \*

Done Deal

\* \* \* \*

The Cosmic Fool

\* \* \* \*

The Future Past of Eternity

\* \* \* \*

The Ghost of Darwin

\* \* \* \*

Of the Human Collusion

\* \* \* \*

The Wormsmeat Chronicles

\* \* \* \*

\* \* \* \*

\* \* \* \*

## COROLLARIES

Stephen King:

Any word you have to hunt for in a thesaurus is the wrong word.

There are no exceptions to this rule.

Yaj Ekim's Corollary:

Alas, we cannot all be Stephen King.

\* \* \* \*

\* \* \* \*

\* \* \* \*

## POSSIBLE LAST WORDS & EPITAPHS

I told you I didn't feel well

\* \* \* \*

Home, Sweet Home

\* \* \* \*

To the last dime

\* \* \* \*

Finally, some real rest

\* \* \* \*

Adios, Amigos!

\* \* \* \*

So long, see you in your dreams

\* \* \* \*

Hooah!

\* \* \* \*

Like riding a bike

\* \* \* \*

We come, we go, but Earth abides

\* \* \* \*

Oblivion or Bust!

\* \* \* \*

So it goes strikes again

\* \* \* \*

\* \* \* \*

\* \* \* \*

## BREADCRUMBS

These sundry thoughts are generally for an esoteric audience of similar bent,

Of minds on an analogous wavelength, most of whom I will never meet.  
You are on a sojourn in a streamtime far different than this one.  
What more can be uttered than fare thee well, best wishes, rotsa ruck.

\* \* \* \*

Woke up again this morning.  
Guess oblivion gets to wait a little longer for these tired old bones.  
Another round of rambling about the bell curve.  
Whoo-hoo and by golly, too.

\* \* \* \*

The world you would save is long since spent.

\* \* \* \*

A plebeian with just enough wit to recognize and appreciate genius across the board.

\* \* \* \*

Loyal friend, occasional Samaritan, inadvertent fiend, itinerant fool.

\* \* \* \*

It would be interesting to witness a dissection of this poor, decrepit body.  
To see all the havoc and pain and bother it has endured during this watch.

\* \* \* \*

The echo of "Holshouser!" so often ringing through the air,  
"Holzblowzer" in a variety of shades was how Blane often uttered it,  
For all the brazen, often foolish things said and done by this unrepentant wit.

\* \* \* \*

Vanity makes it easy to stay small-minded a fair portion of any given day.  
To be in the world and not of it, is not something a busy mind easily allows.

\* \* \* \*

A casual bent toward scholarship for this gistmeister.

\* \* \* \*

What a wearing thing it is to be an infinite spirit trapped in a diminishing body.

\* \* \* \*

Yet another relatively anonymous sojourn.  
Shoots spring into leaves, leaves fall into winter.  
All life, born to live, born to die, in this dream undying.

\* \* \* \*

Having given myself over to the materialistic urge many times in many ways,  
All I can say is that at some point it all just becomes a greater and greater weight.  
As John Ruskin observed: Every increased possession loads us with new weariness.

\* \* \* \*

Where would these many aphoristic thoughts be,  
How would they read, how would they appear, what would they convey,  
Without the aid of spellcheck, a thesaurus, and Wikipedia?  
The many things these modern times allow  
Is the upshot of the ages.

\* \* \* \*

Putting it all together one ditty at a time.  
They just keep a-bubbling into mind,  
And I ain't got nothing better to do  
In this future-past of all things so it goes.

\* \* \* \*

These thoughts might be revolutionary if they had been among the first,  
But early they are not in this Ponzi scheme of history's viral outbreak.

\* \* \* \*

If I have coincidentally, inadvertently, or even intentionally,  
Duplicated something said or written by some other,  
Go with whomever thought it first, obviously.  
No need for plagiarism the way this mind spews.

\* \* \* \*

Parenting is a tough sport, too rough for me, that's for sure.

\* \* \* \*

Perhaps everyone does not have to figure it all out anew, but I haven't met one yet.

\* \* \* \*

A natural-born organizer.  
A natural-born worker bee.  
A natural-born gistmeister.  
A natural-born wanderer.

\* \* \* \*

Perhaps the best thing about being towards the end of a sound existence  
Is that you are no longer young trying to figure out what to do with your life.  
No more tests, no more papers, no more hawking yourself, no more so many things.  
So many games, so much pretending, all of which now seem nothing more than tiresome.

\* \* \* \*

Who be all players but me one in the same.

\* \* \* \*

Taking it all apart, putting it all together, one ditty at a time.

\* \* \* \*



Curious how many aphorisms sometimes change mid-flight  
Into something entirely different, entirely unique in its own right,  
Perhaps even split into two or more, or combined with some other thought,  
The original insight likely forever lost in the filament of consciousness,  
Unless it again happenstances into mind at some later juncture.

\* \* \* \*

If it doesn't sell itself, why waste time hawking it?

\* \* \* \*

Just as flawed as everyone and everything else is here.  
Perfection is the deception of the monkey-mind.  
Only the quantum is free of such mania.

\* \* \* \*

A timeless journal, of sorts.

\* \* \* \*

And yet once again, impulse supersedes rationality,  
A new adventure underway: "Hi-yo, Silver, away!"

\* \* \* \*

Have always had an amazing knack in any up and coming adventure  
Of finding ways to mess things up in royal hue: Trial by fucking fire, I calls it.  
So scar tissue runs deep in mind and body, and tremors of trepidation at times resound.  
And I endure their inevitability with what "Oh well, deal with it, and so it goes" can be mustered.  
The many salvos this aging mind-body have endured fashion a stoic weariness at times,  
And still I tarry, with whatever face the game calls, ever the fool playing wise.

\* \* \* \*

Just pointing out what seem obvious to this frame of reference.

\* \* \* \*

If it does not matter what I think,  
Why would it matter what you think?  
Why would it matter what anyone thinks?  
Perhaps it does not far more than many or most  
Would ever allow their vanity harbor.

\* \* \* \*

The agony and ecstasy of existence is the grout between these many words.

\* \* \* \*

The whimsy of political correctness can be sidestepped  
When there is no audience to weigh in with yay and nay.

\* \* \* \*

Of the dream, for the dream, by the dream.

\* \* \* \*

Pretty amazing to be living, much less walking, with all this body's been through.

\* \* \* \*

Know enough about history to toy with it,  
But to change it in any meaningful way  
Is not highly favored by probability.

\* \* \* \*

What is any given ditty but wandering through one experience or another,  
And then writing about it for others to translate as their given wit allows.

-----

Steven:

You are certainly prolific. I like all of it. The only problem is you'd have a hard time selling these tidbits in a book of aphorisms, perhaps because most of your writing expresses a sense of mystery more than the "illumination of a path" to solve it. I can only think, though, how confusing most of this would sound on Sunday to a Southern Baptist in Church! Average people, I've learned, are terrified by nuance!

Cheers.

S

-----

Moi:

That's why it's just a hobby, and most the Christian ministers who frequent my Starbucks don't hang about very long anymore, probably because I spout things like "Two thousand years and counting" and "How's the Son of Santa Claus doing today?" Expect to get lynched any day now. Either that or ISIS groupies showing up on my doorstep one night brandishing rusty, dull knives, and "Allahu Akbar! Allahu Akbar!" the last words I hear between my own screams. My head will look good on a pike dripping what gray matter's left on the corner of my patio fence facing the road.

-----

Steven:

No clergymen in my Starbucks, unfortunately. Not too many people in SF believe the Jesus "story", at least not past the age of seven! That's when I started saying to myself, "somebody obviously stole the body!"

S

-----

Moi:

A stolen body is a likely theory, I agree, and then the cult did what cults do. The Planet of the Apes,

indeed.

One of my other speculations is that he didn't actually die, that somebody gave him a drug on that sponge -- it wasn't vinegar or sour wine by my reckoning -- that made him look dead, and then meeting with his groupies, he called it good and got out of Dodge, headed to India or some such thing.

Wikipedia: Holy Sponge

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holy\\_Sponge](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holy_Sponge)

Wikipedia: Unknown Years of Jesus

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unknown\\_years\\_of\\_Jesus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unknown_years_of_Jesus)

Wikipedia: Jesus in India

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jesus\\_in\\_India\\_\(book\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jesus_in_India_(book))

But who cares, really? How fortunate you are not to be surrounded by them. It's just a hive over here, including a heavy dose of the Catholic and Assyrian versions. Pretty inured at this point, but it is astounding to hear them babble on about it over and over and over.

-----

Steven:

Maybe I distrust the pharmaceutical astuteness of shepherds, but any story at all is more likely than the one we are told. My occasional comment about Jesus is that SF's Union Square is filled with such people. I've met a "blind Jesus" drug dealer who greets people from ten yards away completely sighted. He killed his mother with a bicycle chain at 16. And I know a man with three selves, two of which were "killed" by the CIA.

These people resemble the general personality type from which "Jesuses" are made. They surely existed back then. Why not assume Jesus was more like them or like Jim Jones--ie. nuts!

S

Yuppity-yup, all DSM labels apply then as well as they do now, no doubt.

\* \* \* \*

Hey, hey, Meister Kruger,

Another round of silliness coming at you. Two score and fifteen-ish pages parlayed into five chapters, all posted in Breadcrumbs: Leftovers I, Leftover II (One-Liners), Possible Titles, Corollaries, and Possible Last Words & Epitaphs. Randomly picked thoughts from the two Leftover sections are being used to wrap the "Ponderings of Yaj Ekim" book that I've been slowly putting together. Am aiming for 501 pages, 480 already uploaded. Eventually, there will a downloadable PDF on the website, and maybe a self-published version with an ISBN number for sale on Amazon if I get to it.

Breadcrumbs

<http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/>

The Ponderings of Yaj Ekim  
<http://theponderingsofyajekim.blogspot.com/>

Hope all's well enough.

Ciao, ciao,

M

[Long collection ditties omitted here for brevity's sake]

-----  
Steven:

Hi Michael,

More power to you if you can get a five hundred-page book published! A lot of this is very poetic, genuinely so. Not to mention insightful. I suppose I find myself wondering who can be in the market for this much wisdom, especially from Asian gurus whose names are American ones spelled backwards! My notion of wisdom by aphorism revolves around brevity, as you know. I've said all that before.

But lots of luck with it. I may start a personal memoir this year. An Australian friend with gazillions has self-published a book about his life and might publish one about mine. I haven't thought of the perfect title, but I imagine "shipwreck" will be in it somewhere.

No trips this summer, unfortunately. I am in the hands of dentists. Expensive to repair a tooth I knocked out. I was supposed to go to Germany, but ...

Good luck, I liked this.

Steven

-----  
Moi:

I really don't expect that it will ever be known, much less make any money. This sort of thing doesn't sell, and I'm not at all into hawking it. It is just a hobby that I'll be leaving behind for time to do with what it will, which is likely nothing. I've enjoyed the process, and that's enough.

Tough luck on the tooth. The shoals ahead are getting kind of scary ... :)

Take care,

M

P.S. And, yes, and the title and author's name might need some rethinking. We'll see if something pops into mind one of these daze.

\* \* \* \*

Moi:

Breadcrumbs: The Unfolding Next Round

Yo, Steven,

Have come up with a less bothersome way to post the latest blather.

Breadcrumbs: The Unfolding Next Round

[http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_73.html](http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_73.html)

Hope all's well enough at your end. Another round of three-digit unfolding over here. Looking forward to being able to complain about the cold in a few months.

Take care,

M

Website:

The Stillness Before Time

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/>

Main Blogs:

The Stillness Before Time

<http://thestillnessbeforetime.blogspot.com/>

The Ponderings of Yaj Ekim

<http://theponderingsofyajekim.blogspot.com/>

The Return to Wonder

<http://thereturntowonder.blogspot.com/>

Breadcrumbs

<http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/>

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Steven:

Hi Michael,

I like your breadcrumbs. I'm currently stuck in a difficult email conversation with a metaphysically minded friend who used to be Parks Commissioner of the state of Victoria, Australia, which included Melbourne. He speaks the language of Ernest Becker's Birth and Death of Meaning, ie. mysticism. He's written a book about Horses, for instance, Horses of Course, in which he asserts that a horse mother whispers a secret name to her foal upon birth. To which I am tempted to reply, "How on earth are you

supposed to know this?!

Citizen Kane, you may remember, revolves around what the dying man could possibly mean whispering Rosebud on his deathbed: except that he is the only person in the room when he says it.

Here is a hilarious classical video: someone's cat in Finland plays the piano and a composer has actually composed a piece around it.

Nora The Piano Cat

<https://youtu.be/zeoT66v4EHg>

Cheers.

Steven

-----

Moi:

New Age babble, indeed. I suppose I had my little moment at some point, but it's many moons done. I'm quite content to call it instinct born of the trail from the puddle of origin.

The tree falls whether you witness it or not, and what Rosebud it makes, well, who cares, really?

Nora is unbelievable. What a world.

\* \* \* \*

Moi:

Breadcrumbs: The Unfolding Next Round

Yes, more, apologies ...

Breadcrumbs: The Unfolding Next Round

[http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_31.html](http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_31.html)

And below are the links to everything else.

Ciao, ciao,

M

The Stillness Before Time

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/>

A 50-page PDF can be downloaded at:

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/thestillnessbeforetime.pdf>

-----

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Breadcrumbs

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A 501-page PDF of The Ponderings of Yaj Ekim

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/theponderingsofyajekim.pdf>

-----

Steven:

Hi Michael,

No apologies needed. Lots of insight. As always, I see you writing a hundred-page book with the best of these shortened perhaps into sets of aphorisms by topic. That's the German efficiency expert in me! I'd probably be a sculptor who'd start with a huge block of marble and keep eliminating until I had a piece for the coffee table.

Hope you are enjoying our political season. Lots about human nature to observe--and very entertaining this time to boot!

Steven

-----

Moi:

Yo, Maestro,

I'm resisting the insistence of that same Germanic trait. Too much work. Trying to edit it all is enough bother. As Leonard da Vinci wrote: Art is never finished, only abandoned.

And as far as politics go, I refuse to let the inanity of Trump and all the other psycho vampires muddy up my world-weary mind. It never ceases to amaze me the idiots who think they are capable of participating at that level of intrigue in this insane asylum. Doubt I'll even give much attention to it all until this time next year, and then only long enough to fill out and mail in the ballot with my lesser-of-all-evils choice, deluding myself all the while that my little scratch really means anything.

Portland artist uses period blood for Trump portrait

<http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation-now/2015/09/15/period-blood-donald-trump/72339462/>

The Families Funding the 2016 Presidential Election

[http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2015/10/11/us/politics/2016-presidential-election-super-pac-donors.html?mabReward=A5&action=click&pgtype=Homepage&region=CColumn&module=Recommendation&src=rechp&WT.nav=RecEngine&\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2015/10/11/us/politics/2016-presidential-election-super-pac-donors.html?mabReward=A5&action=click&pgtype=Homepage&region=CColumn&module=Recommendation&src=rechp&WT.nav=RecEngine&_r=0)

Hope all's well enough, otherwise.

Ciao, ciao,

M

P.S.

Alas, I actually watch it all more closely than I care to admit ...

Le Fichier Circulaire de Michaël

Michael's Circular File: A potpourri of odds 'n ends fathomed in the churning surf

<https://www.facebook.com/LeFichierCirculaireDeMichael?ref=hl>

Blogger Edition (2011-2013)

<http://michaelscircularfile.blogspot.com/>

-----

Steven:

Some adolescent part of me would like to see Trump win just to watch what would happen and see all hell break loose. Can you imagine him leading the Queen of England through the White House?

"Here's a portrait of Abraham Lincoln. Great President, but of course he's a loser ... got himself shot!"

"Here's a portrait of George Washington, but I've got a better one I'll show you sometime. I'm as rich as you are ... " Ouch.

Have you seen this exemplar of good taste? See photo. Gag!

Crazy times and very entertaining for me!

S

-----

Moi:

Crazy times, indeed, indeed. Is that Trump's penthouse or some such thing? Gag's the word.

-----



Steven:

Yes, indeed. His daughter Ivanka is like Grace Kelly by contrast. Here is her apartment.

S

-----

Moi:

That I could live with. Condolences to Ivanka having Donald for a father.

-----

Steven:

I could live with Ivanka, period! She just happens to be my exact type. I started with a crush on Grace Kelly at age six and have never outgrown the idea!

S

-----

Moi:

Definitely a beautiful woman – no idea her personality or wit – but way, way, way out of any league I've ever played. And New York and I would never be a fit, either. So, she's all yours. Good luck.

-----

Steven:

Already married and having her third! It's quite frustrating to be in this league, I might add, without adequate money to date. That was my experience! I have fantasies of the simple suburban girl next door, for this reason. Grass is always greener.

She was interviewed by CNN for half an hour. It is shocking how intelligent and nice she was: soft voice, hands folded in her lap perfectly after every use of them, totally un-narcissistic personality. If she goes on the stump for her father, every woman will vote for him. I love the way every candidate is flummoxing the media's expectations. We might end up with Sanders/Warren versus Trump/Carson or something totally wild like that. Hillary may end up President. Or she might conceivably end up indicted – like Nixon! I don't follow sports. But campaign years always give me the equivalent.

Interview with Ivanka

<https://youtu.be/-5aWA7g7FR4>

-----

Moi:

All the clowns and their spectacles usually fall by the wayside as things get really serious. It would definitely be scary to have Trump or Sanders at the helm. I like Warren's straight-shooting, but she doesn't seem interested in anything I've read. I'm predicting Clinton v. Bush or Kasich at this writing, with

Clinton teflon-ing it out if she does get in.

She's definitely articulate and appealing, but I doubt I'd have even gotten more than a passing glance at any point in my life the way I've played it.

-----

Steven:

You may undersell yourself – but who knows – still, I'd rather fantasize about her than about Hefner's "girlfriends" with their fake boobs and room temperature IQs.

S

-----

Steven:

You are probably right. I've always liked Kasich. And I could deal with Hillary, who actually for the first time defended the word "capitalism" during the recent debate. Something tells me Trump has destroyed Bush with his descriptions. But just what will get Trump to go away? He has all the money he needs. And like Putin, the more politically incorrect he seems, the more a lot of people like it ... Fascinating times.

S

-----

Moi:

Though I might change my mind if I were back in my younger self – and the mind back down between my legs – as far as this adventure goes, I'm pretty much in single celibate mode for the duration. I treasure my solitude too much to give it up for anyone or anything. Besides which, not much goes on in any woman's head that I need to hear every day, nor would I be at all interested in children or rat dogs or playing house. I am Calvin, I am Dennis, all but useless to the Suzy's and Margaret's of this world or any other.

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Steven:

I'm not entirely unlike you. Have reached the age where fantasy is less annoying than reality. I was fortunate to like the company of woman out of bed better on the whole than that of men most of my life. But I, too, have no tolerance for fuss-budget women with small dogs! My friend Joyce likes to sleep alone with her beagle. He's actually pretty big, and I like him. Just as well, though. A bit too wrinkled for me – girl more than a dog. I was wondering what to tell her about not wanting to sleep with her – but she beat me to it, saying she had lost interest in sex. I think you and I have reached the age of "Don't bother me!" We don't want to go out and compete with the other predators for a mate. We do enjoy getting lucky, though! My trip to London gave me hope. A lot of women flirted ...

In NYC, I knew a fellow who serial dated most of the women in his large apartment building over about 25 years. In SF, everyone is a visitor and 25 years of age. Wrong venue for me!

S

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Moi:

I have no passion anymore for anything more than casual friendship and the occasional dinner and chick flick. It might be fun to kiss and touch and taste and give pleasure to something young and firm and amusing once in a while for kicks -- perhaps if I was rich I would have some sort of college-scholarship-mistress thing going on -- but, alas for the older models, dancing with the stars and sagging leather and stretch marks and exes and children and grandchildren and cats and rat dogs and houses full of dearly-departed memories do nothing for me.

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Steven:

I agree completely! My father once explained that he didn't see the aging of my mother in any way that registered, because he had met her when she was young and she still looked the same to him. Later in life she had died and he retired to Spain and found it impossible to fall in love with women anywhere near his own age. I, too, cannot fall in lust with anyone over 50, it seems, and in love probably younger still.

S

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Moi:

Lust is the more accurate word for it. It feels all warm and fuzzy, but let's be honest and get over pretending it's any kind of happy-forever-after thing.

The four-letter L-word, I call it, anymore.

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Steven:

Actually, I met that girl and had her in my life for 26 years until we tired of the differences we did have. We may end up together yet in our old age. I've been lucky at least always to know sincere and loving women. I never had trouble with relationships. I always was defeated by having so little money.

S

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Moi:

I've crossed paths with many potential mates – several even asked me to marry them – and many good friendships as well. I just never had the domestic thing in me enough to want to stick around. My enjoyment of different work experiences and the philosophical quest were always more enticing.

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Steven

Seeing that, I think I'm staying a bachelor! Unlike you, I did have the right nesting instinct. Fortunately, I was an only child and a minimal burden to my parents. We had household help most of my childhood, so the idea of marriage being an unappetizing blend of diapers and baby screams seemed something for other people. None of our friends had small children, as my parents were older. I never feared that. I just had health problems, (I've had cancer three times), money problems and by the time I defeated the former, the latter still remained and all the girls I would have happily married were no longer there for the meeting. The leftovers were and are usually nuts.

S

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Moi:

It's unfortunate you were so hindered by the bouts with cancer. With your passion for music and capacity to do something with it, you definitely had much better prospects than I. When I was done with something I always just packed up and swung on to the next adventure, whatever vine came my way, so to speak. I would have never been able to stick with one line of work to have made enough money to keep a woman happy with me. I came from a decent enough set of parents to have perhaps made a fair go of it, but playing house and having children never really even occurred to me in any meaningful way. And at this stage of world-weary curmudgeonry, I am quite content that I didn't, occasionally joking that I loved them too much to bring them here.

Think I'm done with this day. Good chatting.

G'night,

M

\* \* \* \*

Moi:

Why the new Washington Post poll is especially good news for Hillary Clinton, in 5 charts  
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2015/10/20/why-this-new-poll-is-especially-good-news-for-hillary-clinton-in-5-charts/>

A surprising number of Republicans think Donald Trump is their best hope in 2016  
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2015/10/14/a-surprising-number-of-republicans-see-donald-trump-as-their-best-hope-in-2016/>

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Steven:

I see you indeed follow this a good bit. I am pretty much addicted to the three cable networks these days. I'll write, listen and read closed captions on the news all at the same time. It's fun to see everyone backtracking predictions about the candidates! I like following a good drama whose ending one simply cannot anticipate.

S

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Moi:

I watch most of what's going on in this sorry-so-sorry world without much more enthusiasm than regular dollops of irony and paradox, slathered with witty cynicism of the darker sort.

Here's a nice little quote I ran across the other day:

One of the penalties for refusing to participate in politics is that you end up being governed by your inferiors ~ Plato

And this is one of my all-top favorites:

CYNIC, n. A blackguard whose faulty vision sees things as they are, not as they ought to be. Hence the custom among the Scythians of plucking out a cynic's eyes to improve his vision ~ Ambrose Bierce

The Devil's Dictionary

<http://www.thedevilsdictionary.com>

A vote for Trump pretty much ensures a Clinton victory in my view of it ... but, you are right, it is a horse race ... entirely unpredictable.

Watch out for them Scythians.

M

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Moi:

Dug up this Economist article posted back in early September:

Trump's America: Why the Donald is dangerous

<http://www.economist.com/news/leaders/21663225-why-donald-dangerous-trumps-america>

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Steven:

Thanks for these. I think Biden just made the right decision. But Hillary may still lose. My take on Trump has to do with the Balkans. There was an article in the Economist a few years ago showing that in times of civil war and instability, women marry thuggish men with larger jaws. In stable societies, they marry nerdier men with smaller jaws. I think people are so frustrated with the poor results from our government that they are willing to vote for a more aggressive and crass candidate.

S

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Moi:

Off another direction this morning, so I hadn't caught the Biden announcement. Who I admire, and likely would have voted for eight years ago, but consider too old at this point to be in more than an unelected advisory position.

I do very much hope you're wrong about Trump's chances – hard to imagine having to listen to him bully pulpit-ing for four to eight years – but, yes, alas, if the mob can make it happen anywhere else, the mob can make it happen here, too.

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Steven:

Trump is a curious product, sophisticated at one level, not at another. He reminds me a bit of Hugh Hefner that way. Both turn out aristocratic, worldly brilliant daughters but have lousy taste, themselves.

S

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Moi:

Kings by happenstance on thrones to which they are ill-suited pretenders.

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Steven:

In my snobby birth-world, there used to be a notion of "shirtsleeves to shirtsleeves in three generations". First-generation, crude and productive; second-generation an improvement; third generation, wastrels.

Some people pull off elegance in one generation: Daniel Patrick Moynahan, born in Hell's Kitchen, is a good example. Trump, from Queens, which is unusually crude a place, is second-generation wealth but seems like first.

The Kardashians are all third-generation by now, but still totally uneducated and ungrammatical in speech--and over the top in bad domestic taste. I imagine they will vote for The Donald!

The only advantage I see in Trump as President would be his ability to be just as savage and devious as Putin or the Iranians. I think the world is so used to naive idealistic Americans who can be fooled about everything foreign, that Trump would be quite a shock.

As for Hillary, I'm always surprised she doesn't stress her experience more. She has, after all, lived in the house to which she aspires for eight years, already. She knows every light switch and every nuance of White House life. There will be no learning curve at all ... In a certain sense, she has been President already.

S

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Moi:

And she'd have Bill to pillow talk her ear off, no doubt, when he's not diddling interns, that is.

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Steven:

Yes, well", as the British say! That raises the interesting point of what the hell to do with him. Since he loves to talk, I think the trick might be UN envoy or, if she dares risking one's thinking a third Bill Clinton term is taking place, Secretary of State.

And imagine showing up for White House dinners given by "President and Mr. Clinton".

S

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Moi:

Eight years of the first black president, followed by another four to eight of post-menopausal madness? Yeesch and by golly, what unruly spins these our interesting times do weave.

\* \* \* \*

Moi:

Just happened upon this New Yorker article. No mention of music critics, but some thoughts on your craft that might be of interest.

Says You: How to be a critic in an age of opinion

[http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2016/03/07/critics-in-the-age-of-opinion?mbid=gnep&intcid=gnep&google\\_editors\\_picks=true](http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2016/03/07/critics-in-the-age-of-opinion?mbid=gnep&intcid=gnep&google_editors_picks=true)

Hope all's well enough.

Ciao, ciao,

M

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Steven:

I was just wondering today what you were up to--suddenly--five minutes later your email comes in. Radio waves! Thanks for the article. I did see it.

In music, fortunately, the parameters are a bit more defined--at least in concert criticism. One may be more or less in thrall to some hobbyhorse or other when it comes to new music and be at each other's throats. But the core symphonic repertoire remains. And there you find considerable agreement about what makes for a good performance or not. A good critic writes beautifully and evocatively about Beethoven, just as an art historian does so for Rembrandt. Lots of music criticism was written even 150 years ago. But we remember Bernard Shaw's reviews because of their own value as works of art.

Nothing too new at this end. I have a monthly column of CD review now called "Recent Recordings" available on NY Arts. I got Fanfare to release them, since I am not paid by NY Arts. So now everybody can read everything I write. Fanfare is by subscription, only.

Hope you are doing well!

S

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Moi:

It's tough being late in the game for any artist.

Nothing much going on at this end. Caught in a no-direction-known routine. Happily bored to tears, so to speak. Joined a club so I'm spending more time doing a light workout, followed by jacuzzi and pool time. Practicing to be a whale or dolphin if a slot opens up.

Here's the babble since the turn of the year:

Breadcrumbs: The Unfolding Next Round

[http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_52.html](http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_52.html)

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Steven:

Well, I wish more mystics were aware of your logic! Your latest would make a friend of mine in Australia nervous. He's the former Parks Commissioner of the state of Victoria and spent his life healing horses. But he believes he can divine water with a stick, wrote an autobiography where he traces his wife's name to an ancient Italian portrait of someone with the same name and finds this magical--and does odd things like bless his eyes with water for the gift of sight every day since childhood. I don't think anyone's reasoning can deal with minds like that!

You know, living back East, I never once ran into a woman in my dating life who believed in Astrology and the sort of new-age stuff you run into out here. It's very strange to me to keep running into this nonsense. My friend Joyce is an atheist but believes every idiotic socialist dream as much as if it were a religion. Sometimes I miss Connecticut girls!

S

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Moi:

California is indeed its own little world when it comes to the off-beat. Having been born and raised in the Great Central Valley, past a certain point I'm really not sure what woman elsewhere might be like. I've always gone with Nikos Kazantzakis: There is only one woman in the world. One woman, with many faces.



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Steven:

In the East, class structure affects it. Astrology is for the cleaning lady. Nancy Reagan gobsmailed everyone there by admitting she had an astrologer. And, given that cities there are very Jewish and Jewish culture is bookish, you end up more with nut cases spouting socialist statistics than touchie-feelies being vapidly emotional.

I have a saying about the type: "Life under Socialism: Competition without prizes, boredom without hope, war without victory, statistics without end".

Cheers,

S

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Moi:

Great maxim on socialism. i shall cut and paste it and squirrel it somewhere.

Jewish women are only in books and movies in my wee little world.

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Steven

Well, be careful what you wish for! An intellectual with an anxiety disorder is no more fun than a vague dreamer to be around! It really is like Woody Allen you know.

S

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Moi:

Something to do with all the inbreeding that's gone on in the Land of Cain and Abel is my suspicion. Give me a mutt any day.

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Steven:

Yes, Judaism is the only religion I know of with a genetic disease.

S

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Moi:

Woody Allen is certainly proof in the pudding of that spiritual truism.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth email with Steven Kruger:

Moi:

Hello, Hello

Steven,

Not sure why, but we fell out of touch. Our last back-and-forth was in March 2016. Are you still alive and well enough?

Michael Holshouser

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Steven:

Hi Michael,

I'm happy to say I'm seriously healthy, even these days. Hope you are, too. Last I knew you had been to England and were still writing aphorisms, which I urged you to collect. I've traveled a good bit since 2016, to Australia in 2019 and in the last several years all over the states. I have a New York girlfriend of long standing who may want to move to the Midwest, so we have been exploring places like Tennessee and North Carolina for the future.

Stay safe, though heaven knows what that means lately. I'd hate to own a restaurant these days ... Let me know how you are. Picture from recent trip to Tennessee.

Cheers,

Steven

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Moi:

Good to hear you're doing so well, and a girlfriend, too! Tennessee and North Carolina would be a big switch from New York and San Francisco, that's for sure.

Life is carrying on at this end. A failed carpal tunnel operation has left me feeling more the invalid than ever before, but I'm slowly working through the funk, grasping for the old mojo. These Trumpian and C-19 times certainly put a damper on things. The end of entitlement is what I call the new world that's playing out. What a time for historians and philosophers.

Still writing, though probably not as much as when we first met. Here's the 2020 babbleon:

Breadcrumbs: The Unfolding Next Round  
[michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_52.html](http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_52.html)

How's your keyboard life doing?

M

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Steven:

My keyboard life has made me famous in my field, but without paying me very well. Fanfare is the most respected publication in classical music, and I am on the masthead, but the result is prestige and free tickets to concerts if I ask.

Fortunately, I may come into an inheritance. An old bipolar friend never remarried, getting nutsier as he aged, but has apparently remembered me in his will. He was an investment banker, so the legacy may be substantial. I was just notified, but the will has not yet been probated.

My girlfriend and I are both stuck in our cities because of cheap apartments. I pay only \$732 a month all inclusive. I'd have to move to rural Mississippi to equal that, and one would have to own a car even so.

Your writing is obviously coming along, more than 800 pages of it, but you're organizing it. I always think a little book like Eric Hoffer's collections of aphorisms would work for you.

Picture of Molly below at NY Philharmonic concert last year.

S

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Moi:

Trouble is, I have absolutely no ambition to go through all the bother required to get a book out there. Publishers, critics, supporters and detractors, fame and fortune and influence ... ugh!

Nice-looking woman, and no doubt intelligent enough to spark some enjoyable pillow talk.

Congrats on the inheritance. Finally rewarded for all you've contributed to your passion.

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Moi:

I actually gave it several shots years ago, and have a nice collection of pleasant rejection letters to show for it. As one said, these sorts of books don't sell well.

Well over five thousand pages all total, actually.

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Steven:

I also lack the ambition to write a proper book – to tell my story in a memoir, which people are always suggesting. Fortunately, if my inheritance amounts to something, I can get the perfect listening space for

my sound system, i.e., a nice house, and be near Molly. She's only 58 and still has to work, but she's an introvert like me. I'm eager to travel the world from concert to concert with her. We will see!

Cheers

Steven

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Moi:

Sounds perfect. Anonymity is its own reward. Congrats if it all comes to pass.

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Moi:

Regarding my writing, I actually prefer to give it away free as pdf's. Have paid for my website to run another 20 years – which is Network Solution's max at this writing – and everything is published on Google's Blogger, as well, for as long as the internet allows. Being a dead poet suits me.

The Stillness Before Time

<http://thestillnessbeforetime.com/>

Blogger: My Blogs

<https://www.blogger.com/profile/12270094801824803661>

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Moi:

That's what one of my editors says. He's the secret ghost writer of about 50 Deepak Chopra books. Doesn't bother him at all to be unknown to the public.

S

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Moi:

I actually did self-publish using Lulu Publications a decade or so ago. It's for sale on Amazon, but needs an update I haven't gotten to.

Just orders the Hoffer aphorism book on Amazon. Really admire his True Believer book, so I'm sure it will resonate, as well.

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Steven:

It would be interesting to have him alive these days and commenting on politics.

Did I ever tell you I spent half an hour on a park bench with AOC when she was in SF for a conference in 2016? She's very sexy but completely consumed with hate, a real Communist who doesn't believe housing should be privately owned. I was so frustrated at her rantings about jet planes, the rich, and about evil corporations, that I asked her,

"Do you eat beef?"

"Yes, why do you ask?"

"Because farting cows cause 14% of greenhouse gases."

"I'll have to look into that ..."

Trouble is, she did look into it! The Green New Deal she wrote includes that phrase, "farting cows" – thanks to me!

S

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Moi:

Definitely a strong-willed gal from what I've seen in the headlines that she's always getting. What a trip to have had a face-to-face happenstance. Wonder how long she'll last in the corridors of power.

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Steven:

She's got intense charm and sex appeal to burn and enough of a chip on her shoulder to last a long time. Pelosi is afraid of her, and she's only 30. I was just flirting. That would have been fun, too! But I think she lives with a tech zillionaire – typical socialist!

S

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Moi:

Wikipedia: Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexandria\\_Ocasio-Cortez](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexandria_Ocasio-Cortez)

### Personal Life

Following the death of Ocasio-Cortez's father in 2008, her mother and grandmother relocated to Florida due to financial hardship. She still has family in Puerto Rico, where her grandfather was living in a nursing home before he died in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria. She has said, "to be Puerto Rican is to be the descendant of ... African Moors [and] slaves, Taino Indians, Spanish colonizers, Jewish refugees, and likely others. We are all of these things and something else all at once – we are Boricua."

Ocasio-Cortez discussed her Catholic faith and its impact on her life and her campaign for criminal justice reform in an article she wrote for *America*, the magazine of the Jesuit order in the United States. At a December 2018 Hanukkah celebration in New York, she stated that she has some Sephardic Jewish ancestry.

During the 2018 election campaign, Ocasio-Cortez resided in Parkchester, Bronx, with her boyfriend, web developer. Riley Roberts.

In 2020, Ocasio-Cortez was a guest judge on an episode of RuPaul's Drag Race.

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Moi:

Hey, hey,

Just to let you know I picked up that Eric Hoffer book you recommended. Good reading in the occasional pick-up pile. What a mind. A nice addition to my collection of quotation books.

So, how's the Tennessee/North Carolina adventure looking? Did that inheritance come through in enough of a way to make all things possible?

Another summer in the Great Central Valley on the horizon at this end. "And what cities will burn this year?" he wondered.

Hope all's well.

M

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Steven:

Hi Michael,

Everything's well here. It seems I have O+ blood, and according to the Harvard Medical School website, people with this blood type do not get Covid. Molly and I did several vacations in Tennessee and NC. Franklin, just outside Nashville, was truly lovely, but Molly in the end decided to stay in NY another year, and my inheritance is only going to be distributed at the end of this year. It depends on my deceased friend's condo being renovated and sold. So I am stuck in half-dead SF and Molly similarly situated in half-dead NY.

Symphony orchestras are mostly not playing, so my nightlife raison d'etre has disappeared from the world, but when the inheritance comes through, I hope to travel some more with symphony concerts the focal point wherever I go and take Molly with me. (She still has to work for five years). I still write CD reviews for Fanfare and New York Arts.

Hope you have survived the pandemic in a healthy state--and that the state we live in does not burn down, as you wonder! Glad you read Eric Hoffer!

Cheers.

Steven

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Moi:

Oh well on life in the not-so-fast lane. San Francisco and New York must take quite of a bit of endurance according to everything I've read. Dark times, indeed. At least Trump isn't dominating the headlines (for the time being).

I have A+ blood, which is not good news according to a study that just came out, so I shall continue in precautionary mode for as long as needed. Good thing I'm in a monk-ish state of mind anymore.

Why type A blood may increase COVID-19 risk

<https://www.livescience.com/blood-type-coronavirus-respiratory-antigens.html>

Take care,

M

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Steven:

What's happened in SF is that the absence of tourists reminds one of the dysfunction of the city's huge homeless population. Wherever you walk now there is a body or two on the periphery of one's vision, covered bus-stops occupied at night, tents and unimaginable amounts of debris and human feces visible everywhere. Forget a wall with Mexico. Seattle and Portland and SF need a wall!

Sorry to hear you are "type A" in blood if not in personality. A few more months, though, and you should be safe in a vaccinated world. I'm waiting for the J & J one dose wonder but otherwise wearing a mask.

It is extremely odd to move in a world where men and women can't see each other's smiles. No wonder the birth rate has dropped, despite everyone being at home and having nothing better to do than boink!

S

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Moi:

What I wonder about is all the really young children not seeing passing faces and expressions. Staring into screens 24/7/365 was bad enough, but what shadow will World War Covid cast in the civilization game? As far as boinking goes, what a world we've lost, I had mine, you had yours, life is an entitlement, pity the young.

Got both Moderna shots this last month – as did me Mum (Moderna) and Sis (Pfizer), all through our different providers – so between that and disciplined mask-wearing, I'm not all that worried. It all fits in my philosophical reverie: Life is short no matter how long, long no matter how short.

That said, I'm not sure if this little lull in the body count is because of immunizations, or the dearth of super-spreader events this time of year. Watchin' and waitin' to see how 2021 rolls as mutations mutate and the world tries to recreate the old normal. Cautiously cynical.

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Steven:

Yes, the pandemic seems to have accelerated "virtual life" to a degree that is disturbing, and tech inventions are ramping up to make us approach existence ever more this way. It must be very strange these days to have a crush on a girl at school and never sit next to her or really see what she looks like.

When it comes to the pandemic, I try to remember that risk in life is normal, and that the original point of restrictions is not that this version or that of the virus might kill us--but that sick patients could overwhelm hospitals. Now that the death rate is ever lower and medications work and emergency rooms have space, I favor re-opening. I don't want to live under restrictions--a life without "droplets"--designed to prevent everyone from catching a cold. Risking getting the flu is normal....

S

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Moi:

I'm feeling pretty sure that it will be an endemic reality for the rest of our time, if not forever. It's on each of us to protect ourselves, or not. Open it back it back up, and let the cards fall as they will. Very Darwinian.

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Steven:

Darwinism is the essence of reality. Look in the eyepiece of a microscope and just about the first thing you see is something big swallowing something little. Despite what the left tells us, competition and life are synonyms

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Moi:

An everyday jungle reality despite all the concrete.

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Steven:

Definitely, and despite all the screens and holograms.

S

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with Tyler Leigh Couchman on an email I sent:

Moi:



You still alive?

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Tyler:

Very much so. How are you doing these days? Feeling good, I hope.

I'm living out in Calaveras County on the property now, and in the process of selling the other one up north. Met a different woman over the summer, and now I'm going to be a Dad come October. Ha-ha, things can change so quickly. I embrace all of it.

You at Starbucks on Geer most mornings still? Next time I'm in Turlock I'll stop in.

-----

Moi:

Yowze, that is a most unexpected turn of events. Definitely a life-changer. What a thing it will be to see your genes in a child's face.

All's well enough at this end. No big changes. I've been switching up the morning routine. Sometimes Geerbucks, sometimes Brenda Athletic Club, sometimes Stan State, sometimes home, so best give a day's notice if you can. Send both an email and a text to be sure I catch it.

-----

Tyler:

I'll get in touch later this month when I'm in Turlock and maybe we can meet up.

-----

Moi:

Looking forward to catching up on all them adventures.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with Tyler Leigh Couchman on an email I sent:

Moi:

Less than halfway to daddy-hood. Pretty sure you'll be good at it. Hope all's well.

-----

Tyler:

All is well, Ekim. A lot of time in contemplation of being a Father. It's a turbulent stillness. I see myself steering away from ideas I once had about parenting. As we go on, I suspect it will be something like bumper cars.

Still want to catch up one day, have some coffee and pretend that words hold meaning.

Hope you are well my friend and brother.

-----

Moi:

Have spent a lot of time with women and children in a variety of ways in this existence, and all I can really say is that you are on the cusp of an adventure that will, for the rest of your daze, serve up every imaginable ecstasy, every imaginable agony. I have no doubt you'll give it your best, but know there is no perfection in the task at hand.

No big news at this end. Just keeping it simple, looking out for me Mum, trying to preserve what's left of the mind-body, watching the world turn in this little portal of illusion. And words, as meaningless as we both know they are, are still bubbling into consciousness in the random here and there.

Would be great to catch up on the sundry details of your entrée into householderhood. Probably not much need for you to be in Turlock anymore, so I'd be happy to run into you somewhere more convenient – e.g., Oakdale, Modesto – in your occasional forays down the hill.

Meanwhile, keep on keeping on, and rotsa ruck.

Ciao, ciao,

M

\* \* \* \*

Back-and-forth texts with Tyler Leigh Couchman after he left California with mate Hanna Grace and son Koa for a job in Colorado:

Tyler:

Hey Ekim ... how's life?

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Moi:

Hey back, all's carrying on the same at this end in my for-the-rest-of-this-life-vacation-sort-of-way. Some bother with carpal tunnel that I'll be looking to have sliced and diced come February, but otherwise the mind-body is holding up in the well-enough zone. What's up at your end? How is it living in paradise? Everybody happy and healthy? And how's that job working out?

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Tyler:

We moved out to a small mountain town. Elevation 7500. Hot springs ... fly fishing ... hunting ... might open a restaurant. We're doing well. How are you holding up during the craziness?

I quit that job. It was a corporate disaster.

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Moi:

Craziness, indeed. This coronavirus is definitely changing the game in ways we can only begin to speculate, many if not most of them filled with bother. Not surprised the corporate thing didn't work out. Working with others in hierarchical settings can get pretty twisted. It certainly pleases me not being in the working world anymore. No exceptional new news at this end. Just living the quiet life, doing what I can to stay in reasonable health, watching the show unfold. Geerbucks has closed the lobby, and I suspect the Brenda Athletic Club will shut their doors any day now, so I'll probably be spending more time in my patio and wandering about Stan State. So, are we talking Hot Springs in South Dakota or Arizona or North Carolina or Virginia?

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Tyler:

Well, we're dreaming a collective nightmare while in the cosmic bosom. The stillness before time. The relentless grace of the eternal.

We're in southwest Colorado.

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Moi:

50 Bird Species and the Sounds They Make

<https://www.aaastateofplay.com/50-bird-species-sounds-they-make/?fbclid=IwAR03YKb1aWv9cN82bYWgHmlBmL0DeSoq1us0HZAtEmJs2OahTPDEy04GS0A>,

The Lemonade Machine

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Av07QiqmsoA>

This Guy's Impression of Trump Talking About Coronavirus and Easter is Uncannily Good

[https://digg.com/2020/trump-impersonation-coronavirus?fbclid=IwAR3NexJJ9CU7uuanfxAXSXdU56wj7OrFOlveuhcbS\\_\\_CqEcDylEPH4ryUw0](https://digg.com/2020/trump-impersonation-coronavirus?fbclid=IwAR3NexJJ9CU7uuanfxAXSXdU56wj7OrFOlveuhcbS__CqEcDylEPH4ryUw0),

The Coronavirus Explained & What You Should Do

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=486&v=BtN-goy9VOY&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=486&v=BtN-goy9VOY&feature=emb_logo)

\* \* \* \*

Back-and-forth text with Tyler Leigh Couchman after he and Hanna Grace separated and he returned to California:

Tyler:

Hope you're well, Ekim. Life's curveballs are in full force.

-----

Moi:

Hey, hey, been thinking about ya, wondering how our new world is working out for you and yours. All's well enough at this end. Almost like Old School, only with boggling techno. So, what's going on?

-----

Tyler:

It's been rough. Back in California, supposed to be temporary, made some bad choices recently resulting in Hannah Grace and I living separately right now. In the middle of some heart break and turmoil. Not sure what the future looks like.

-----

Moi:

Sorry to hear it. Was hoping you'd really scored in the domestic bliss arena. Where are you staying?

-----

Tyler:

I did in a lot of ways. Still has the potential. Avoided a lot of shadow work. Relationships can teach us so much. Ignoring the lessons can crush us eventually. Up in the hills for now.,

-----

Moi:

One trial after another, no end to learning.,

So, what's the next adventure?

-----

Tyler:

No next, it's all one.

-----

Moi:

Your parents still there?

-----

Tyler:

Yeah The place is theirs now. Bought it from me, kinda.

-----

Moi:

At least you have a place to lick your wounds and try to figure out the next big adventure. Anything calling you?

-----

Tyler:

Well, we bought a property in Idaho to build a home and life on so that's up in the air with us ... for now I'm here, sorting some things out within myself, reading, writing, making music...working as a carpenter up in Murphy's area.

-----

Moi: So you might get back together. Still just the one child?

Is the sorting out of a spiritual nature?

-----

Tyler: Yeah, only one. Yeah, somewhat spiritual, maybe everything is, mixed with emotional stuff, epigenetic traumas and inherited limiting beliefs.

-----

Moi: Yeah, all a mix, and ever a slog at many times. I'm certainly no example of an easy path. Lots of adventures, lots of trials. All you can do is keep on moving through the maze that's offered.

-----

Tyler: Yep. Release the illusion of control. Just create.

Tyler: Turning in for the night, I'll get in touch if I'm down that way. Grab some coffee. Catch up. Be well.

Sounds good, looking forward to it.

\* \* \* \*

Back-and-forth texts with Tyler Leigh Couchman after Hanna Grace and he reunited in California:

Moi:

Hey, hey, just checking in, spring is popping, Geerbucks outdoor seating is back in play, philosophical intrigue abounds.

The Day Everything Changed

<https://www.npr.org/2021/03/11/975663437/march-11-2020-the-day-everything-changed>,

What's the word? Still local? Or back with woman and child?

-----

Tyler:

Up in Murphy's. We're all together in a little townhouse ... hustling and working to get on to the next adventure. How are you?

-----

Moi:

Other than the litany of depressing old man bothers, it's relatively tolerable at this end. Pretty much hanging aloof in my studio and patio with the pandemic still in play. Got the two Moderna shots, and have no trouble wearing masks, so I'm more watch-and-wait than worried. As far as activities go, I see my mother and sister in Modesto on most Sundays, and a few friends occasionally in the outdoor seating at Geerbucks. Watch a fair amount of Netflix in the evenings, and do my aqua chi thing at the BAC many if not most daze. Spend a number of sunsets every week on a bench over at Stan State with an older friend, and am sometimes chauffeur for another to medical appointments and shopping in Modesto. And, of course, there's the aphoristic wordplay that ever continues to bubble up here and there in the day-to-day. Definitely a low-key, contemplative existence. Good to hear you and Hannah Grace and Koa are back together working through things. A lot to deal with in the coupling and child-rearing process. Coming to grips with different values, I suspect. More than this Peter Pan ever had grit and gumption to partake for more than short durations. So good fortune to all of you. Any idea what adventures might be in store? It would be good to see you if you ever get down this way. A discussion on "Stuff" might be in order.

Ciao,

M

\* \* \* \*

A series of back-and-forth emails with Albert Medina that lead to a couple break-offs in communication:

\* \* \* \* \*

Caveat

To become reconciled to a friend with whom you have broken is a form of weakness; and you pay the penalty of it when he takes the first opportunity of doing precisely the very thing which brought about the breach ~ Arthur Schopenhauer

\* \* \* \* \*

Albert:

Life ... Here and Later

Hi. Ran into your website "The Stillness Before Time" and was positively impressed by your writing, choice of words to explain spiritual concepts. Thanks!

I live in Hughson just outside of Modesto, am 64 years old, have been and continue to be a rabid spiritual sojourner. Maybe we could share some spirited conversation and coffee some time? Just let me know.

Thanks and many blessings to you and yours,

Albert (Al) Medina  
Hughson CA  
209 216 6968

-----  
Moi:

Hey, Albert (Al),

I was actually born and raised in Hughson and live in Turlock. Am retired, so a meet can happen most anytime that works for you. Spend most Sundays with my mother, so that would be the exception. The Starbucks on Geer Road is one of my regular watering holes, and the table where I found the Master Path brochure is the regular spot. Will be meeting with a friend tomorrow in the nine-ish zone, but should be available by ten if that's convenient. And if not, just throw out another day or time or place, and I'm sure it will be doable.

Looking forward to some chat time.

Ciao, ciao,

M

-----  
Albert:

Am I missing a piece of the jigsaw puzzle? I am a MasterPath student. Are you? If so, what a coincidence indeed.

I don't often go to your Starbucks and like the one on Canal Street. Today I chose the Starbucks by Target, Turlock. I will hang out here reading for a while so you are most welcome to come over. Surprise me!

I am planning a trip to the Sierra tomorrow with Leslie, my partner. Free most days so maybe we can set up a meet for next week?

Thanks kindly for your reply! Looking forward to talking with you, Michael.

Love and Sound,

Al

-----  
Moi:

Just spotted your message. Will be over in about 20 minutes if you're still there.

-----  
Albert:

Groovee mon. Seeyasoon.

\* \* \* \*

Moi:

Another Thursday Done

Al,

Great meeting you. A rare and refreshing chat. Sorry we were interrupted, but so it goes.

Thanks for those links. Watched Paul Hedderman for a bit. Good stuff.

Off for some Club Brenda aqua chi time.

Catch you soon.

M

-----

Albert:

Hi. I was reading your #29 Stillness aphorism ... love it! Yes, you write extraordinary stuff ... easy to read, too. I sent you a text inviting you to a hike on Saturday. I kinda like La Loma Park and have hiked it for years. Let me know.

"dualistic whimsy" ... indeed!

Much Love,

Al

It may be fairly frightening, even irritating,  
For many to begin fathoming they are godness,  
Because up to this point, their manifest consciousness  
Has not even begun to open to that expansive an inner vision.

-----

Moi:

A hike tomorrow sounds good. My day's wide open. What are your thoughts on time and logistics?

\* \* \* \*

Albert:

Hike on Saturday



Hi. Cool! Weather should be comfortable. We can meet around 1 p.m. at the parking lot at the bottom of the entrance to La Loma Park, by the tennis courts.

Time seems to be elastic. I have sometimes felt that a single minute seemed like a whole day ... I have seemingly spent one whole year as a blink. Sorry, I don't mean to be evasive. My 64 years on this planet have passed in a single clap of my hands! More logistics are important to those with complicated lives ... most have complex lives, filled with responsibilities and commitments. Also, if one has goals in time and space, the mind will create logistical steps to attain that desire. Buddha exclaimed that "desire is the source of all pain."

Even defecation requires simple logistics ... find that porcelain throne!

But that's fodder for a splendid trade of ideas while hiking.

Al

Moi: You sure it's even a clap of the hands?

See you tomorrow at one o'clock by the La Loma tennis courts.

\* \* \* \*

Albert:

3-Летняя Девочка Села За Пианино, И Уже Через Секунду Мое Сердце Замерло!  
<https://www.facebook.com/2016025095129562/videos/278283199473361/>

Hi. Fabulous talent and obvious discipline! I have seen videos of very young guitarists, bassists, violinists that are simply uncanny. To me, these are proof of carryover tendencies (sanskaras) from past lives but I wouldn't have a chance of proving that in court!

I like this excerpt from Page 5 of your Ponderings of Yaj Ekim ... grist for the old mill of the mind. Seeya at 1.

You can only see  
What you are capable of seeing.  
You can only hear what you are capable of hearing.  
You can only taste, smell, and feel what you are capable of tasting, smelling, and feeling.  
And in reality, you are truly seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, and feeling  
Your Self cloaked in every form, every disguise imaginable.

Moi: Looking forward to a nice little saunter-chat.

-----

Albert:

Watch "Poetry by RUMI – Who Says Words with My Mouth" on YouTube  
<https://youtu.be/LHSclx-hIRc>

Relax and enjoy! Thanks for passing some quality time with me today. I learned a lot from you! Blessings  
be. Al  
Moi:

Great walk and talk. Came away thinking on things, that's for sure. Had no idea the La Loma zone was such a pleasant space.

Found that Sound book I was talking about. Looks very much like the same thing you're talking about.

From Light to Sound: The Spiritual Progression  
The Journey of Soul's Unfoldment  
by Dennis Holte  
(1995)

Was wrong about Dale Carnegie being the first. Napoleon Hill and others were way earlier than I realized:

How to Win Friends and Influence People  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/How\\_to\\_Win\\_Friends\\_and\\_Influence\\_People](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/How_to_Win_Friends_and_Influence_People)

Before How to Win Friends and Influence People was released, the genre of self-help books had an ample heritage. Authors such as Napoleon Hill, Orison Swett Marden, and Samuel Smiles had enormous success with their self-help books in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Dale Carnegie began his career not as a writer, but as a teacher of public speaking.

The recent movie that I couldn't remember. Great prison flick. Spoiler alert on the Wikipedia link if you think you might watch it.

Shot Caller  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shot Caller\\_\(film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shot Caller_(film))

Thanks for the Rumi link. The one following it was good, too.

Only Breath  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IZqAnIp5dMQ>

See you in one soon or another.

Ciao, ciao,

M

\* \* \* \*

Moi:

Eight Translations of the Ashtavakra Gita

Wikipedia: Ashtavakra Gita  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ashtavakra\\_Gita](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ashtavakra_Gita)

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The Heart of Awareness (Byrom)  
<http://theheartofawareness.blogspot.com/>

Ashtavakra Gita (Marshall)  
<http://theashtavakra.blogspot.com/>

Bitten by the Black Snake (Schoch)  
<http://bittenbytheblacksnake.blogspot.com/>

A Duet of One (Balsekar)  
<http://aduetofone.blogspot.com/>

Ashtavakra Gita (Richards)  
<http://anotherashtavakragita.blogspot.com/>

Astavakra Samhita (Wood)  
<http://astavakrasamhita.blogspot.com/>

Ashtavakra Gita (Vedic)  
<http://ashtravakrageeta.blogspot.com/>

Ashtavakra Gita (Shastri)  
<http://ashtravakrageeta.blogspot.com>

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Ashtavakra Gita: I Am Shiva  
<http://ashtavakragitaiamshiva.blogspot.com/>

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Ashtavakra Gita: Sri Ramana Maharshi  
[www.sriramanamaharshi.org/resource\\_centre/audio/ashtavakra-gita/](http://www.sriramanamaharshi.org/resource_centre/audio/ashtavakra-gita/)

\* \* \* \*

Albert:

Body is a Trip!

Hi. Have a great time with your mother and your day. I noticed you massaging your knee yesterday. So sorry you can't use it as in the past. Water exercise sounds like the best thing for your body. Leslie swears by it and has a friend who does as well.

It's hard to even think clearly or do anything well with a whole lotta pain going on!

This entire region is one of decay, death, and decomposition...that includes every life form and material

object. Nothing is permanent in the material, astral, causal, or mental worlds, say the great Saints.

Then why attach ourselves to anything or anyone here?

Ha! Grist for enlightened conversation. Thanks for the superb links.

Much Love,

Al

\* \* \* \*

Albert:

Exasperation and Exhaustion

Hi, Michael.

How inevitably absurd, asinine, banal, bizarre, blah, bland, boring, characterless, Childish, colorless, corruptible, daft, deadly, dry, dreary, dull, dullsville, empty, farcical, Flat, frustrating, futile, hare-brained, hollow, ho-hum, humdrum, idiotic, illogical, impractical, Inane, incongruous, insipid, irksome, irrational, juvenile, lackluster, lifeless, ludicrous, meaningless, Mind-numbing, monochrome, monotonous, mundane, not up to much, pathetic, pointless, puerile, Purposeless, repetitive, ridiculous, 'same old, same old', senseless, silly, soul-annihilating, stale, Stodgy, strange, stupid, tame, tedious, tired, tiresome, tiring, trite, trivial, trying, uneventful, Unexciting, uninspiring, uninteresting, uninvolved, unrelieved, unvaried, vulnerable, Wearing, and generally wishy-washy the human paradigm has so often become.

By you.

Caught this gem from your crumbs page. Reason for my copying it is because it aptly describes my mental state prior to meeting Sri Gary, the Sat Guru. The human consciousness is definitely limited and is in colossal ignorance. The Sat Gurus say:

... this world is not our true Home.  
... nor is Brahm the true lord,  
... nor is the mind the true Traveler.  
... nor is knowledge of the Self (cosmic consciousness, Brahmand) the end of attainment.

Don't give up hope. Be aware.

[Graphic with Rumi meme: Your heart and my heart are very old friends]

Love will catch you if you allow it. Soul is awakening.

Much Love,

Al

-----

Moi:

Wordplay is my playground. Sometimes I'm just having fun with the dictionary and thesaurus.

Off to Modesto today. Maybe some coffee time tomorrow..

-----

Albert:

I think words are terrific tools, though my skills are darn near nil. I added 2 words to your E word...ha!

-----

Moi:

You're pretty articulate verbally, so it's curious that it doesn't morph to paper.

-----

Albert:

Hi. Yeah, it's important to me to use language in such a way that knowledge, truth and love are conveyed, hopefully sweetly. But I don't have the literary gift ... 'preciate the compliment!

My afternoon is pretty open tomorrow. Maybe we can connect around 2pm? I found another paved trail in Modesto called the "Virginia Corridor". Walk/talk? Let me know, bro.

Al

-----

Moi:

Going to pass on Modesto today. Spent the day there yesterday, and need to get to the pool today. The knee is still a little achy from the La Loma saunter. Dealing with the commuter traffic in the later part of the day is always a draining experience anymore. Some serious reorganization of my clutterfest is also on the agenda.

Am meeting a friend at Geerbucks at 12:30. Richard Buckley, son of Lord Buckley. He's a musician, car buff, entrepreneur. Recently moved from Southern California to Merced with his girlfriend. Very sharp and clever. Not into the spiritual thing per se, but always a kick in my reverie. Join us if you'd like. Or drop by the GB at 2 o'clock for an hour or so of chat time if that suits your timeline better.

Lord Buckley

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lord\\_Buckley](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lord_Buckley)

-----

Albert:

Howdy. Thanks kindly for inviting me to the meeting with Richard and girlfriend. Wow, moving from LA

to Merced ... now that must be an interesting tale. Sure, I would love to visit with you guys. I can make it around 1pm to Geerbucks, if that's ok with you. Listened to "Nazz", by Lord and it rocks! The words "cat/cats and chicks" come up a bunch and I remember those well-used words in my early life jargon. Great imagination and storytelling of Buckley Sr.

See ya soon,

Al

P.S. Let me know if times change, etc. Thanks.

P.P.S. Sorry about that knee ... bummer!

-----

Moi:

See you at one o'clock.

\* \* \* \*

Albert:

Great video of Richard, Lady, and host Skip Lowe

Lord Buckley Jr., Lady Buckley -- Rare 1992 TV Interview  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SNX-FDeoEjs>

The wife and son of legendary humorist Lord Buckley discuss his life and career in this half-hour show with cable TV host Skip E Lowe, including several rare clips.

\* \* \* \*

Albert:

Thanks

Hi. Thanks kindly for an illuminating 3 hours with great people and conversation. Leslie also enjoyed the meet.

Many blessings,

Al

-----

Moi:

Figured two music guys would have a good time.

\* \* \* \*

Albert:

Perusal and Takeaway

Hi. Here's a gem you wrote that I resonate with deeply:

Only in the complete and utter aloneness of awareness  
Can the freedom of pure beingness be fully discerned

Through all the cacophony of the sensory-intellectual consciousness, true identification has been slaughtered. Thanks for the link. Keep up the great work!!

Love,

Al

-----

Moi:

The challenge is letting go of the cacophony.

We spend so much time questing the most simple thingless the mystery has to offer.

No need for religion and all the groupthink, all the dogmas, all the hierarchies, all the middlemen, in my estimate. Why worship what you are? Eternity is now. You are it, it is you. Just be. Free, simple, easy. Anything more than that is just the trickster mind playing its imagination game.

Here's the ditty that came of that. Not quite lean enough for this platform, but oh well.

The challenge is letting go of the cacophony ever playing out in our heads.  
We spend so much time questing the most simple thingless the mystery has to offer,  
Yet there it is: the awareness, the witness, the mystery, peering out from behind every mask.  
What need for religion, belief, faith, prayer, principles, dogma, middlemen, groupthink, hierarchies?  
Why worship what you are? Eternity is right here now, timeless. You are it, it is you. Just be.  
Anything less is merely the trickster mind playing its more-more-more imagination game.

-----

Albert:

Hi. In my case, there was a deep need for "more". Sound (shabda) fills me with love in each morning contemplation. Sound is love in its purest state.

The Saints call it Nectar (amrit) and Divine Wine. Partaking of this beverage changes one forever and gives real purpose to existence.

Sound is embraced when the light has been exhausted.

Much love,

Al, yer pal

-----

Moi:

More sculpting this morning in the Club Brenda lobby. Getting pretty final. I suppose my view of it all is pretty much stand-alone theater.

Enjoy this fine chilly-breezy day.

The challenge is letting go of the cacophony ever playing out in our aloneness.  
We spend so much time questing the most unadorned reality the mystery has to offer,  
Yet there it is: the awareness, the witness, the enigma, peering out from behind every mask.  
What need for religion? What need for spirituality? What need for belief, faith, prayer, scripture?  
What need for deities and demons, mythologies, parables, dogmas, principles, rituals, idols, symbols?  
What need for messiahs, saints, priesthoods, traditions, superstitions, caste systems, groupthink?  
What need for cathedrals, temples, shrines, holy places, titles, hierarchies, dress codes?  
What need for dualistic or non-dualistic concepts, or any light or sound shows?  
Why worship what you are? Eternity is right here right now, timeless.  
Merely being the awareness is all there is: You are it, it is you.  
Anything less is nothing more than the trickster mind  
Playing its more-more-more imagination game.

-----

Albert:

Hey dude ... thanks for the mail.

I find your point of view to mirror a few awesome neo-advaitists that I have listened to. You may wish to check out this document, purportedly attributed to Adi Shankara, who popularized Advaita many centuries ago in India.

The Realization of Brahman

<https://sanskritdocuments.org/sites/snsastri/brahmajnaanaavalimalaa.pdf>

Some neo-advaitists that are brilliant, in my humble opinion (apart from yourself): Adyashanti, Michael James, Swami Sarvapriyananda. There are many others that I have enjoyed listening to. They all have YouTube videos and websites.

I appreciate deeply your realizations and conclusions ... carry on!

Much Love,

Al

-----

Moi:



Boggling how much of everything imaginable is out there. I consider my babble to be more hobby than anything else. A dead poet in the making.

-----

Albert:

Yes, I am gobsmacked that we have so much access to so much, via the internet. I have a deep respect for all teachers of spirituality, for there is a teaching/teacher available that will meet every human being's level of need and way of life. Even religions fill a void for billions of people.

It's a miracle of these times. In my view, you are a live poet deatching.

Ha!

Al

-----

Moi:

Pretty final, getting close to the first nap of the day, enjoy the day, ciao ciao, M

The challenge is letting go of the cacophony ever playing out in our aloneness.  
We spend so much time questing the most unadorned reality the mystery has to offer,  
Yet there it is: the awareness, the witness, the enigma, peering out from behind every mask.  
What need for religion? What need for spirituality? What need for belief, faith, prayer, scripture?  
What need for heavens and hells and purgatories, deities and demons, mythologies, icons, sacraments?  
What need for messiahs, saints, priesthoods, traditions, superstitions, caste systems, groupthinks?  
What need for philosophies, dogmas, ethics, laws, principles, doctrines, idols, mystic powers?  
What need for cathedrals, temples, shrines, holy places, titles, hierarchies, dress codes?  
What need for dualistic or non-dualistic concepts, or any light or sound shows?  
Why worship what you are? Eternity is right here right now, timeless.  
Merely being the awareness is all there is: You are it, it is you.  
Anything less is nothing more than the trickster mind  
Playing its more-more-more imagination game.

-----

Albert:

Nice ... What need, indeed.

Ciao, Al

\* \* \* \*

Albert:

Pardon Me

I forgot to include this website for your perusal ... or rejection!!

I Am Ronen: Kasmir Saivism - Tattvas

<https://iamronen.com/blog/2009/08/21/kasmir-saivism-tattvas/>

The transcendental aspect of nature is called Parasamvit (“vid” = to know) which means Pure Consciousness.

Ciao,

Al

-----

Moi:

All interesting, including the Soul's Divine Journey that arrived a few daze ago, thanks.

-----

Albert:

De nada, my friend.

That book came out in 2011 and I have read it many times ... I hope you feel the great Love of the path. If you want or need more, Volume 1 (Divine Teachings of Light and Sound) hardback is much more in-depth and is available on the MP website. I also have a spare copy which I can lend you, if you wish to investigate Sound further.

Much Love,

Al

-----

Moi:

I think Soul's Divine Journey and From Light to Sound pretty much covers the gist of the Master Path. Find myself more about awareness than love at this writing. May well be wrong, but love and emotion, as well as light and sound, seem more products of human wiring than anything ultimately real or important. Our never-ending egocentric-ethnocentric-geocentric-solarcentric self-absorption just doesn't move me anymore.

Soul's Divine Journey got me into a wander through Wikipedia the other night. A few links for your amusement.

Sant Mat

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sant\\_Mat](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sant_Mat)

Surat Shabd Yoga

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Surat\\_Shabd\\_Yoga](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Surat_Shabd_Yoga)

Contemporary Sant Mat Movements

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Contemporary\\_Sant\\_Mat\\_movements](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Contemporary_Sant_Mat_movements)

Radha Soami

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Radha\\_Soami](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Radha_Soami)

Satguru

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Satguru>

Sufism

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sufism>

Sikhism

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sikhism>

Hinduism

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hinduism>

Bhakti

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bhakti>

Sikh Gurus

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sikh\\_gurus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sikh_gurus)

Guru Nanak

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guru\\_Nanak](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guru_Nanak)

Namdev

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Namdev>

Ramananda

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ramananda>

Guru Granth Sahib

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guru\\_Granth\\_Sahib](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guru_Granth_Sahib)

Hafez

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hafez>

Rumi

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rumi>

Perfect Master (Meher Baba)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Perfect\\_Master\\_\(Meher\\_Baba\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Perfect_Master_(Meher_Baba))

Meher Baba

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meher\\_Baba](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meher_Baba)

MasterPath is another contemporary American movement of Surat Shabda Yoga. Gary Olsen, the current Living Master of this branch, contends that several historical figures are Sat Gurus of Surat Shabda Yoga as representatives for the eternal Inner Shabda Master. A few of these Living Masters of their times include Lao Tsu, Jesus, Pythagoras, Socrates, Kabir, the Sufi Masters, and mystic poets, Hafez and Rumi, the Ten Sikh Gurus beginning with Guru Nanak, Tulsi Sahib, and the Radhasoami/Radha Soami and offshoot Masters, including Shiv Dayal Singh, Baba Sawan Singh, Baba Faqir Chand, and Sant Kirpal Singh.

-----

Albert:

Hey dude. These are all fantabulous websites! Grooveeeee ... thanks.

\* \* \* \*

Moi:

Ditties for the Bluegrass Pyre

Here's something I think you'll appreciate as a musician. It was couple night's worth of blugrassy thoughts that came out while wandering from group to group with a friend at the 2018 California Bluegrass Association (CBA) Spring Campout at the Stanislaus County Fairgrounds in Turlock. I call them ditties; my friend, Mikki, calls them hooks.

Happy 2019. Whoo-hoo

-----

Thanks, man. Nice of you to think of me and the New Year. Speaking of earthly music, here is a nice production of two virtuosos – tabla and bansri – enjoy!

Much Love,

Al

-----

Albert:

Here's the link ... a little sandalwood ... kick back, leave this scene

Zakir Hussain & Rakesh Chaurasia

Live in Krakow EthnoFestival July 2015

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O0H8bk7JKMY>

-----

Moi:

Nice, thanks.

-----

Do you like this type of music? If so, I have others to share ... different Indian classical instruments and masters of the same.

Amazing, is it not, the time and dedication it requires to master an activity. What a gift we have in YouTube.

Al

-----

Moi:

Pretty eclectic in my music tastes, so I'm betting anything you have to share will be interesting.

\* \* \* \*

Albert:

Satie and Cortès

Hi. I came across this video a few months back and the hit was to send it to you. Sometimes a meaningless catalyst can touch the heart quite deeply. When I first saw and listened, it seemed like oodles of nostalgia came roaring up out of my subconscious ... like a geyser of feelings and memories from the great abyss of the subconscious. Having been to Paris when I was a child ... then as an adult in 2004 probably added to my melancholy resonance and purging.

Glad you're eclectic.

Anyway, trust that you are well and still digging deep for the diamonds, as you always do.

Oceans of Love and Sound,

Al

Erik Satie: Gymnopédies

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wnacdOIoTBQ>

-----

Moi:

Classic tune, didn't know its title, the paintings by Cortès are a perfect fit, thanks.

Gymnopédies

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gymnopédies>

Erik Satie

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Erik\\_Satie](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Erik_Satie)

Édouard Cortès

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Édouard\\_Cortès](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Édouard_Cortès)

Édouard Cortès Paintings

[https://www.google.com/search?q=%C3%89douard+Cort%C3%A8s+Paintings&num=50&newwindow=1&client=safari&rls=en&tbm=isch&source=lnms&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiH1Iysg9rfAhWRwMQHHd2wBuAQ\\_AUIoAUoAQ&biw=903&bih=621](https://www.google.com/search?q=%C3%89douard+Cort%C3%A8s+Paintings&num=50&newwindow=1&client=safari&rls=en&tbm=isch&source=lnms&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiH1Iysg9rfAhWRwMQHHd2wBuAQ_AUIoAUoAQ&biw=903&bih=621)

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Moi:

Blood, Sweat, & Tears "Variations on a Theme by Erik Satie (1st and 2nd Movements)"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GreaN1ljqGY>

Legacy

From the second half of the 20th century on, the *Gymnopédies* were often erroneously described as part of Satie's body of furniture music, perhaps because of John Cage's interpretation of them. Collectively, the *Gymnopédies* are regarded as an important precursor to modern ambient music.

The first and second *Gymnopédies* were arranged by Dick Halligan for the group Blood, Sweat & Tears under the title "Variations on a Theme by Erik Satie" on the group's eponymous album, released in 1968. The recording received a Grammy Award the following year for Best Contemporary Instrumental Performance. In 1980, Gary Numan produced a track called "Trois Gymnopédies (First Movement)", which appeared on the B-side of the single "We Are Glass". *Gymnopédies* have been heard in numerous movies and television shows. Examples include the documentary *Man on Wire*, Wes Anderson's *The Royal Tenenbaums*, and Woody Allen's *Another Woman*, all of which use *Gymnopédie No. 1* in their soundtracks. In 2007 Wilhelm Kaiser-Lindemann [de] arranged the first and the third *Gymnopédie* for The 12 Cellists of the Berlin Philharmonic.

-----

Albert:

F\*\*\*ing beautiful ... and so short for a Grammy ... thanks. *Man On a Wire* (Phillippe Petit, movie) played this piece when he tight wired the WTC buildings in '74. THAT took balls of brass. Quite a flick and worth the time. Merci.

\* \* \* \*

Albert:

Millennial Humor

Can you relate??

A Millennial Job Interview

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uo0KjdDJr1c>

-----

Moi:

Too good, for sure passing it on.

\* \* \* \*

Moi:

2019 Underway

Whoo-hoo!

The Unfolding Next Round

[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_52.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_52.html)

Breadcrumbs 2018 (578 pages)

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/breadcrumbs2018.pdf>

Breadcrumbs (Compendium) (1898 pages)

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/breadcrumbs.pdf>

-----

Albert:

Death is caused by swallowing small amounts of saliva for a long time - Carlin

-----

Moi:

He is missed.

The other two books, and another year or so of the edited compendium of The Return to Wonder.

The Stillness Before Time (53 pages)

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/thestillnessbeforetime.pdf>

The Ponderings of Yaj Ekim (505 pages)

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/theponderingsofyajekim.pdf>

The Return to Wonder (3006 Pages) (Major edit underway – New copy colored blue)

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/thereturntowonder.pdf>

\* \* \* \*

Moi:

Simple Animations by a NASA Scientist 'Prove' The Speed of Light Is Torturously Slow

<https://www.sciencealert.com/simple-animations-by-a-nasa-scientist-prove-the-speed-of-light-is-torturously-slow>

\* \* \* \*

Moi:

## Website Makeover

It has been a busy month tying everything together. Below are links to the 2019 makeover for your amusement.

Been hanging over in the lobby at Club Brenda most mornings of late. Quieter and free coffee and television if I feel like watching the whoo-hoo unfold.

But I am plenty willing to abide the Geerbucks lobby if you've time for a meet one of these mornings.

Hope all is well.

M

## Website

The Stillness Before Time

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/>

There is really only one Way.  
It is without division or boundary.  
It is without name or theology.  
Awareness is its scripture,  
Here now its venue,  
You its witness,  
Your life the journey.

A 53-page PDF copy can be downloaded at:

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/thestillnessbeforetime.pdf>

## Main Blogs

The Stillness Before Time

<http://thestillnessbeforetime.blogspot.com/>

The Ponderings of Yaj Ekim

<http://theponderingsofyajekim.blogspot.com/>

The Return to Wonder

<http://thereturntowonder.blogspot.com/>

Breadcrumbs

<http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/>

PDF's



The Stillness Before Time

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/thestillnessbeforetime.pdf>

The Ponderings of Yaj Ekim

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/theponderingsofyajekim.pdf>

The Return to Wonder

(Major edit underway – New copy colored blue)

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/thereturntowonder.pdf>

Breadcrumbs (Compendium)

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/breadcrumbs.pdf>

Breadcrumbs 2018

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/breadcrumbs2018.pdf>

Breadcrumbs 2019

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/breadcrumbs2019.pdf>

Breadcrumbs 2020

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/breadcrumbs2020.pdf>

Conversations

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/conversations.pdf>

Definitions

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/definitions.pdf>

Titles, Titles & More Titles

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/titlestitlesandmoretitles.pdf>

Ditties for the Bluegrass Pyre

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/dittiesforthebluegrasspyre.pdf>

Once Upon a Christmas

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/onceuponchristmas.pdf>

(Please note that all writings are subject to annual updates and editing, so downloading current PDF copies every year or so might be a good idea if you want the most current version. This applies especially to the Breadcrumbs compendium, which is likely an ongoing work until the last wheezing breath)

Recent Breadcrumbs

The Unfolding Next Round (Current ditties unpublished elsewhere)

[http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_52.html](http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_52.html)

Standouts from “The Return to Wonder” Edit

[http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_83.html](http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_83.html)

## Breadcrumbs Blog Posts

### Preface

[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_28.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_28.html)

### Breadcrumbs

[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_82.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_82.html)

### Leftovers

[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_11.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_11.html)

### Soundbites

[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_63.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_63.html)

### Corollaries

[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_31.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_31.html)

### Possible Last Words & Epitaphs

[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_34.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_34.html)

### The Standard Ripostes

[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_39.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_39.html)

### List of Top Books for the Up and Coming

[http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_79.html](http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_79.html)

### List of Top Books for the Up and Coming

[http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_83.html](http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_83.html)

### The Unfolding Next Round (Current ditties unpublished elsewhere)

[http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_52.html](http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_52.html)

### Of the Human Journey

[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_6.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_6.html)

### Got God?

[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_33.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_33.html)

### Ten Reflections

[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_21.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_21.html)

### Standouts from the Return to Wonder Edit

[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_8.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_8.html)

### Links

[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_18.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_18.html)

Life Resume

[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_68.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_68.html)

Photo Gallery

[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_17.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_17.html)

Books

[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_50.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_50.html)

Movies

[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_73.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_73.html)

Quotes Worth Pondering

[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_1.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_1.html)

Spam Responses (a.k.a., WTF Is This Shit!?)

<https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction.html>

Facebook

Michael Holshouser

<http://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=1166861214&ref=name>

Michael's Little Warehouse of All Things Amusing, Absurd & Profound

[http://www.facebook.com/note.php?note\\_id=390323775911](http://www.facebook.com/note.php?note_id=390323775911)

Le Fichier Circulaire de Michaël (Michael's Circular File)

<https://www.facebook.com/LeFichierCirculaireDeMichael?ref=hl>

Yaj Ekim

<http://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=1166861214&ref=name>

Hughson Union High School Class of '72

<https://www.facebook.com/Hughson-Union-High-School-Class-of-72-301790023189950/>

Blogger

Michael Holshouser

<https://www.blogger.com/profile/12270094801824803661>

Twitter

Michael Holshouser

<https://twitter.com/#!/YajEkim>

Sivana East

Michael Holshouser

<https://blog.sivanaspirit.com/author/mjholshouser/>

Instagram

Michael Holshouser

<https://www.instagram.com/mjholshouser/?hl=en>

Odd and Ends

Final Exit

<http://finalexitandrelatedlinks.blogspot.com/>

The Blind Men and the Elephant

<http://theelephantandtheblindmen.blogspot.com/>

The Joyful Curmudgeon

<http://thejoyfulcurmudgeon.blogspot.com/>

Of A Philosophical Nature

<http://ofaphilosophicalnature.blogspot.com/>

Quotes, Quotes & More Quotes

<http://quotesaplenty.blogspot.com/>

The Four Agreements

<http://donmiguelSFiveAgreements.blogspot.com/>

Le Fichier Circulaire de Michaël

<http://michaelsCircularfile.blogspot.com/>

50 Rules Kids Won't Learn in School

<http://50ruleskidswontlearninschool.blogspot.com/>

12 Rules You Can Live By

<http://12rulesyoucanliveby.blogspot.com/>

How to Work in Any Environment

<http://howtoworkinanyenvironment.blogspot.com/>

Once Upon a Christmas

<https://onceuponchristmas.blogspot.com/>

Ditties for the Bluegrass Pyre

<https://dittiesforthebluegrasspyre.blogspot.com/>

Election 2016: The Rise (and Fall?) of Donald Trump

<https://theriseandfallofdonaldtrump.blogspot.com/>

## Eight Translations of the Ashtavakra Gita

The Heart of Awareness (Byrom)

<http://theheartofawareness.blogspot.com/>

Ashtavakra Gita (Marshall)

<http://theashtavakra.blogspot.com/>

Bitten by the Black Snake (Schoch)

<http://bittenbytheblacksnake.blogspot.com/>

A Duet of One (Balsekar)

<http://aduetofone.blogspot.com/>

Ashtavakra Gita (Richards)

<http://anotherashtavakragita.blogspot.com/>

Astavakra Samhita (Wood)

<http://astavakrasamhita.blogspot.com/>

Ashtavakra Gita (Vedic Scriptures)

<http://ashtravakrageeta.blogspot.com/>

Ashtavakra Gita (Shastri)

<http://ashtravakrageeta.blogspot.com/>

## PDF's of Ashtavakra Gita: I Am Shiva

Ashtavakra Gita: I Am Shiva

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/ashtavakragitaiamshiva.pdf>

I Am Shiva Comparison Chart

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/iamshivacomparisonchart.pdf>

## PDF's of Eight Translations

The Heart of Awareness (Byrom)

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/theheartofawarenessbyrom.pdf>

Ashtavakra Gita (Marshall)

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/ashtavakrafitamarshall.pdf>

Bitten by the Black Snake (Schoch)

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/bittenbytheblacksnakeschoch.pdf>

Ashtavakra Gita (Richards)

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/ashtavakragitarichards.pdf>

A Duet of One (Balsekar)

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/aduetofonebalsekar.pdf>

Astavakra Samhita (Wood)

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/astavakrasamhitawood.pdf>

Ashtavakra Gita (Shastri)

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/ashtavakragitashastri.pdf>

Ashtavakra Gita (Vedic Scriptures)

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/ashtavakragitavedic.pdf>

Translations of Other Ancient Writings

Ashtavakra Gita: I Am Shiva

<http://ashtavakragitaiamshiva.blogspot.com/>

Tao Te Ching: Verse One

<http://taotechingverseone.blogspot.com/>

Tao Te Ching (Marshall)

<http://theperennialway-taoteching.blogspot.com/>

Bhagavad Gita (Marshall)

<https://bhagavadgitamarshall.blogspot.com/>

Yoga Sutras (Marshall)

<http://yogasutrasbypatanjali.blogspot.com/>

Dhammapada (Marshall)

<http://buddhasdhammapada.blogspot.com/>

The Book of Ecclesiastes (Marshall)

<https://21ecclesiastesmarshall.blogspot.com>

Song of the Avadhut (Abhayananda)

<http://songoftheavadhut.blogspot.com/>

Avadhut Gita (Shastri)

<http://avadhutgitabydattatreya.blogspot.com/>

Atma Bodha (Chinmayananda)

<http://theatmabodha.blogspot.com/>

The Essence of the Ribhu Gita (Ramamoorthy & Nome)

<http://theribhugita.blogspot.com/>

Yoga Vasishta Sara (Ramasramam)  
<http://yogavasishtasara.blogspot.com/>

Crest-Jewel of Discrimination (Madhavananda)  
<http://crest-jewelofdiscrimination.blogspot.com/>

Mandukya Upanishad & Mandukya Karika of Gaudapada (Panoli)  
<https://mandukyaupanishadpanoli.blogspot.com>

Gaudapada: Advaita Vedanta's First Philosopher (Jones)  
<https://advaitavedantasfirstphilosopher.blogspot.com/2020/02/on-tradition.html>

Writings by Bart Marshall

Verses Regarding True Nature  
<https://versesregardingtruenaturemarshall.blogspot.com>

One Hundred Two Haiku  
<https://onehundredtwohaikumarshall.blogspot.com>

Translations of Ancient Writings by Bart Marshall

Ashtavakra Gita  
<http://theashtavakra.blogspot.com/>

Tao Te Ching  
<http://theperennialway-taoteching.blogspot.com/>

Bhagavad Gita  
<https://bhagavadgitamarshall.blogspot.com/>

Yoga Sutras  
<http://yogasutrasbypatanjali.blogspot.com/>

Dhammapada  
<http://buddhasdhammapada.blogspot.com/>

The Book of Ecclesiastes  
<https://21ecclesiastesmarshall.blogspot.com>

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Albert:

Hi. Well, it's good to be busy with what one loves. That way life is a constant unfolding of love and joy.

My schedule is tight right now but maybe in a couple of weeks, things will cool down. Thanks for the mail and update.

Al

\* \* \* \*

Albert:

Hey friend ... For your interest, pleasure and reading bliss here is the wonderful JapJi of Guru Nanak, the first Sat Guru of the Sikhs (they had a total of 10 in their line). Today, the Guru of the Sikhs is their written scripture, the Shri Guru Granth Saheb.

As you can readily perceive, this work is an inspired outflowing of pure devotion and love regarding the One Creator of all.

Hope you are well and happy. Love, Al

Sri Japji Sahib

<https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=ZGVmYXVsdGRvbWFpbnuZXVYyYWxzdXJmZXJuZXdzfGd4OjQ2MjlyNmNmU0MGQ5NDI>

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Moi:

Good deal, thanks.

Hot off the press:

The Unfolding Next Round (Current ditties unpublished elsewhere)

[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_52.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_52.html)

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Albert:

Yo. Seems like you've hit bedrock ... again.

Get into Sound, man. It's the only current I know to get past all forms and grades of mind, all thinking and all emotional reverie.

Sound confers deep and abiding bliss ... not hormone related.

I shit you not.

Blessings always,

Al

-----

Moi:



Agreeing to disagree. Bedrock to you, ground to me. The austere, ineffable aloneness of the timeless awareness prior to consciousness is truth enough for me. This eternal, ungraspable, indivisible moment is all there is. Quantum is just quantum, space is just space, time is just time, light is just light, sound is just sound, consciousness is just consciousness, imagination is just imagination, illusion is just illusion. No need for any emotional concoction. No need for any frivolous groupthink. No need to follow, no need to lead. No need for the insatiable more, more, more. Vanity is vanity, absurdity is absurdity, silliness is silliness, no matter the veil.

-----

Albert:

"No need to follow ..."

Hi. So, Michael, it seems to me that you believe that you have reached your pinnacle ... your apex. I have a lot of compassion for you, my friend. You are being tricked by your own mind and have forgotten your Soul.

To deny a "higher" or to dismiss "more" is to flush evolutionary impulse down the toilet.

You are welcome to be satisfied with your current understanding as long as you wish. In truth, you have no idea where you came from, where you are now, nor do you have any inkling of where you will be going after translation.

You are – lovingly but truthfully stated – foolish to not care.

Those who contact not the Word (Sound Current), why do they come into the world? Arid is the field of life for them and they die unfulfilled and empty-handed ~Guru Nanak

It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God ~ Bible

Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it ~ Matthew 7:13-14

With sincere humility and reliance, should one turn one's attention to the Master and Lord. The shortcomings and blemishes of the devotee, who is blessed with the gem of humility, will soon be removed. Radhasoami Dayal (the merciful Supreme Being) will Himself bring about his correction and make him fit to receive the special gift of His Prem (Love) ~ Babuji Maharaj, Radhasoami Satsang Agra

With His Love,

Al

-----

Moi:

And I think the same of what you're doing with your existence. To me, the sound thing yet another true believer distraction, another toll booth, another middleman scam. So it goes.

The True Believer

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_True\\_Believer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_True_Believer)

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Albert:

Hi Michael. Thanks for the GREAT article on Wiki ... I agreed with every word. I also agree with your skepticism, your keen and thorough research on "paths", your exhaustive attempts to find the truth within your own conscious awareness.

You have my deepest respect in all that you have done!

but ...

It is common practice these days to throw the baby out with the dirty bathwater, given the exposure of destructive cults. False and fraudulent teachers abound, especially in these troubled times where people will grasp for anything that sounds good, that offers a scintilla of hope. It is said that there are more gurus than disciples in the world ... more chiefs than braves. Therefore, it is no surprise that there exists a commitment to non-commitment in the search for Truth, Self, and God.

A dilettante can never find the way but will only wander in the many species of existence in Samsara. Only the bold and adventuresome will gravitate towards the Sound and the True Master. Their food is Love. Sound is the very essence of Love.

There exists a refulgent and shining gold needle in the huge pile of tin needles.

I love you, Michael.

Al

-----

Moi:

You're killing me, Al.

-----

Albert:

Hey ... a heads-up:

Lavazza Perfetto (ground) is for sale at SaveMart - \$5.99/12 oz.

Miles of smiles on death row.

O tongue, you are an endless treasure. O tongue, you are also an endless disease ~ Maulvi Rum (Rumi),

from Mathnawi

My apologies to you, Michael, for touching some sensitive areas with my own tongue ... I am now in a graced position to watch it and rectify mistakes as or before they occur. Here's another:

We all have our cross of egotism to bear ~ Unknown

Laughs and Love,  
Knowledge and Hope,

Al

\* \* \* \*

Albert:

Social distance bar fight

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3juaQvrlsZw&feature=youtu.be>

-----

Moi:

As the world turns in these our modern times.

-----

Albert:

How are you dealing with all "this"? We are doing well ... still in Hughson ... still kickin' and screamin'.

-----

Moi:

Suits my Zen-ish nature nicely, actually.

-----

Albert:

Tao Te Ching (sorry for the spelling, if wrong) remains one of my favorite spiritual texts. So simple, so evocative and disarming.

-----

Moi:

Yes, indeed. I have a number of translations, and each one casts it in a unique light.

\* \* \* \*

A Loving Invitation for Light and Sound on January 30th

Dearest friend and lover of Spirit,

Happy New Year! Thanks for enduring an incredibly challenging year! Through all the pain, suffering and chaos in the world, Truth and Spirit are touching more souls than ever with real love, inspiration and deep revelations.

As you know I am a practitioner of the Light and Sound Teachings of MasterPath, whose founder is Sri Gary Olsen. It is not possible for me to list all the astounding benefits and happiness I experience daily as a student of Sri Gary's.

Sri Gary would like to invite you to attend a free live audio Satsang on January 30th. He will be explaining the benefits of the Light and Sound path and how to master the difficult life challenges we all face. Registration is simple and there is no cost whatsoever. All you need is a computer or a phone to receive the live audio broadcast which you can enjoy in the privacy of your own home. Please click on the following link for directions/times on how to attend this timely and auspicious talk by a Living Master of Light and Sound:

[https://masterpath.org/seminar\\_registration.html](https://masterpath.org/seminar_registration.html)

Many blessings and great Love to you. I sincerely hope you connect with this free Satsang on January 30th. Please observe time zones and don't hesitate to get in touch with me for any questions or help. Thank you!

Al Medina  
Hughson CA  
(209) 216-6968

\* \* \* \* \*

Caveat

To become reconciled to a friend with whom you have broken is a form of weakness; and you pay the penalty of it when he takes the first opportunity of doing precisely the very thing which brought about the breach ~ Arthur Schopenhauer

\* \* \* \* \*

Albert:

New Day

Hi Michael. How ya been?

I think about you from time to time ... I am embarrassed to say that I have forgotten what you look like! We've had some pretty spirited conversations a while back and I apologize for my pugnaciousness and surly attitude and conversational style.

Time has a positive side. It allows for reflection, review and rapprochement.

I liked you and thought that we could be friends. We had many viewpoints in common and I probably

should have focused on those. As I mentioned to you back then, you are a unique soul in this area with a brilliant take on the riffraff of earthly life, as well as the mass ignorance we are swimming in. Much has happened.

Wanna meet ... maybe go for a walk? No golfballs!

Much Love,

Al

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Moi:

Gotta admit, Albert, that I'm torn. Our interactions were both enjoyable and vexing. You are a high-energy fellow, and that can be a bit much at times, and I'm not sure it would/could be any different if we gave it another try. Our views on the spiritual nature of things are fundamentally different. I have absolutely no interest in any deities or dogma fabricated by human imagination, and you are very much involved in Gary Olsen's light and sound paradigm – which I believe is an offshoot of Sikhism – and I doubt either of us is going to alter our stance anytime soon.

And as far as the world and our species goes. I'm running out of interest talking about the same absurdities over and over with the few people I do hang with. I've always been a solo act, and solitude becomes me more and more. Schopenhauer aphorisms have become a favorite read of late.

That said, I'm open to a coffee shop meet some morning to explore the possibility, at least do some catch-up. Panera Bread in Turlock has some nice outdoor seating for these our Covid times. My calendar is as blank as possible, so let me know what works.

Regards,

M

P.S. Here's the unfolding output for the year to date:

Breadcrumbs: The Unfolding Next Round

[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_52.html?fbclid=IwAR3rGSD9bOue4YT5SEI9Kf\\_NS-ZI7CZlxcVQDz2VlXLVRm-J1dWx-ID2RX0](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_52.html?fbclid=IwAR3rGSD9bOue4YT5SEI9Kf_NS-ZI7CZlxcVQDz2VlXLVRm-J1dWx-ID2RX0)

P.P.S. And a Schopenhauer page I've recently added to one of my blogs:

Of A Philosophical Nature: Arthur Schopenhauer

<https://ofaphilosophicalnature.blogspot.com/2021/04/arthur-schopenhauer.html>

P.P.P.S. And Bart Marshall's translation of Ecclesiastes is another recent addition:

The Book of Ecclesiastes

<https://21ecclesiastesmarshall.blogspot.com/2021/03/chapter-one.html>

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Albert:

I don't know about my "high" energy levels these days ... getting old, just passed into my 67th year. I sink into desolation frequently ... not because of the world and its colossal ignorance, but because it is very difficult to be a solitary player. No man is an island, they say. I perused your website yesterday ... that thing is HUGE!

There is a Starbucks on Canal Street that has both indoor and outdoor seating ... I haven't been there in about a year due to viral hysteria. Would love to see your smiling face this morning, say about 10 a.m.?

Otherwise, let me know when a good time would be for you. You can text or email me.

There really is a heck of a lot to laugh about!

Much Love,

Al

-----

Moi:

Headed over to me Mum's today, sorry. Tomorrow, same place, same time?

-----

Albert:

All in ... see you a demain.

Al

-----

Moi:

Yo, Al, thanks for the good chat today. Definitely a fairly rare topic for discussion in this if not most times and places. We'll have to do it again.

And thanks also for the Hafiz book. A real treasure.

M

P.S. Bart Marshall is the translator I was talking about. Very clear by my reckoning. 'Verses Regarding True Nature' is a classic work.

Translations of Ancient Writings by Bart Marshall

Ashtavakra Gita

<http://theashtavakra.blogspot.com/>

Tao Te Ching  
<http://theperennialway-taoteching.blogspot.com/>

Bhagavad Gita  
<https://bhagavadgitamarshall.blogspot.com/>

Yoga Sutras  
<http://yogasutrasbypatanjali.blogspot.com/>

Dhammapada  
<http://buddhasdhammapada.blogspot.com/>

The Book of Ecclesiastes  
<https://21ecclesiastesmarshall.blogspot.com>

Writings by Bart Marshall

Verses Regarding True Nature  
<https://versesregardingtruenaturemarshall.blogspot.com>

One Hundred Two Haiku  
<https://onehundredtwohaikumarshall.blogspot.com>

Amazon: Bart Marshall Page  
[https://www.amazon.com/Bart-Marshall/e/B00MCJS522/ref=dp\\_byline\\_cont\\_pop\\_book\\_1](https://www.amazon.com/Bart-Marshall/e/B00MCJS522/ref=dp_byline_cont_pop_book_1)

His version of the Tao Te Ching takes it to a Bhagavad Gita level.  
P.P.S.

A list of all the things I've blogged:

Blogger: User Profile: Michael Holshouser  
<https://www.blogger.com/profile/12270094801824803661>

\* \* \* \*

Albert:

Yesterday

Hey man. Great to see and share with you yesterday! So good to hear your points of view on the Self, Pure Awareness, life/death, illusion/delusion and a host of other spiritual goodies. Thanks.

I have been looking at your blog this morning, Michael. Man, you have laboriously posted some real jewels of discriminative wisdom – the whole list is the essence of "Vedanta", pointing to the state of Turiya and Jivan Mukti. I really like the Ashtavakra Gita entry. Some of those dialogues are very long, indeed, but refreshingly clear.

Keep up the great work! Fantasticate your day, my friend.

Love,

Al

\* \* \* \*

Moi:

Eight Translations of the Ashtavakra Gita

Wikipedia: Ashtavakra Gita

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ashtavakra\\_Gita](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ashtavakra_Gita)

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The Heart of Awareness (Byrom)

<http://theheartofawareness.blogspot.com/>

Ashtavakra Gita (Marshall)

<http://theashtavakra.blogspot.com/>

Bitten by the Black Snake (Schoch)

<http://bittenbytheblacksnake.blogspot.com/>

A Duet of One (Balsekar)

<http://aduetofone.blogspot.com/>

Ashtavakra Gita (Richards)

<http://notherashtavakragita.blogspot.com/>

Astavakra Samhita (Wood)

<http://astavakrasamhita.blogspot.com/>

Ashtavakra Gita (Vedic)

<http://ashtravakrageeta.blogspot.com/>

Ashtavakra Gita (Shastri)

<http://ashtravakrageeta.blogspot.com>

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Ashtavakra Gita: Sri Ramana Maharshi

[www.sriramanamaharshi.org/resource\\_centre/audio/ashtavakra-gita/](http://www.sriramanamaharshi.org/resource_centre/audio/ashtavakra-gita/)

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Ashtavakra Gita: I Am Shiva  
<http://ashtavakragitaiamshiva.blogspot.com/>

PDF of "Ashtavakra Gita: I Am Shiva"  
<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/ashtavakragitaiamshiva.pdf>

PDF of "I Am Shiva Comparison Chart"  
<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/iamshivacomparisonchart.pdf>

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PDF's of Eight Translations

The Heart of Awareness (Byrom)  
<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/theheartofawarenessbyrom.pdf>

Ashtavakra Gita (Marshall)  
<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/ashtavakrafitamarshall.pdf>

Bitten by the Black Snake (Schoch)  
<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/bittenbytheblacksnakeschoch.pdf>

Ashtavakra Gita (Richards)  
<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/ashtavakragitarichards.pdf>

A Duet of One (Balsekar)  
<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/aduetofonebalsekar.pdf>

Astavakra Samhita (Wood)  
<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/astavakrasamhitawood.pdf>

Ashtavakra Gita (Shastri)  
<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/ashtavakragitashastri.pdf>

Ashtavakra Gita (Vedic Scriptures)  
<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/ashtavakragitavedic.pdf>

\* \* \* \*

Albert:

Song of the Avadhut: Chapter One  
<http://songoftheavadhut.blogspot.com/2010/03/chapter-one.html>

Live it!!

-----

Moi:

No need to keep seeking that which you have already found.

How's this for a first-try description of ego?: What is ego but little self's attachment to all the assumptions consciousness has imagined.

-----

Albert:

I like your description ... Ego supports and is sorely attached to the vain individual's imagined dream world ... the dream world supports the vain and fraudulent little self (ego).

And so it goes ... age after age.

Et Voila!

Al

-----

Moi:

Here it is with a little fine-tuning:

What is ego but little self's identification with, little self's attachment to, All the assumptions, all the habituation, that consciousness has imagined.

-----

Albert:

The Pure Awareness is overwhelmed by the sensory-intellectual turbulence and vacillation ... even in dreams.

"Yoga chitta vritti nirodha" – Patanjali

All yogis strive to still the crazy mind. Thanks!

Al

-----

Albert:

Since "selfing" is universal one might conclude that this earth is a huge bordello of egos, all seeking intercourse with matter and form.

-----

Moi:

And awareness the omnipresent voyeur.

-----  
Albert:

Three-mile lovely hike yesterday at Red Hills, near Chinese Camp. Please see attached. Voyeur indeed.

-----  
Moi:

Spring is springing.

-----  
Albert:

[Photo of horses in field]

A bucolic scene from Red Hills area.

-----  
Moi:

A good stroll, indeed.

\* \* \* \*

Albert:

Nan Yar - Who Am I

Hey, you might like this ... Ramana Maharshi philosophy and practice.

Who Am I? (Nan Yar?) - The Teachings of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi

<http://ofaphilosophicalnature.blogspot.com/2021/04/who-am-i-nan-yar-teachings-of-bhagavan.html>

-----  
Moi:

Good one, thanks.

\* \* \* \*

Albert:

Vedic Ashtavakra Gita

All the translations are fabulous, succinct, and cut through a lot of messy sludge. Is all of life simply a pit of sticky quicksand, trapping the pure awareness and ensnaring it?

Here are some really cool lines that I have contemplated much on my own journey:

You are the solitary witness of all that is, almost always free. Your only bondage is understanding the seer to be someone else. 7

Ego poisons you to believe: "I am the doer". Believe "I am not the doer". Drink this nectar and be happy. 8

Question for you, Michael: If ego poisons us into believing that "I am the doer", who is it within ourselves (if not ego) that asserts "I am not the doer"? Who is THAT "I"? How can you be certain that it is not a form of subtler ego within the higher mind?

This competition between the ego (the false "I") and the Pure Awareness (your term for the real "I") is an eternal conflict as defined by many higher teachings.

Fun and laughs,

Al

-----

Moi:

The challenge is not making such a challenge of it. Learn to relax in the ebb and flow of the daily mind. It ultimately really doesn't matter is my take on it anymore. Let go of all the crap we've been fed by all the middlemen. You're it, it's you, it's that simple.

The Ashtavakra Gita is probably my favorite. As you say, it cuts to the essence.

-----

Albert:

[Photo of lynched gold miner in Jamestown, California]

Jamestown humor! Deep message for me.

I agree that there is 99.99% crap by "middlemen" (or women) in the spiritual marketplace, including religions, metaphysics, philosophy and various yogic disciplines. I also totally understand one's disgust and disillusionment that can arise when seeing so much fraud and exploitation. Who can be trusted? Great question.

Cutting to the core with this Gita was a brilliant find. Well done, Michael!

-----

Moi:

Have you glanced at Schoch's translation? He really takes it down to the essence.

Bitten by the Black Snake  
<http://bittenbytheblacksnake.blogspot.com/>

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Albert:

It is very difficult to renounce the passions as "poison", even though I know that they are. Truth is, we are very weak and most of us can't give up a single desire. Yes, I agree that the primary obstacle is the black snake of ego.

-----

Moi:

As attached to the world as we were before the quest began.

-----

Albert:

Not quite! A bit wiser, but not much.

\* \* \* \*

Albert:

Electromagnetic Radiation, 5G Satellites

Michael, I thought you might be attracted to this information. EMR affects everyone and now there are thousands of satellites beaming down 5G wavelengths, with thousands more on the agenda. I spoke with Arthur about one year ago. He was genuine and committed to informing the public about the invisible threat on all biological life, especially the new 5G rollout.

To forward this newsletter via social media, copy and paste this link:

<https://www.cellphonetaskforce.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Survey-Results.pdf>

Thanks for the reply on the Ashtavakra Gita.

Much Love,

Al

-----

Moi

What we've done to our garden is a horror story, and the future will be forever scarred by it.

We can't stop ourselves from killing off the host any more than any cancer can.

\* \* \* \*

Albert:

[Photo of Redwood sculpture of Great Ape]

Do we even belong here?

-----

Moi:

Eternity can take me home anytime.

\* \* \* \*

Albert:

But first ... incroyable ... etonnant ... remarquable.

Surfing 115-Foot Wave - Sebastian Steudtner Broke the World Record  
<https://youtube.com/shorts/YPrPVFHO1L4?feature=share>

-----

Moi:

Boggling

You a surfer?

\* \* \* \*

Moi:

The Unfolding Next Round

The latest round for your amusement:

The Unfolding Next Round  
[http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_52.html](http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_52.html)

Mowgli in the forest out the back door,  
Huck Finn in the Mississippi across the street,  
Sisyphus daily pushing the boulder up the mountain,  
Johnny Appleseed casting his reflections about,  
The Joyful Curmudgeon cynically amused,  
Jester Amok unleashing definitive fare,  
And Peter Pan in the essence of all.

-----

Albert:

Hey. I sent your blog URL to a good friend who stopped by Turlock yesterday with his gal, after a couple days in Yosemite. We had lunch at Bistro 234 - it was OK but I remember their food being much better before the virus hysteria. The Hops of Wrath (Dust Bowl microbrew) is a great beer!

We must discard "doership" and implement "beership" ... Get it? Ha!

Here is a little excerpt from your Breadcrumbs 2020 that I like (there's a whole lot that I like).

"Time is an invention of the human mind. The eternal moment is all there is. All meaning and purpose is illusion. Only the mind moves the clock's hands. Only the mind turns the calendar's pages. Only the mind measures all things imaginable."

How do you view your own mind, Michael? As an "instrument"? A troublemaker? Can the mind "create" anything that is truly real? Is your mind under control of Pure Awareness (Soul)? Is your mind your master ... or are you the master of your own mind?

Much Love and thanks,

Al

-----

Moi:

Ebb and flow

Is it really my mind? Or my body? Or my soul?

Who's the who, who owns anything?

-----

Albert:

"I, me, my, and mine" – Tricky.

-----

Moi:

We're trapped in our words.

Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent. The limits of my language mean the limits of my world. Language is a part of our organism and no less complicated than it. Language disguises thought ~  
Ludwig Wittgenstein

Goodreads: Ludwig Wittgenstein Quotes  
(Author of Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus)  
[https://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/7672.Ludwig\\_Wittgenstein](https://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/7672.Ludwig_Wittgenstein)

Wikipedia: Ludwig Wittgenstein  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ludwig\\_Wittgenstein](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ludwig_Wittgenstein)

-----

Albert:

Words can hold us spellbound, as can hardened concepts. "Selfing" is a universal habit and cannot be challenged in most people. One's entire life is a ramification projected by the false self, concretized in vanity and egotism ... best to just allow people their "reality".

Thanks!

Al

-----

Moi:

Forget the world, just be.

-----

Albert:

Here's a joke from the glass:

Discard doership ... adapt beership

Ha!

-----

Moi:

Doing it as I type this.

-----

Albert:

Hey man. Do you like to listen to music? I have a clip I would like to send you.

-----

Moi:

Send it.

Took the Bimmer up for a spin into the hills today ... Snelling ... Hornitos ... Bear Valley ... Coulterville ... La Grange ... Catching the last of the green ... What a day.

-----

Albert:

Great for a refresh. Good to hear it. Pretty country all over.

-----

Moi:



Were you going to send that music clip?

-----

Albert:

I am torn between three artists. Should be in your mailbox tomorrow morn. 'Night, Michael.

\* \* \* \*

Albert:

Watch "Amazing Machine Hacks | Tree Harvester & Processor | Machinery Trucks" on YouTube  
<https://youtube.com/shorts/YpSmKBMe3rw?feature=share>

I did not think this was real.

-----

Moi:

If it can be conceived, it can be built in these our times. Have you seen the dancing terminators?

Do You Love Me?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fn3KWM1kuAw>

\* \* \* \*

Moi:

Of A Philosophical Nature: Who Am I? (Nan Yar?)

The Teachings of Bhagavan Sri Ramana Maharshi

<https://ofaphilosophicalnature.blogspot.com/2021/04/who-am-i-nan-yar-teachings-of-bhagavan.html>

\* \* \* \*

Albert:

LOVE LOVE LOVE

Killer! BD is an amazing outfit. What will this weird place look like in five decades?

Sent this to six friends ... thanks kindly!

Do You Love Me?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fn3KWM1kuAw>

\* \* \* \*

Albert:

Pierre and his "Old Lady"

I love his attention to each note, as well as his heartfelt concentration. Are we silent passengers in a meaningless dream?

Pierre Bensusan | Silent Passenger Live at the National Concert Hall – October 2014  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4XyrMT5\\_gh0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4XyrMT5_gh0)

-----  
Moi:

Good Sunday morning fare, thanks.

\* \* \* \*

Moi:

Bart Marshall nails it, too.

Verses Regarding True Nature: Twenty-Eight  
<https://versesregardingtruenaturemarshall.blogspot.com/2020/04/twenty-eight.html>

\* \* \* \*

Albert:

Squatter with Humor

[Photo of homeless tent with Starbucks Coffee sign]

Expand and check out the top right side. What a trip.

\* \* \* \*

Albert:

Williams Road

[Photo of horse in foothill stream]

Beautiful ten miles between Highways 120 and 132.

\* \* \* \*

Albert:

THE PRIMARY OBSTACLE - VANITY OF EGO

"I am RIGHT. I am ALWAYS right. I have always been right. There was this ONE TIME when I THOUGHT I was wrong – but I was MISTAKEN."

-----  
Moi:

And that didn't count.

Verses Regarding True Nature: Six

<https://versesregardingtruenaturemarshall.blogspot.com/2020/04/six.html>

-----

Albert:

I have listened to Bart years ago and like his frankness. Check out his interview with Iain McNay.

Conscious TV: Bart Marshall 'Only This Emptiness'

[http://conscious.tv/atoz\\_show.php?action=show&author=Bart%20Marshall](http://conscious.tv/atoz_show.php?action=show&author=Bart%20Marshall)

Thanks!

-----

Moi:

Watched this about a month ago. Straight-shooting, nothing fancy.

\* \* \* \*

Albert:

You like Ramana, n'est pas.

Conscious TV: Michael James 'The Real Behind All Appearances'

<http://conscious.tv/single.php?vid=5765947199001>

\* \* \* \*

Albert:

[Photo of Redwood sculpture of Great Ape]

An unexamined life isn't worth living ~ Socrates

-----

Moi

Socrates said the unexamined life is not worth living, but the examined one is no bargain ~ Woody Allen, Annie Hall

-----

Albert

Yeah, man. It's a cruel, hostile world ... then we die.

-----

Moi:

Just putting in our time.

-----

Albert:

Interesting viewpoint ... Rare.

-----

Moi:

Surely, you've heard me say it before: Didn't ask to be here, ain't praying' to be stayin'.

-----

Albert:

I don't blame you, Michael.

Hey man, how did Pierre hit you?

-----

Moi:

Pierre?

-----

Albert:

Pierre Bensusan, the music I sent you.

-----

Moi:

That was great, what focus it takes to be a musician.

-----

Albert:

Focus is right! Would you like another, different guitarist with a totally different approach?

-----

Moi:

Sounds good.

-----

Albert:

Best with phones, buds or speakers. Enjoy!

Alex de Grassi - Cumulus Rising

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c\\_dcGZDF3yk&list=RDC\\_dcGZDF3yk&start\\_radio=1](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c_dcGZDF3yk&list=RDC_dcGZDF3yk&start_radio=1)

-----  
Moi:

Thanks, will catch it later, have some medical stuff going on this a.m.

-----  
Albert:

You are welcome, Michael!

-----  
Moi:

Most propositions and questions, that have been written about philosophical matters, are not false, but senseless. We cannot, therefore, answer questions of this kind at all, but only state their senselessness. Most questions and propositions of the philosophers result from the fact that we do not understand the logic of our language ~ Ludwig Wittgenstein

Not to my contemporaries, not to my compatriots, but to mankind, I commit my now completed work in the confidence that it will not be without value for them, even if this should be late recognized, as is commonly the lot of what is good. For it cannot have been for the passing generation, engrossed with the delusion of the moment, that my mind, almost against my will, has uninterruptedly stuck to its work through the course of a long life ~ Arthur Schopenhauer

-----  
Albert:

I can see why you resonate with AS. This is how you feel about your work as well, yes?

Delusion and illusion are chronic ailments, afflicting humankind perpetually. Only the individual can break free, never the teeming masses. This world is a training ground, with death as the final arbiter of success or failure, and rebirth confirming the latter.

Wow ... tthat sounded cool!

Much love, Al

-----  
Albert:

I don't understand this wisdom at all. Words are certainly tricky and very slippery, especially as time moves and vernacular mutates.

\* \* \* \*

Check out Michael James with Iain McNay, especially the last half of the interview that gets into the "meat" of Nan Yar.

Michael James 'The Real Behind All Appearances'  
<http://conscious.tv/single.php?vid=5765947199001>

You might also resonate with Michael James' website:

Nāṅ Ār? (Who am I?)  
<https://www.happinessofbeing.com/>

Much Love,

Al

\* \* \* \*

NEWEST FROM NIH - FACEMASKS ARE DANGEROUS AND DO NOT STOP TRANSMISSION OF VIRUS

Surprise, surprise, surprise. New from NIH.

Thanks for the link to American political and military failures.

Here is the conclusion paragraph:

The existing scientific evidences challenge the safety and efficacy of wearing facemask as preventive intervention for COVID-19. The data suggest that both medical and non-medical facemasks are ineffective to block human-to-human transmission of viral and infectious disease such SARS-CoV-2 and COVID-19, supporting against the usage of facemasks. Wearing facemasks has been demonstrated to have substantial adverse physiological and psychological effects. These include hypoxia, hypercapnia, shortness of breath, increased acidity and toxicity, activation of fear and stress response, rise in stress hormones, immunosuppression, fatigue, headaches, decline in cognitive performance, predisposition for viral and infectious illnesses, chronic stress, anxiety and depression. Long-term consequences of wearing facemask can cause health deterioration, developing and progression of chronic diseases and premature death. Governments, policy makers and health organizations should utilize proper and scientific evidence-based approach with respect to wearing facemasks, when the latter is considered as preventive intervention for public health.

Here is the full study and website:

Facemasks in the COVID-19 era: A health hypothesis  
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7680614/>

\* \* \* \*

Albert:

Sonora Sunday

[Photo of motorcycles parked on Main Street in Sonora, California]

Used to ride ... No mo!

-----

Moi:

Most everything of interest is turning once-upon-a-time anymore.

-----

Albert:

The make-believe ego chases after the make-believe world with gusto, completely obfuscating the Pure Self.

Not quite so for the few who turn back their attention to their own awareness, with increasing alacrity and joy.

\* \* \* \*

Albert:

FAT CHANCE!

[Cartoon of bee lecturing flowers at Plant Parenthood meeting about keeping their petals closed if they don't want to be pollinated]

-----

Moi:

Women like to blame men for the state of the world, but their wombs have created it all.

-----

Albert:

HA! You crack me up, dude. Wombs are only incubators. Zygotes require semen and ovum, then only can an embryo be formed.

Moms and Dads ... Hmmm ... Doesn't seem like genetic manipulation is going to change that anytime soon.

Anyway, my friend, the physical theater is here and has always been populated. We all have our little dream world to inhabit and vitalize.

Find those ornery women and tell 'em off!

And keep your rocket in your pocket.

-----

Moi:

The incubation period affords plenty of time and opportunity to do the humane thing to the unborn innocence. Have your cake and delete it, too. So to speak.

-----

Albert:

Innocence?? Surely you jest!

-----

Moi:

Nope

\* \* \* \*

Albert:

Calum Graham - Tabula Rasa

Love the title, love the sound, love the player. So now you know Pierre and Alex ... Here is Callum.

Isn't 'Awareness' amazing! IT is the creator of all that we experience.

But hardly is there a single soul that is aware of awareness, Itself ... without admixture.

Calum Graham - Tabula Rasa - Acoustic Guitar  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FXJ5fgadB2k>

\* \* \* \*

Albert:

My Post Regarding a Very Dark Universe

Howdy. This is a post I recently placed in a blog that I read often. Check out the bottom link that gives a picture of what our sun looks like from closest planet to most distant planet in our solar system. Hope you enjoy it!

"Thanks Brian. May I make a comment regarding your statement of this region having plenty of light? Actually, it is very, very dark in this material universe. The closest star to our own sun, Proxima Centauri, is 4.5 light-years away ... roughly 24 trillion miles! Although galaxies look like dense concentrations of stars they are really very empty. In the Milky Way, the average distance between stars is about 5 light-years, or 30 trillion miles! Our own sun provides all the life, radiance, and light for our solar system which has a diameter of about 4 billion miles. Neptune is about 3 billion miles from the sun. Let's divide



24 trillion miles by 3 billion miles to get some perspective of the distance to our closest neighboring star. Proxima Centauri is 8000 times further away from our solar system than Neptune is from our own sun! Now, think about the tiny point of light that represents our sun (please see link below), viewed from Neptune! And then consider how much TOTAL DARKNESS EXISTS between our solar system and Proxima Centauri, 24 trillion miles away. Remember that the only source of light in our universe is a star!

Darkness is really the norm. It is actually an oddity to be alive on a planet that is close to a sun, given the immensity of pitch-black space that separates each star.

Get the picture? This material universe is very dark, mostly inky blackness until one gets relatively close to a sun. When there is no moon out and we look at the stars at night, is there any usable illumination from all the points of light that are stars? No, there isn't. If we move only 2 billion miles away from the sun there is hardly any illumination at all. Check out the following rendition of our planets and how the sun looks from each.

Enjoy our planet and its star!"

How Does the Sun Appear on Other Planets?

<https://futurism.com/how-does-the-sun-appear-on-other-planets>

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Moi:

Nice one, a perspective I've never seen.

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Albert:

Hey, thanks, man!

There is much that we have not seen, disrupting and overturning any sense of reality which we may be fixated to.

Fantasticate your day!

Love, Al

\* \* \* \*

Albert:

Ramesh Balsekar

I love this wise old man, his common sense and his inner enthusiasm. "leave the world alone because the world is perfect".

His big question suggested for all listeners: "Am I happy?"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nrqTl11bqxk>

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Moi:

You've heard many teachers, read many books, mastered the lingo, but have you read Ram Tzu?

Google Search: Ram Tzu

[https://www.google.com/search?q=ram+tzu&newwindow=1&ei=nK6DYJK9L4nXtAa8uLLQCw&hotel\\_occupancy=&oq=ram+tzu&gs\\_lcp=Cgdnd3Mtd2l6EAMyCwguEMcBEK8BEJMCMgIILjICCAAyBAGAEEMyAggAMgYIABAWEB4yBggAEBYQHjIGCAAQFhAeMggIABAWEAoQHjIGCAAQFhAeOgkIABCwAxAHEB46FQguEMcBEK8BELADEMgDEAoQQxCTAjoOCC4QxwEQrweQsAMQyANKBQg4EgExUMI7WMI7YJWDAWgBcAB4AIABygGIAf4CkgEFMC4xLjGYAQCgAQGqAQdnd3Mtd2l6yAELuAEDwAEB&scient=gws-wiz&ved=0ahUKEwiS-\\_74IJBwAhWJK80KHTycDL0Q4dUDCA4&uact=5](https://www.google.com/search?q=ram+tzu&newwindow=1&ei=nK6DYJK9L4nXtAa8uLLQCw&hotel_occupancy=&oq=ram+tzu&gs_lcp=Cgdnd3Mtd2l6EAMyCwguEMcBEK8BEJMCMgIILjICCAAyBAGAEEMyAggAMgYIABAWEB4yBggAEBYQHjIGCAAQFhAeMggIABAWEAoQHjIGCAAQFhAeOgkIABCwAxAHEB46FQguEMcBEK8BELADEMgDEAoQQxCTAjoOCC4QxwEQrweQsAMQyANKBQg4EgExUMI7WMI7YJWDAWgBcAB4AIABygGIAf4CkgEFMC4xLjGYAQCgAQGqAQdnd3Mtd2l6yAELuAEDwAEB&scient=gws-wiz&ved=0ahUKEwiS-_74IJBwAhWJK80KHTycDL0Q4dUDCA4&uact=5)

Amazon: No Way: A Guide for the Spiritually "Advanced"

<https://www.amazon.com/No-Way-Guide-Spiritually-Advanced/dp/0929448138>

Google Search: The Razor's Edge

[https://www.google.com/search?q=The+Razor%27s+Edge&newwindow=1&ei=uq-DYMPaFoa5tAaM67v4Aw&oq=The+Razor%27s+Edge&gs\\_lcp=Cgdnd3Mtd2l6EAMyCAguELEDEJMCmGIIlJICCC4yAggAMgIILjICCAAyCAguEMcBEK8BMgIADICCAAyAggAOGgIABCwAxDNAjoHCCEQChCgAToECCEQCjoFCC4QkwI6BggAEBYQHICmsBJY88USYMDKEmgHcAB4AYAB9QGIAYsfkEGMC4yNC4xmAEAoAEBqgEHZ3dzLXdpsgBAbgBA8ABAQ&scient=gws-wiz&ved=0ahUKEwjDn5aBlpbwAhWGHM0KHYz1Dj8Q4dUDCA4&uact=5](https://www.google.com/search?q=The+Razor%27s+Edge&newwindow=1&ei=uq-DYMPaFoa5tAaM67v4Aw&oq=The+Razor%27s+Edge&gs_lcp=Cgdnd3Mtd2l6EAMyCAguELEDEJMCmGIIlJICCC4yAggAMgIILjICCAAyCAguEMcBEK8BMgIADICCAAyAggAOGgIABCwAxDNAjoHCCEQChCgAToECCEQCjoFCC4QkwI6BggAEBYQHICmsBJY88USYMDKEmgHcAB4AYAB9QGIAYsfkEGMC4yNC4xmAEAoAEBqgEHZ3dzLXdpsgBAbgBA8ABAQ&scient=gws-wiz&ved=0ahUKEwjDn5aBlpbwAhWGHM0KHYz1Dj8Q4dUDCA4&uact=5)

Youtube: The Razor's Edge That Moment

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iyT4rsObXgc>

\* \* \* \*

Albert:

Nisargadatta Maharaj by Wolinsky

Thanks for the lovely links! I listened to Liquorman many years ago and loved his description of how 'GRACE' helped him leave cocaine and alcohol completely. I also love the animated passion with which he tells his story of spiritual triumph. His guru was Ramesh Balsekar. Here is a short clip of Ram Tzu (Wayne) and Iain McNay:

Wayne Liquorman 1 – 'Never Mind'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TkdCDS3P5Cc>

And here is a longer, very loving tribute to Nisargadatta Maharaj, the guru of Balsekar. Wolinsky breaks down in his own tears of love for Maharaj in the beginning (3 minutes in) of this long and interesting biography. In this video, Wolinsky interviews some of the most prominent and closest disciples of Nisargadatta Maharaj, who convey their personal understanding of the teachings. His devotion is very palpable, 28 years after the guru's death. There are great original clips of Maharaj, showing his method of teaching and style.

Rays of the Absolute (the Legacy of Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ugK51abLMtl>

The Razor's Edge by Maugham is a classic for any seeker of the true Self. I got a jocular outburst from the burning of the pages in the video! Siddhartha by Hesse was another bubble breaker as a teen. Yes, we have both been around the block many times, Michael. Thanks again for sending the great links.

I leave you with this beautiful video with Swami Sarvapriyananda. He speaks of "Bhakti and Love", rather than the intellectual approach to merging with God:

Bhakti Yoga: The Path of Devotion | Swami Sarvapriyananda  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dDIIdHh2-mF8>

Much Love,

Al

-----  
Moi:

So, why are you still here, Al?

\* \* \* \*

Albert:

Death and the Self

I am not done yet, buddy. Here you go, Michael ... these short explanations may help:

What Carries from Life to Life? | Swami Sarvapriyananda  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2sLBsWjfyfg&list=RDCMUCZOKv\\_xnTzyLD9RJmbBUV9Q&index=6](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2sLBsWjfyfg&list=RDCMUCZOKv_xnTzyLD9RJmbBUV9Q&index=6)

... and WHO IS IT THAT GETS LIBERATED?

Who Gets Liberated? | Swami Sarvapriyananda  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-fTz6Pc4iDU&list=RDCMUCZOKv\\_xnTzyLD9RJmbBUV9Q&index=7](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-fTz6Pc4iDU&list=RDCMUCZOKv_xnTzyLD9RJmbBUV9Q&index=7)

-----  
Moi:

So much silliness.

-----  
Albert:

I am wondering if this is your take on all videos that I have sent you! Did you watch the last three? It

seems like your glass is full.

If so, there is nothing more that can be put into it ... all is summarily rejected.

And that's OK. Just let me know, please.

-----

Moi:

How many times do you have to read or hear something to get it?

Catholic catechism, Hindu catechism, Protestant catechism, Muslim catechism ... et cetera ad infinitum.

-----

Albert:

Got it.

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Moi:

So much ado about nothing.

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Albert:

You grok yourself.

\* \* \* \* \*

Caveat

To become reconciled to a friend with whom you have broken is a form of weakness; and you pay the penalty of it when he takes the first opportunity of doing precisely the very thing which brought about the breach ~ Arthur Schopenhauer

\* \* \* \* \*

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

Silicon Valley parents are raising their kids tech-free – and it should be a red flag  
<https://flipboard.com/@flipboard/-silicon-valley-parents-are-raising-thei/f-40ca0c91ee%2Fbusinessinsider.com>

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Moi:

You can bet if I was a parent that my kids would abide in the real virtual reality for at least the first ten years. No day care, and probably home school them, too.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on a video I sent:

Happiness

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e9dZQeIULDk>

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Steve:

It's a cultural manipulation ... to get people to work hard ... to make someone else happy and rich ... all the wealth in the world is within the hands of a few ... the rest are slaving away for them ... and to add insult to injury ... they duped all the slaves ... into actually voting for one of the fat rats at the top ... to the Presidency of the US.

-----

Moi:

The rat race to the "happiness" that really doesn't exist as anything more than one illusionary endorphin fix or another.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on a couple articles he sent:

The more opioids doctors prescribe, the more money they make

<https://www.cnn.com/2018/03/11/health/prescription-opioid-payments-eprise/index.html>

At Pennsylvania rally, Trump again calls for death penalty for drug dealers

<https://a.msn.com/r/2/BBK5ma3?m=en-us&ocid=News>

-----

Steve:

Drug dealers.

-----

Moi:

The sanctioned version.

-----

Steve:

Given that the "Drug Dealers" that kill more people than anyone else in this country are the pharmaceutical companies ... and the doctors that overprescribe opioids and other addictive drugs ... it

occurs to me the Trump must be talking about executing them as well. Legally prescribed drugs kill far more people in this country than illegal ones.

-----

Moi:

But isn't it the US of A war in Afghanistan that has colluded a fair portion of the opium, and the Feds get their piece, so I'm pretty sure all the pharmacies and white-coated prescribers will likely keep their heads. Screw us little folk, and all our whining and moaning about equality and fairness for all.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on a couple articles I sent:

Police used DNA info on genealogy websites to track down Golden State Killer suspect  
<https://www.cnn.com/2018/04/26/us/golden-state-killer-dna-report/index.html>

To Catch a Killer: A Fake Profile on a DNA Site and a Pristine Sample  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/27/us/golden-state-killer-case-joseph-deangelo.html>

What the Golden State Killer case means for your genetic privacy  
<https://www.cnn.com/2018/04/27/health/golden-state-killer-genetic-privacy/index.html>

-----

Steve:

Guess he got his \$99's worth when he had the urge to DNA profile himself ... guess he didn't read the fine print in the Privacy Policy either ... they have a right to sell that info to anyone they want.

-----

Moi:

Everything's for sale. Assume it so. And how many of us read the fine print? And even if we do, how many of us click on the "don't accept" button? Like cattle branding themselves.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

'We're doomed': Mayer Hillman on the climate reality no one else will dare mention  
<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/apr/26/were-doomed-mayer-hillman-on-the-climate-reality-no-one-else-will-dare-mention>

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Moi:

He's not saying anything you and I and any number of people haven't been saying for who knows how many years. The collapse, perhaps extinction, of civilization is pretty darned obvious. Not if, but when and how, are the only questions.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

Amazon doubles quarterly profits to \$1.6bn – and hikes annual cost of Prime

<https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2018/apr/26/amazon-expected-to-post-record-quarterly-sales-growth-analysts>

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Steve:

Fucking greedy cunts ... I may cancel my subscription ... I used to pay \$79 about 5 years ago ... they keep jacking it up.

-----

Moi:

Most the things I buy from Amazon have free shipping. Am not usually in that big a rush, so I just wait until enough items are accumulated to meet the minimum. When I do pay shipping, I rationalize it is cheaper than the gas and the time it would take to hunt it down.

And as for movie watching, I'm hooked on Netflix. It would be too much bother re-listing all the movies in my queue. Plus, most the movies I have listed aren't even available on streaming, which is why I do DVD's, and don't have cable or streaming in my apartment.

I did get streaming a while back for Mom to catch if she gets inclined or we watch something together. Occasionally watch things on my computer where Wi-Fi is available, but rarely because videos on a computer screen just don't do it for me in more than short bursts.

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Steve:

The problem I have a problem is that I used to feel like I got my money's worth out of it because it seemed like I was paying about the same price as I used to be for Netflix but the movies that you get included with the subscription for either Netflix or prime or all fucking crap I rationalized it by figuring that I was buying so much stuff online that the free shipping was helping but that is a scam to which I will explain to you when we get together

-----

Moi:

Haven't heard anything about the free shipping being a scam, so I'll be looking forward to our Cinco de Mayo get-together.

\* \* \* \*

Links sent to Randy Icelow after talking about the Old School military games I played during the younger daze:

Avalon Hill and Strategy & Tactics

Avalon Hill

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Avalon\\_Hill](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Avalon_Hill)

List of Avalon Hill Games

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_Avalon\\_Hill\\_games](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Avalon_Hill_games)

My Avalon Hill collection included: Battle of the Bulge, Blitzkrieg, Jutland, 1914, Midway, PanzerBlitz, Kingmaker, D-Day, Diplomacy, Wooden Ships and Iron Men

Simulations Publications, Inc.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Simulations\\_Publications,\\_Inc.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Simulations_Publications,_Inc.)

Strategy & Tactics

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Strategy\\_%26\\_Tactics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Strategy_%26_Tactics)

Strategy & Tactics Magazine

[www.costik.com/spicom/sandt.html](http://www.costik.com/spicom/sandt.html)

Only had one Strategy & Tactics game:

Terrible Swift Sword

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrible\\_Swift\\_Sword\\_\(game\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrible_Swift_Sword_(game))

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

Mothers who regret having children are speaking up like never before

<http://www.macleans.ca/regretful-mothers/>

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Moi:

I feel sorry for anyone who brings children into this screwed up world. What effort and bother it requires, and for what? It has been rough enough, but I shudder to think what this life would have been like if I'd landed a seed or three in one womb or another back when I was in the chase.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

CES Was Full of Useless Robots and Machines That Don't Work

<https://www.thedailybeast.com/ces-was-full-of-useless-robots-and-machines-that-dont-work>

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Moi:

What a stupid fucking world we've created. I pine for Old School.

\* \* \* \*



Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Empty half the Earth of its humans. It's the only way to save the planet

<https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2018/mar/20/save-the-planet-half-earth-kim-stanley-robinson>

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Moi:

Amazing what bullshit some of these writers come up with.

-----

Steve:

Yeah ... I thought about this ... and these people are proposing that to save the planet ... humans leave major portions of it ... and cram into cities. Besides being absurd ... what about the fact that living in crammed cities like they do in China ... is a miserable existence ... and will make you sick. I think it was John Muir who said that Cities make you sick ... and the cure is Nature.

Stating that people naturally want to live in cities is absurd ... people are moving to cities because the infrastructure and culture we've created ... forces them to ... where they get used and abused in factories and offices ... living a pathetic life with no joy or purpose ... other than to make money for unfathomably greedy people.

-----

Moi:

Sure over the city thing at this end. Other than museums and such, I have no desire whatsoever to wander through jungles of asphalt and concrete and glass and steel anymore. Just overdone webs of consumption.

-----

Steve:

The last time I went into SF I just about had a total breakdown. It was the Saturday before Christmas and I was taking my GF to a play at the Geary Theater by Union Square ... Charles Dickens "A Christmas Carol." I don't know that I was thinking ... that is ground zero for tourist ... and SF is brain dead so they permitted construction that fucked it up even more. It took me an hour to get to the off ramp in SF from Morgan Hill ... and another hour to go about 1.5 miles to the theater from the 6th street exit off 280.

The entire day cost a shitload of money for simply seeing a play ... and I was so pissed off by the time I got through with it ... I wished I'd never gone. I used to love going to SF ... back when there was no traffic ... but today it is an expensive way to be abused ... and it's become a dirty crowded expensive mind fuck.

-----

Moi:

The only way I travel anymore is in my urban camping unit in the middle of the night, and even that is death-defying at times. The last four journeys to San Francisco, Chico, Santa Cruz, and Monterey have all

had a why-am-I-doing-this flavor about them. I'll get over your direction one of these spring daze, but I'm not sure I'll follow it up with a coastal expedition the way I have in the past.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

For Austin Bomb Investigators, Each New Blast Offers New Clues  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/20/us/austin-bomb-san-antonio-fedex.html>

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Moi:

Hadn't realized they'd gotten him when I sent the article above.

Austin Bombing Suspect Is Identified As Mark Anthony Conditt; Died In Standoff  
<https://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2018/03/21/595457452/authorities-in-austin-say-latest-package-bombs-sent-by-same-person>

-----

Steve:

Didn't know that until just now ... how did they catch him?

-----

Moi:

The video at the FedEx where he mailed a couple packages played a major part. Too early to be sure of all the details. Here's what Wikipedia has so far.

Wikipedia: Austin Serial Bombings  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Austin\\_serial\\_bombings](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Austin_serial_bombings)

Death of suspect

Early on March 21, a suspect, 24-year-old Mark Anthony Conditt, was identified by investigators via security footage taken at a FedEx store, and police moved in to make an arrest.

They tracked him to a hotel room in Round Rock, north of Austin, then onto I-35, where they pulled him over at around 2 AM (CDT). As SWAT officers approached, he detonated a bomb in the vehicle, killing himself and injuring one of them, provoking another to fire upon the vehicle. The Austin Police Department closed a southbound section of the interstate where Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) agents were dispatched to investigate.

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Steve:

While I understand why people are frustrated if they are disenfranchised from the economy ... or feel like a cog in the machine ... or are disgruntled because we've bombed their country ... I don't understand why

they want to hurt unknown people who essentially had no part in their suffering. Why bomb innocent people walking around a street ...

-----

Moi:

That is a question for the ages. If I was going to be a serial killer, I would do it Dexter fashion, choosing people who deserved it for crimes upon the innocent, and of course those who had crossed me in such a way that savage revenge was the answer.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Brain Damage from Benzodiazepines: The Troubling Facts, Risks, and History of Minor Tranquilizers  
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/side-effects/201011/brain-damage-benzodiazepines-the-troubling-facts-risks-and-history-minor>

-----

Steve:

I think you said your sister was on this stuff.

-----

Moi:

Ann was taking lithium for her bi-polar condition. Don't know if she took anything else. Mom did valium, but I'm not sure how much or how often. She's survived to age 88 and doing better than you and I likely will, so I think we're past any worries.

-----

Steve:

It's rooted in the times ... back then they thought these drugs were miracle cures for lonely isolated house wives ... who were going crazy in the Nuclear Family.

-----

Moi:

Anxiety runs deep in all our minds. Mothers Little Helper was as popular as opioids are today.

Rolling Stones: Mothers Little Helper  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tfGYSHy1jQs>

Steve: I've been listening to Podcasts that are showing that it's our isolating culture that drives people to drugs. We have a drug problem because people are depressed and lonely ... and I believe it.

Lost Connections: Uncovering the Real Causes of Depression – and the Unexpected Solutions  
<https://www.amazon.com/Lost-Connections-Uncovering-Depression-Unexpected/dp/163286830X>

-----  
Moi:

Our mind-bodies evolved out of relationship with nature, so I suspect the rise of so-called civilized existence for the last ten thousand plus-or-minus years is at the root of most if not all of our psychological suffering. Anyone who wants to get back into balance, into synchronicity, needs to get back to nature as much as possible.

-----  
Steve:

Yes, the problem is that we've become dependent upon the very infrastructure that is making us sick.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Facebook: is it time we all deleted our accounts?  
<https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2018/mar/20/facebook-is-it-time-we-all-deleted-our-accounts>

-----  
Moi:

No worries at this end. They can know as much about me as they please, and it won't make any difference to my world. I feel pretty ignored, actually.

-----  
Steve:

Their stock is tanking ... because people are realizing the extent to which they are being mined for data ... and the ramifications are severe in the context of the final result was ... the current disruptive chaotic politics that is trashing the US across the globe ...

-----  
Moi:

It would be interesting to see what the breakdown is by age group. I wonder how much the millennials will care.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with Cliff McFelter on an article and essay he sent:

The Genetic Reason Why Some People Are Born To Travel All Over The World  
<http://news.bitofnews.com/the-wanderlust-gene-why-some-people-are-born-to-travel-all-over-the-world/>

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Cliff's essay on travel:

## WHY TRAVEL?

Standing near a small souvenir kiosk in an international airport recently, I was pondering that very question. As is my wont to do when killing time in airports, I was actively watching the comings and goings of all the various folks who had ventured far beyond their native land. People from dozens of different countries, dozens of different nationalities, speaking dozens of different languages. Always a fascination to me. This question is pretty much a constant in my mind whenever I find myself doing this very thing myself. Why am I traveling?? My grandmother used to say I was just a gadabout, which doesn't quite address the question. My uncle would say I was just a vagabond, which was probably closer to the truth, though still not answering this question as to ... why?? Recently I was sent a very interesting study suggesting it's a genetic quirk that some of us have.

But again, I'm not sure that's the answer I've been looking for, though it comes the closest. According to this study, I really don't have much choice in the matter, as it's just a natural occurrence of my genetic structure ... I travel because that's what I do. Kind of like eating, sleeping, etc. Sometimes in the middle of some totally random thought, I realize I have to go on a trip somewhere. Not any place in particular. It's just a feeling of the need to go. So usually that's what happens. You do that enough and next thing you know you've been around the world a few times. But back to this question of why ... As a striking young lady from some foreign land walked between the kiosk and myself, I found myself staring at this rack of refrigerator magnets (after I politely quit staring at her) and ... lo and behold, the answer to my lifelong question was staring at me from a rack of cheap souvenirs. Right there in plain sight, for all the world to see, was the answer: TRAVEL IS THE ONLY THING YOU CAN BUY THAT MAKES YOU RICHER

So now, after all these years, I realize that I've just been trying to get rich. Pretty simple explanation really. And profound in many ways. Though I've never really had lots of money, I realized as a young man, while traveling through many very poor countries (formerly known as third world countries, but now politically incorrect), that I had won the world birth lottery and was one of the richest people on the planet. Being born in the US is like having a free ticket to see the world. That is if you want to travel. Most people don't and that is perfectly fine. But for those of us (Westerners mostly) who do, our birthplace has everything to do with our ability to travel. If you were born in a small village in India or Africa or South America, the chances of you traveling the world are next to none. In fact, most of those travelers I see in those airports are all from developed countries with strong economies, while very few of them are from tiny villages in undeveloped countries. Just a fact of life. I was a lottery winner, and pretty much have been cashing in on my winnings most of my adult life. And according to the profound philosophy of refrigerator magnets, I've just been getting richer all the time. Works for me.

-----

Moi:

You are definitely the most world-traveled person I know. There are some tourist friends who have eaten and drunk and shopped all sorts of places, but in my mind, you are the only one who has actually traveled. Rich man's life on a dime I calls it.

-----

Cliff:

Well said ... I just might co-opt that ... "Rich man's life on a dime' ... if you don't mind! Ha!

Have seen plenty of those recently who come here (Thailand especially) just to party and drink themselves into oblivion. They make no attempt to understand the culture, language, customs or history. In fact there's a party on one of the islands in the south, Koh Phangan, that draws more than 30,000 young people every full moon ... just to drink and party. Pretty sad. Then of course there's the jumbo jets full of well-off Europeans that only come to shop and eat. So much for cultural enrichment.

Cheers, mate!

-----  
Moi:

Sodom and Gomorrah playing out over and over ... History doesn't repeat itself, but the patterns do.

Don't know if it's true, but I've also heard there's quite a market for sex with children.

-----  
Cliff:

I've heard that also. And probably true ... as the whole world is a Sodom & Gomorrah replay. Kind of like watching the planet self-destruct in real time. But the monks still chant at 4 in the morning and it still sounds beautiful. While across town the slave and sex traders steal children and ship them off to rich perverts in various parts of the world. Maybe we've gone way past Sodom and Gomorrah ... something way beyond kinky perverted narcissism. Kind of like that guy who thinks he's president in the US.

Ah well ... don't these tropical flowers smell wonderful!!

-----  
Moi:

Back in Jesus's day, the world population was 200 million; today it's almost 7.5 billion. Add a little technology to that mix, and it's every insanity playing out on steroids. I think we're both staying out of the way of it as much as possible, putting in what time is left as tranquility and anonymously as our minds, or no-minds, allow.

Worldometers: Current World Population  
<http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/>

Poodwaddle World Clock  
<http://www.poodwaddle.com/worldclock/>

Worldometers: Thailand Population  
<http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/thailand-population/>

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Cliff:

Jeez Louise! That population clock is mesmerizing. Hard to break away from. Just watching the madness of overpopulation right before your eyes. Pretty friggin' amazing to say the least.

Yes, we both are just hiding out and enjoying our anonymity to the best of each of our ability. Ain't it sweet.

Was reading a novel the other day and a line in it was quite profound ... to quote: Life is just a way of killing time.

Cheers, my friend.

-----

Moi:

Killing time until kills me ... is my line.

I periodically check in with the Worldometers for the same reason. Boggling how few people realize that we've gone up 6.5 billion people in just two hundred years. It hit two billion as our parents were born, and somewhere 2.6-ish when we popped in. Ten billion by 2056? I don't see how, given climate change and all the political, economic, and environmental horrors that are taking shape. Pity the young ... is another of my lines anymore. What would we do if we were starting over, I wonder.

So is Chico still your home base? Or are you wandering the world for the duration?

-----

Cliff:

I was so blown away a few years ago when I went back to India for the first time in about 34 years. I mean it was super crowded in 1973 when I first went (especially in comparison to the US), with a population of around 440 million. In 2014 when I returned, the population was 1.2 billion. The population had tripled in just 40 years, with no end in sight. Two-legged madness run amuck. There's no way the planet can handle the stress and degradation that humans inflict on it. We've fouled our nest to the point where I swear I can hear mother nature crying. But she will survive, she just might have to give a couple really good shakes and get rid of this bi-pedal parasite called mankind.

Reminds me of a poem I wrote back in 1979. I'll forward it to you when I get back to Chico as it's old fashion ... on paper, in a physical file!

Yep, still hanging out in Chico. Have a sweet deal, living just north of town (just north of Henshaw) on a 20-acre organic farm. Living in a giant studio (1000 square feet) for 500 a month. So, I can afford to pay rent there and still travel as much as I feel like. But if the political situation continues to deteriorate, I might just travel for the duration. As much as I dislike it, we must pay attention at the moment. Ugh.

\* \* \* \*

An email sent on May 23, 2015 to Paula Yvonne Hunt, my mother's older sister and cousin Steve's mother, who was dying of pancreatic cancer, titled "A Shout-Out From California." Forwarded a bcc copy to my mother, Beverly Holshouser, as well:

Hey, Aunt Paula,

Thought I would give what sounds like one of the last shout-outs for all our most excellent times these last sixty-plus years. I have really appreciated you and your family being a part of my life. We are a clan of very good and decent human beings, and the crew you and Ralph brought into this world have always been great fun in all the times we have spent together. A rolodex chock-full of many, many splendid memories, indeed.

Mom says you seem pretty calm about things, so I am guessing you have made your peace with the dreamtime as much as anyone can hope in this inexplicable mystery. I hope you do not have to endure too much pain in your transition. I am pretty agnostic about it all at this writing – we are all That I Am as far as I'm concerned – but, one life or many, and as rough as it is at times, it is ever beyond-the-pale magical to have been born at all.

Thanks again for being part of my life.

Namaste, Blessings,

Michael

-----

My mother responded:

Your words to Paula were just right. I am always amazed at your writing ability. It brought tears to my eyes.\

Love you,

Mom

-----

Response to Mom:

Words come easy and earnest when that's how I feel about it. I do feel blessed in this life.

\* \* \* \*

Response to several videos Ninos David sent on Facebook Messenger regarding Islam in Europe and takeover comments by Donald Trump before he was elected president regarding the oil fields in Iraq;

What a wretched species we can be. Absurd beyond all bounds. Exceedingly tiring.

The video on Islam in Britain is priceless. What a horror story it will be in Europe for the rest of time. And America, too. The Third World will drown Western Civilization if climate change doesn't cast us all into the shoals first. Revenge, for all we have done to them since Alexander. As always, be happy we are too old to have to endure it ourselves. At least neither of us had any progeny that we need directly worry about.



So, is Trump taking over the oil wells? Haven't seen anything like that in the headlines. Am recovering from a hard-hitting case of bronchitis earlier this week, and prepping for a colonoscopy tomorrow, which is why I haven't been pressing for Fruit Yard time this week.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

John Hammond-16 Shells from a Thirty-Ought Six  
<https://youtu.be/d-JRlNgc3Io>

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Moi:

Good Monday-night-back-to-work-tomorrow fare.

-----  
Steve:

I've got the week off ... but breaking my back ... working in my yard. I need to buy a condo with no maintenance

-----  
Moi:

You could live a simple existence, and rent out the moneymakers.

Mom lives comfortably in a two-bedrooms condo, single-story, with two bathrooms, a two-car garage, a small brick and rock patio, in a very quiet gated community. A couple years ago, I finally convinced her to have a housekeeper come in once a month. Let the landscapers do all the mowing and sundry other outdoor brothers.

-----  
Steve:

This house isn't a money maker ... it takes all my money ... until the \$300;000 mortgage principal is paid off ..m it's a money pit.

-----  
Moi:

I was thinking you could charge enough rent to pay it off ... but no.

-----  
Steve:

I could charge enough to pay the mortgage ...then you have maintenance and repairs etc. ... forgoing something big like a new roof ... I could break even ... and that would take years to pay off.

I need to either work another 10 years ... or sell it and move.

-----

Moi:

Well, from what you've said, it's cheaper than rent, and you have plenty of space, so I guess you'll be there until you decide to retire, and then hopefully walk away with a decent amount of change in your pocket. Who know what real estate prices will be in another five or so years.

-----

Steve:

Yeah ... it's funny ... I believe this house is just about the right size ... but I actually feel cramped compared to my house I sold out in Antioch ... I wish I had never sold it ... it had a three-car garage and more rooms.

-----

Moi:

The more space you've got, the more you've got to fill, and hard to downsize.

-----

Steve:

Well, I need a bedroom ... and an office ... and now ... at my age ... I need an entire room to put my equipment that I need to manage my health issues ... inversion table ... and I'd like to set up a massage table so I can have them come directly to my house.

I'd like to have a "Guest" room ... but that is now filled with all this other equipment. Ideally a four-bedroom house would work.

Could I cram into something smaller ... I suppose ... but I don't want to put my "Office" in my living room.

-----

Moi:

That commute from Antioch to Mountain View ... Yeesch.

-----

Steve:

Yeah, but I didn't commute from there ... I spent the weekends there ... and had a commuter room near work ... my commute is longer now.

-----

Moi:

I forgot you'd mentioned that.

-----

Steve:

I loved my house in Antioch ... I just didn't like Antioch ... the crime rate got bad and is increasing ... but I wish I'd kept it now ... I could have moved into it for a couple of years and then saved a lot on taxes ... but at the time I thought we were going to hit another recession ... if we had ... it would have been a good move ... still might be in retrospect a few years from now ... if the economy crashes and that area goes down the tube as it did last time ... I will be glad I sold when I did.

I'm so tired of playing the Capitalism game ... I fucking hate it ... our lives revolve around work and money and politics ... and there is no sense of security.

-----

Moi:

Never been much good at playing the game, so I abide whatever winds blow, and am happy enough with the hand I've been dealt. Worked harder, not smarter, is the way I often put it. Contentment is the last hurdle, as far as I see it.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with Cliff McFelter on an article I sent:

Human race just 0.01% of all life but has eradicated most other living things  
<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/may/21/human-race-just-001-of-all-life-but-has-destroyed-over-80-of-wild-mammals-study>

-----

Cliff:

I'd say the human is probably the most destructive creature to inhabit this earth ... by a long shot. We're pretty much doomed if humans stay in charge. Just returned from 10 days at the Strawberry Music Festival (my crew now goes much earlier) where I turned off my devices and didn't listen to one word of news for 10 days. Quite refreshing actually. Have resisted the urge to watch or listen since I got back also ... as I'm sure it's the same old crap of mad men and their massive fucking egos, plundering, raping, conquering, and destroying the earth, while getting rich in the process. Humankind is in desperate need of a reset ... or maybe just a special virus that targets the narcissistic egos of madmen. Or maybe just shoot 'em all.

-----

Moi:

We're definitely going to keep chewing away at our Mother and all our fellow earthlings until either we off ourselves, something offs us, or we just plain run out of anything to chew on ... and then it's Soylent Green time. Still watching it all, but feeling pretty detached about it anymore. Can't imagine anything sane coming out of anything we touch. Kind of like Midas on steroids, but without any will to stop.

Heading for a wall at a couple hundred miles an hour, and not even the squeal of brakes. It's rough being a cancer cell, but what the hey, biology will out. Oh, well, so it goes.

-----  
Cliff

Pretty amazing statistics ... .01% of all life's population decimates 83% of all creatures living on earth. We're pretty much a destroying entity in the grand scheme of things ... yet we think we're the cream of the crop. Humans are unfortunately bound to their egos and can't think past their own desires and greed ... so the world is subservient to them (or so they think). And with a mindset bent on the idea of "more" – we're pretty much doomed from the get-go. But then I'm preaching to the choir! Would be nice if that choir was much larger.

-----  
Moi

cancer |'kansər|  
noun

the disease caused by an uncontrolled division  
of abnormal cells in a part of the body:  
he's got cancer | smoking is the major cause of lung cancer.

- a malignant growth or tumor resulting from the division of abnormal cells:  
most skin cancers are curable.
- a practice or phenomenon perceived to be evil or destructive  
and hard to contain or eradicate:  
racism is a cancer sweeping across Europe.

-----  
Moi:

Happened on this last night. Impressive.

Youtube Search: The Danish National Symphony Orchestra  
[https://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=The+Danish+National+Symphony+Orchestra](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=The+Danish+National+Symphony+Orchestra)

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Cliff:

Very cool ... Nice to see a woman conductor.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

A Physicist Has Proposed a Grim Explanation For Why We Never See Aliens

<https://www.sciencealert.com/physicist-proposed-horrifying-explanation-why-we-never-see-aliens-fermi-paradox-berezin>

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Moi:

No debate that there's probably all sorts of life forms across the universe, but what are the odds that their worlds have water and land masses and climates that create forests that create creatures that have brains with opposable thumbs and legs and lungs and vocal chords and tool-making abilities that can work together to chase other creatures to extinction. And then somehow get off this planet, and survive who knows what to get at all the creatures on even one world, much less all the orbs that are spinning away out there. As for artificial intelligence playing conquistador, well, I have yet to see any technology last any great amount of time without a human tech having to look under the hood. In other words, I'm not holding my breath that the universe has anything to fear from our little burp of time.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

Here's How Much Exercise You Need to Give Your Brain a Boost

<https://www.livescience.com/62696-exercise-physical-activity-cognitive-skills.html>

-----

Steve:

My call on this is to simply exercise as much as you want to ... which for me is more than this ... although I'm sure it will decline in the older years. I enjoy exercise ... especially outdoors ... so motivation is not a problem ... it's work that gets in the way. If I were retired, I'd be doing something every day ... because I enjoy it.

-----

Moi:

May as well enjoy this mortal cadaver as long as we can is my view, too.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Your Job Doesn't Matter: According to David Graeber, we should be excited for robots to take our bullshit jobs.

[https://www.vice.com/en\\_us/article/59qw5d/bullshit-jobs-david-graeber](https://www.vice.com/en_us/article/59qw5d/bullshit-jobs-david-graeber)

-----

Moi:

And what would most people do if they didn't have to work? More of what they're already doing anytime they have a chance: Eat too much, drink too much, gamble too much, take too many drugs, stare into every screen they can, create all sorts of havoc and inanity. The whole human paradigm is superfluous. We're long overdue for extinction.

-----  
Steve:

Some I suppose ... not me ... I'd do more communing with nature ... mountain biking and hiking ... reading for pleasure instead of work ... meditating ... socializing ... et cetera.

-----  
Moi:

Creative minds are probably more inclined towards the leisurely pace that such a world would offer. For the rest, tripe.

-----  
Steve:

Yes ... sometimes I see what people spend what little free time they have doing ... and it either confused or depresses me ... like reality or television game shows ... I don't even own a cable television package ... never have ... I simply don't watch anything that has commercials attached to it ... it's either PBS science shows ... or movies with some kind of redeeming quality to them.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

Syphilis and gonorrhoea up by one-fifth in England  
<https://www.bbc.com/news/health-44368741>

-----  
Steve:

That and more is up a lot in California ... I'm telling you ... Bot Sex will rule in the future.

-----  
Moi:

The hand and a fantasy works for me anymore. Simpler, cheaper, and I can roll over and get to sleep sooner. And, happily, less and less a force every whirl around the sun. It has been both fun and bother; one that I would never choose to go through again. Way too much effort for the payoff. Just a biological, instinctual fact, nothing more.

-----  
Steve:

I've had similar thoughts ... in the context of it being a source of pleasure ... and a fucking headache ... it's like being a junky when you're young. Another thought I've had, is that if I'd put half the time and energy into making money that I've put into women ... I'd be a billionaire by now.

-----

Moi:

No doubt. If you'd gone with any of the biggees like Apple, Microsoft, Facebook, and even just taken a few handfuls of shares, you'd be sitting anywhere in the world you wanted.

-----

Steve:

Could have gone to work for Microsoft as far back as 2000 ... yes ... anywhere.

-----

Moi:

Sent Yaj Ekim Photoshop graphic looking out blurry windshield, the rear-view mirror crystal clear: Free will looking forward, fate looking back.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

30 years after warning of global warming: They were right

<https://www.mercurynews.com/2018/06/18/30-years-after-warning-of-global-warming-they-were-right/>

-----

Moi:

And yet so many still question it. Corporations continue to sacrifice the future for a bottom line. Mounds of false gold piled high in a storming cesspool. Boggling.

Merchants of Doubt

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Merchants\\_of\\_Doubt](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Merchants_of_Doubt)

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Steve:

Keep a vile of Fentanyl handy ... go out with a smile ... instead if a bang.

-----

Moi:

Helium is the demise of choice at Studio 101. No muss, no fuss, no risk of waking up in your own puke.

How-to photos at bottom of page:

Final Exit and Related Links

<http://finalexitandrelatedlinks.blogspot.com/>

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Steve:

So, what're the specifics? ... bag over head with tube pumping helium into it ... till you loose consciousness?

BTW ... you inject a serious dose of Fentanyl in your veins ... you're not waking up ... ask Tom Petty or Prince.

-----  
Moi:

Pretty straightforward. Just replace the oxygen with helium. Lots of links on that page to get all the details.

I don't have access to Fentanyl, and why go through all that needle bother when I already have a helium tank in my closet, and there's plenty more down at Party City.

-----  
Steve:

Could always mix in some nitrous oxide to make it interesting ... :-)

-----  
Moi:

Suicide is about being done with your universe and all the vanities, all the agonies and ecstasies you have played out in its quantum dreamtime. The means is merely what you have inclination toward and access to. However you choose do it, and with whatever quality of mind, whether passionate or pragmatic, you choose to do it, the oblivion is the same, the oblivion is the point.

-----  
Steve:

When I ponder it ... and the methods I want to consider ... my main focus is to check out painlessly and without dear or panic ... putting a bag over my head freaks ne out ... hence these potential alternatives.

-----  
Moi:

Agree with the painless part, but a plastic bag is no big deal. Guns are too messy, and needles and chemistry are too much bother. Not putting whoever deals with the body through too much cleanup and mental harshness is also a factor. When that moment comes – assuming I have any control over it – just closing my eyes and peacefully falling asleep will work just fine.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

You're Wiping Your Butt All Wrong and Probably Injuring Yourself



<https://melmagazine.com/youre-wiping-your-butt-all-wrong-and-probably-injuring-yourself-64a57da97c9b>

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Moi:

Here's the way to go:

Bidet

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bidet>

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Steve:

Garden hose.

-----

Moi:

The hand-held shower is the weapon of choice at Studio 101.

\* \* \* \*

Response to no one in particular:

Pew Research shows fewer than 50 percent of Americans can tell the difference between fact and opinion  
<https://thenextweb.com/insider/2018/06/19/pew-research-shows-fewer-than-50-percent-of-americans-can-tell-the-difference-between-fact-and-opinion/>

Distinguishing Between Factual and Opinion Statements in the News

The politically aware, digitally savvy and those more trusting of the news media fare better; Republicans and Democrats both influenced by political appeal of statements

[www.journalism.org/2018/06/18/distinguishing-between-factual-and-opinion-statements-in-the-news/](http://www.journalism.org/2018/06/18/distinguishing-between-factual-and-opinion-statements-in-the-news/)

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Moi:

Is it nature? Is it nurture? Can ignorance ever learn to think critically?

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on a couple articles I sent:

‘Gaming disorder’ is now classified as a mental condition — but there’s reason to be skeptical

<https://www.theverge.com/2018/6/18/17475440/gaming-disorder-world-health-organization-icd>

World Health Organization says video game addiction is a disease. Why American psychiatrists don't

[www.latimes.com/science/sciencenow/la-sci-sn-video-game-addiction-explainer-20180619-story.html](http://www.latimes.com/science/sciencenow/la-sci-sn-video-game-addiction-explainer-20180619-story.html)

-----

Steve:

No shit.

-----

Moi:

What would all these millennials do if their screens were taken away?

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

300,000 coastal homes in US, worth \$120 billion, at risk of chronic floods from rising seas  
<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2018/06/18/rising-seas-climate-change-coastal-homes-floods/710141002/>

-----

Steve:

But at least they can watch gorgeous sunsets ... as the water rises around their recliner chairs on their sunset deck.

-----

Moi:

Might be good prospects for some sort of pilings business. No need to move. Raise your house above Mother Nature's wrath. Make your home into real waterfront property. Could also be very good for the boating business.

-----

Steve:

That's what happened in many places already ... Florida and New Orleans ... when people rebuilt ... they raised their houses onto stilts ... and they keep a dingy strapped to their decks for when it happens ... personally ... I think it's time to move when you get to that point.

-----

Moi:

Yes, but who will pay them enough to buy something else?

-----

Steve:

Why it is legal to build developments in areas where the elevation is 30 ft below sea level ... and 60 below storm surges ... is beyond my comprehension ... then they complain when the area floods and accuse the government of not saving them ... from their own stupidity.

-----  
Moi:

I feel little compassion for anyone who builds anyplace Mother Nature is likely to eventually destroy.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Planning a move? By 2021, these 8 states will have no income tax  
<https://www.usatoday.com/story/money/taxes/2018/06/18/states-that-have-no-income-tax/35708055/>

-----  
Moi:

Alas, except for Washington, not the ones on my possibilities list at this writing. Can't really imagine leaving the West Coast. The Midwest cold is too harsh at this stage of physicality, and anything too dry or too humid are definitely also out.

The decision will be whether to move along the coast somewhere Fort Bragg north, or up on the inland corridor in Oregon or Washington. Really enjoyed Arcata when I was going to Humboldt State for eight months in 1999. Something with fewer people, more moisture, and reasonable access to coffee and health care. Your raving about Eugene puts it very high on the list.

-----  
Steve:

Yeah ... all in line with my thoughts on this too ... I'll be in Eugene in a couple of weeks for a concert.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Employees who practice mindfulness meditation are less motivated, having realized the futility of their jobs  
<https://boingboing.net/2018/06/17/tune-in-turn-on-slack-off.html>

-----  
Moi:

Waking up did nothing for my pocketbook, that's for sure. But, oh well.

-----  
Steve:

These companies make me laugh ... they initiate mindfulness programs to try to mitigate the hell hole that they've created for you to work in ... and then they seem to be surprised when as you become enlightened and more aware ... you suddenly realized that your life is a piece of shit working in their fucking company.

-----  
Moi:

The trick is to somehow be content that every day you're pushing the boulder up the hill – that it is all entirely meaningless, that it is all completely absurd – but you shrug your shoulders and daily endure the struggle, perhaps even happily.

The Myth of Sisyphus  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Myth\\_of\\_Sisyphus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Myth_of_Sisyphus)

The Myth of Sisyphus (French: *Le Mythe de Sisyphe*) is a 1942 philosophical essay by Albert Camus. The English translation by Justin O'Brien was first published in 1955.

In the essay, Camus introduces his philosophy of the absurd, man's futile search for meaning, unity, and clarity in the face of an unintelligible world devoid of God and eternal truths or values. Does the realization of the absurd require suicide? Camus answers, "No. It requires revolt." He then outlines several approaches to the absurd life. The final chapter compares the absurdity of man's life with the situation of Sisyphus, a figure of Greek mythology who was condemned to repeat forever the same meaningless task of pushing a boulder up a mountain, only to see it roll down again. The essay concludes, "The struggle itself [...] is enough to fill a man's heart. One must imagine Sisyphus happy".

Camus is interested in Sisyphus' thoughts when marching down the mountain, to start anew. After the stone falls back down the mountain Camus states that "It is during that return, that pause, that Sisyphus interests me. A face that toils so close to stones is already stone itself! I see that man going back down with a heavy yet measured step toward the torment of which he will never know the end." This is the truly tragic moment, when the hero becomes conscious of his wretched condition. He does not have hope, but "there is no fate that cannot be surmounted by scorn." Acknowledging the truth will conquer it; Sisyphus, just like the absurd man, keeps pushing. Camus claims that when Sisyphus acknowledges the futility of his task and the certainty of his fate, he is freed to realize the absurdity of his situation and to reach a state of contented acceptance. With a nod to the similarly cursed Greek hero Oedipus, Camus concludes that "all is well," indeed, that "one must imagine Sisyphus happy."

-----  
Steve:

I've read many of Camus's books ... first got into him in my early 20's ... *The Fall* ... in particular.

-----  
Moi:

Can't say I've read a lot of his works, but what I did read, and his life story, had its impact. Was especially struck by "The Stranger" and the "Myth of Sisyphus".

-----  
Steve:

The Fall

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Fall\\_%28Camus\\_novel%29?wprov=sfla1](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Fall_%28Camus_novel%29?wprov=sfla1)

-----

Moi:

Sounds pretty involved. Not sure I've got mind enough to wrap my head around it at this point, but will add it to my Amazon wish list just in case.

-----

Steve:

The Plague

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Plague?wprov=sfla1](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Plague?wprov=sfla1)

Moi: Started it a couple times, but didn't get far. Tend to prefer aphorisms anymore. Too lazy to get through storylines.

BrainyQuote: Albert Camus

[https://www.brainyquote.com/search\\_results?q=albert+camus](https://www.brainyquote.com/search_results?q=albert+camus)

The only way to deal with an unfree world is to become so absolutely free that your very existence is an act of rebellion ~ Albert Camus

But what is happiness except the simple harmony between a man and the life he leads? ~ Albert Camus

-----

Steve:

From what I'm experiencing these days ... there is little "Harmony" anywhere ... in either my work environment ... personal life ... or society in general. We are turning into a caustic culture ... ever vigilant ... looking for one thing or person after another to blame or criticize ... for the pain and suffering ... that is simply inherent in life. We could use more Buddhism ... which teaches acceptance of the fact that life is full of suffering and pain ... instead of expecting it to be completely eliminated ... and looking for someone to blame for it.

We've turned into a country full of fragile sissies ... who scream ... rant ... rave ... and "Demonstrate" ... against one individual after another who we blame for our situation in life. A bunch of Momma's Boys ... raise without strong fathers who taught us that life just ain't fair ... and to do the best you can ... while excepting what you can't change.

We're all going to go down in this country ... and be swallowed by the masses of the world that are heartier than we are ... while staring at your cell phones ... and posting how unfair it is that the starving masses we've been subjugating for centuries ... are finally getting their due.

-----

Moi:

Every Rome declines and falls sooner or later. As it looks now, we definitely appear to be on the sooner end.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

The debt curve from Hell is upon us

<http://thehill.com/opinion/finance/394493-the-debt-curve-from-hell-is-upon-us>

National Debt of the United States

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National\\_debt\\_of\\_the\\_United\\_States](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_debt_of_the_United_States)

-----

Moi:

Yet another domino a-quivering away, as the world careens madly towards the wall of dissolution, and not even the hint of squealing brakes. Way more than my wee brain wants or needs or even can wrap its head around at this stage of its mortal game.

-----

Steve:

My concern is that I may not have a pension to retire with soon ... but the next so called recession won't be just that ... the entire economy will collapse ... bank savings and all.

-----

Moi:

Could be very bleak very soon for everyone. Buy what you need and want now while the dollar is still worth something.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Criminal Behavior, Not Racism, Explains 'Racial Disparities' in Crime Stats

<https://townhall.com/columnists/larryelder/2018/06/28/criminal-behavior-not-racism-explains-racial-disparities-in-crime-stats-n2495148>

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Moi:

Another truth for the propaganda mills to ignore.

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Steve:

Yeah ... this has been obvious to anyone with common sense ... but if you even try to say that perhaps there are more “fill in any demographic other than white males” causing more crime and therefore that is

why there are more of them getting arrested or shot ... you are labeled a racist or sexist ... so stating the truth gets you nothing but labeled as a Nazi White Supremacist.

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Steve:

This is the first article I've ever read that says ... The emperor has no clothes ... in fact ... I was surprised to see that it states that the police are actually less reactive towards blacks ... because they're afraid of the backlash.

-----

Moi:

Being a policeman might well be the last thing I would ever do. That, or joining the military. Both total no-wins from the get-go.

And right down there, also, would be your job.

Speaking of which, how are you and your compatriots doing with all the bad news on pensions and such? Must be some very frustrated people wandering the halls in Mountain View.

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Steve:

There are more issues piling up than I can count ... and people are leaving that we need ... it's going to make it worse ... and is already impacting me in severely acute ways.

If we ... and I mean everyone in this country and the rest of the world ... survive this administration ... it will be a miracle. And even if we do ... the Supreme Court will be trashed for decades. The remainder of our time on this planet is looking bleaker by the day ... and it seems like the ignorant masses don't see it coming.

The people who are going to get fucked the most are those who voted for them ... the irony is astounding ... but if they think they have it bad now ... when they see their social security and Medicare disappear .... And the recession hits which will cause inflation to skyrocket ... so that any money you have saved will be devalued so much you won't have anything left in a year or two ... and we're all jobless ... homeless ... and with no support system ... society will fall apart ... the homeless situation we have now will seem like nothing compared to what is coming.

-----

Moi:

Boggling that one moron can do so much harm, invoke so much chaos, so quickly. Keep hoping he will be exited anytime soon by some sort of coronary implosion or a dollop of full metal jacket.

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Steve:

It's not just one person in my mind ... he's just the puppet they use ... what's behind him is the 1% ... the Republican Party has become an instrument for the obscenely wealthy oligarchs to infiltrate and usurp the Government ... they've take it over and are running it to benefit themselves ... to the demise of the masses ... it's not sustainable ... it will destabilize society in the long run.

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Moi:

Well, Doctor, what have we got -- a Republic or a Monarchy?

A Republic, if you can keep it.

The response attributed to Benjamin Franklin at the close of the Constitutional Convention of 1787, when queried as he left Independence Hall on the final day of deliberation.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth between Steve and Michael Gennaro, an old friend of his:

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Steve:

Let me make something clear that I've experienced personally ... and I'm not sure if you have ... but there are two instances I can relay:

When I was in my early 20's I was in SF with some friends waiting in an alley outside a club to go in. A couple of cops started harassing a friend of mine and I simply asked him what he had done and why were they hassling him. I got arrested ... handcuffed ... taken behind a precinct ... and had the shit kicked out of me while I had my hands handcuffed behind my back. My hair had been pulled out ... my ribs bruised ... lumps on my head ... I got beat up ... bad. And I couldn't do a fucking thing about it. My lawyer said so. It's your word against theirs and they win every time. There were not cameras everywhere in those days. I simply had to swallow that and take it. Note: I'm white ... this happens to all sorts of people ... not just black people.

Around the same time in my life some friends of mine were shooting guns in the middle of nowhere outside Livermore ... in the open country off of a country road ... intentionally in the middle of nowhere. We had done this many time before. We were simply shooting at cans and bottles etc. for the fun of it. A couple of cop cars came flying up ... skidding into the dirt ... doors flying open ... cops behind their doors pointing guns at us and yelling to drop our guns ... all in a very fast quick tense confrontation that caught us by total surprise ... we didn't think we were doing anything illegal ... and at the time ... we weren't ... it was open public land. I started to put my gun down and they kept yelling for me to drop it ... get on my knees ... hand behind my back ... the whole bit ... just like in a movie ... shoved to the ground and handcuffed. Today ... I probably would have been shot and killed ... but I came close to that that day. That was 30 years ago.

I've been subjected to these very same situations. Blacks probably are more because they are living in higher crime areas and they are involved in more crimes ... as this study shows. I believe that is historical and rooted in poverty ... more than it is anything else. But the point I'm making ... is that white people get shot too ... all the time ... but it's not a racial Issue when it happens so you never hear about it. If a



Black person is shot ... it's automatically labeled as due to racism ... and I believe that if it is at times ... it's the minority of the times ... this study shows that it is predominantly due to the fact that blacks are committing more crimes.

The point being that they are taking what is a minority of situations ... and stating that it is the cause in all situations ... they are mischaracterizing statistics. They need to take responsibility for the crime in their areas and do something about it. Way more blacks are shot by other blacks ... the number of blacks shot by cops is minimal ... it is not an epidemic. What is an epidemic is blacks shooting each other. So apparently they don't think that Black Lives Matter all that much ... if they are killing each other in record numbers.

This has been obvious to anyone with common sense ... but if you even try to say that perhaps there are more "fill in any demographic other than white males" causing more crime and therefore that is why there are more of them getting arrested or shot ... you are labeled a racist or sexist ... so stating the truth gets you nothing but labeled as a Nazi White Supremacist.

This is the first article I've ever read that says ... The emperor has no clothes ... in fact ... I was surprised to see that it states that the police are actually less reactive towards blacks ... because they're afraid of the backlash.

-----  
Michael:

I don't think you can generalize one way or the other about cops. There are nearly 1 million police officers in our country and you often hear the caveat something to the effect, 'most cops do a great job every day'. I'm sure that's true. And I'm sure there are racists cops just as racism exists in all walks of life. The police force is one place where there can be no allowance for racism, so the fact that there is some will always be an issue (be it a black racist cop or a white racist cop). I can tell you that if I were a black parent, I would have a talk with my kids about being on best behavior when interacting with the police because you never know when you might encounter a cop who is quicker on the draw when dealing with a black kid.

-----  
Steve:

Now one could argue that there are more blacks committing crimes because of racial bias in our culture in general ... which puts them in more poverty situations ... so they turn to crime to survive ... and that that is the root cause ... I'll listen to that ... but it is a fact that more blacks commit crimes than other demographics ... and ... the primary threat to a black male is not getting shot by police ... it's getting shot by another black male ... and ... this states that police have more to fear from getting shot by a black male ... than the other way around.

-----  
Michael:

Yeah, I can see why a cop might have more fear when confronting a black man than when confronting a white man. The problem as I see it is when that heightened fear causes the cop to respond to the situation differently because of this inherent bias. The fact is that the cop knows almost nothing about the

individual he is confronting, regardless of skin color, and he should function based on his training rather than on some bias that there are a lot of bad black men out there and this might be one. If a cop can't do that, he should find another profession. I couldn't do it.

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Steve:

This is what I mean by the Left is distorting the facts ... I don't believe we have a major issue in this country with cops shooting blacks unjustifiably.

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Michael:

I don't know how major the issue is. Hopefully, it's not as bad as it might be based on some of the things we've seen. The last time I visited Leanne's parents in Chicago, one of her dad's friends stopped by. He is a retired Chicago cop. I asked him about how hairy his job had been, and he started talking about it. He policed some crime ridden areas and he told me that he and his fellow cops viewed the black man as their enemy. He said that when a call came in about a shooting of a black man, they would often go have coffee first before showing up at the crime scene because they hoped that maybe more black guys would get shot before they arrived. Now he's talking about many decades ago of course. He also said when confronting a black man, the cops shot first and asked questions later. He talked about his exploits with some regret I think. So I asked if he was in favor of the greater scrutiny that cops are now under. He said, no, you have to let cops do their job. This answer surprised me and I'll never forget it.

Still, this is Chicago several decades ago. I hope it's nothing like that now, but my guess is that it can still be a bit like this at times, but that all the scrutiny is making this gradually better. One more way our society tends to inspect itself and tries to improve.

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Steve:

I believe they are getting shot because they are committing crimes or threatening the cop. Does that mean there are never any instances of cops being racist? Of course not ... but it is not an epidemic ... there's more blacks threatening cops than the other way around ... but if you say that ... people discount it and refuse to look at the facts.

-----

Michael:

There should be more people threatening cops than the other way around. There are criminals out there. But we give cops significant authority and a gun, and they need to handle all of that professionally. When a cop does not, I think it matters. We can always get into trouble by extrapolating the bad things we see, which I think is much of what you are talking about. I agree.

A few months ago a basketball player for the Milwaukee Bucks was harassed and tasered by cops. The footage was released and the cops suspended. I watched the approx. 30 minutes of video. What I saw was a cop who was pushing for a fight with a young, big black man driving an expensive car, a fight that was not fair because the cop had his authority, his taser, his gun, and his backup cops on his side. It was

horrendous, Steve. I see a cop escalating the situation at every turn. If you have the time, here's the 30-minute video. Now, it's just one case. But it's still very wrong, in my opinion, and as a society we can do better. But I would never be critical of cops in general. They do a job I would not do.

Sterling Brown Tasing and Arrest

[https://video.search.yahoo.com/search/video;\\_ylt=Awr9Du5ZMzVbhUA1wVXNyoA;\\_ylu=X3oDMTEyNmlwc2k1BGNvbG8DZ3ExBHBvcwMxBHZ0aWQDQjU1ODVfMQRzZWMDc2M-?p=full+video+of+sterling+brown&fr=yfp-t-#id=3&vid=6035319527cf139681021fe29a3fbfab&action=view](https://video.search.yahoo.com/search/video;_ylt=Awr9Du5ZMzVbhUA1wVXNyoA;_ylu=X3oDMTEyNmlwc2k1BGNvbG8DZ3ExBHBvcwMxBHZ0aWQDQjU1ODVfMQRzZWMDc2M-?p=full+video+of+sterling+brown&fr=yfp-t-#id=3&vid=6035319527cf139681021fe29a3fbfab&action=view)

I hope this is true. We've seen a few ugly incidents and it's hard to know how representative it is. The Justice Department did find widespread racism in the Ferguson police department.

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Moi:

Wow, those are some pretty harsh memories. Nothing like it in all my interactions with the coppers, which have really only been traffic violations, pretty much all of them justifiable and long overdue. Have so far been more than a little lucky to have never been caught for the many things that were incarceration-worthy.

As far as policing and racism goes, it's not a job I would ever do, so all I hope is that anyone who does choose that path will do it as professionally, as respectfully, as by the book as is any-given-day possible. And try not to kill or abuse anyone unless there is no alternative. I think the movie "Colors" with Robert Duvall and Sean Penn caught the challenge of wearing a badge as well as any I've ever seen.

Colors

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colors\\_\(film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colors_(film))

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Steve:

I wouldn't choose that profession ... which makes me question why those who do ... would want to ... they're either delusional about what the job entails and the life they are going to buy into ... or they are high on the prospect of being in control.

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Moi:

All kinds of guns and other dangerous toys, fast cars, and a white hat to boot.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

Motley Fool: This Is the Most Misunderstood Concept in Renewable Energy.

<https://www.fool.com/investing/2018/06/28/this-is-the-most-misunderstood-concept-in-renewabl.aspx>

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Moi:

Fortunately, I'll likely be dead before it really becomes an issue that interferes with my having things warm or cold as needed.

\* \* \* \*

Possible Obituary Draft: Beverly Jean Holshouser

Beverly Jean Holshouser (age) passed away on (day or date) at her home in Modesto (or wherever living).

She was born on September 4, 1929 in Pomona, CA, to Paul and Reetha Kurtz, and moved with her family to Modesto in 1934.

Bev attended Modesto High, Modesto Junior College, and University of California, Berkeley, after which she returned to the Modesto area to marry Horace Holshouser of Hughson, and began a happy 60-year marriage that included two children and a teaching career at Hughson Elementary School.

Bev was preceded in death by her husband, Holtz, her sister Paula Yvonne Hunt of Salem, Oregon (plus any others), and is survived by her children, Michael Holshouser of Turlock and Ann Christensen (husband, John), twin sister Betty ??? Beard of Modesto, and numerous nieces and a nephew.

For the last years of her life, Bev enjoyed reading, travel, bridge, the company of her children, and the friendships of her PEO sisters.

If needed:

The family thanks \_\_\_\_\_ for the loving care she received from \_\_\_\_\_ (Hospice or other caregiver).

Remembrances may be made to \_\_\_\_\_ or a favorite charity.

Services will be private.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

Police: Inmate kills Kansas deputies escorting him to court

<https://www.mercurynews.com/2018/06/16/police-inmate-kills-kansas-deputies-escorting-him-to-court/>

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Moi:

How do you allow someone to grab your gun? My guess is some new prisoner containment procedures are very quickly being rolled into place.

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Steve:

I hope I never have to rely upon a police officer of this caliber to protect me in any way.

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Moi:

You're on your own if something does happen, is the way I see it. All the police can do in most cases is sift through whatever's after the fact, and maybe harvest enough clues to solve something, which may or may not do you much good, especially if you're crippled or dead.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Why are Americans so sad?

<https://qz.com/1306176/why-are-americans-so-sad/>

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Moi:

We abide in a culture of discontent. Contentment is failure. Nothing is ever satisfactory. Success is ever out of reach. Power and fame and fortune are all that matter. We live for what others think. Too much is not enough.

For myself, it's less about sadness than it is weariness with all the ignorance and suffering and futility. How long to keep pushing that fucking boulder up the fucking hill, is the question.

There is no fate that cannot be surmounted by scorn ~ Albert Camus

The Myth of Sisyphus

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Myth\\_of\\_Sisyphus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Myth_of_Sisyphus)

Life is thickly sown with thorns, and I know no other remedy than to pass quickly through them. The longer we dwell on our misfortunes, the greater is their power to harm us ~ Voltaire

I have lived eighty years of life and know nothing for it, but to be resigned and tell myself that flies are born to be eaten by spiders and man to be devoured by sorrow ~ Voltaire

Very learned women are to be found, in the same manner as female warriors; but they are seldom or ever inventors ~ Voltaire

BrainyQuote: Voltaire

[https://www.brainyquote.com/search\\_results?q=voltaire+quotes](https://www.brainyquote.com/search_results?q=voltaire+quotes)

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Steve:

Good one ... I find rumination on past slights ... will eat you alive.

But they sure are prolific ... in their analysis and criticisms of men ... as if it is any business of a woman to define what it is to be a man. I've told women who seemed to think they are such ... that only a man can define what it is to be a man ... by his very existence if nothing else.

Ditto ... it's all so futile ... the things I used to think mattered in my youth ... wasted my youth ... if I had it to do all over again ... I would have found a more relaxing path in life ... the struggling to achieve ... as defined by others ... is a miserable existence ... and a mirage that you never reach.

-----  
Moi:

Women have no friggin' clue what men are about, but that we should without question or complaint, play their nonsensical sugar-and-spice-and-everything-nice games.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Where have all our insects gone?

If all humankind were to disappear, the world would regenerate back to the rich state of equilibrium that existed 10,000 years ago. If insects were to vanish, the environment would collapse into chaos.

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/jun/17/where-have-insects-gone-climate-change-population-decline>

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Moi:

Will humankind be extinguished, or at least diminished enough to do no more harm, before we destroy the web completely? Oh for that time machine.

Web of Life 101: Food Web

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Food\\_web](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Food_web)

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Steve:

The best hope for the planet as a whole ... would be to have humans be extinguished ... If we cared at all about the planet and other life forms ... we'd all commit suicide.

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Moi:

The "if" that – for all practical purposes – is not, never was, will never be.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

An Empire of Exploitation, a World of Misery, and the Revolution Humanity Cries Out For  
[https://www.opednews.com/articles/An-Empire-of-Exploitation-by-Revolution-Newspap-Economic\\_Revolution-180616-214.html](https://www.opednews.com/articles/An-Empire-of-Exploitation-by-Revolution-Newspap-Economic_Revolution-180616-214.html)

-----  
Moi:

Yet another "We can still save ourselves" article. So friggin' absurd to think the masses are capable of freeing themselves from the overlords.

The horror! The horror! ~ Joseph Conrad

Wikipedia: The Heart of Darkness  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heart\\_of\\_Darkness](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heart_of_Darkness)

Kurtz's health worsens on the return trip, and Marlow himself becomes increasingly ill. The steamboat breaks down and, while it is stopped for repairs, Kurtz gives Marlow a packet of papers, including his commissioned report and a photograph, telling him to keep them away from the manager. When Marlow next speaks with him, Kurtz is near death; as he dies, Marlow hears him weakly whisper: "The horror! The horror!".

A short while later, the "manager's boy" announces to the rest of the crew, in a scathing tone, "Mistah Kurtz—he dead". The next day Marlow pays little attention to the pilgrims as they bury "something" in a muddy hole. He falls very ill, himself near death.

Upon his return to Europe, Marlow is embittered and contemptuous of the "civilized" world. Many callers come to retrieve the papers Kurtz had entrusted to him, but Marlow withholds them or offers papers he knows they have no interest in. He then gives Kurtz's report to a journalist, for publication if he sees fit. Finally, Marlow is left with some personal letters and a photograph of Kurtz's fiancée, whom Kurtz referred to as "My Intended". When Marlow visits her, she is dressed in black and still deep in mourning, although it has been more than a year since Kurtz's death. She presses Marlow for information, asking him to repeat Kurtz's final words. Uncomfortable, Marlow lies and tells her that Kurtz's final word was her name.

-----  
Steve:

Perhaps the Horror he was referring to ... was the prospect of returning to civilization ... and a lifetime of marriage ... LOL

-----  
Moi:

Both ends of the river are the same river.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Antarctica is melting faster than anyone thought, and we're not ready for the sea level rise that's coming  
[www.businessinsider.com/antarctica-ice-melt-glaciers-ice-shelf-collapse-2018-6](http://www.businessinsider.com/antarctica-ice-melt-glaciers-ice-shelf-collapse-2018-6)

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Moi:

There they go again, pretending climate change can be turned around. That their little algorithms mean anything. That anyone's going to be ready what's coming around the bend.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

Why you should think twice before getting in a pool  
<https://www.popsoci.com/pool-germs>

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Moi:

Since it's right across the street, I enjoy an hour or two doing what I call Aqua Chi – repetitive movement of arms and legs every which way – in the club pool almost every day, but I never put my head underwater anymore for all the reasons cited in this article. Am very conscious of food, air, and waterborne life forms at this writing. Ignorance was bliss, but a little knowledge keeps me in the game.

And I would never own my own pool or spa, even if I was the only one using it. Way too much bother, way too expensive. A \$35-a-month club membership is nothing in comparison for all the time I spend over there.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with Joe Warda on an article I sent:

Awakening from the Autobiographical Self  
<https://theheartofconsciousliving.wordpress.com/2015/08/21/awakening-from-the-autobiographical-self/>

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Joe:

I had to read a couple of times, and now I'm thinking about it!!!

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Moi:

So perhaps I won't be hearing about you again anytime ever.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Silicon Valley insiders revealed that Facebook, Snapchat, and Twitter are using 'behavioural cocaine' to turn people into addicts



<http://www.businessinsider.com/silicon-valley-insiders-tell-bbc-how-tech-firms-turn-users-into-addicts-2018-7>

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Moi:

But hasn't every commercial enterprise since trade first began, worked hard to addict their customers to whatever product was being sold? Maybe the online world is more effective, more intense, but it's nothing new in my thinking. It still falls back on the individual to reign in their own mind and body. No one is forcing anyone to drink the Kool-Aid.

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Steve:

Problem is they're reading your email, text messages, and listening to your phone calls ... and using that to do this.

-----

Moi:

No worries, I'm not that interesting, and they're not going to get anything out of my wallet that I don't want to spend.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with Ninos David on an article he sent:

Who is Mexico's Andrés Manuel López Obrador?  
<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-44646478>

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Moi:

Sounds like a Mexican version of Bernie Sanders. We'll see if they let him live.

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Ninos:

That is the question!

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Former British Army Sergeant Sentenced After Parachute Murder Attempt Of Wife  
<https://www.npr.org/2018/06/16/620531854/former-british-army-sergeant-sentenced-after-parachute-murder-attempt-of-wife?sc=tw>

British sergeant jailed for life for tampering with wife's parachute

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/jun/15/emile-cilliers-army-sergeant-jailed-for-tampering-with-wife-parachute>

'Shocking betrayal': the soldier, the lover and the sabotaged parachute

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/may/24/shocking-betrayal-the-soldier-the-lover-and-the-sabotaged-parachute-emile-cilliers>

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Steve:

After digesting this ... read the last paragraph twice.

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Moi:

Amazing. Sounds like another Scott Peterson, only this time Lacy somehow survived.

So, this woman is on her own with two kids, and seemingly not angry, not getting divorced, and rationalizing the whole thing. Pretty friggin' beyond the pale.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

Credibility Concerns Lead NIH To End Study Of Alcohol's Health Effects

<https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2018/06/15/620328777/credibility-concerns-lead-nih-to-end-study-of-alcohols-health-effects>

It Was Supposed to Be an Unbiased Study of Drinking. They Wanted to Call It 'Cheers.'

Buried in a new N.I.H. report are disturbing examples of coordination between scientists and the alcohol industry on a study that could have changed America's drinking habits.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/18/health/nih-alcohol-study.html>

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Steve:

Alcohol is a toxic and a carcinogen ... in any amount.

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Moi:

Can't even begin to speculate how many years have been shaved off my potential longevity and well-being with all the hedonism this mind-body has endured, but it surely must be in the double digits.

And the night ain't over.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

In just 10 minutes, an encounter on a Westminster street corner went from road rage to deadly shooting, police say

<https://www.denverpost.com/2018/06/15/road-rage-westminster-shooting/>

Westminster shooting likely a road rage incident, suspected killer admitted to shooting

<https://www.thedenverchannel.com/news/crime/police-westminster-shooting-likely-a-road-rage-incident-suspected-shooter-identified>

After waiving his Miranda rights and admitting to the shooting, Webster also told police he “has mental health issues and just started a new prescribed medication today,” according to the affidavit. He said the medication and the box for the handgun were at his house. Those claims about his mental state and medication have not been independently confirmed beyond what the search warrant states.

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Steve:

It was the Flintstone vitamins.

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Moi:

And severe mommy issues.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

Teens take fewer risks with sex and drugs but face new challenges

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/2018/06/14/teens-take-fewer-risks-sex-drugs-cdc/701751002/>

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Steve:

Like finding any meaning in our culture ... or purpose in life.

-----

Moi:

Good luck with that. No idea what I'd do if I was 18 again. Boggling how the world has changed in just half a century.

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Steve:

I think these poor kids don't have any future there's no job security there's no purpose or meaning in life other than making a lot of money and since that's being stripped away from them even their left with absolutely nothing but the prospect of being homeless on the streets of some major city which is growing to epidemic proportions

-----  
Moi:

And it's not even crowded in this part of the world compared to China, India, and all the multi-mega cities. I'm sure plenty of those kids running around in the playgrounds will endure long, harsh lives because suicide isn't on their list of options. The human species will carry on until who-knows-what-for-sure wipes it out. Human history is full of bitter episodes that are somehow survived. Our kind might slog on for many thousands of years for all we know.

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Steve:

In collective misery.

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Moi:

All the entitlements we take for granted will be so diminished/extinguished that they won't know any different.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

What Chinese women want: "Little puppies", the new ideal boyfriend type  
<https://qz.com/1287606/introducing-little-puppies-the-ideal-boyfriend-type-for-chinas-young-women/>

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Moi:

One of the last comments made to the last women I was seeing for a brief time: What you really want, Susan, is yourself with a dick.

Wikipedia: Cougar (slang)  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cougar\\_\(slang\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cougar_(slang))

WikiHow: How to Know if a Woman is a Cougar  
<https://www.wikihow.com/Know-if-a-Woman-is-a-Cougar>

Feline Scale  
<https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Feline%20'scale>

Google Search: Cougar Women  
[https://www.google.com/search?num=20&newwindow=1&client=safari&rls=en&ei=DbwjW6bKN4quz wK04IXwAQ&q=cougar+women&oq=cougar+women&gs\\_l=psy-ab.3..0110.14155.16160.0.16625.6.6.0.0.0.199.883.0j5.5.0....0...1.1.64.psy-ab..1.5.882...0i7i30k1j0i10k1j0i13k1.0.ojphdw1nUNs](https://www.google.com/search?num=20&newwindow=1&client=safari&rls=en&ei=DbwjW6bKN4quz wK04IXwAQ&q=cougar+women&oq=cougar+women&gs_l=psy-ab.3..0110.14155.16160.0.16625.6.6.0.0.0.199.883.0j5.5.0....0...1.1.64.psy-ab..1.5.882...0i7i30k1j0i10k1j0i13k1.0.ojphdw1nUNs)

Google Search: Cougar vs. Coyote Woman Slang

<https://www.google.com/search?client=safari&rls=en&q=cougar+vs+coyote+woman+slang&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8>

-----

Steve:

The thing is, is that women are constantly in a battle with men who are more dominant but the minute they get a submissive man it makes their blood recoil and they can't stand it they hate wimpy men for the most part but they're constantly saying they want one.

-----

Moi:

They daily carve away at your soul, and dispose of the husk when there's nothing left. Cart-pushing zombies – yes-dear-you-were-right-I was-wrong-I'm-sorry-it won't-happen-again – are all that's left. It's all so pathetic.

-----

Steve:

A study I read determined that women are attracted to three things in men:

- 1) Robust Health
- 2) Maturity
- 3) Dominance

The study stated that above all else it was dominance ... alpha males ... so they try constantly to beat you into submission ... and the type of men that are prone to try to attract women by pleasing them because.

They're ignorant about their true nature ... succumb to that and become marshmallows ... but it's really a test ... what women really want from a man is for him to respond by pushing back and smacking them down and proving his dominance ... they're actually attracted to that regardless of what comes out of their mouth.

My number one advice to a son if I ever had one would be to tell him to ignore what women say and watch very carefully what they do and how they interact and respond ... most of what they say is just lies and deceptions and tests to try to probe your perimeter ... figure you out ... they're trying to play you like a piano ... what they truly want is evidenced by the way they respond ... the way they act ... and the choices they make.

Women who constantly complain about arrogant men vote for them ... like Trump ... Trump had a significant number of Women Voters which is not being discussed amongst women ... there are more female voters in this country than men, and look who got elected.

Hey, Stella! Hey, Stellaaa!

A Streetcar Named Desire  
<https://youtu.be/G7a1TxVV4Bg>

-----

Moi:

Like I keep saying, I am more than happy to be done with the un-fairer sex anymore. Mom is the only woman I give myself over to these daze, and once she's gone, it'll be nothing but superficial interaction with them for whatever time's left.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Musician Wins \$260,000 In Lawsuit Against Ex-Girlfriend Who Sabotaged Career  
<https://www.npr.org/2018/06/15/620202403/musician-wins-260-000-in-lawsuit-against-ex-girlfriend-who-sabotaged-career>

-----

Moi:

Treacherous slime. Money he'll never collect, I'm thinking.

-----

Steve:

Winning a lawsuit doesn't mean they have the cash ... but he could effectively ruin her life for a significant number of decades by taxing her wages so that for the next 20 years they automatically take about half of her paycheck ... maybe with some luck she'll commit suicide.

-----

Moi:

Revenge has a long memory. Good that things seem to have worked our well for Abramovitz. A survivor, a.k.a., hero, in the Genitalia Wars.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

We Compared the Average IQ Scores in All 50 States, and the Results Are Eye-Opening  
<https://www.inc.com/bill-murphy-jr/we-compared-average-iq-score-in-all-50-states-results-are-eye-opening.html>

-----

Moi:

And look where Kaliforny is. Why am I not surprised?

Steve: LOL ... that's what I thought ... Oregon is more intelligent.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Car Hammock turns your automobile into a suspended camping lounge  
<https://newatlas.com/carhammock-hammock-inside-vehicle/55047/>

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Moi:

Perfect for the Silicon Valley commuter who needs a few zzz's before he takes on the pot holes and road-ragers.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Suze Orman Says This Is the Age You Should Retire—Not a Month or Year Before  
[time.com/money/4989314/suze-orman-new-retirement-rule/?xid=partner\\_CL\\_Synd](http://time.com/money/4989314/suze-orman-new-retirement-rule/?xid=partner_CL_Synd)

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Steve:

It's from Suzie Orman! ... it must be True! ... Well, I'll just plan on working until I'm ... Ugh! ... Oh shit ... My chest ... It's so tight ... Aaaaauurgh! ... THUD! ... (Sound of body hitting floor).

-----

Moi:

Who the fuck is Suze Orman? And why would I bother listenntg to someone so foolish? I retired at 58, and would have done it earlier while I had even more of a body and mind if I'd given it more thought.

-----

Steve:

She's some famous financial advisor ... who got rich telling you to work till you're 70.

-----

Moi:

Just another stupid fucking woman ripping off stupid fucking people who deserve stupid fucking advice.

-----

Steve:

My bet is she's being paid by rich powerful people to tell the plebes to keep working until they die.

-----

Moi:

No doubt in this mind. Yet another minion of one-percenters.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

We Are All Getting Dumber, New Science Proves, and No One Is Sure Why  
Are our terrible diets, bad schools, tech obsession, or even increasingly trashy media to blame?  
<https://www.inc.com/jessica-stillman/we-are-all-getting-dumber-new-science-proves-no-one-is-sure-why.html>

-----

Moi:

All of the above as far as reasons go, but at the root of it all is the disconnect with the natural world. I'm thinking the downward spiral really took off with the advent of the refrigerator and television.

Am pretty sure division of labor and specialization have something to do with it, as well. The generalist who can do it all is far more savvy, far more trail-smart, is my thinking. Words like gumption, grit, resourcefulness, creativity, critical thinking, stamina – In a world where screens and obesity and absurdity rule, how many in the current generation even know what they mean?

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

The Chomsky Challenge for Americans  
<https://www.truthdig.com/articles/the-chomsky-challenge-for-americans-in-understanding-our-dangerous-world/>

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Moi:

Chomsky is always spot-on, but all his clarity for all these years continues to change nothing. We're being consumed by the overlords, the world, and ourselves, waving the flag, cheering ourselves exceptional all the while. The future is already paying the price of our self-absorbed ignorance and stupidity.

The recent photos of Xi and Putin toasting, and the exasperated G6 staring at Trump, says it all.

Two photos that perfectly sum up the state of global leadership in 2018  
<https://qz.com/1301788/photos-of-trump-at-g7-and-xi-jinping-at-sco-sum-up-state-of-global-leadership/>

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

Woman sues NASA over ownership of moon dust vial  
<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-44459297>

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Steve:

Bought all of this ... except that she wants it for the memory of her father ... she wants the cash.

-----

Moi:

Her kids certainly will.

-----

Steve:

I've been to Johnson Space Center and walked up to the building where the moon rocks are all kept ... I've also got a piece of a parachute that was in space that was used to slow down the space shuttle when it landed ... I'm in my hotel in Washington DC right now I just went to an award today that I won at the federal government level for exceptional work in the cloud realm one of the only four people in the entire world who received it.

-----

Moi:

Congrats! You said when I visited that you'd been nominated, and I'd wondered a few times since what had happened. Nice to be recognized for all your hard work, and your mind.

A link I found on it. Congrats, again.

FedRAMP Five Awards

<https://www.fedramp.gov/fedramp-five-awards-accepting-nominations/>

Congratulations to the 2018 FedRAMP Five Award Winners!

<https://www.fedramp.gov/congratulations-to-the-2018-fedramp-five-award-winners/>

Large Agency Tech Lead Award: Steven Hunt, National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Steven Hunt serves as the IT Governance Lead for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's (NASA) Enterprise Managed Cloud Computing office, where he has led development and implementation of a robust Enterprise-Class Cloud A&A Framework. The Framework is comprised of leading-edge policies, procedures, standards, and guidelines aligned with FedRAMP, NIST, and Agency requirements and objectives, allowing NASA to minimize compliance burden while enabling secure, mission-supporting services. Steven is an evangelist and supporter of FedRAMP, and demonstrates a consistent willingness to provide input on FedRAMP initiatives to help improve the program.

Passed on the news to Mom, Ann, and John.

How long will you be in Washington? Any chance they'll talk you into that higher position you mentioned?

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Steve:

Need to get up in five hours for a flight.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on a video he sent:

Monty Python's Life of Brian: Always Look On The Bright Side Of Life  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SJUhlRoBL8M>

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Steve:

One of My Favorites.

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Moi:

A classic, indeed.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Man goes to prison for attempting to hijack web domain at gunpoint  
<https://www.engadget.com/2018/06/17/prison-sentence-for-armed-web-domain-robbery-attempt/>

-----

Moi:

Amazing how stupid some people are.

-----

Steve:

Yeah ... the guy is going to jail for 20 years ... for a freaking domain name ... Darwin Award Candidate for sure!

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Moi:

And 'do it for state' sounds pretty millennial-stupid from the get go. Some sort of beyond 'truth or dare' thing, I guess. Ceaselessly amazing what the herd is always coming up with to impress each other.

Where did "do it for state" come from and why does it celebrate stupidity and sex?  
[https://www.reddit.com/r/OutOfTheLoop/comments/4qta4h/where\\_did\\_do\\_it\\_for\\_state\\_come\\_from\\_and\\_why\\_does/](https://www.reddit.com/r/OutOfTheLoop/comments/4qta4h/where_did_do_it_for_state_come_from_and_why_does/)

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

The New Arms Race Threatening to Explode in Space

<https://www.wired.com/story/new-arms-race-threatening-to-explode-in-space/>

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Moi:

Fascinating how good our kind is at perpetually shooting itself in the foot. In other words, always be ready for a quick return to Old School.

-----

Steve:

At the expense of social programs.

-----

Moi:

Forget the little people. We're headed back to the Charles Dickens version of human kindness.

-----

Steve:

Charles Dickson's London will seem like nirvana compared to what is coming.

-----

Moi:

Get that AR yet?

-----

Steve:

What is legal in California today ain't worth buying ... may have to keep one on Oregon.

-----

Moi:

The toyz you already have will probably do for the time-being.

-----

Steve:

Perhaps ... but I would really like to have an AR-15 ... I don't have any kind of rifle ... and more specifically I want a .223 ... ammo is much cheaper than a .308 and it's perfect for refining marksmanship skills ... which is what the ignorant masses don't seem to understand.

Here's my prediction ... they'll choke out the use of AR-15s ... so sales of .308 rifles will skyrocket ... and we will essentially have INCREASED the lethality of the overall stock of guns in the U.S. ... great stupid regulators ... how about thinking things through before you implement laws that have no logical reason to exist.

-----

Moi:

Still think you should consider a Ruger Mini-14 Ranch Rifle as an entrée into the world of .223. Plenty legal for target practice at any gun range, and just as lethal as any AR-15 in a firefight. Ten-round clips are legal in Kaliforny, and larger clips can be had.

Google Search: Ruger Mini-14 Ranch Rifle

[https://www.google.com/search?num=20&newwindow=1&client=safari&rls=en&ei=928yW9-QCoK2tQX--IvQAw&q=Ruger+Mini-14+Ranch+Rifle&oq=Ruger+Mini-14+Ranch+Rifle&gs\\_l=psy-ab.3..0i67k1j0i7i30k115j0l4.8587.10479.0.12303.2.2.0.0.0.196.373.0j2.2.0....0...1c.1.64.psy-ab..0.2.373....0.GQFCjtnwXgg](https://www.google.com/search?num=20&newwindow=1&client=safari&rls=en&ei=928yW9-QCoK2tQX--IvQAw&q=Ruger+Mini-14+Ranch+Rifle&oq=Ruger+Mini-14+Ranch+Rifle&gs_l=psy-ab.3..0i67k1j0i7i30k115j0l4.8587.10479.0.12303.2.2.0.0.0.196.373.0j2.2.0....0...1c.1.64.psy-ab..0.2.373....0.GQFCjtnwXgg)

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Steve:

Do they have the same stupid limitations that an AR-15 has ... with the "Button Clip" requirement? Or can I use it like a normal human being without being hobbled with ridiculous bolt-ons ... like the "Flipper" hand grip requirement that went into effect this year?

-----

Moi

The Ruger Mini-14 comes with a very legal standard rifle stock, available in a variety of materials. All kinds of accessories are available, some of them illegal in California, but none of them are necessary. Pistol grips offer a certain leverage, but it's just as lethal without one. Mine originally came with a wood stock, but I'm partial to Hogue stocks at this writing.

Hogue Stocks for Ruger Mini-14's and 30's

<https://www.hogueinc.com/stocks/ruger/mini14>

Google Search: Ruger Mini-14 Ranch Rifle Accessories

[https://www.google.com/search?num=20&newwindow=1&client=safari&rls=en&ei=BHAYW6TSHY2MsQXf8ri4AQ&q=Ruger+Mini-14+Ranch+Rifle+Accessories&oq=Ruger+Mini-14+Ranch+Rifle+Accessories&gs\\_l=psy-ab.3..0i22i30k115.941834.944708.0.950584.12.12.0.0.0.0.426.1738.0j5j2j0j1.8.0....0...1c.1.64.psy-ab..4.8.1736...0.0.2gYVpNCdJHk](https://www.google.com/search?num=20&newwindow=1&client=safari&rls=en&ei=BHAYW6TSHY2MsQXf8ri4AQ&q=Ruger+Mini-14+Ranch+Rifle+Accessories&oq=Ruger+Mini-14+Ranch+Rifle+Accessories&gs_l=psy-ab.3..0i22i30k115.941834.944708.0.950584.12.12.0.0.0.0.426.1738.0j5j2j0j1.8.0....0...1c.1.64.psy-ab..4.8.1736...0.0.2gYVpNCdJHk)

Google Images: Ruger Mini-14 Ranch Rifle Accessories

[https://www.google.com/search?q=Ruger+Mini-14+Ranch+Rifle+Accessories&num=20&newwindow=1&client=safari&rls=en&source=lnms&tbn=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKewiy4-Cz6fHbAhUJIKwKHT9QABoQ\\_AUICygC&biw=867&bih=623](https://www.google.com/search?q=Ruger+Mini-14+Ranch+Rifle+Accessories&num=20&newwindow=1&client=safari&rls=en&source=lnms&tbn=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKewiy4-Cz6fHbAhUJIKwKHT9QABoQ_AUICygC&biw=867&bih=623)

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Steve:

The links I'm seeing show models that are either 5 rounds or 20 rounds ... can you modify this for a 10 round capacity?

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Moi:

Ruger does not make high-capacity magazines, but there are plenty of aftermarket versions available.

Google Search: Ruger Mini-14 Magazines

[https://www.google.com/search?num=20&newwindow=1&client=safari&rls=en&ei=zXoyW7zwEcnIsQXomaDIAG&q=ruger+mini+14+magazines&oq=ruger+minimagazines&gs\\_l=psy-ab.1.0.0i7i30k1110.94767.95637.0.98324.4.4.0.0.0.168.618.0j4.4.0....0...1c.1.64.psy-ab..0.4.617...0i13k1.0.NVBZy5vlALo](https://www.google.com/search?num=20&newwindow=1&client=safari&rls=en&ei=zXoyW7zwEcnIsQXomaDIAG&q=ruger+mini+14+magazines&oq=ruger+minimagazines&gs_l=psy-ab.1.0.0i7i30k1110.94767.95637.0.98324.4.4.0.0.0.168.618.0j4.4.0....0...1c.1.64.psy-ab..0.4.617...0i13k1.0.NVBZy5vlALo)

Google Images: Ruger Mini-14 Magazines

[https://www.google.com/search?q=ruger+mini+14+magazines&num=20&newwindow=1&client=safari&rls=en&source=lnms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwIU4frB8PHbAhVHXq0KHQwpC9gQ\\_AUICygC&biw=867&bih=623](https://www.google.com/search?q=ruger+mini+14+magazines&num=20&newwindow=1&client=safari&rls=en&source=lnms&tbm=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwIU4frB8PHbAhVHXq0KHQwpC9gQ_AUICygC&biw=867&bih=623)

-----  
Steve:

It's sad that a 10-round magazine is not considered high capacity ... in Texas you can mount a 100 round drum on anything with a trigger ... and it's legal ... I've seen them on Glock pistols in Youtube videos.

-----  
Moi:

The reality is that most gunfights are over pretty quickly. If you shoot more than a magazine or two, you're probably at a gun range, and no one's shooting back.

-----  
Steve:

Yeah ... that's one context ... but it's sure a pain to have to load 20 magazines ... in addition on the former note ... I've seen articles where some guy shot 11 or 12 rounds before he immobilized the assailant ... be a drag to need that extra round or two ... probably more of an issue for a pistol ... as the accuracy is reduced ... hopefully you can aim better than that with a rifle. I'm in favor of the more liberal 17 round or 20 round mag ... 10 seems absurdly limiting ... just makes a lot of money for the companies selling magazines.

-----  
Moi:

Am totally ready for just about any kind of scenario you could imagine – bought all kinds of things while they were still Kaliforny-legal – and hope to never be in a life-or-death situation where I need them.

-----

Steve:

Grenade launchers? ... with phosphorous loads? ... LOL

-----

Moi:

I'm a big believer in don't ask, don't tell.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

NFL vs. Millennials: Football Struggles to Bridge the Generation Gap

<https://bleacherreport.com/articles/2782233-nfl-vs-millennials-football-struggles-to-bridge-the-generation-gap>

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Steve:

Personally, I am not attracted to any sport that has significant violence and injury to the participants in it ... football ... any kind of boxing ... or MMA/UFC. Soccer is a reasonable sport ... and far more humane than football.

-----

Moi:

It's a gladiator thing that some are beyond-all-rational-thinking attracted to, me included. I was too small and nearsighted to play in high school, but practiced enough to enjoy the strategic and tactical aspects, as well as the violence. No other sport – including boxing, ultimate fighting, or any martial art – calls out to me the way it does.

-----

Steve:

Yeah ... I really don't understand people who enjoy watching people beat the shit out of each other for entertainment. It's barbaric. And takes advantage of the poor people who engage in that.

One thing I've noticed that is really bizarre in a "certain type of woman" ... of whom I've met a few ... is that they get sexually aroused watching boxing or other violent sports. One woman ... a very attractive one I might add ... literally told me point blank that she gets horny watching men beat the shit out of each other ... like ... what the fuck? ... I passed on that shit.

-----

Moi:

The kind of women who like it when men fight over them in a bar, or believe jealousy is love. It can sure get twisted.

How The NFL's New Helmet Rule Could Change Football As We Know It

<https://deadspin.com/how-the-nfls-new-helmet-rule-could-change-football-as-w-1826535363>

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

Wi-Fi security is starting to get its biggest upgrade in over a decade

<https://www.theverge.com/circuitbreaker/2018/6/26/17501594/wpa3-wifi-security-certification>

-----

Steve:

Yep ... they'll tell everyone to buy a new router ... and make millions.

-----

Moi:

Sheep Baaa

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=33hajppi4yg>

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

What It's Like in the Most Populated Cities in the World

[https://www.travelandleisure.com/trip-ideas/city-vacations/most-populated-cities?utm\\_campaign=social-button-sharing&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_source=twitter.com](https://www.travelandleisure.com/trip-ideas/city-vacations/most-populated-cities?utm_campaign=social-button-sharing&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com)

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Steve:

Hell on Earth.

-----

Moi:

Have no interest in traveling anymore just to see a bunch of variations of asphalt, cement, steel, and glass. I can barely stand living in Turlock with it's 80,000 denizens, and the Great Central Valley with its million and a half in Stanislaus County and the two counties north and south. Don't even want to bother getting into my car anymore to run a few errands. How you deal living in the Bay Area is beyond me.

-----

Steve:

I wouldn't call what I do "Living" ... it's "Surviving" ... and barely that ... Treading Water is another metaphor that comes to mind. The world ... other than for the 1% ... has become a mine field of pain and suffering ... and we're fed crumbs to keep us motivated ... a delude ourselves into thinking that checking out would be worse ... the biggest lie of them all.

-----

Moi:

What a lot of bother being born has been. All for bits and pieces of pleasure that have grown tired and stale. Departing crosses my mind pretty much every day in a casual pondering sort of way, and my lot is nothing compared to what so many endure.

-----

Steve:

I know how you feel ... I fall down those black holes more frequently these days ... with every increasing pain and ache ... and then I feel like a whiner because I see how horrific the rest of the world lives ... but then I think I can't understand why anyone in those situation would still be struggling ... what's the point of working in a factory or rice paddy in some polluted hell hole? I can't stand the fucking daily grind of the commute and working in front of a computer all day ... if I were in their situations for 10 minutes I'd snuff it in a no time at all.

Fucking used to be a pleasure ... as were a number of other momentary distractions ... but I look back on it ... and it's no different than drugs ... what is an orgasm but a momentary head rush? ... no wonder so many people are becoming addicted to opioids ... you have far more control and the outcome is the same ... without alimony ... LOL

-----

Moi:

Certainly way too much work for what I get out of it anymore. Boggling all the time and energy and money we've spent on women in our lives. And for what, really?

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

The Essential Reading List: Dystopian

<https://writingcooperative.com/the-essential-reading-list-dystopian-ac832df9b4d2?gi=917a95384815&source=rss----6e9c0c9fd682---4>

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Moi:

I've either read or seen the movie of maybe half of these, so it looks like I have some enjoyable homework, dystopian jester that I am.

-----

Steve:



Yeah ... I noticed that after I sent it ... many of these are historical in nature ... classics.

-----

Moi:

Several of them played key roles in shaping my dystopian mindset.

Dystopia

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dystopia>

List of Dystopian Works

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lists\\_of\\_dystopian\\_works](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lists_of_dystopian_works)

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

This Is How 18 Months of Marriage Changes You, According to a Study

<https://curiosity.com/topics/this-is-how-18-months-of-marriage-changes-you-according-to-a-study-curiosity/>

-----

Moi:

What a soul-sucking, domesticating, binding thing relationship with a woman quickly becomes. Has nothing to do with marriage. Every time I left whatever level was going on, it was as if my wings were all crimped down. The newfound freedom was always intoxicating. Thank god my dick no long runs my existence.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

Pregnant girlfriend cried and pleaded with boyfriend to stop YouTube stunt moments before shooting him dead

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2018/06/23/pregnant-girlfriend-cried-pleaded-boyfriend-stop-youtube-stunt/>

-----

Moi:

A 50-caliber bullet into a one-and-a-half-inch-thick book, are you fucking kidding me!? Jesus Christos, how stupid is that? Why the heck is she in jail, is what I don't get. Yes, it was incredibly foolish, but why is she to blame for being pressured by his need to be famous?

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

ICE Carries Out Its Largest Immigration Raid In Recent History, Arresting 146

<https://www.npr.org/2018/06/20/621810030/ice-carries-out-its-largest-immigration-raid-in-recent-history-arresting-146?sc=tw>

-----

Steve:

What they've got to do is arrest people that own the companies that hire illegal aliens, and put them in prison take away their business licenses with no chance of operating a business in the United States ever again. I bet that would squash the illegal immigration because they wouldn't have any jobs.

-----

Moi:

I worked alongside illegals most my young life. Paying low wages was the only way we could survive on the farm. And I guarantee you that no white folks would ever work that hard. Latinos do the jobs no one else wants to do, and they do them well. I'd like to see these whiny white screengrazers do even a quarter of the work for twice the wage.

-----

Steve:

The reason nobody wants those jobs is because the wages are so low, and if they stopped letting illegals work for substandard wages the wages would go up and somebody who's already here would take the job. Yes, that would require raising the price of food but it's better than paying for welfare for all these people. I'd rather have the cost of my food go up than have 15 million illegal aliens in my country.

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Moi:

You're probably the exception. I don't think most people want to pay that kind of price for their food, their clothing, their mechanical repairs, their landscaping, their housecleaning, their laundry, their butchering, their construction, their material possessions, their nights out eating, and whatever else Latinos and other minorities do.

Like I said, I'd like to see these obese, screengrazing, entitled millennials go out and do a ten-hour day of back-breaking fieldwork on a hundred-degree day. And then do it for weeks and months and years on end for their entire lives. Pay them whatever they ask, I'd wager without fear of losing, that we wouldn't even see even a quarter of the food and material things we every day take for granted wherever we go.

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Steve:

Circling around on this ... and this is in no way critical of what you did to keep your farm afloat ... I fully realize that the framework for labor in that industry is what it is ... and a single farmer can't compete without joining the bandwagon ... but what we're doing is paying refugees a substandard living wage ... as their alternative is to return to a war-torn country where they will be raped and murdered ... so we're taking advantage of them ... and in the process ... driving down the wages for that work in this country.

I keep hearing people say that Americans don't want these jobs ... the reason is that the illegal labor has driven the wage down to a level where they don't want that work. If the work paid a reasonable wage ... Americans would take the work. This is also not only a farm-landscaper-house cleaning labor pool ... they have decimated the construction industry ... where all the framers and roofers, et cetera have driven the wage down. This is because they work under the radar with no Social Security or health care or disability, et cetera. This is not only an economic issue ... it's a human rights issue.

My mind is to eliminate the illegal immigration pool of labor ... get the wages back to normal ... employ American workers in those jobs ... and solve two problems with one solution. And yes ... we'd have to pay more for our food and houses ... but the cost of the illegal immigration is more ... on many levels. And taking advantage of people who are classifying themselves as refugees ... their own definition ... by paying them substandard wages ... isn't ethical.

Just my 2 cents.

-----

Moi:

Trouble is, the barbarians are already in the gates. Can't ship them all back.

-----

Steve:

Actually ... we could ... but we don't have the political will to do so ... we have an immigration problem that needs to be solved ... I don't know how to secure the border ... but I do know that if you took away their jobs ... and put any employer who hires them in prison .... And slapped them with a lifetime restriction against having a business license ... they wouldn't come here anymore ... no point in coming here is you can't get a job.

-----

Moi:

Probably better odds getting a crew back from Mars alive.

The sounds of separation – how 8 minutes of audio changed the immigration debate  
<https://www.cnn.com/2018/06/22/politics/donald-trump-pro-publica-sound/index.html>

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Steve:

Would they prefer electrified razor wire fencing?

-----

Moi:

Reminds me of back when I did brandings with cowboy friends when I ran the newspaper in Waterford in the circa 1980 zone. The cows and calves bawling away when they were separated was quite the scene. Pretty horrific experience to get roped, wrestled down, tied up, inoculated, and castrated. Tractor-driving

through peaches and walnuts was all I knew up until then, so working with livestock was quite the eye-opener.

-----

Steve:

Castration! ... now there's an idea ... that would reduce the explosion of offspring from the illegals ... and be one hell of a deterrence.

-----

Moi:

Who knows what the fascists will come up with before it's over.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Why The American Dream No Longer Includes Home Ownership

[https://m.huffpost.com/us/entry/us\\_5b2c5736e4b00295f15ae32a](https://m.huffpost.com/us/entry/us_5b2c5736e4b00295f15ae32a)

-----

Moi:

No way I could have ever bought a house as transient as I've been all my life. I've never been good at owing money and paying interest, so rent has always been much easier on the state of mind. Being a homeowner has worked out for you because you've stayed with one job, and as you've pointed out, it's cheaper than rent in the Bay Area. But for young people just getting started, it may never make sense unless they really lock into something well-paying and secure for a long haul. And that is likely increasingly doubtful for the majority.

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Steve:

The young are going to retire the concept of home ownership.

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Moi:

And retirement, too, methinks. And perhaps a variety of other things before their little window of time is done.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

Vegans Suck at Science. Here's The Proof.

<https://www.t-nation.com/diet-fat-loss/vegans-suck-at-science-heres-the-proof?0vH>

-----

Moi:

I'm a big believer in not worrying about food past a certain point. I eat and drink pretty much anything, and seem to have survived. Neither vegetarianism or veganism has ever held any appeal. Both clans are awash in magical thinking and countless other forms of silliness.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

“I am not defined by this.” NASA astronaut Jeanette Epps talks about being pulled from the ISS mission  
<https://qz.com/1312023/nasa-astronaut-jeanette-epps-talks-about-being-pulled-from-the-iss-mission/>

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Steve:

I can shed some light on this for you in that I can guarantee that she was not pulled from the mission because she was African-American, or because she was a woman. In fact, in the federal government, and NASA in particular, affirmative action is so strong that if anything it's the opposite. White males are discriminated against at my work in spades. If you are a black female, you are the cream of the crop. The only demographic that is higher is Veterans. You are at the back of the line if you're a white male, so I can guarantee you that she was not pulled for the reasons that are speculated. If anything, it puts her at the front of the line for any job within the federal government.

-----

Moi:

I hear you. That's kind of what I was already figuring. Something else was going on, but what, we'll probably never know.

-----

Steve:

The problem I have with the Left is that not only are they the primary drivers for racism ... sexism ... and every other “ism” ... essentially against anything white or Male ... or old ... oh yeah ... I forgot age-ism ... they are completely ignorant of their own prejudice ... they've injected into our legal and fiscal policies ... and they automatically label anything that effects any other demographic as biased against them ... when there could be perfectly viable reasons to the contrary.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Young Americans are waking up to their grim financial future  
<http://www.latimes.com/business/la-fi-young-american-finances-20180622-story.html>

-----

Moi:

I suspect retirement will not even be a possibility at some point in the not-too-distant future. Young people are fucked. If we think suicide stats are bad now, just wait.

-----

Steve:

Distant Future? ... given what I'm finding out in the last few days regarding my retirement benefits and job I don't see retirement as a possibility for me in my lifetime.

-----

Moi:

Certainly not in any kind of luxurious, stress-free lifestyle.

-----

Steve:

Our culture if fueled by stress ... I'm surprised it's not a commodity sold on the New York Stock Exchange.

-----

Moi:

We are definitely one fucked-up culture.

-----

Steve:

Why do you think coffee has been legal all these years, and pot illegal? My theory is always been that it's simply because they think it would lower productivity, which it probably would. They don't want a bunch of people laying around half asleep on the couch eating boxes of Cocoa Puffs. They want you to be all wound up and stressed out and jittery, so that you keep moving and cranking and making the money until the day you die.

-----

Moi:

Exactly so. Anything that wires up or numbs down is good. Anything that relaxes or awakens is bad.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an inquiry I sent:

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Moi:

So, what's the new job?

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Steve:

Too overworked and stressed. Today I got up at 5 a.m., and am just getting home.

-----

Moi:

Alas, that's what I was afraid was happening. Are you still able to stay home some daze?

-----

Steve:

There's far worse shit that I've recently found out ... Trump is trying to dismantle Federal employee pensions ... health care ... many other really bad things ... so I've worked my entire life ... for them ... and they're going to take away what they've promised us all those years.

This is really bad.

Blurry eyes ... some daze?

-----

Moi:

The one-percenters have lost sight of everything that our society needs to function smoothly. Their greed knows no bounds, and Trump is the Trojan Horse leading the charge to dismantle the middle class.

-----

Steve:

I'm dead serious about this. I went to a union meeting yesterday and there were four pages of shit that's being shoved through by the Trump Administration. They are essentially taking away what we have worked for 30 or 40 years, at the very end of our careers. which is just not right. This is going to be catastrophic. It means that basically we won't be able to survive on our pensions because they're not going to give us any cost of living increases. Which means in 10 or 20 years, it will be worth half what it was when we retired. They're going to make us pay so much for our health benefits we won't be able to afford them.

-----

Moi:

I hear you, I get it. The future is going to be a very fucked up piece of work. The security net that we grew up believing would be there when our generation retired is being ripped to shreds. The infrastructure our society takes for granted is falling into disrepair in every way. Imagine the Charles Dickens world all these kids running around in the playgrounds will have to endure. Pretty amazing to watch it unravel so quickly.

-----

Steve:

There's more on top of this ... it was mind boggling ... they're also targeting Social Security, Medicare, and disability payments. On top of the above, they're also cutting back medical leave and vacation days, as well as holidays, to make it miserable to work for the government.

-----

Moi:

The Deplorables are in charge.

So what's the new job you've taken on? And are you still able to stay home some days?

-----

Steve:

More bad news today ... I'll be lucky if they don't fire all NASA employees at my center ... they're dismantling the entire federal government.

-----

Moi:

Jesus Christos, what a cluster Trump and his deplorables have made of things. I'm still convinced he's working for the Russians and Chinese to bring down our little corner of the world. The Moscovian Candidate, indeed.

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Steve:

He's going to destroy the federal government in ways that are incomprehensible. In addition to destroying our international relationships, the United States will be left in tattered shambles by the time he gets out. We'll be lucky if we don't get into a major war. He's the biggest security threat to this country we've ever seen.

-----

Moi:

What an astounding slice of history we are getting to witness. New Rome ripped and shredded at every seam. Boggling.

-----

Steve:

Fucking nuke it all and get it over with ... at least I'd finally be at rest ... insomnia is killing me.

-----

Moi:



Pretty rough seeing everything you've worked so hard for, get ripped to shreds by the megalomania of a moron. The face of deplorabilia personified.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on a couple articles he sent:

Delivering Government Solutions in the 21st Century

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Government-Reform-and-Reorg-Plan.pdf>

What's inside Trump's major government overhaul

<https://www.federaltimes.com/management/2018/06/21/whats-inside-trumps-major-government-overhaul/>

-----

Moi:

Yowza, definitely a new order is in the work. What will November think? Curious that I'm not seeing anything about it on my Google News feed. Found it in a search, but the big media outfits seem surprisingly mum, so far. Will be interesting to watch the weekend unfold.

-----

Steve:

It's a massive reorganization of the government ... they must be stupid if they don't realize that.

-----

Moi:

It will sound good to all the anti-government folks who want things trimmed down. The ones who don't care about anything to do with science, education, healthcare, social services, and the like.

-----

Steve:

Until they want those services. These people ranting and raving and cheering at Trump rallies don't realize that all of their services are going to be cut off. They are not going to have any health care or social security, and there's no way in hell he can bring their jobs back like he's probably saying. It's simply impossible. All this really amounts to is a massive transfer of wealth to people who are already obscenely rich. They've cut the taxes on the wealthy, and then make up for it by cutting the services on the poor. It's obscene.

-----

Moi:

Boggling, indeed. What trip to watch everything we've taken for granted evaporate so quickly. And the irony is, as you say, that his deplorables still have no friggin' clue what they've unleashed upon their little worlds.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

Dear Europe, if you want stop Trump, sanction his companies

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/jun/22/europe-trump-sanction-companies>

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Moi:

You mean they aren't already!?

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

With three words, President Trump fortifies a flawed perception about NASA

"We're reopening NASA," president says at a campaign rally.

<https://arstechnica.com/science/2018/06/trump-were-reopening-nasa-agency-has-fought-that-misconception-for-years/>

Steve:

Just had my performance review with my supervisor ... 5th or 6th year in a row ... maybe 7 ... can't remember ... for Substantially Exceeds Rating ... highest you can get ... here's his write up in my review:

"Steve Hunt took on one the most complex tasks associated with cloud computing that exists today in enterprise class computing. Specifically, he was tasked with designing and developing an Agency-level, Enterprise Grade cloud Accreditation and Authorization approach that addresses both IaaS and SaaS. He has worked tirelessly on this for several years, and during this performance period, he completed the effort. It was a herculean-level undertaking, supported by a team led by Steve, with a deliverable that is arguably still ahead of its time, making it difficult to appreciate.

There were many constraints associated with the effort, including changing requirements, changing NASA tools sets, evolving FedRAMP guidance, and a vendor community that does not yet fully understand security in the cloud age. Despite all this, Steve persevered and developed an elegant solution, one for which the need is just being realized outside of EMCC. His contribution via this deliverable is one of the most significant EMCC achievements to date.

Further, Steve has operated in his role as the EMCC Cloud Security Compliance Lead with arguably the most comprehensive knowledge of the FedRAMP program that exists as part of the FedRAMP Program, itself. He regularly advised both the FedRAMP PMO on improvements to FedRAMP process. He also frequently advised vendors with cloud services of interest to NASA on how to align with the FedRAMP requirements to ensure NASA could meet its FedRAMP obligations. Throughout this period, Steve also provided FedRAMP guidance to large NASA projects, such as the Office 365 Implementation team. His associates at IV&V view Steve as the authority on NASA cloud computing security compliance and frequently request his advice when supporting NASA using the very FedRAMP security assessment guidance developed by Steve and his team. From an effort perspective, Steve always went above and beyond what most NASA employees would do to ensure NASA's requirements are met. He leveraged his network of cloud security experts across NASA for guidance, and he earned the respect of the NASA's

current Senior Agency Information Security Official after briefing him on the then in-development Cloud A&A approach. As just one way to recognize his contributions, Steve was nominated by at least two parties within NASA (ARC Code IQ as Steve directly supported) for a major FedRAMP Agency award.

All in all, Steve's contributions to the Agency EMCC team, both in previous years, and certainly this year, are extremely significant."

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Moi:

Nice to be recognized with such articulation. Congrats, again. Hopefully, NASA won't be closed down anytime ever.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on a series of articles I sent:

We're Not Better Than This. But We Can Try to Be

<https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2018/06/child-separations-we-are-all-complicit.html>

You Listened to Children Crying at the Border. Sheriffs Listened to Kirsten Nielsen.

[https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/children-crying-border-sheriffs-kirstjen-nielsen\\_us\\_5b2820a0e4b0f0b9e9a40eba](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/children-crying-border-sheriffs-kirstjen-nielsen_us_5b2820a0e4b0f0b9e9a40eba)

Why are so many migrants crossing the U.S. border? It often starts with an escape from violence in Central America

<https://www.nbcnews.com/storyline/immigration-border-crisis/central-america-s-violence-turmoil-keeps-driving-families-u-s-n884956>

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Steve:

I have no problem whatsoever with what they're doing at the border I'm so sick and tired of the left manipulating people's feelings and try to vilify everybody on the right, and the right doing the same to the left. All we're trying to do is keep people from coming across the border illegally, and they're turning us into monsters for doing so. I wish all these people had to house and take care of 50 of these people in their backyard, so that they would see what it's like for us taxpayers to have to pay for.

-----

Moi:

For me it's less about what they're doing than how they're doing it. What a horror story so many places are down south of us, that so many are desperate enough to go through such a journey with so little possibility of entering our ironic Shangri-La.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

Former astronaut doubts that NASA or SpaceX will make it to Mars with their shiny new rockets  
<http://bgr.com/2018/06/19/mars-mission-chris-hadfield-astronaut-nasa-spacex/>

-----  
Steve:

Making it there isn't the hard part ... it's making it there alive ... and getting back.

-----  
Moi:

Every aspect is so friggin' absurd that it's boggling that anyone is even contemplating it seriously. Can't even imagine being cooped up with a handful of people in a tin can for that long. Just a suicide mission from the get-go.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

Why We Need To Talk About Burnout In The Tech Industry  
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/laurencebradford/2018/06/19/why-we-need-to-talk-about-burnout-in-the-tech-industry/#7f0d87031406>

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Moi:

Trouble is, once someone's burnt out, I'm doubtful there's really any getting back to any meaningful balance. I've never lasted long at any place I've worked, and in the few times I did go back, I was quickly faced with the reality of why I left in the first place.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

One-third of adults in U.S. taking drugs that may cause depression, study finds  
<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation-now/2018/06/13/prescription-drugs-may-cause-depression/697354002/>

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Steve:

That's depressing ... LOL

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Moi:

I've long suspected that some friends of mine who take piles of prescriptions every day would do well to do the cold turkey for a bit to see what happens.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

For sale: (1) California ghost town

<https://boingboing.net/2018/06/11/for-sale-1-california-ghost.html>

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Steve:

That's the cost of a one-bedroom condo in the bay area.

-----

Moi:

Good spread for anyone wanting to play it out in hermit mode. Some Silicon Valley type will probably buy it on a lark.

-----

Steve:

New location for Burning Man 2

-----

Moi:

If Kaliforny would allow it. I think Nevada is probably a bit more lenient about such things.

-----

Moi:

A follow-up a few months later on what happened with the property:

Historic California ghost town sells for \$1.4M on Friday the 13th

[www.kcra.com/article/historic-california-ghost-town-sells-for-dollar14m-on-friday-the-13th/22182076](http://www.kcra.com/article/historic-california-ghost-town-sells-for-dollar14m-on-friday-the-13th/22182076)

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Is the Global Economy Just a Giant Debt Scam? Here's What the Financial Elite Doesn't Want You to Know

<https://www.alternet.org/global-economy-just-giant-debt-scam-heres-what-financial-elite-doesnt-want-you-know>

-----

Moi:

Have never been much of one for owing anybody anything, so It's all well beyond my range of relevance. Our kind is just one big clusterfuck. One of these daze I will be departing for good, and you can put your money down that I won't be even glancing back.

-----  
Steve:

This guy was essentially calling out the elephant in the room and stating that the entire economic system is a big house of cards it's going to come Crashing Down and that the financial issues that Greece was having we're not specific to Greece but more systemic to the global economy and it's just a matter of time.

-----  
Moi:

I understood what he is saying, and what I'm saying is what goes up must come down – house of cards and dominos are the standard metaphors – and oh well and so it goes. Not something I'm losing sleep over. I'll stick around for as long as its tolerable, and then sayonara cruel world.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

DMT: The Spirit Molecule  
<https://youtu.be/LtT6Xkk-kzk>

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Moi:

Don't think I've heard of DMT, bur I've done everything else I could get my hands on times beyond counting. As far as I'm concerned, anything and everything should be available to anyone who is on an exploratory journey.

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Steve:

From what I've read, I don't think there are significant risks in terms of people becoming addicted to things like hallucinogens. They simply don't lend themselves to that type of repetitive use. The issues we have in our culture have more to do with things like cocaine and meth and opioids, which are ravaging entire communities. I don't know what the answer is, but it's terrible to see what things like methamphetamines do to people. I feel somewhat like you, but the problem is that communities go broke trying to take care of these people.

-----  
Moi:

The addicts aren't the people I'm talking about. The addictive mind will find one thing or another to latch onto. Meth is just one of the current fads. It was crack cocaine only a decade or so ago, and opium dens were the craze long before we showed up for our little window of time. Food, alcohol, religion, politics, work, you name it, there will always be minds that do the lemming thing. It takes a lot of band-aides, ruins a lot of people who are connected to them, but there is really no solution to it.

In case you haven't seen it, this is a fun little website:

The Art of Manliness

<https://www.artofmanliness.com/category/a-mans-life/>

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

The risk of 'contagion' after suicides is real

<https://www.cnn.com/2018/06/09/health/suicide-contagion-explainer/index.html>

Suicide Rates in The US Are Increasing at a Staggering Rate, And No Group Is Protected

<https://www.sciencealert.com/the-cdc-just-released-staggering-new-data-on-suicides-in-the-us-2018>

Too Many Men Are Dying By Suicide

[https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/opinion-eil-men-suicide\\_us\\_5b1b0aeb4b09d7a3d727142](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/opinion-eil-men-suicide_us_5b1b0aeb4b09d7a3d727142)

-----

Steve:

The Media promotes contagion in every volatile situation ... 90% of these mass shootings would never have happened otherwise.

-----

Moi:

They've probably set the stage for most the wackiness that this world endures. Trump would never have made it to the White House without all the free press he was given.

-----

Steve:

Look at the ratio between male and female suicides in the fourth paragraph. It's 3 and 1/2 to 4 times as high as it is for women.

-----

Moi:

Probably because we're less likely to put up with bullshit past a certain point, and better at getting it done once we make the decision.

-----

Steve:

Driven to it by women to begin with.

-----

Moi:

Speaking of women, what's happening with the one up in Portland?

-----

Steve:

She was here last week ... enjoyed the company ... but am usually left fatigued ... takes a couple days to recover.

-----

Moi:

Must be a big drain when she has several months of emotion to unleash in such a quick burst.

-----

Steve:

Contagion in action.

After Celebrity Deaths, Suicide Hotline Calls Jump 25%

[https://www.wsj.com/articles/after-celebrity-deaths-suicide-hotline-calls-jump-25-1528633686?mod=rss\\_newyork\\_main](https://www.wsj.com/articles/after-celebrity-deaths-suicide-hotline-calls-jump-25-1528633686?mod=rss_newyork_main)

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

US suicide rates increased more than 25% since 1999, CDC says

<https://www.cnn.com/2018/06/07/health/suicide-report-cdc/index.html>

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Steve:

Democrats every one ... can't blame them.

-----

Moi:

The end of entitlement is a scary thing.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Blue Mind: Why Being Around Water is So Good for Our Psyches

<https://experiencelife.com/article/blue-mind/>

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Moi:



Water has always drawn me: Oceans, rivers, lakes, canals, swimming pools. Had the canal across the road when I was a kid. Spend time doing what I call Aqua Chi almost every day at my club. It is most definitely a great mind-body meditation.

-----  
Steve:

Me, too. I absolutely love the beach and the ocean, which is why I was a windsurfer hardcore for 15 years. It literally broke my heart and my soul to have to stop. Took me about 10 years to get over it. I was literally depressed because I couldn't windsurf anymore.

-----  
Moi:

I did some sailing, but it always seemed to me that windsurfing took wind and water to a whole different level.

-----  
Steve:

It makes you one with both ... you literally lose all sense of self and consciousness, and are completely immersed and connected with nature in a way I've never experienced with any other activity ... like one continuous orgasm for hours.

-----  
Moi:

That's how it looks from the shore. Alas that I missed my youthful window of opportunity.

-----  
Steve:

It hurt more to let go of windsurfing than it did to divorce my wife ... I'll take Mother Nature over a mind-fucking woman any day of the week.

-----  
Moi:

And motorcycles, too.

They're more reliable ... as are many things ... a good dog is more loyal, loving, and faithful.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

The Truth About Saturated Fat  
<https://www.t-nation.com/diet-fat-loss/truth-about-saturated-fat>

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Moi:

Stick with things nature created, foods that we evolved eating. Avoid packaged stuff, and anything that has more syllables than an agile tongue easily bears.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

Three Reasons the Anti-Gun Crowd Remains Quiet About the Oklahoma Restaurant Shooting  
[https://www.redstate.com/kimberly\\_ross/2018/05/27/three-reasons-anti-gun-quiet-oklahoma/](https://www.redstate.com/kimberly_ross/2018/05/27/three-reasons-anti-gun-quiet-oklahoma/)

-----  
Moi:

True, true, but how to minority report the mentally ill?

Minority Report  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minority\\_Report\\_\(film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minority_Report_(film))

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

PC police won't let us use these words anymore  
[https://nypost.com/2018/05/26/pc-police-wont-let-us-use-these-words-anymore/?utm\\_campaign=partnerfeed&utm\\_medium=syndicated&utm\\_source=flipboard](https://nypost.com/2018/05/26/pc-police-wont-let-us-use-these-words-anymore/?utm_campaign=partnerfeed&utm_medium=syndicated&utm_source=flipboard)

-----  
Moi:

My next t-shirt: Fuck Your Political Correctness

political correctness |pə'lidəkəl kə'rek(t)nəs|  
(also political correctitude)

noun

the avoidance, often considered as taken to extremes, of forms of expression or action that are perceived to exclude, marginalize, or insult groups of people who are socially disadvantaged or discriminated against.

Wikipedia: Political Correctness  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Political\\_correctness](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Political_correctness)

Google Search: Political Correctness  
<https://www.google.com/search?client=safari&rls=en&q=political+correctness&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8>

Google Images: Fuck Political Correctness  
<https://www.google.com/search?q=fuck+political+correctness&client=safari&rls=en&source=lnms&tbm>

=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwjrkQazqLzJAhWkIYgKHeiPBHgQ\_AUIBygB&biw=1035&bih=716#imgr  
c=WO2NuhtcmAVXDM%3A

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

A century on, why are we forgetting the deaths of 100 million

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/may/25/spanish-flu-pandemic-1918-forgetting-100-million-deaths>

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Moi:

Rest assured that Mother Nature will not rest until she finds a way to destroy us all.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

Mike Meru Has \$1 Million in Student Loans. How Did That Happen?

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/mike-meru-has-1-million-in-student-loans-how-did-that-happen-1527252975>

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Steve:

“May” never pay back? ... they “will absolutely” never pay back. And the aggregate outstanding Student Loan debt right now is over a Trillion and growing ... and most of that was accelerated by bogus for profit colleges ... like the one my ex girlfriend worked for ... I heard what was going on and what a scam it was directly from her ... one reason why I couldn’t stomach being with her anymore.

That amount of debt ... plus ... the Trillions in credit card debt in this country ... that will never be paid back ... and will buckle the economy when everyone starts to default on it ... will dwarf what triggered the last recession ... AND ... there are not more tricks in the back of the Feds to fix it this time. They borrowed 6 Trillion last time ... that is still owed ... and they can’t lower rates anymore than they have for the last decade ... which has trashed everyone’s retirement accounts.

So the house of cards is piled high ... and the foundation is crumbling ... no one seems to be aware of just how fucked we are ... it’s just a matter of time ... everyone seems to think the economy is going well because the stock market went up last year ... but that will all blow up in smoke when this hits the fan.

I give it another few years at most ... as soon as a democrat gets in office everyone will panic ... and you can kiss the economy good bye.

-----

Moi:

Well, I figure Trump's going to be in there another four, so no worries about the Dems until 2024, maybe more if they don't get their act together.

Hopefully, by the time it all crashes and burns, you'll be retired and fortified up in Eugene for whatever duration you're fated to endure.

-----  
Steve:

If it gets really bad what will happen is all the money will get devalued like it has in Brazil and Venezuela and places like that so it doesn't matter how much money you have saved in your bank account it'll all be worth was it will get to the point where it'll cost \$1,000 for a loaf of bread.

-----  
Moi:

That's why I'm diversified in gold and silver and guns and other such things. Got no debt, a van, and plenty of camping gear, too.

And a helium tank if it gets beyond all repair.

-----  
Steve:

When the financial system starts to collapse I'll log on to my computer immediately and take my entire savings and apply to my house payment the money will be worthless and the only thing of any value is paying off my mortgage so that I have the house paid off once that's done all I need is food and the ability to pay property taxes.

-----  
Moi:

At this point, I'd have Mom to worry about, but other than that, we're both free and clear, and able to endure far more than anyone with a wife and children.

Meanwhile, off to the gym ... Staying in shape for Armageddon.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

James Packer looks cheery as he boards super yacht with friends in Cabo San Lucas ... after checking himself out of \$35,000-a-week psychiatric hospital following mental breakdown  
<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/tvshowbiz/article-5825979/James-Packer-boards-giant-yacht-friends-Cabo-San-Lucas.html>

-----  
Steve:

I'm sorry and I don't mean to sound callous but I have a problem with empathizing with people who are billionaires who have issues with dealing with life ... they should try dealing with life from the perspective of somebody who's on the border of being homeless.

-----

Moi:

Thirty-five grand a week!?! Jesus Christos, just go out and take a few long walks by yourself out on a mountain trail without an iPod crammed in your ear. Kriminies, what a wacko friggin' world.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

CNN's Anthony Bourdain dead at 61

<https://a.msn.com/r/2/AAyo1er?m=en-us&a=1>

Heroin, depression, and getting sober: Anthony Bourdain was always open about battling demons

<https://www.yahoo.com/entertainment/heroin-depression-getting-sober-anthony-bourdain-always-open-battling-demons-171835934.html>

A Community Organizer on How Anthony Bourdain Brought His Globe-Trotting Curiosity to an Overlooked Corner of America

[time.com/5306228/anthony-bourdain-curiosity-queens/](http://time.com/5306228/anthony-bourdain-curiosity-queens/)

Anthony Bourdain shone a different light on the Middle East

<https://www.cnn.com/2018/06/08/world/anthony-bourdain-middle-east-intl/index.html>

Anthony Bourdain on New Jersey and why his show stands out in one of his last interviews

<https://www.northjersey.com/story/life/food/2018/06/08/anthony-bourdain-talks-new-jersey-one-his-last-interviews/684721002/>

Twitter reacts to the death of Anthony Bourdain

<https://www.northjersey.com/story/entertainment/dining/2018/06/08/twitter-reacts-death-anthony-bourdain/684015002/>

Chef Edward Lee: Bourdain changed my life

<https://www.cnn.com/2018/06/08/opinions/how-anthony-bourdain-changed-me-edward-lee-opinion/index.html>

Our 15 Favorite Episodes of Anthony Bourdain's TV Shows

[www.vulture.com/2018/06/anthony-bourdain-best-tv-episodes.html](http://www.vulture.com/2018/06/anthony-bourdain-best-tv-episodes.html)

Anthony Bourdain, CNN host and celebrity chef, hanged himself with bathrobe belt, prosecutors say  
[www.foxnews.com/entertainment/2018/06/09/anthony-bourdain-cnn-host-and-celebrity-chef-hanged-himself-with-bathrobe-belt.html](http://www.foxnews.com/entertainment/2018/06/09/anthony-bourdain-cnn-host-and-celebrity-chef-hanged-himself-with-bathrobe-belt.html)

Anthony Bourdain was 'regularly suicidal' after end of first marriage

<https://pagesix.com/2018/06/09/anthony-bourdain-was-regularly-suicidal-after-end-of-first-marriage/>

The troubling signs leading up to Anthony Bourdain's suicide

<https://pagesix.com/2018/06/09/the-troubling-signs-leading-up-to-anthony-bourdains-suicide/>

The restaurant industry grapples with demons of addiction, mental illness

<https://www.cnn.com/2018/06/24/health/chefs-mental-health-substance-abuse/index.html>

-----

Moi:

Have never really watched the show except for a few glimpses and the occasional headline, but I think a recent viewing said to me this guy isn't looking healthy. Way too skinny, way too many tats, something's off.

-----

Steve:

His show was excellent ... but he committed suicide ... odd ... had everything going for him ... or so it seemed.

-----

Moi:

I think the drive it takes for fame and fortune and power is often energized by a lot of well-disguised demons.

-----

Steve:

He has a very interesting life story ... commendable in that regard ... he started out as a junkie in the bowels of NYC's restaurant business ... wrote a best seller about it ... and his life changed ... I think he's been carrying that baggage his entire life ... and the tide may have overcome him in the end.

-----

Moi:

From the photo posted in the article, I'd say that he was still very much into drugs. May even have been an accidental overdose. Heroin can be tricky stuff.

-----

Steve:

It's possible he had some form of cancer or something ... and checked out ... I know I would ... all the money in the world can't save you in the end ... only make you more comfortable ... beats dying in a cardboard box on the streets of Detroit.

-----

Moi:

Given the media's ability to feed our voracious curiosity, I'm sure we'll know more about his innermost reality in a very few days. Sounds like he was awash in intensity his entire life.

-----  
Steve:

He hung himself with the bathrobe belt ... from a posh hotel in France ... a metaphor for feeling suffocated by the grandiosity of what he had built.

-----  
Moi:

Alas that he'll never read all the fine things people are writing about his legacy. From Proximo in the movie *Gladiator*: We are nothing but dust and shadows. Dust and shadows!

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on a link he sent:

Amazon: The Silencing: How the Left is Killing Free Speech  
[https://www.amazon.com/Silencing-Left-Killing-Free-Speech/dp/1621573702#productDescription\\_secondary\\_view\\_div\\_1528572314483](https://www.amazon.com/Silencing-Left-Killing-Free-Speech/dp/1621573702#productDescription_secondary_view_div_1528572314483)

-----  
Moi:

The Democrats are likely in for a long, cold power outage.

A couple of my ditties on ethics that I have likely passed your direction before: "Chances are your nose looks best on your own face" and "Ethics is the luxury of a full belly and a safe harbor."

-----  
Steve:

Yep ... one of my favorite ... and I believe insightful movies ... expressed as a comedy ... is *Trading Places* ... with Eddie Murphy and Dan Aykroyd ... position in life influences one's politics ... I've seen many of my liberal friends ... and family ... turn into conservatives for this reason ... as well as others.

-----  
Moi:

The permutations of greed are relatively predictable.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

Romney predicts 4 more years for Trump  
<https://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2018/06/07/us/politics/ap-us-romney-trump.html>

-----  
Moi:

Much to the dismay of all the anit-Trumpers in my zone, I've been saying that since the first month he took office. Rome is falling to mob rule, and he's the Caesar they've been longing for.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

Curiosity Rover Finds Ancient 'Building Blocks for Life' on Mars  
<https://www.space.com/40819-mars-methane-organics-curiosity-rover.html>

-----  
Moi:

But what about filling potholes here on Earth?

-----  
Steve:

High Tech Legos.

-----  
Moi:

My guess is there are lots and lots of building blocks out there, but so what? It might mean something if we hadn't destroyed so much of our own world. What a bankrupt species we are.

-----  
Steve:

Like looking at new cars ... while not maintaining the one you have ... LOL

-----  
Moi:

Exactly so. Irony and paradox rule.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

Border arrests exceed 50,000 for third month in a row  
[https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/border-arrests-exceed-50000-for-third-month-in-a-row/2018/06/06/db6f15a6-680b-11e8-bea7-c8eb28bc52b1\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.06d535f3625f](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/border-arrests-exceed-50000-for-third-month-in-a-row/2018/06/06/db6f15a6-680b-11e8-bea7-c8eb28bc52b1_story.html?utm_term=.06d535f3625f)

-----  
Steve:



- 1) Immigration is an issue I agree with Trump on.
- 2) Wish he could round up all the 15 million illegals already here and send them back.
- 3) Mine fields would be cheaper than a wall.

-----  
Moi:

Who knows what he'll do before he's done. Forget the wall and mines. I'd put two army groups down there and call border patrol a training exercise, with occasional sorties against any cartels that dared pop their heads up.

My issue with Trump is entirely about him being a complete and utter moron and degenerate. Toxic to the nth degrees. I have absolutely no respect for him either as a man or a human being.

-----  
Steve:

Yes ... it's unfortunate ... cuz he's accurately identified a number of real issues ... but his ability to mitigate them is flawed.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

Man Sues CVS For Telling Wife He Had Viagra Prescription  
[https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/cvs-michael-feinberg-viagra\\_us\\_5b155dcee4b02143b7cecbd0](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/cvs-michael-feinberg-viagra_us_5b155dcee4b02143b7cecbd0)

-----  
Steve:

All I can say is if his wife finding out that he uses Viagra causes a rift in their marriage then the marriage is pretty flimsy to begin with ... she should be happy that the guy is willing to put any kind of effort into getting his dick up so he can make her happy.

-----  
Moi:

Assuming he was using it for her benefit. The article is a little incomplete.

-----  
Steve:

Yeah ... I suppose if he hadn't fucked her in 3 years ... the context would be totally different.

-----  
Moi:

Even if I were still at my peak, I can't imagine having sex with most the women that are out there anymore. So much fat, and most of them, sadly, just plain ugly from the get-go. Even the strongest potions wouldn't get a rise out of me anymore. With the eye I have now, I'd probably be celibate if I was starting over. It's like friggin' Halloween every day anymore.

-----

Steve:

Hence the robot sex workets ... LOL

-----

Moi:

Exactly so. Very healthy ... for men ... who just want to get their rocks off with a "shut-the-fuck-up" fantasy girl. Robots for women will have to be emotionalized with some sort of "I-love-you-honey" Chatty Cathy pull-string.

-----

Steve:

Yeah ... but you can't robotize power and wealth ... the woman's power will be diminished.

-----

Moi:

Getting cast into the nonessential pile will be like burka-izing without the burka.

-----

Steve:

Uber and sex robot companies will collaborate to form order from your phone services ... rent by the hour not buy.

-----

Moi:

It's probably already happening under the radar, at least with some of those life-size manikins.

-----

Steve:

With all the plastic surgery and fake parts women install these days ... the only difference between them and a robot ... is the brain ... and you don't need that for purely sexual purposes.

-----

Moi:

And without the risk of the welfare department tapping into your paycheck for child support. What's not mentally healthy about that? And sleep alone, too. Definitely win-win for men.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

NASA's priorities appear to be out of whack with what the public wants  
<https://arstechnica.com/science/2018/06/nasas-priorities-appear-to-be-out-of-whack-with-what-the-public-wants/>

-----

Steve:

Seems to indicate the Public is more intelligent than I used to think ... my core priorities would be to simply study the Cosmos for fundamental knowledge regarding What and Why is out there ... and apply any science or knowledge we gain to benefit life on Earth ... i.e., Climate Change and other faucets of what comes under the "Earth Sciences" umbrella. Seems to make sense to me to try to preserve this planet as a first priority ... over trying to populate others.

-----

Moi:

Makes sense to me. Star Wars, Star Trek, and all things Asimov and Heinlein are fun on paper and the big screen, but the reality of physics and biology have alternative facts in store.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

Claims about social benefits of sex robots greatly overstated, say experts  
<https://www.theguardian.com/science/2018/jun/04/claims-about-social-benefits-of-sex-robots-greatly-overstated-say-experts>

-----

Steve:

1. I absolutely believe this will be the best thing since sliced bread ... and will free men from the inherent manipulations of women who use sex to enslave men.
2. This article is written by women who feel threatened by that. Need I say more.

-----

Moi:

Define health benefits.

-----

Steve:

Anything that alleviates the grating monotonous drone of a women's voice when she obsessively badgers a man into near suicidal desires ... that doesn't contain alcohol, barbiturates, or opiates.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

A Second American Civil War?

<http://robertreich.org/post/174535949180?curator=MediaREDEF>

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Moi:

Keep an eye out for brown shirts goose-stepping down dark alleys.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth response to an invitation from Ninos David to travel with him for a month to Bangkok or Dubai or Taipei in November:

Taipei Taoyuan Airport Guide & Reviews

<https://www.sleepinginairports.net/asia/taipei.htm>

EVA Air America

<https://www.evaair.com/en-us/index.html#>

Yo, Ninos,

Been thinking quite a bit about your invitation to wander across the world, and I think I'm going to have to decline. Along with not wanting to leave Mom and Studio 101 unattended for that length of time, I have too many physical issues going on, especially in the upper back and neck. No way could I easily handle long flights, strange beds, and who-knows-what sundry unknowns. My sense of adventure at this stage of the game is not strong enough to override all the pain and bother that this sort of road trip would inflict. Would like to support your wanting to travel internationally one last time, but I'm just not enthusiastic about adding any more suffering to my existence than the day-to-day road ahead already has in store. Hope you can find someone else, or chance going it alone.

Hanging at the BAC in the lobby on the east side of the pool if you're around and about.

Ciao, ciao,

M

-----

Ninos:

Wow! That essay can win a literary award ... Anyway, thank you for your realistic thought and I understand your concerns .... For me, every day my concerns are intensified ... That is why I have not been moving around .... Age, health issues, and the world situation have had dramatic impact on all of us .... Let us see what we can do within California.

-----

Moi:

Alas that languid day trips are about all either of us can manage easily anymore.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

7 Ways Being Alone Changes Your Brain, According To Science

<https://www.bustle.com/p/7-ways-being-alone-changes-your-brain-according-to-science-9128661>

-----

Moi:

Have always been what I've come to call a "sociable loner." Can't be around people all the time, but am not a hermit, either. Generally, I think I've struck a pretty fair balance in both work and play in this existence.

\* \* \* \*

This Timeline Shows The Entire History of The Universe, And Where It's Headed

<https://www.sciencealert.com/timeline-shows-the-entire-history-of-the-universe-and-how-it-ends>

Le Fichier Circulaire de Michaël

<https://www.facebook.com/LeFichierCirculaireDeMichael/photos/a.334374433348372.79379.316880768431072/1633777263408076/?type=3&theater>

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David:

Axial tilt reversal is, of course, absolute nonsense. The "sciencealert" source is not credible.

-----

Moi:

Big picture, Dave, big picture.

-----

David:

Big nonsense, you mean. You know what axial tilt is, don't you? The earth spins, the center of that spin can be described as its axis. In the case of planet earth, in comparison to the planet's orbit and the orbit's relationship to the sun, this spin-axis has an angle of 23.5 degrees. Evidence strongly suggests that this tilt can change a bit over time, between about 22 and 24.5 degrees. But it doesn't reverse. Never has, never will. The relationship of this axis to the sun does "reverse", that happens every year. Its why we have seasons. The big picture here is that the authors of this 'meme' are completely clueless. They don't know what they're talking about. Only a disreputable site like "sciencealert" (known for its click-bait nonsense) would publish it. There's absolutely no content of any significance here. You link a bunch of stuff

together and imply some cosmic significance to it. Pseudo-science. The dumbing down of humanity. Bunk. A lie. I hate lies more than anything else, and that's at the end of the day what this is. A lie.

-----

Moi:

So, how's Tom doing? (A reference to another mutual friend who has stopped interacting with Dave because of his zealous commentary towards posts made by Tom's wife).

Not likely your School of Emotional Rationalism is ever going to make it into the history books, Dave. What I posted was just a small screenshot of the much larger graphic, which I'm not sure you even looked at. What I like is the way it shows what a scratch humankind is in the play of the universe. I don't need for it to be totally-logically-scientifically-according-to-Hughes accurate, or politically correct according to your self-righteous-lone-ranger-I've-got-a-piece-of-paper-from-Berkeley bullshit. So it goes, deal with it, get over it, move on.

Obviously, I'm a little weary of your rants on my timeline, so here's notice that I'm going to be taking a break from your world for the duration. Ta-ta for now.

-----

David:

You put it out on a public (or at least semi-public) platform. My 'rant' is intended to draw attention to a falsehood. You should take the post down.

-----

Moi:

I'm with Tom. Bye-bye, Dave.

-----

During the back and forth with Dave, I shared my frustration with mutual friend Bruce Styles. All of us are farm boys born and raised in Hughson, California.

-----

Bruce (Sidebar):

Jebus ... I had a few words with Dave a while back. I hope he got the drift of the conversation.

-----

Moi:

Not holding my breath. Yes, the times are their usual wacko, but there's nothing any of us can do about it, never has been, never will be, so I have no need for him to shit on me. My response might be a little harsh, but oh well. I'm afraid Dave has committed the most grievous of sins: He has become an insufferable boor, and is now sentenced to Facebook purgatory. So I am with Tom. No, Dave, you are not Zorro (Referring to the profile pic Dave posted of Zorro overwhelming an opponent). You might be the other guy, though.

-----

Bruce:

Notwithstanding this kerfuffle, the chart is a fascinating view based on current scholarship of the origins and possible fate of the universe. Certainly would not throw out the whole based on one complaint. It can certainly soundly stand as a hypothesis and guide for further study.

-----

Bruce:

Fascinating, seems this is a demonstrated phenomenon that has likely happened countless times to wit: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Axial\\_precession#Polar\\_shift\\_and\\_equinoxes\\_shift](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Axial_precession#Polar_shift_and_equinoxes_shift)

-----

Bruce:

And of course polar shifts have occurred with great frequency: <http://earthsky.org/earth/magnetic-pole-reversal-ahead>

-----

Dave:

Magnetic pole reversal has nothing to do with the earth's axis.

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Dave:

I have deleted my previous comment and apologize for my over-reaction and zealotry.

-----

Moi:

Understandable in these Trumpian times.

-----

Bruce (Sidebar):

You know, I was kind of surprised by his over-the-top reaction to that post so have been needling him a bit – you know pointing out the obvious. I took a closer look at the reference you cited, it's a "respectable" science news aggregator site, staff are pretty capable and on the up and up, so pointed that out to Dave. You may have noticed he back-peddled and conceded he was wrong. Frankly, I have to call him on that crap for his own sake.

I think, in this current climate, political climate, people in general feel pretty out of control (as if we are ever in control). Seems to me that's Dave's problem, the news daily is just awful. Trump is a nightmare and there's really not much anyone can do about it. I think Dave has a sense of total lack of control and

that sets him off. So, one of his "deals" is to overreact to what he sees as fake news and inaccurate quotes. The room or playground monitor shtick gets old ... It's just Facebook fer chrisakes, Dave ... Perspective.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with Bruce Styles on buying a travel trailer:

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Bruce:

So, I may be buying a travel trailer. I know you bought and sold several RVs over the years. What is the safest process for doing that title transfer and the money exchange? At some point, I have to hook the trailer up of course, but how to exchange the money, get the title, and get out of there in one piece? It's going to be about an \$8000 transaction. I was going to suggest to the guy that we meet at the bank, but how the heck do I already have the trailer hooked up and ready to go without returning to his place to get the trailer? any insight would be welcome.

Thanks, Bruce

-----  
Moi:

Gosh, it's been so long I can hardly remember how I bought the Toyota Dolphin. And the Chevy Dolphin was through a dealer. And way back before both those, I picked up an Airstream trailer that I parked behind my parents place. Can't remember if I rented or borrowed a pickup to haul it. Also had a couple sailboats with trailers.

As far as the DMV paperwork goes, I think any title transfer pretty much works the same as any vehicle. You give them the money; they sign over the pink slip. Should be pretty straightforward, unless there's something shady about whoever you're picking it up from.

How about renting a pickup, hooking it up to the trailer, and driving to the bank to do the transfer? Or maybe have whoever you're buying it from bring it over to your place, and then go down to the bank to do the paperwork..

-----  
Bruce:

Well, I have my Toyota Tundra. I just need to confirm it has a Class IV hitch. Will likely hook up, go to bank with seller following and do the transaction there. The guy works in Chico, the trailer is at his mother's house in Magalia in the hills.

Will be interesting. It's a Hi-Lo, the idea being might be able to store it in our garage, if I can ever get that cleaned out.

2009 Hi-Lo 24 - \$9500 (Magalia)  
<https://chico.craigslist.org/rvs/d/2009-hi-lo-24/6581769031.html>

He's "letting it go" for \$8000.



Bruce

-----

Moi:

Looks good. Nice and clean. The advantage of buying something from older generations. Magalia's a bit of a winding road journey, but towing should be no problem with the Tundra and your farm boy roots. You must have a pretty big garage to fit it, but keeping it out of the elements is a good idea to minimize leaks and such. A tarp with bungee cords also works. Make sure you have the right wiring for lights. Have him take some pics of the hook-ups before you head up there.

-----

Bruce:

Yeah, last week I had a electronic brake booster installed in the truck and at the same time a seven prong electrical connector which is required for trailers so that it'll actuate the electric brakes on the trailer.

So, I was kind of getting ready to buy something like this. The concern with this trailer is, the guy said it was stored outside under trees, so it was in the shade, as if that was an advantage. Needless to say, being in the elements the tires are probably pretty well shot. I'm also assuming it's going to need new marine deep cycle batteries. I'm a little concerned if they didn't winterize it the gray water and black water tanks might be a mess. But they wanted 9500 I offered 7500, he said he and his brother want 8000. I can go for that.

Those HiLo trailers seem to maintain their value over time. Slap some wax on it, spiff it up and it should be worth the purchase price for at least five years.

I might be kidding myself, but I am thinking it might be my portable Walden Pond cabin.

We'll see.

Bruce

-----

Moi:

I've always enjoyed my cabin-on-wheels living. The mobility and simplicity of a small cave is a very pleasant way to gypsy. At this writing, I'm more into the thought of a camper van. Easier driving, easier parking, doesn't require a campsite, great way to do urban camping. much cheaper than motels. My Aerostar will do for now, but when Mom passes, my lifestyle may move who-knows-what-direction. Might move up to the north coast of Kaliforny, or someplace inland like Eugene, or maybe just pack it all away and wander about the world for a bit.

Google Search: Camper Vans

[https://www.google.com/search?q=camper+vans&num=20&newwindow=1&client=safari&rls=en&source=lnms&tbn=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEWjVueqmqzZ7bAhWn8YMKHbRqBCYQ\\_AUICygC&biw=867&bih=623](https://www.google.com/search?q=camper+vans&num=20&newwindow=1&client=safari&rls=en&source=lnms&tbn=isch&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEWjVueqmqzZ7bAhWn8YMKHbRqBCYQ_AUICygC&biw=867&bih=623)

Don't think I'd want to get a VW camper – prefer something more six or eight cylinder – but some of these certainly might be tempting:

14 of the Coolest Custom VW Campervans Ever Built

[www.goodshomedesign.com/10-of-the-coolest-custom-vw-campervans-ever-built/](http://www.goodshomedesign.com/10-of-the-coolest-custom-vw-campervans-ever-built/)

-----

Bruce:

Nyet on the VW. Just say no.

-----

Moi:

The family beetle during high school and junior college, and the van that transported me from Turlock to Ojai to Chico during the late 80's, were taste enough for this and all future lifetimes.

-----

Bruce:

Well, I should say they're kind of fun, but the minute, the very minute the ownership rolls over to the 6th year you've got to sell ASAP because every thing that could possibly go wrong will.

-----

Moi:

The van cost me a pretty penny to learn that sobering fact, but it got me to Chico before it died, so I buried it content.

-----

Bruce:

Uhm, err, are you available on Saturday or Sunday? For a ridiculous adventure in Magalia/Chico? Well, take that back, Saturday?

-----

Moi:

Dude, I'd love to help you, but that is a little more of a marathon adventure than this body wants to endure at this writing. Am really having bothers with the upper back and neck causing tingly fingers and such. That last concussion a couple years back really changed my game. Very into staying very local for the time-being.

Have another decade-older friend who wants me to go to Bangkok with him, and there's just no friggin' way I can endure flying in coach that kind of distance without going completely bat-crazy. World travel would be interesting, but it needs to be at a very languid pace anymore. My climb-every-mountain time is long over. This getting old is definitely getting old. No point to it, really. Keeping the helium tank close,

that's for sure.

-----

Bruce:

Understandable.

One of my ideas for a fantasy trip would be to pay the five or six grand and just take a cruise around the world. Wouldn't exactly be feet on the ground in a big way, but at least you'd see the Vista go by.

Concussion you say? I didn't realize that you had had a concussion in the last few years. That's certainly something to take seriously. Also sorry to hear about the back. You know I have good days, and then days when my back is giving me grief. Sometimes it gets pretty old.

Thanks for giving my goofy idea a whirl. I've got this down to checking it out, then having them come down to the chase bank in Paradise, which is only four miles away. Hope that works.

-----

Moi:

A world cruise is definitely on the list of possibilities, though I'm pretty sure living at a Golden Corral 24 hours a day for any amount of time is not a good idea at this or any future writing. Did the Carnival Long Beach to Ensenada three-day-four-nighter sometime in the early Y2K years, and it was a food fest plus-plus. Very dangerous.

Good luck with the trailer and whatever adventures it conjures.

\* \* \* \*

Follow-up email to Bruce Styles a few days later titled: Mission Accomplished?

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Moi:

So, did you do the there-and-back?

-----

Bruce:

No, chickened out, explained I would try to get up next Saturday. Occurred to me I needed to find some mirror extensions to actually tow, wasn't able to find in Sacramento so will order online. If that one is gone another will come along.

-----

Moi:

Didn't even think about that aspect. Trailers are whole different beasts than motorhomes and vans. And maybe it will still be there, and maybe you can whittle down another thousand for all the bother.

\* \* \* \*

More follow-up with Bruce a few weeks later:

-----  
Moi:

What's the word on that trailer?

-----  
Bruce:

Hey Mike,

The word is that I went up to Magalia last weekend and bought the trailer. Now I have to say, David Hughes came with me, but really, you need to come along because the trip damn near killed Dave. I guess he's not ever seen one of my adventures or how they shape up. Dave is not even remotely mechanical-minded so every glitch we encountered he became more and more flummoxed.

It's not that anything in particular was out of whack, just everything was out of whack. The seller, after I had requested he have the propane on to test the stove and oven, and the electricity on to test the refrigerator and finally the water hooked up to check for leaks, didn't have anything ready to go.

Then of course, there are the regular glitches in trying to do anything. The trailer has a weight distribution hitch, which again the seller didn't really know exactly how it work so we spent a lot of time reading instructions. In the end though the seller was a younger guy in great shape and was able to kind of with everything together it just took forever.

But all ended well, and the trailer towed very nicely back to Sacramento. I'm in the process of getting it detailed and spiffed up to take a trip soon. We'll see how it works out.

-----  
Moi:

Man, what an ordeal! Very happy that I wasn't there. Hope it works out and you get out on the road again.

-----  
Bruce:

Come on, Mike, that's not the spirit, you would've had a great time.

Actually, the seller was a pretty interesting guy. He lived on a sailboat up in Petaluma with a cabin there in Magalia next to his mother who is the actual owner. He just recently sold the sailboat and bought a motor yacht, again moored in Petaluma. He works as an engineer for Northrop Grumman in Chico. So, he was pretty interesting.

Without his help, checking the things out and hooking it up would've been impossible.

The trailer is in pretty good shape. It's just that it needs to be washed waxed and vacuumed from top to bottom. It wasn't used that much, so the interior really almost looks new. Dave, of course, kept mumbling "I think you're crazy." Again, Dave has no mechanical aptitude whatsoever. I think he has the resources to just go from Motel to hotel, but I'm sick of them.

-----

Moi:

Too long a day for me anymore. Hate even getting into my car to go across Turlock, much less a journey all the way to Motown. All I'm good for is hiking across the street to my club, or over a few blocks more to my Geerbucks. Whatever sense of adventure, whatever edge I had in my youth. is but a neuron trail of evaporating and oftentimes dubious perceptions.

At least you still wanted the trailer after you saw it live. Hope it works out for you.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from Ninos David:

When Noble Lynxes Square Off, The Call Of The Wild Gets A Bit ... Whiny  
<https://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2018/05/22/613374055/watch-when-noble-lynxes-square-off-the-call-of-the-wild-gets-a-bit-whiny>

-----

Moi:

Battling over turf like all the male cats in my apartment complex. Especially bothersome when a female is in heat.

-----

Ninos:

Lucky you for being that close to nature and life. Don't complain.

-----

Moi:

Lots of ducks and geese and rat dogs, too. Whoo-hoo for urban wildlife.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from Ninos David:

US warns staff in China: Beware of unusual sounds  
<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-44223523>

-----

Moi:

Constant war without the gunpowder ... so far.

Titles from the Hopi language used in the Qatsi Trilogy:

Koyaanisqatsi: Unbalanced life.

Powaqqatsi: Parasitic way of life, life in transition.

Naqoyqatsi: Life as war, civilized violence, a life of killing each other.

Wikipedia: Qatsi Trilogy

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Qatsi\\_trilogy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Qatsi_trilogy)

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from Ninos David:

Australian archbishop Philip Wilson guilty of concealing child sex abuses

[www.bbc.com/news/world-australia-44205985](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-australia-44205985)

-----

Moi:

The Catholic Church is an abomination. Its history is as filled with as much horror as the worst nightmare the human plague has ever concocted.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from Ninos David:

Why The Older You Get, The More You Hate Everyone (And Why That's OK)

<https://www.elitedaily.com/life/i-hate-people/1420157>

-----

Moi:

Don't know if hate is quite the right word, but I haven't come up with a better one. Exasperation and bother and boredom and impatience and contempt come to mind, but aren't quite as catchy.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with Ninos David on an article I sent:

Human race just 0.01% of all life but has eradicated most other living things

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/may/21/human-race-just-001-of-all-life-but-has-destroyed-over-80-of-wild-mammals-study>

-----

Ninos:

I guess you want to hear my two cents on this: No, human creatures are not worth saving.

-----

Moi:

It's tough getting through a day knowing you're a cancer cell eating away at your mother and all your brothers and sisters.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

Human race just 0.01% of all life but has eradicated most other living things  
<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/may/21/human-race-just-001-of-all-life-but-has-destroyed-over-80-of-wild-mammals-study>

-----  
Steve:

Great article ... Thanks.

-----  
Moi:

It's tough getting through a day knowing you're a cancer cell eating away at your mother, and all your brothers and sisters.

-----  
Steve:

Ignorance is bliss.

-----  
Moi:

It was, indeed, in the farm-boy life of little old rural Hughson, and then came college and the world beyond.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from Ninos David:

Is cultural knowledge more important than language skills?  
<http://www.bbc.com/capital/story/20180518-is-cultural-knowledge-more-important-than-language-skills>

-----  
Moi:

English is the world's lingua franca, and probably will be for many years to come. As far as travel goes, I think a general respect for any given culture, along with a casual effort to learn key words and phrases, coupled with sign language, patience, and good humor, will get you by most anywhere where they don't want to kill you as soon as you get off the plane.

\* \* \* \*

Complaint to Amazon about a delivery:

-----

Moi:

Once again, I was not happy to return home, and not find the package in the patio where I had asked it be left, both online and with a note on the door. What is the point of having an option that is not heeded? I live in an apartment complex, and do not feel comfortable having any package left unattended by the door for any length of time. The patio is a fenced-in area about which I feel much more secure. Yes, it takes some effort by the driver to come around the back side of my apartment, but I assume that's part of the customer service component in the job description. The photo is a great idea, though the package was in front of the neighbor's apartment, and I only just happened to see it.

-----

Amazon's Response:

Hello,

I'm sorry to know about the issue you faced with the delivery of your order.

On priority, I've forwarded this issue to the shipping team in our company, I know they'll want to hear about your experience and rest assured this will be taken care of. We're aware that our choice of delivery services reflects on our business as a whole.

Additionally, I have also filled up a feedback form on your behalf and forwarded it to our business team who shall work upon it. I assure you that we will take necessary steps to make sure that you do not face such issue again.

Strong customer suggestion helps us continue to improve the selection and service we provide. We take any kind of information seriously as it is valuable to us in helping us to continue to improve our program.

We know you count on more than just great products, and that getting proper delivery service is just as important. I'm sorry for the experience you had, but hope you'll continue to shop with us.

Your patience is highly appreciated. We look forward to seeing you soon.

Best regards,  
Shailendra

-----

Moi:

The response by your representative is much appreciated, but whether or not I'm truly satisfied will only be yes if I never have to address this issue again. Proof is always in the pudding.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:



NASA wrestles with what to do with International Space Station after 2024

<https://spaceflightnow.com/2018/05/20/nasa-wrestles-with-what-to-do-with-international-space-station-after-2024/>

-----

Steve:

Trade it in for a Tesla ... LOL

-----

Moi:

Is there really any need to put humans up in space anymore? Aren't satellites and robots and such, much more efficient and cost-effective?

There are some reasons ... to perform development and experiments that can't be done on Earth. They can develop pharmaceutical in zero gravity that you can't do on Earth. Most of it though is to develop technology and perform experiments in preparation for longer space flights deeper into space ... which I've come to the conclusion is not as high a priority as fixing our own planet.

I firmly believe in developing our capabilities in space technology ... but more so as you say in Robotics and autonomous vehicles ... primarily because it's more reasonable ... less expensive ... safer ... and I don't believe we should be wasting money planning on populating Mars or beyond ... we have a more urgent issue ... we're killing our current planet ... and should be focusing on correcting that course before moving further out ... just common sense to me.

-----

Moi:

It's crazy in my mind to waste treasury and resources to send anyone out into deep space. Too many issues with the garden we have already trashed beyond any hope of repair.

-----

Steve:

Agreed ... and the thought that you can somehow turn a planet that was never intended to support human life ... into a place you are going to populate ... is absurd ... we can't even save our own planet ... let alone another one ... and if we could ... it would be far easier to do so ... than try to move somewhere else.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on a couple articles I sent:

He took his family to lunch, left the table and rammed them with his car, killing two, police say  
[https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2018/05/21/he-took-his-family-to-lunch-left-the-table-and-rammed-them-with-his-car-killing-two-police-say/?utm\\_term=.81cb9881fe9b](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2018/05/21/he-took-his-family-to-lunch-left-the-table-and-rammed-them-with-his-car-killing-two-police-say/?utm_term=.81cb9881fe9b)

He was a 'church-going family man' up until killing 2 family members at NC restaurant

<http://www.charlotteobserver.com/news/local/crime/article211575219.html>

-----

Steve:

Sounds like there's a story behind this ... only guessing ... but I would imagine there was some kind of disagreement that was festering ... and he snapped.

-----

Moi:

I betting on a tumor or dementia or Alzheimer's or some such thing.

-----

Steve:

How about just having a spurious epiphany ... that he's wasted his entire life following the Nuclear Family Myth ... and realized that his wife and kids don't give a shit about him ... have used him his entire life ... while he's broken his back working himself to death to feed, cloth, shelter, and educate them ... and one morning at breakfast ... his wife and kids are demeaning him as they have for decades ... demasculinizing him ... and he snaps.  
I'm surprised it doesn't happen more often.

-----

Moi:

Sure seems a very likely probability.

-----

Steve:

I read an article that says women are bummed that they can't seem to find men who want to get married anymore. I'm baffled as to why they are perplexed. Our culture demeans and demoralizes men constantly ... our roles models are buffoons like Homer Simpson ... and the guy from Married with Children ... the men are all portrayed as incompetent moron that are subjugated and castrated by their wives and kids constantly.

Why the fuck would anyone want to consciously commit to a lifetime of that fucking living hell?

-----

Moi:

Certainly not us, El Dude, certainly not us.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

Celebrities Are Obsessed with the Keto Diet. Why You Shouldn't Be.  
<https://www.livescience.com/62617-does-keto-diet-work.html>

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Steve:

My take on this is that the Keto diet is the opposite extreme of the vegan diet ... the are both extremes too far in either direction ... one is no meat all veggies ... the other is tons of fat ... I'm aligned with the Paleo diet ... it's in the middle ... low carb ... low glycemic ... unprocessed natural food only ... healthy amount of good quality meat ... tons of healthy veggies ... Kale ... Broccoli ... Cabbage ... Spinach ... and nuts ... low glycemic fruit ... et cetera.

I've got an ex-GF that is preaching Vegan to me ... I keep telling her I eat more veggies than she does ... but I also eat meat ... all I can tell you is ... I pay attention to how my body responds to food ... and I never feel better than when I eat a good sized chunk of red meat ... rare ... I don't care what they say ... I feel good when I eat it ... fuck anything else.

-----  
Moi:

It's always curious why some people are drawn to such extremes.

-----  
Steve:

I have a theory ... our Judeo-Christine culture mythologizes and aggrandizes suffering ... iconified by the image of Jesus being nailed to a cross and literally dying for us all ... the ultimate "Extreme." So we worship the concept that pain and suffering are the ultimate avenue to enlightenment ... and this gets codified into every aspect of our culture ... the Work Ethic is a perfect example ... and greedy Capitalist instill this into our Political system ... that being that if you work hard ... i.e., Suffer ... you will be rewarded in the long run ... which is bullshit ... you simply get into deeper and deeper debt ... and make someone else rich ... who doesn't work for their money.

So extreme diets that iconify suffering to achieve health and beauty ... are natural for our culture ... it's the "No Pain, No Gain" concept ... which has been debunked by exercise experts ... all that will lead to is a strained body that falls apart in the long run ... I know ... I followed that Mantra most of my life ... and my body got fucked up as a result ... strained ligaments ... frozen shoulder ... arthritis ... et cetera.

-----  
Moi:

Christianity and Manifest Destiny on steroids.

Manifest Destiny  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manifest\\_destiny](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Manifest_destiny)

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

Two-thirds of world population will live in cities by 2050: UN report  
<https://www.cnn.com/2018/05/16/world/world-population-cities-un-intl/index.html>

-----  
Steve:

Correction ... we'll all be scrambling to survive on the vestiges of civilization ... after the <war-famine-pestilence-climate impacts> ... take your pick ... survivalist will be in what's left of the country and woods ... everyone else will be clinging to dead cities ... void of any remaining cans of beans or water ...

-----  
Moi:

Urban warfare, unending pain and suffering, my favorite.

-----  
Steve:

All those women that spend all that money for plastic surgery and boobs and lift jobs to look hot are going to regret it ... the best thing to be during the coming times will be a homely looking woman that nobody has any interest in.

-----  
Moi:

I suspect everyone will play it with whatever they've got. Booty or stew meat, the strong will decide.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

Mental noise is bad: Why silence is the think tank of the soul  
<https://www.theladders.com/career-advice/mental-noise-is-hurting-us-why-silence-is-the-think-tank-of-the-soul>

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Moi:

Good article. A challenging thing to do in our busy-busy embrace-it-all culture.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

California assisted death law overturned in court  
[www.sacbee.com/news/politics-government/capitol-alert/article211195824.html](http://www.sacbee.com/news/politics-government/capitol-alert/article211195824.html)

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Steve:

That's OK ... I don't need any assistance.

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Moi:

Or permission.

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Steve:

I just really don't get what it is that makes people so passionate and spend so much energy and time trying to stop other people from killing themselves ... it seems as if they're more just stressed about these other people's lives than the people are themselves.

-----

Moi:

I'm of a mind to tell everyone to keep their nose on their own face anymore.

-----

Steve:

The biggest myth in the world is that life is special and precious ... the truth of the matter is that life is cheap ... look across the planet ... millions of people are slaughtered and starving to death And over history have been dumped into pits by the thousands and hundreds of thousands without a second thought ... there's plenty more where they came from ... in fact there's too many ... we can lose about 4 billion people on this planet and we'd still be overpopulated.

-----

Moi:

There were only two hundred million people just two thousand years ago, and it was still more than a little fucked up.

-----

Steve:

Yeah, and life was so cheap back then they used to strap them to crucifixes and use them as tiki torches at Roman parties

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Moi:

Yeesch, what a horrible species we can be.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

The 10 professions with the most psychopaths

<http://www.businessinsider.com/professions-with-the-most-psychopaths-2018-5>

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Steve:

Nice to know at least I'm low on the list ... LOL

-----

Moi:

I've played in a few of those lines of work. And the way I see it is we all have bits and pieces of the countless labels the psychiatry folks love to toss around. Traits that served well the survival of our ancestors, but potentially dysfunctional when taken to extreme. One of my lines is that I'm a natural born killer who chooses not to.

Amazon: The Wisdom of Psychopaths

[https://www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb\\_sb\\_noss?url=search-alias%3Daps&field-keywords=The+Wisdom+of+Psychopaths](https://www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb_sb_noss?url=search-alias%3Daps&field-keywords=The+Wisdom+of+Psychopaths)

-----

Steve:

I agree with the Labels issue ... the field of psychiatry looks at the world through the lens of their world ... I believe there is a difference between someone who “feels” ... and has compassion and empathy ... but an ability to manage it and keep it in check when required to get the job done ... and someone who lacks the ability to have compassion or empathy even if they wanted to.

If you're in the middle of a war zone ... and you break down crying because you just saw something horrible ... you will be the next statistic ... it's unfortunate ... but that is the world we live in. In my mind feeling too much is a liability ... it's never done me any good ... and developing an ability to detach yourself from the cruelty of the world is a survival mechanism. But you are labelled a sociopath or psychopath for doing so.

When the hordes come rushing over the horizon ... they are going to mow down the touchy-feely types who are doing most of the complaining right now.

-----

Moi:

One of my ditties that the PC-ers don't much care for: Ethics is the luxury of a full belly and a safe harbor.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

Washington Appears to Be Gearing Up for a Third Gulf War

<https://www.alternet.org/news-amp-politics/washington-appears-be-gearing-third-gulf-war>

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Moi:

Can't we all just get along?

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Margot Kidder, 'Superman' Actress, Dead at 69

<https://www.rollingstone.com/movies/news/margot-kidder-superman-actress-dead-at-69-w520293>

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Steve:

Another One Bites the Dust prior to even reaching 70 which all the Wall Street pundits are trying to tell you to work until

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Moi:

And whose dick does Wall Street suck off every day? Time and health are the only wealth, I say, I say.

\* \* \* \*

Facebook Messenger Conversations with Debbie Mason-Peterson about Esther Squire's suicide in September 2014, sent to Kathy Vierra-Marchant in July 2016, and to Marci Wentzell in December 2016. All are alumni from the Hughson Union High School Class of '72:

Hughson Union High School Class of '72

<https://www.facebook.com/Hughson-Union-High-School-Class-of-72-301790023189950/>

Final Exit and Related Links

<http://finalexitandrelatedlinks.blogspot.com/>

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Hey, Marcia,

Here's the cut and paste of the Facebook conversations with Debbie that began when Esther took her life. It starts when Debbie first hears about it, and concludes soon after the memorial in October.

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September 19, 2014

9/19, 5:17pm

Debbie Mason-Peterson

Have you heard about Esther???

9/19, 5:19pm  
Michael Holshouser

No, what's going on?

9/19, 5:20pm  
Debbie Mason-Peterson

Her friend, Betty, called me. The Sheriff called Betty, and Esther has passed.

I can't stop crying, Mike, I'm shaking all over.

I can't believe this.

9/19, 5:21pm  
Michael Holshouser

What happened?

9/19, 5:22pm  
Debbie Mason-Peterson

They wouldn't tell Betty the details because she isn't family.

I talk to Esther everyday, and I know she has a lot of problems going on, but none of seemed this bad!

9/19, 5:24pm  
Michael Holshouser

She's definitely been down in the dumps.

9/19, 5:24pm  
Debbie Mason-Peterson

I'm trying to get ahold of her sister and kids, but I don't have their numbers.

9/19, 5:25pm  
Michael Holshouser

All I can suggest is the Marble Quarry website.

9/19, 5:26pm  
Debbie Mason-Peterson

Yes, and so have I, so we have been there for each other. I can't believe she thought it was all so bad that she had to do this.



Her and I have been there for each other. Sorry, I'm so nervous, I can't type.

9/19, 5:28pm  
Michael Holshouser

I guess she was just so tired of struggling with family and work. Just didn't want to start over.

I'm actually about to head over to the coast with a friend for a few days, so I need to shut things down and move on. I'm really sorry Esther is no longer with us. She will be missed. Keep me posted as you find out more details.

9/19, 5:38pm  
Debbie Mason-Peterson

Okay, Michael, I'll keep you informed.

September 20, 2014  
9/20, 8:19am  
Michael Holshouser

Wish we could have done more for her.

September 20, 2014  
9/20, 2:29pm  
Debbie Mason-Peterson

Michael, she killed herself with helium. She told me you told her about it.

9/20, 3:49pm  
Michael Holshouser

We'd talked about that sort of thing, but I didn't realize that she was that depressed about things to actually do it.

9/20, 3:50pm  
Debbie Mason-Peterson

I didn't, either, Michael! I'm devastated and shocked beyond words.

9/20, 3:52pm  
Michael Holshouser

She will be missed, that's for sure.

Are you in touch with her family?

9/20, 3:55pm  
Debbie Mason-Peterson

Yes I've been in touch with her sister, Julie, only.

9/20, 3:55pm  
Michael Holshouser

What's she saying?

9/20, 3:56pm  
Debbie Mason-Peterson

They're all very devastated. The kids went to the jail to tell Colby today.

9/20, 4:00pm  
Michael Holshouser

What a thing to go through.

Wonder how Brent is feeling?

9/20, 4:04pm  
Debbie Mason-Peterson

I've talked to him, and he's not doing real good, either. He said he cried all night.

9/20, 4:05pm  
Michael Holshouser

I imagine they will all be wishing they'd paid more attention.

9/20, 4:06pm  
Debbie Mason-Peterson

Her kids should have reached out more but they were stubborn.

9/20, 4:08pm  
Michael Holshouser

It's sad that they were all so unsupportive. I think she just felt so alone.

She'd given so much to all of them, and when she needed help, nothing. Or at least that how she seemed to perceive it.

9/20, 4:12pm  
Debbie Mason-Peterson

She did, Michael!

9/20, 4:16pm  
Michael Holshouser

And to have to start all over, I think she just ran out of steam.

9/20, 4:20pm  
Debbie Mason-Peterson

I just talked to Mark Hollingsworth and told him.

She kept telling me she felt trapped and doomed.

9/20, 4:23pm  
Michael Holshouser

Very sad.

9/20, 5:50pm  
Michael Holshouser

It's a telling thing that none of her family have her Facebook page friended.

9/20, 5:51pm  
Debbie Mason-Peterson

Esther removed them all herself.

Probably about a week and a half ago.

She told me that she was done with them.

9/20, 5:59pm  
Michael Holshouser

What an amazing thing that all her struggling for her children came to such a bitter end. So sad.

9/20, 6:00pm  
Debbie Mason-Peterson

I know it, Michael, and it shouldn't have!

I still can't believe this is true. I can just see her and I together having lunch or dinner. I had so much planned for us to do in the future. I'm so terribly sick inside.

Her kids should have nurtured and cared for their mother I'm pretty upset with them.

9/20, 6:06pm  
Michael Holshouser

Hard to fathom how they failed her. Can't imagine ever doing such a thing to my mother, that's for sure.

9/20, 6:07pm  
Debbie Mason-Peterson

Me, neither!

September 21, 2014  
9/21, 9:31pm  
Debbie Mason-Peterson

Hi, Mike, do you have Marcia Wentzell's phone number?

9/21, 9:44pm  
Michael Holshouser

Don't know if they're still current, but here's what I have.

Phones: (509) 675-2856 and (209) 529-9673

Email: Marcia Wentzell <mark.eye@hotmail.com>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/marcia.wentzell?fref=ts>

So, what's the latest? Sounds like there's going to be a memorial sometime soon. Any details?

9/21, 9:45pm  
Debbie Mason-Peterson

I don't know any details yet. Waiting to hear from Julie.

Thank you, Mike. I'll try calling her tomorrow. Thank you.

The area code 509 might be current!

The family is waiting for the autopsy to be completed, and then they can make plans. That's what I heard last.

September 22, 2014  
9/22, 8:02am  
Michael Holshouser

They seem to be using her Facebook page to make announcements, so I'll be watching that. Keep me posted if you hear anything else. Thanks.

September 22, 2014  
9/22, 1:06pm

Debbie Mason-Peterson

I will, Mike..

September 25, 2014

9/25, 8:38pm

Debbie Mason-Peterson

Michael, did you see Esther at all last Thursday? Was she at Starbucks in Turlock?

9/25, 9:26pm

Michael Holshouser

We talked a couple times on the phone in the days before. I offered to pay the money she owed to get it off her credit report, so that she could apply for a government job some friend had told her about. She at first said yes, but then later sent a thanks-but-no-thanks email. I was headed off for a trip to the coast and emailed back for her to think on it, that we could talk about it more over coffee when I got back the following week.

Please keep this between you and me if you can manage it. Let's let her rest in peace, and not create a larger drama for the family and all concerned. I'm only telling you this because I know she talked to you a great deal about all the things that happened for her to reach this fateful decision. You were a great friend to her, and I'm sure she appreciated all you tried to do to help. But in the end, she felt so alone, so abandoned by her family, and just didn't have the steam to start over.

Anywho, that's how it came down from my point of view. So incredibly sad. Makes for a heavy heart that we didn't/couldn't do more.

And as I said, please keep this between you and me.

Take care,

M

9/25, 9:30pm

Debbie Mason-Peterson

She told me about borrowing money from you, and she said you were going to let her know if you could lend it to her. She said you called back and said you couldn't lend the money at this time, but she was fine with it.

9/25, 9:33pm

Michael Holshouser

Nope, I was all set to head over to get a cashier's check at Tri Counties Bank. All I needed to know from her was who to make it out to.

9/25, 9:34pm

Debbie Mason-Peterson

Yes, I agree with you that we should move on and try to remember our sweet lovely friend, Esther, and cherish our time we had with her. I won't say anything about what we talked about because it has no benefit to anyone. There are some things her family doesn't need to know.

9/25, 9:34pm  
Michael Holshouser

They'll be dealing with this for the rest of their lives.

9/25, 9:36pm  
Debbie Mason-Peterson

I don't know why she didn't tell me the truth, but I guess she thought about it and decided not to borrow. I don't know what was really in her head, and I thought I did.

9/25, 9:38pm  
Michael Holshouser

I imagine she was probably going back and forth and forth on what to do. Not an easy thing to let go. I'm sure we can forgive the little fibs along the way ... :)

9/25, 9:41pm  
Debbie Mason-Peterson

I will keep our conversation private, Michael, I promise. The only reason I asked if you saw Esther last Thursday is because she texted me and said she was driving around Turlock, so I thought of you and thought maybe you had coffee with her or talked to her.

9/25, 9:43pm  
Michael Holshouser

Nope, no coffee time, alas.

9/25, 9:46pm  
Debbie Mason-Peterson

I am so sad she decided to do this, Michael. I am still very much in shock.

9/25, 9:48pm  
Michael Holshouser

I don't imagine we'll ever quite understand all the things that were going through her mind.

Time to hit the sack at this end, so g'night.

And thanks for keeping mum on things.

9/25, 9:49pm  
Debbie Mason-Peterson

Good night, Michael, and mums the word!!!

September 26, 2014  
9/26, 2:59am  
Michael Holshouser

Woke up for a bit, and while waiting for the sleeping pill to kick in, it occurred to me that the reason Esther didn't tell you about my offer of financial aid was because I had asked not to tell anyone. Prefer to keep my boy scout attempts anonymous, so her white lie to you was merely her keeping her promise to me.

9/26, 3:25am  
Debbie Mason-Peterson

Hey, me too. Thanks for explaining it to me. I don't care that she lied and that's okay. I just didn't want her to leave like this I had plans for us to do things and maybe go places! She has really broken my heart.

September 26, 2014  
9/26, 7:31am  
Michael Holshouser

She will be missed.

October 11, 2014  
10/11, 3:56pm  
Michael Holshouser

Hey, Deb, just thought I'd check in and see how you're doing. It was a good turnout yesterday, a real cross-section of all the lives Esther touched. Wish she could have seen it before letting go.

10/11, 3:58pm  
Debbie Mason-Peterson

I'm okay, Michael, thank you! I know this has hit me hard, and I just know it will take some time to get past it. I can't imagine life without her. We were very close.

10/11, 4:01pm  
Michael Holshouser

You two were definitely close. She's left a big hole for a lot of us, that's for sure. I imagine her family is really feeling it, big-time. A lot of regrets and second-guessing going on across the board, no doubt.

10/11, 4:04pm  
Debbie Mason-Peterson

Yea, I'm sure there is a lot of second-guessing going on, and there should be because I knew all of Esther's hurts, emotions, and all her situations.

10/11, 4:09pm  
Michael Holshouser

I knew quite a bit, too, and I'm sure you knew even more. Wonder how the family dynamic will play out in the times to come. Except maybe for David in the once in a while, I doubt I'll ever have much contact with Ralph or any of the kids. Esther was really the main connection.

10/11, 4:12pm  
Debbie Mason-Peterson

I was leaning on Esther she was a rock for me. She helped me a lot. I didn't know she would even consider doing this!

10/11, 4:16pm  
Michael Holshouser

I would have thought she would at least stick around for her grandkids, but I guess she just was tired of struggling to keep her head above water, and didn't want to start over. She had spent her life giving and giving to everyone else, and was running on empty, exhausted.

It's always important to take time to replenish yourself.

10/11, 4:18pm  
Debbie Mason-Peterson

I know I can't imagine her life being so bad that she had to make it final.

10/11, 4:20pm  
Michael Holshouser

I'm wondering at this point how much of it was chemical. Was she taking any medication? Someone mentioned something about Prozac, but I never heard her mention it. Wonder if something might have helped.

10/11, 4:21pm  
Debbie Mason-Peterson

She wasn't taking Prozac. I was trying to get her to go to the doctor and get Prozac or something but she wouldn't.

10/11, 4:23pm  
Michael Holshouser

I didn't really think about suggesting it, but I think she was so against drugs that I doubt she would have



listened to me, either.

10/11, 4:24pm  
Debbie Mason-Peterson

I'm recently on Prozac and she knew it. She told me that she would wait and see how I do on it. I've taken before and it helps.

I so badly wanted to help her, and I tried very hard but she had her mind closed to getting past her problems.

10/11, 4:27pm  
Michael Holshouser

It's just challenging to get the right medication and the right dosage. It's a process figuring it all out, and I guess she just didn't have the money or patience to consider giving it a shot. Like I said, she just ran out of steam for living.

We both did our best for her – certainly more than her family as far as we know – and have nothing to feel guilty about as far as I'm concerned.

10/11, 4:30pm  
Debbie Mason-Peterson

She was on Medi-Cal so it wouldn't cost her anything. I told her I would go with her. She just said she hated Medi-Cal.

10/11, 4:32pm  
Michael Holshouser

I didn't know that. Too bad she didn't give it a shot.

10/11, 4:32pm  
Debbie Mason-Peterson

She should have!!!

She was stubborn.

I have a family situation today. My sister is threatening suicide.

She is really messed up. I used to talk to Esther about her.

10/11, 4:35pm  
Michael Holshouser

Esther was probably as stubborn as anybody I've ever known ... :)

Is there anything you can do to help your family member?

10/11, 4:39pm  
Debbie Mason-Peterson

Since our family lost Eddie and my dad, she has alienated herself from the family. She's been horribly mean to my mom. She thinks everyone is against her. She is a huge into drama and starting family drama. She's smoked pot all her life and still does, she's on meth, she's addicted to Vicodin and she drinks alcohol. She a mess and she chooses to stay away from her family: my mom, brother and me. She blames us for her actions. I texted her husband and told him, and she texted me back and told me to leave him alone.

10/11, 4:45pm  
Michael Holshouser

Sounds pretty darned rough. A life of pot-smoking and meth pretty much wrecks the mind beyond help in my experience. Doesn't sound like there's much you can do except try to protect your mother as much as possible. They say blood is thicker than water, but I say it ain't that much thicker. Esther's clan has proven that, that's for sure.

10/11, 4:49pm  
Debbie Mason-Peterson

Yea, Mike, my sister is a real piece of work. I texted her husband and asked him if someone should call 911. Well, he didn't respond to me, and my sister text me a few minutes later and said to leave him alone. I told her I take suicide accusations serious. So they can deal with it. Dammit!

10/11, 4:54pm  
Michael Holshouser

Not much you can do if she won't accept help in my thinking. You could maybe get her 5150-ed at the county psych unit, but that's probably only going to make her more angry than she already is. Pretty rough dealing with irrational behavior. I'm to the point where I just 86 anybody who abuses me. Time is short and getting shorter every second in this life, and I've got no need for anyone who can't behave in a civil manner.

10/11, 4:58pm  
Michael Holshouser

Behavioral Health and Recovery Services  
<http://www.stancounty.com/bhrs/>

10/11, 5:05pm  
Debbie Mason-Peterson

Yea she's beyond help those are my feelings. If she has to commit suicide I can't stop her. Now she's really mad because I was concerned. I told her to deal with her suicidal thoughts with her husband I give up!

10/11, 5:09pm  
Michael Holshouser

Sounds right to me. I certainly wouldn't have much patience for it if it was my sister.

One thing I was wondering about yesterday, is if Colby was released from prison to come to the memorial?

10/11, 5:12pm  
Debbie Mason-Peterson

Colby wasn't there yesterday.

10/11, 5:14pm  
Michael Holshouser

Didn't really know more than a couple of the kids, mainly through Facebook pics, so I wasn't sure.

10/11, 5:16pm  
Debbie Mason-Peterson

Yea, I noticed yesterday that Garrett was crying so hard, but the girls didn't show any emotion.

I know we all grieve differently. I cried all the way through the service. I just felt so empty.

10/11, 5:22pm  
Michael Holshouser

I wonder if the girls were just looking to blame someone besides themselves.

10/11, 5:23pm  
Debbie Mason-Peterson

They always appeared like they blamed their mom. It made me furious.

10/11, 5:28pm  
Michael Holshouser

Well, as you said she de-friended them all a week or two before, so I guess she made it clear what she thought of them by the end. Sad, considering how many times she used to say how "family was everything." Did she de-friend them all, or just a few of them?

10/11, 5:29pm  
Debbie Mason-Peterson

All of them.

10/11, 5:29pm  
Michael Holshouser

Wow, boggling.

Like I said in an earlier conversation, I can't imagine deserting my mom.

10/11, 5:30pm  
Debbie Mason-Peterson

Me neither, Mike!

10/11, 5:35pm  
Michael Holshouser

Well, time for me to head out to dinner with a friend. Good chatting with you. Go easy on yourself. Like I said, we're not the ones who have to carry any guilt over Esther's decision. We did what we could.

Keep in mind these two Marcel Proust quotes I posted on the Class of '72 page:

Let us be grateful to the people who make us happy; they are the charming gardeners who make our souls blossom.

People do not die for us immediately, but remain bathed in a sort of aura of life which bears no relation to true immortality but through which they continue to occupy our thoughts in the same way as when they were alive. It is as though they were traveling abroad.

Ciao, ciao, for now.

M

10/11, 5:40pm  
Debbie Mason-Peterson

Thank you, Michael. I appreciate your kindness! Talk to you soon.

October 11, 2014  
10/11, 9:16pm  
Michael Holshouser

Take care.

10/11, 9:17pm  
Debbie Mason-Peterson

You, too!

October 12, 2014

10/12, 8:38am  
Michael Holshouser

Thought of two other questions this morning.

Was Brent at the memorial?

And was Esther really a Christian? It was nothing she ever talked about with me, so I'm wondering if she was, or if it was the kids putting on a show to make themselves feel better.

10/12, 9:05am  
Debbie Mason-Peterson

Brent was at the funeral. He came and sat with my mom and I.

We talked about it once recently. She wasn't sure how she believed. She wasn't sure if there really was a God or heaven. She didn't attend church.

10/12, 9:09am  
Michael Holshouser

That matches much better with my view of her thinking on such things.

Only met Brent once, way back when I ran into Esther at the La Grange Rodeo, I think before they were married. Barely remember what he looks like. Another of Esther's many struggles.

-----  
And this was Kathy Vierra-Marchant's response after I sent the text above to her back in July:

It was good talking to you, too. That chat was long overdue on my part because I think I told you that after Esther's death I wanted to have a chat. At that time, it was mainly going to consist of q's Debbie had. And that looks like that was covered anyway with the texts you just sent me. She was the last one to talk to Esther!! I remember now, she told me that Esther was driving around Turlock and Debbie was trying to get her to come over to her place, or she would even come to Turlock. She was very adamant with me at the time that you may have assisted Esther. And I said, well, if you think so why don't you ask him yourself!! You see the thing with Debbie, she just keeps issues going on and on and on. I told her soooo many times, to move on and let shit go. Your responses to her in all those texts, were spot on. I could not have responded any better. You are great with words. You know, the funny thing is, Esther told me was that Debbie drove her nuts too with all the Robin/Debbie drama. She told me that a few weeks before she died. I would never tell Debbie that because I think they had a good friendship. It was just something we shared and had in common and found out we weren't being insensitive to Debbie, but Jesus H Christ, we were both so done talking about it. Hey I have to get. Haven't accomplished much today. Clock's ticking!

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Mother's Day: Why the Woman Who Invented It Said She Regretted It

<https://www.inverse.com/article/44805-mothers-day-anna-jarvis-regret>

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Steve:

Why am I not surprised?

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Moi:

Heard about this before, but had forgotten. Hallmark Holidayz, I call 'em. Amazing all the ways the one-percenters access our minds and wallets. What suckers we are for so many absurdities. I did wedding photography for a bit, and that could very quickly get more than a little over the top.

According to this movie, Charles Dickens was the one who kicked off the way we do Christmas. Watched it with Mom last night. Kind of a Shakespeare in Love take.

Wikipedia: The Man Who Invented Christmas

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Man\\_Who\\_Invented\\_Christmas\\_\(film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Man_Who_Invented_Christmas_(film))

Netflix: The Man Who Invented Christmas

<https://dvd.netflix.com/Movie/The-Man-Who-Invented-Christmas/80191295?trkid=201886046>

Wikipedia: A Christmas Carol

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A\\_Christmas\\_Carol](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A_Christmas_Carol)

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Noam Chomsky reveals exactly what went wrong in the 2016 presidential election that gave us Trump  
<https://www.rawstory.com/2018/05/noam-chomsky-reveals-exactly-went-wrong-2016-presidential-election-gave-us-trump/>

-----

Moi:

Sent a Doonesbury cartoon with Doonesbury lamenting, "I miss my capacity for outrage."

-----

Steve:

I still have it ... and wish I could turn it off ... cuz in these times ... it's on 24x7x365

-----

Moi:

Hard to watch the world go the direction it has. We all hoped for so much more.

-----

Steve:

I'm so overworked I live second to second continuously ... hope takes awareness of the future ... which I don't have time or energy to ponder.

-----

Moi:

Very Zen, without the Zen.

-----

Steve:

Yeah ... but Zen for the wrong reasons ... Zen like in Fight or Flight mode ... non stop ...

-----

Moi:

A level of intensity that was fun when you were young, but only exhausting and filled with ever-present dread at this writing.

-----

Steve:

When I was younger, I worked fewer hours ... and this area wasn't so crowded ... and I didn't have a house to take care of ... owning a home fucks your weekends.

-----

Moi:

Hard to keep, hard to let go, how our minds do get bound up in our commitments to the this and that.

-----

Steve:

It's a conscious long-term strategy ... one that serendipitously paid off in the current time frame. Shortly after I bought this house the rents started to skyrocket ... to levels I never imagine. To buy this house costs no more than renting a one-bedroom apartment does ... and when you factor in the appreciation ... I'm actually making money on it ... so overall I'm very glad I bought this place when I did ... or I'd be fucked right now ... paying more for renting ... and getting nothing out of it.

-----

Moi:

You've definitely gamed the game well. The trick is someday enjoying the fruits of all the labor.

-----  
Steve:

That's the problem ... mist likely die b4 that happens.

-----  
Moi:

Not too late to cash in your chips and go be a hippie vagabond over in Hawaii.

-----  
Steve:

Hawaii is the most expensive place to live in the US ... Washington looks good but for the weather ... Eugene is still #1 on my list ...

-----  
Moi:

I'm just talking about enjoying your life as much as possible with whatever health and energy you have left.

-----  
Steve:

Thanks for the good thoughts ... I think it's too late .. you have done the right thing ... I'll be working till I'm 65 then died of a heart attack or a stroke 6 months later.

-----  
Moi:

I'm in your corner rooting for ya, Cuz.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Pals over partners: the rise of the 'Friend Parent'  
<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/women/family/pals-partners-rise-friend-parent/>

-----  
Steve:

Pathetic ... jeses ... think about how the kid will feel.

-----  
Moi:



I don't know, might be a lot more positive than some of the harsh relationships and divorces that I've witnessed. Add to that all the kids who've been messed up big time by foster care and worse. I've had plenty of women friends – good spirits who I had no sexual or relationship interest in, but who would have been very good mothers – who would have been far better off having my seed come out of their wombs than the pathetic genetic choices they made. Better to be raised by two sane friends separately than two insane haters together using the kids to get at each other.

-----  
Steve:

Except that if she gets pissed at you for any reason she can mail you for child support for the next 20 years

-----  
Moi:

While in college, and somewhere in my thirties, a couple women asked about providing them with a seed, and I, not realizing how wise I was at the time, passed.

What happens with sperm banks? Are those guys ever forced to pay up?

-----  
Steve:

There's been litigation regarding that ... people who want to breed are ignorant selfish abusive narcissists.

-----  
Moi:

Life is a death sentence, with every sort of torture imaginable inflicted as the given dream allows. What a cruel, selfish thing to bring a child into this world.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Liberals, You're Not as Smart as You Think

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/12/opinion/sunday/liberals-youre-not-as-smart-as-you-think-you-are.html>

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Moi:

I've been telling all the liberals I know that he's going to get re-elected. My bet is the deplorables are going to come out in droves for the midterms, and unless Mueller find a red-hot smoking gun, the Dems can forget about impeachment, much less any criminal charges.

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Steve:

Liberals don't even get that Trump fucking Centerfolds and Porn Sluts ... just makes him a stud in a Right-Wing country boys mind ... more votes for the Alpha Male!

-----

Moi:

Crazy but true.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

The real reason tech billionaires are prepping for doomsday

<https://www.salon.com/2018/05/12/the-real-reason-tech-billionaires-are-prepping-for-doomsday/>

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Moi:

The shards of collapse are always fashioned into something new. It's our nature. The trick is to survive, to abide, whatever new order arises. A good portion of those geeks will be useless if their technologies are no longer practical.

-----

Steve:

Their tech will collapse ... their paper and digital currency will be shit ... and they will just be pencil neck nobody's again ... getting bullied by the coal miners they put out of work ... who all the women will be flocking to for the protection of their arsenals ... from getting gang-raped by roving packs of 16-year-olds ... raised on gang-rape video games their entire lives.

-----

Moi:

Exactly so.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Living Apart Together: A New Option for Older Adults

<https://khn.org/news/living-apart-together-a-new-option-for-older-adults/>

-----

Steve:

Booty call FWB in old age!

-----

Moi:

Too much bother for me, but a good option for them who can endure the visual and texture and rat dog and other domesticating aspects.

-----

Steve:

I know the number of couples who have adopted this pattern and I find it funny because essentially they're getting booty call permanently and the woman thinks that she's being independent these guys are never going to marry these women and they get all the benefits of it without the cost or painted living with him

-----

Moi:

Other than a few roommate situations with women, I've never lived with a girlfriend.

-----

Steve:

I've done so two times ... mistake both times.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

Net neutrality dies on June 11th

<https://www.theverge.com/2018/5/10/17338978/net-neutrality-end-date-fcc>

-----

Moi:

All right by me. Am weary of the internet and all this technology anyway. The head's full enough for this lifetime. So ... more chat time, more walks, more books, more movies, more time at the gym, more nothing time, more Old School everything in the real virtual reality.

-----

Steve:

What this means is it allows Corporations to fuck in the ass ... deeper and wider ... than they already are ... no foreplay ... no lube.

-----

Moi:

Nothing new, and I'm past caring anyway.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

Army goggles help see through smoke and fog; shoot around corners

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/world/2018/05/09/new-army-goggles-help-soldiers-see-through-smoke-fog/588488002/>

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Moi:

Gonna take a while for them toys to work their way down to our level.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

How does alcohol affect your sleep?

<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/321731.php>

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Moi:

It's a wonder that I'm still alive and functioning at all is all I can say.

\* \* \* \*

A month-long series of emails about my discovery and exploration of GABA. They began during the Sunday wee hours after returning home from an early May 2018 day in Morgan Hill with cousin Steve:

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Moi:

Hey, hey,

Home safe and sound, unloaded, up from a couple hours of napping, waiting for the melatonin to kick in. Thanks for a good day. That Indian restaurant is really something.

Working on getting Signal downloaded. Don't usually do much with my phone online, so it may take some fiddling. The other two I've subscribed to, and never used, are ProtonMail and Confide.

Was thinking about the door jam in your garage, and it occurred to me you might also be able to slip a long, thin piece of metal like a ruler under the door to kick it out. Would be much simpler than the pulley and rope idea if there's any kind of gap.

Congrats on your academy award if you get it, and good luck with everything else, too.

Ciao, ciao,

M

-----

Steve:

Yeah ... enjoyed visiting with you too. Forgot to give you some of this GABA stuff I got as a sleeping aid ... works better than Melatonin ... next time around.

I was exhausted yesterday due to poor sleep and crashed not long after you left. Glad you made it back fine.

Let me know if you need any help setting up that Signal app.

Take care,

S

-----

Moi:

Haven't heard of GABA. Looks like I can get it on Amazon. Any particular brand you favor?

-----

Steve:

I bought such a huge amount of this stuff because of a good price break on it and I have enough to supply half of California for the rest of my life ... honestly if you want some of this stuff I have way too much ... and if we figure out a way to connect sometime again soon I can give you a ton of it.

How much is too much ... I bought 5 kilos of it so I had 11 pounds!

Bulk Supplements

<https://www.bulksupplements.com/catalogsearch/result/?q=Gaba>

Wikipedia: Gamma-Aminobutyric Acid

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gamma-Aminobutyric\\_acid](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gamma-Aminobutyric_acid)

-----

Moi:

Yowza, must really work for you. I'm thinking I should experiment with it first. Amazon has the 100-gram powder version for about 12 bucks. Do you take it every day?

-----

Steve:

No ... my general summary of it is that it works better than either Melatonin ... or Benadryl ... and has less side effects ... but does have some. I found that when I took it for more than 3 or 4 days it made me feel sluggish ... it's possible I was just taking too much. In general, it helps me sleep and relax ... but I think it slows your metabolism ... which due to the fact that I am not retired ... I need to keep revved ...  
LOL

Overall I use it over anything else.

The reason I bought the quantity I did is simply because of the price break ... it cost about half as much at that quantity as it does when you buy a single kilo ... partially due to the cost reduction ... and partially due to the elimination of shipping fees.

-----  
Moi:

That much certainly should last a while.

I'd been using a half a Kirkland Sleep Aid every once in a while until my doctor recommended I switch to melatonin. Seems to work, but I'm of a mind to have a war chest with different tools.

Amazon: Kirkland Signature Nighttime Sleep Aid (Doxylamine Succinate)  
[https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B000UIEIBY/ref=oh\\_aui\\_search\\_detailpage?ie=UTF8&psc=1](https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B000UIEIBY/ref=oh_aui_search_detailpage?ie=UTF8&psc=1)

Wikipedia: Doxylamine  
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Doxylamine>

I generally have no trouble falling asleep, but usually wake up an hour or two later, which is when I take the melatonin or doxylamine, that get me back down an hour or three later for (hopefully) another three to four hours. The joy of retirement is that I can take a nap (or two or three) pretty much any time I feel like it.

-----  
Steve:

My driver for getting off of antihistamines was that I read they can contribute to getting dementia ... which I never knew ... until AFTER taking them for about 5 years straight.

-----  
Moi:

Got a 100-gram package of GABA from Amazon, and used it the first time last night. Did the recommended quarter teaspoon. Seemed to work well, and no noticeable hangover at this writing. Curious how much you take, and how often.

-----  
Steve:

I started with  $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon and went to  $\frac{1}{2}$  ... but when I do so I can't do that for more than a night or two ... starts making me feel sluggish ... and I think it slows your metabolism to the point where you can gain weight. Generally, I'd say don't use more than you have to ... to get to sleep ... and not every night ... only when it's hard to get to sleep.

-----  
Moi:

That's the way I do these things, too. Like to mix them up, as well, so that the body doesn't get too laissez-faire about any one.

So thanks for the new tool in the nighttime war chest.

-----

Steve:

BTW ... as I said ... I've got way too much of this stuff ... I can flip you a Kilo ... which is ten times what you bought ... LOL

-----

Moi:

By the way, I'm really responding well to the GABA. Almost like my body has a craving for it. Holding intake to a moderate level – one to three quarter teaspoons a day – but the results feel good. Thanks for sharing.

-----

Steve:

Good to hear ... it had a mellow calming effect.

-----

Moi:

Yes, a very pleasant mellow.

Too many variables to be sure, but I think it may be helping the brain function a little more crisply, as well.

-----

Steve:

Only down side is I found it slowed me down too much when I took like a half teaspoon 3 or 4 days in a row.

-----

Moi:

No problem slowing down at this end ... I've got no deeds to do, no promises to keep.

59th Street Bridge Song

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K-8RljXFSzI>

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

California surpasses UK to become world's 5th largest economy

<https://www.dailysabah.com/economy/2018/05/04/california-surpasses-uk-to-become-worlds-5th-largest-economy>

-----

Steve:

More people slaving away living miserable overworked lives with no time for rest or enjoyment ... to make someone else rich

-----

Moi:

The pharaohs of old would applaud.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

The Coming Collapse

[https://www.opednews.com/articles/The-Coming-Collapse-by-Chris-Hedges-Collapse-Of-Civilizations\\_Corporate\\_Death\\_Debt-180521-482.html](https://www.opednews.com/articles/The-Coming-Collapse-by-Chris-Hedges-Collapse-Of-Civilizations_Corporate_Death_Debt-180521-482.html)

-----

Moi:

An excellent article. I be as ready as anyone I know, and I'm still not ready. Hoping it doesn't happen until after I'm gone, but I ain't counting on it.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent, including a sidebar conversation between he and another friend, Michael Gennaro, who sees the world in a much less skeptical light than Steve and I:

Cash outflow? Major Social Security change projected to begin in 2022

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/money/personalfinance/retirement/2018/05/19/major-social-security-change-coming-2022/34883891/>

-----

Steve:

There is no way to tell when they will actually cut benefits ... but they can't wait until the reserves run out ... they will need to do so ahead of time to soften the impact. My guess is sometime in the next ten years ... after 2022 or later ... because that when it will become an undeniable issue.

This is why people who are cheering on the corporate tax cuts ... or ... those giddy about the stock market going up ... are selling out the future of their kids and old people ... because all of those gains in the stock market that they are so happy about now are essentially coming from a borrowed future and a bankrupt government.



This is the hypocrisy that I see with many liberals today in that they talk about hating Trump and hating the Republicans but they are all jumping for joy because their 401K plans in the stock market has been going up recently ... but that money is all borrowed time on the future it's ... coming from an ever-increasing deficit that will bankrupt the country and there will be no social security or Medicare for anybody.

You can't responsibly say that you don't like the Republicans are Trump and then be happy because the stock market is going up ... the stock market is going up because they cut corporate taxes which is bankrupting the revenue stream and in addition it's coming from deregulation which is going to pollute and kill the planet ... so all of the gains in the stock market ultimately are rooted in the fact that we are ruining the life source of our planet and bankrupting our Revenue stream for social programs.

-----  
Moi:

Fortunately, I won't need it too much longer. My goal is to spend every last dime in the piggy bank, and then back to oblivion.

-----  
Steve:

FYI ... another discussion ... in which I'm trying to point out the disparity between what I see Liberals saying about hating Trump and the Republican Agenda ... while at the same time being down right giddy about benefiting financially from it.

Let me know what you think of my perspective on this ... I think I did a pretty good job of ferreting out the detail.

-----  
Sidebar with Michael Gennaro:

Mike,

Here are my thoughts on this, Mike ... and to underscore this ... I believe it is what is wrong with our Country in a foundational way:

1. FACT: The stock market is going gang busters because:
  - a. Corporate taxes are being cut
  - b. Deregulation

This all comes at the expense of social program, badly needed infrastructure deferred maintenance, and the environment. Our country is crumbling ... social security will go bankrupt ... or at least be severely cut back ... Medicare will do the same ... and the planet will die ... and on and on. In addition, this contributes even more to disparity of wealth ... that is already obscene. This is not Chicken Little thinking ... these are facts.

2. Given this ... what I see on the Left is people who bash Trump and the Right agenda ... and acknowledgement of the above Facts ... but they are literally giddy about their retirement funds going up ... which is a direct result of the above. The reason being that you can achieve short term financial gains by selling out the social program ... workers health ... and environment ... both short and long term. The "Cost" ... is the future of your children and old people ... who will be living in abject poverty and have no future.

3. In order to reconcile those two ... I only see two options:

a. Ignorance: They simply don't see the relationship between the two ... the stock market going up and the true cost of what is driving that.

b. Hypocrisy: They do see the relationship ... know that it is has these impacts and costs to the welfare of the population and planet ... but when they see how much money they're making ... they essentially sell out their morals and values ... and run with the pack ... and jump for joy because they have theirs.

I can forgive the Ignorant ... I have a challenge doing so for the Hypocrites ... because they know their gains come at a catastrophic cost to humanity ... which it will ... but peoples values tend to bend when they personally benefit ... even if it's at the expense of others ... including their own children and grandchildren.

To circle back around ... our economic system has become to abstracted and obfuscated that the average person in this country is contributing to the pain, suffering, and demise of the rest of humanity ... and they are either completely unaware that they are contributing to it ... or they throw their hands up and say ... Well, I can't do anything about it ... so I might as well enjoy the benefits of trashing the planet and making the obscenely wealthy more so ... as long as I get a little piece of the pie.

What should people do? Well, they could at least put their money where their mouths are ... and perhaps divest themselves of that machine that is killing the planet ... there are mutual funds designed to do just that ... essentially more ethically invested funds. You used to be able to put your money in a savings account or bonds that earned at least 6 or 7% ... but those days are gone ... and I think it's intentionally designed that way ... to force people to invest in the market .... Where their retirement funds can be "Harvested" every 10 years or so ... which I think will happen again in the next recession ... which is going to make the last two look like a walk in the park.

Yeah ... it's problematic ... you're so engrained in the system ... that it's difficult to extract yourself ... from a system that is killing the entire planet ... and subjecting a significant number of people and countries to what amounts to a thinly veiled colonialism ... that tortures and kills people ... to make their economies open to western corporations to use and abuse their resources and population.

Short of moving to another country there's not much you can do. But people could at least be honest about it. And if you're happy with the personal gains that are a result of all the above ... at least admit that you're essentially a Republican and Pro-Trump ... because that's what it comes down to.

That's my two cents on that ... or perhaps a buck or two.

-----

And back from Michael Gennaro:

Steve,

I don't see how you can accuse many liberals of hypocrisy if they hate Trump and his Republican supporters but are happy if their 401Ks go up. Most so-called liberals were not happy to see the tax reform. I can only speak for myself and of course I'm convinced that the recent tax reform is an awful thing driven by the Republican's need to reward their corporate and wealthy donors. I wish it had never happened, I wish the corporate tax rate was not decreased by 40% with no way to pay for it, and I'd be very happy if that law could be reversed and the stock market would adjust downward accordingly.

I don't know what you want so called liberals to do to show they are not duplicitous in this regard. It can be recognized and bemoaned that there are many things happening for short-term benefit at long-term risk. But being bothered by all that and being happy if your investments go up are not mutually exclusive. Many factors impact stocks, and I don't believe a stock market crash tomorrow would be a good thing. I honestly do not want to see the market go up too much or too fast, but I would like to see it rise at historical percentages over time. I don't feel hypocritical.

-----

And my response to Gennaro's response: A Yaj Ekim Jester Amok graphic of a man with his head up his ass, with the caption, "You cannot win an argument against ignorance."

And Steve's response to my response: LOL

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Suicide Rate Rising

<https://mobile.nytimes.com/2016/04/22/health/us-suicide-rate-surges-to-a-30-year-high.html>

-----

Moi:

It all depends what any given person is willing to endure in a game they will inevitable lose anyway.

-----

Steve:

At least you get to control your death ... in a world where the ability to control much about your life is dwindling to near zero

-----

Moi:

As long as you don't wait too long.

\* \* \* \*

A woman named Elizabeth Castro had posted links to my first website created during a six-week course at Humboldt State in 1999. Below is an email sent to update it to the website licensed by Network Solutions and hosted on the Creative Alternatives server:

New Gallery Entries

November 30, 1999

Thanks to all of you who have submitted entries for my "Created with HTML 4 VQS Gallery" page. I've finally gotten a new set of links up and running. Take a look. While this is one of my most time-consuming jobs, it's also one of my favorites. I love seeing what you've all created with my book. In this new batch, you'll find Michael Holshouser's Zen musings, Michael Spry's compelling discussions about adoption (and theme parks), Phil Silva's wooden bows, John Clifton's Sydney Electric Train Society page, Heather Butlin's gorgeous hand painted silk scarves, Martha Cox' Go Take a Hike site, David Johnson's Tierra Pintada studio, and much more.

I've also added "New" flags so you can quickly pick out the new offerings. Please let me know if you find corrections that should be made. Thanks.

And yes, I do plan to split the Gallery entries into multiple pages, just as soon as I can!

-----

Elizabeth Castro: Contact Me

There was a time when I responded to almost all my email. I worried over it morning and night, I spent hours each week. Two things changed. First, I finally realized I simply could not keep up with it. And second, I began to get more than 300 spam messages a day. Nevertheless, I know what it's like to feel completely stuck and not know where to get help. I have provided a help forum here on my site so that readers can help each other. And here is a contact form that you can use to write me. While I may not respond to every message, please know that I do read them all, and appreciate your comments and feedback. I especially like seeing the web sites that you've created!

Only the email and comments fields are required. (My privacy policy is to never share email addresses with anyone. Period.)

Name

Last Name

Email

Confirm email

Subject

Your comments here:

Type the contents of this image please:

Thanks!

Elizabeth Castro

-----

Hey, Liz,

Just to let you know the "Zen musings" you refer to in the posting made on 11/30/99 at [http://www.cookwood.com/html4\\_4e/news/index.html](http://www.cookwood.com/html4_4e/news/index.html) are now at a different web address in case you want to update the link.

The Stillness Before Time

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/>

The Return to Wonder

<http://thereturntowonder.blogspot.com/>

Also, my email address is longer than the field allows:

[mholshouser@creative-alternatives.org](mailto:mholshouser@creative-alternatives.org)

Thanks for your HTML book, and for sharing my website.

Ciao, ciao,

Michael

\* \* \* \*

A fax sent to Bare Bones Software sales department on March 26, 2008, regarding getting an update of their BBEdit HTML software:

I recently purchased an Apple MacBook with Leopard OS X Version 10.5.2. Please send an update of your BBEdit software that was purchased on February 20, 2007. The customer Number was 46763150, and the Order Number 125898515. My email address is [mholshouser@creative-alternatives.org](mailto:mholshouser@creative-alternatives.org), and the registration address is 1112-4 Cedar Creek Drive, Modesto CA 95355-5213. I downloaded your 30-day update the other day, and look forward to using your product for years to come. Copies of all supporting emails are attached.

Thanks,

Michael

P.S. If you're philosophically inclined, and are interesting in seeing my rudimentary use of BBEdit, check out The Stillness before Time at <http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/>.

\* \* \* \*

Letter sent to Modesto Junior College English professor, Russ Kelly, with a copy of "The Stillness Before Time":

December 26, 2014

John Russell Kelly

519 Mensinger Avenue  
Modesto, CA 95350

Dear Russ,

It popped into mind the other day to share with you what became of one your former intro English students from back in the early 70's. Your kick-start with Vonnegut, Brautigan, and whatever else was on the reading list, somehow led to Camus, Hesse, Voltaire, Nietzsche, Krishnamurti, Lao Tzu, Buddha, Shankara, Nisargadatta, and so many others. They, and all the other adventures this life has offered, gradually unlocked the mind, and sent it on an unexpected journey down the solitary pathless.

Teaching is a tough sport, and I just wanted to thank you for putting up with my youthful foolishness in the way back when. If education is about more than merely getting a job, then I would say, for all your effort, at least in one case, probably more, mission accomplished.

Hope you are doing well and enjoying your well-earned retirement.

Best wishes,

M

\* \* \* \*

Letter sent to Ursula K. Le Guin with a copy of "The Stillness Before Time":

August 30, 2004

Ursula K. Le Guin  
P.O. Box 10541  
Portland OR 97206-0541

Dear Mrs. Le Guin,

After watching the re-make of *The Lathe to Heaven* last weekend, I scrolled through your bibliography, and realized what a subliminal impact your writing has had on my existence.

The Books of Earthsea were a quiet inspiration in my youthful wandering, and I recall thinking many times of Ged as I taught myself to sail. And your interpretation of the Tao Te Ching picked up a couple years back resides comfortably with several other versions on the bookshelf.

So, it occurred to me to share with you the philosophical/mystical outcome of it all. A 50-page selection of aphorisms and essays from a large outpouring that began in the late 80's. Nothing that hasn't already been said in one form or another many times by many people in many places. Just a new version that bubbled into mind, was enjoyable to jot down, and no doubt could use some more of that endless revising we both enjoy.

The Stillness Before Time  
<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com>

Hope you find it interesting, and thank you for your contribution to my dream.

Sincerely,

M

P.S. In response to your website comments about people sending you unsolicited material, I also want to let you know that I'm not looking for you to send this on to an agent or publisher, or for a blurb to put on a cover. This is strictly a sharing thing that you needn't feel obligated to even answer. Writing is one of the many "general puttering" things I intrinsically enjoy, and playing the "getting published" game is, by my reckoning, a great deal of bother that I have managed, thus far, to get by well enough without.

\* \* \* \*

Dawn Eden Fletcher was a friend from the Los Gatos and Chico years who attempted to get my writings published by a number of publishing houses. She mailed out a letter I put together. No word, thus far, from the Dead Poets Society:

November 14, 2002

Dawn,

Here's the updated draft of our little letter. Let me know if you have any more suggestions or corrections.

Now the big question is who to send it to. Enclosed is a list of some publishers collected back early in the game. Sent copies off to the ones with addresses and got a small collection of nice rejection letters.

After that, I just decided to give it away in whatever way was made available, which included quite a few copies made at Kinko's, and the web site designed at Humboldt State.

So, at this point, even if no one ever publishes it, hundreds of people, maybe even into the low thousands, have it out there, doing with it whatever the winds of time do with such things. The title really should be *The Silliness of Time*.

Let me know which publishers you think we should aim toward, and I'll print up copies and get them to you for signatures.

Thanks,

Michael

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Bantam New Age Books  
666 Fifth Avenue  
New York, NY 10103

To Whom It May Concern:

At the web site <http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com> is a spiritual/philosophical work I recommend you consider publishing. *The Stillness Before Time* by Michael Holshouser is,

I believe, a viewpoint that many people would find both interesting and relevant.

Back in the 70's and 80's, I owned and operated a bookstore in Los Gatos called Walden Pond Books. If I hadn't retired, and it was available, this book would be in a prominent position on a table near the entrance. I think it would do well as a palm-sized edition for gifts and carry-alongs. *The Stillness Before Time* is just a small fraction of Michael's total writing, so there would be much more material available if it became popular.

Michael may be contacted any of the following ways:

1112-4 Cedar Creek Drive  
Modesto CA 95355-5213

(209) 668-5732 (Home)  
(209) 634-9736 (Work)

[mholshouser@creative-alternatives.org](mailto:mholshouser@creative-alternatives.org)

I hope you will give his thoughts serious consideration. Please feel free to contact me if you have any further questions or comments.

Sincerely,

Dawn Eden Fletcher

\* \* \* \*

An unsolicited letter sent care of J.K. Rowling publisher. Returned with an apologetic explanation that they had a policy of not interfering with Rowling's creative process:

J.K. Rowling  
c/o Bloomsbury Publishing  
36 Soho Square  
London  
W1D 3QY  
England

New Year's Eve  
January 31, 2007

Dear Ms. Rowling,

The other day I was reading the article about you in *Time Magazine*, and what caught my eye were the comments about religion, and your awareness of the role doubt plays. Don't know that you'll find it of interest, but enclosed is a self-published work that came out of my spiritual free fall back in the 90's. Not really marketable I've been told, but enough people have found it suited them, that now and again I print out a handful on the nearest copy machine.



I'm sending it to you as sort of a thank you for all the enjoyment I've gotten from your Harry Potter books and movies. What enviable story-telling skills you have. I've never had the knack or ambition to do more than newspaper articles, emails, brochures and the like, and these days about all I'm good for is wandering about and jotting down aphoristic silliness. A curious thing it is, what each of us feels called to do with our relatively few journeys around the sun.

And while I'm at it, thought I'd pass on an idea for a Christmas children's story that came to mind many years ago, but never got around to being more than an occasional ponder. I'm not sure if the British version of Santa and crew is as crazed as what we do on this side of the world, but because you obviously have the ability to weave it into something fun, you're welcome to use it free gratis if it appeals to you.

Basically, it's a story that's never been fully explained of how Santa Claus carries all the toys to kids around the world. In a nutshell, Santa has an evil twin brother at the South Pole who steals Santa's magic shrinking bag (much like what you came up with in *Deathly Hallows*) a week before Christmas. A small band of unlikely heroes (e.g., a couple of mischievous young elves, the errant son of Rudolf, a young dragon who keeps thing warm the Village, and so on and so forth) set out to take on dark elves, dragons, werewolves, sea creatures and other evil sorts at the bottom of the world. After a variety of near-calamitous adventures, they, of course, win back the bag just in time to save Christmas.

Kind of passé nowadays (what with *Lord of the Rings*, *Dragon Riders*, *Eragon*, *Earthsea*, *Star Wars*, the Grinch, Rudolf, your stuff, and who knows what else), but it might have done something twenty or so years ago when it first came to mind. And it still might be a kick given the right imagination, writing ability and illustrations. Who knows, you might knock out another niche in storytelling history. So, although you no doubt already have a feast of prospects and commitments, this little morsel of an idea is yours if you want it (Yes, this can be considered a binding legal release -- I'm planning, dullingly bureaucratic as it is, on keeping my day job). Or, if you're not interested, but know someone who is, feel free to pass on. It would just be interesting, if it has redeeming value, to see it come to some sort of fruition.

I'll sign off here with a last congratulations on your on having been able to accomplish your dreams so eloquently. It's very pleasing to know that someone reasonably deserving has done well without trampling over others to get there. I look forward to seeing all the ways in which you will use your influence and means to do good things for family, friends, acquaintances and who knows how many strangers. And also, of course, to reading whatever creative enterprises are brewing away in the epicenter of your most excellent imagination.

Well, it's New Year's Eve, and time to wander into the night to celebrate the beginning of yet another year with a pint of amber ale and a shot of something cognac. And after that, the annual viewing of *The Lord of the Rings* into the wee hours.

Enjoy the show. Best wishes, always.

Sincerely,

M

\* \* \* \*

Email to Jeff Nichols, one of the many former bosses at Creative Alternatives, on December 6, 2015

Yo, Colonel Jeff,

Good seeing you last night. Congrats on what looks like the third-time-is-a-charm match with Carrie. Below for your amusement if the rabbit hole ever beckons are the website and other key links to what I'll be leaving behind for what dreams may come – somewhere in the neighborhood of 4,000 pages of babble-on at this writing, and the main reason I retired – with the customary vanity-vanity-all-is-vanity caveat. A curious fate to have been tasked – nothing I would have ever even guessed in the way-back-when – but so it goes.

Meanwhile, keep on keeping on. Stop in at the Geerbucks if you ever have a few hours to burn. Bwahahahaha, so to speak.

Ciao, ciao

M

#### Website

The Stillness Before Time

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/>

#### Main Blogs

The Stillness Before Time

<http://thestillnessbeforetime.blogspot.com/>

The Ponderings of Yaj Ekim

<http://theponderingsofyajekim.blogspot.com/>

The Return to Wonder

<http://thereturntowonder.blogspot.com/>

#### Breadcrumbs

<http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/>

#### PDF's

The Stillness Before Time

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/thestillnessbeforetime.pdf>

The Ponderings of Yaj Ekim

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/theponderingsofyajekim.pdf>

The Return to Wonder (Major edit underway – New copy colored blue)

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/thereturntowonder.pdf>

Breadcrumbs (Compendium)

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/breadcrumbs.pdf>

Breadcrumbs 2018

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/breadcrumbs2018.pdf>

Breadcrumbs 2019

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/breadcrumbs2019.pdf>

Breadcrumbs 2020

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/breadcrumbs2020.pdf>

Conversations

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/conversations.pdf>

Definitions

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/definitions.pdf>

Titles, Titles & More Titles

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/titletitlesandmoretitles.pdf>

Ditties for the Bluegrass Pyre

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/dittiesforthebluegrasspyre.pdf>

Once Upon a Christmas

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/onceuponchristmas.pdf>

(Please note that all writings are subject to annual updates and editing, so downloading current PDF copies every year or so might be a good idea if you want the most current version. This applies especially to Breadcrumbs, which is likely an ongoing work until the last wheezing breath)

Facebook

Michael Holshouser

<https://www.facebook.com/michael.holshouser>

Le Fichier Circulaire de Michaël

<https://www.facebook.com/LeFichierCirculaireDeMichael?pnref=story>

And If I was locked in a deep dark dungeon or cast forgotten upon a desert isle, the one book I would want of all these eyes have read would be the "Ashtavakra Gita" out of the Hindu tradition. It is go-directly-to-the-rabbit-hole-do-not-stop-to-smell-the-flowers-game-over stuff. Everything these hands have scribbled is jabber in comparison. Below are eight translations.

An overview:

Wikipedia: Ashtavakra Gita

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ashtavakra\\_Gita](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ashtavakra_Gita)

Eight translations:

The Heart of Awareness (Byrom)

<http://theheartofawareness.blogspot.com/>

Ashtavakra Gita (Marshall)

<http://theashtavakra.blogspot.com/>

Bitten by the Black Snake (Schoch)

<http://bittenbytheblacksnake.blogspot.com/>

A Duet of One (Balsekar)

<http://aduetofone.blogspot.com/>

Ashtavakra Gita (Richards)

<http://anotherashtavakragita.blogspot.com/>

Astavakra Samhita (Wood)

<http://astavakrasamhita.blogspot.com/>

Ashtavakra Gita (Vedic)

<http://ashtravakrageeta.blogspot.com/>

Ashtavakra Gita (Shastri)

<http://ashtravakrageeta.blogspot.com>

The last chapter of all eight translations:

Ashtavakra Gita: I Am Shiva

<http://ashtavakragitaiamshiva.blogspot.com/>

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Here's What Each Aura Color Means & What It Reveals About How You're Feeling

<https://www.elitedaily.com/p/what-each-aura-color-means-reveals-so-much-about-you-how-youre-feeling-8979513>

-----

Steve:

More complete bullshit.

-----

Moi:

New age babble soars into meaninglessness once again.

I prefer light colors – white, gray, blue, brown – so the car doesn't need to be washed as often. Stick to used cars because I'm frugal, and think it's just downright stupid to be driving around thousands of dollars-worth of vanity. I only need to get to where I'm going, and don't give a rat's ass what people I do or don't know think about me or what I drive.

-----

Steve:

Sub-consciously, you pick those colors because they align with the colors of your chakras ... LOL

-----

Moi:

Keep waiting for the Mothership to get back so I can go home.

\* \* \* \*

Response to a radio article from cousin Steve:

The Population Bomb, 50 Years Later: A Conversation with Paul Ehrlich

<https://tunein.com/podcasts/News--Politics-Podcasts/Commonwealth-Club-of-California-p1060/?topicid=121132970>

-----

Moi:

Another excellent hour of mental masturbation come and gone, and nothing at all changed for it.

... tick ... tick ... tick ...

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on a couple articles I sent:

The shocking viral reaction to a prom dress

<https://www.cnn.com/2018/05/02/opinions/the-shocking-viral-reaction-to-a-prom-dress-yang/index.html>

My culture is NOT your goddamn prom dress.

[https://twitter.com/jere\\_bare/status/989981023076208640](https://twitter.com/jere_bare/status/989981023076208640)

-----

Moi:

More PC madness. Can it get any more stupid?

-----

Steve:

Alas ... I don't have a Twitter account ... can't read this

-----

Moi:

Here's a snapshot. Get a life, Jeremy.

Gave Twitter a bit of a try years ago, but settled on Facebook as more suited for my purposes, and doing very little with it at this writing. Use both mainly to check in on the pulse in the once in a while. Old School is getting me back in its grips.

-----

Steve:

The concept of Cultural Appropriation is just another bullshit means for angry idiots to attack and abuse white people for no reason at all.

What is real is foreigners coming to my country and using my tax dollars to pay for them and their kids ... expecting us to print text books in every language for them ... that's Fiscal Appropriation.

-----

Moi:

And not very PC to remind them.

-----

Steve:

Yeah ... if you tell them to stop robbing you ... you're racist.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

I Know Which Country the U.S. Will Invade Next

<https://www.truthdig.com/articles/i-know-which-country-the-u-s-will-invade-next/>

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Moi:

Dusting off my flag first thing tomorrow morning. Nothing like a flag-waving Fourth of July playing out to the drums of war. We love our Halliburton Wars. Very ummy-yum-yum.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Listen to Barbara Ehrenreich Takes on Wellness Industry in 'Natural Causes' on TuneIn

[https://tunein.com/podcasts/News--Politics-Podcasts/Forum-\(KQED\)-p689/?topicid=121165555](https://tunein.com/podcasts/News--Politics-Podcasts/Forum-(KQED)-p689/?topicid=121165555)

-----  
Moi:

Interesting. The word "industry" says it all.

-----  
Steve:

The powers that be will Capitalize anything they can get you to pay for ... and Death is a pretty good motivator to buy for most people ... but what I get from this is that they are essentially "Inventing" illnesses and Health Maintenance Products ... promising you better Health and longevity ... which this woman says is bullshit.

-----  
Moi:

Whatever they can get insurance to pay for.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

Teen 'obsessed with male sacrifice held pillow over lover's head before plunging knife into chest during sex while dressed as clown'

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/teen-obsessed-male-sacrifice-held-12461875>

Moi:

The guy had plenty of warning that she was one wacked-out chick. He's lucky she didn't know how to use a knife.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

Intermittent fasting: The ultimate beginners guide

<https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/319394.php?sr>

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Moi:

Good article. I've done a variety of fasting and cleansing experiments through the years. These last few spins around the sun, on most days, it's been the wait-until-late-afternoon to do anything more than coffee and water. Even with a considerable amount of time at the gym, the metabolism has slowed down so much in the last decade. Can't eat three meals a day anymore, or I'd be up to 250 pounds within a year. Our attachment to food is always both a fascinating and tiring thing to watch.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on a couple articles I sent:

The Sex Lives Of People Over 65 Are Thriving, Study Finds, So There's Finally Something to Look Forward To

<https://www.bustle.com/p/the-sex-lives-of-people-over-65-are-thriving-study-finds-so-theres-finally-something-to-look-forward-to-8980258>

Older Americans aren't talking about sex and here's why that matters

<https://www.nbcnews.com/health/aging/older-americans-aren-t-talking-about-sex-here-s-why-n871086>

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Steve:

Better living through chemistry ... they've got pills and supplements now that increase the desire and ability to perform ... unfortunately they don't have a pill to fix deceitful manipulative gold diggers who are thinly veiled prostitutes ... who leverage their pussies into a money making machine.

-----

Moi:

Money or no, the thought of having sex with an older woman, most of whom have very well-worn, often obese bodies, is so frightening that I don't think any medication would ever inspire me to make the effort.

-----

Steve:

It takes money to enabling fucking younger women when you are an old man.

-----

Moi:

Young or old, money or no, I'm just not interested in dealing with any woman at anything more than friendship level anymore. My solitude is much too enjoyable. They were intriguing when I was younger and stupider, but there is absolutely no interest in spending that kind of time ever again. Way too much work, way too much bother, and very little return. It's a blessing to be done with it all.

-----

Steve:

That's what extreme wealth affords you ... the ability to have interludes of pleasure ... followed by solitude or other activities ... most men I see Trapped by Marriage etc ... never wanted it ... they Paid for a woman's company with a lifelong commitment ... and most of them regret it. Rich people can engage in sex then walk away without commitment ... unfortunately that benefit is for the one percent.

-----

Moi:

I'm doubtful at this point whether I'd even bother about it if I was rich. Women just aren't that interesting to be around for any great length of time anymore.



-----

Steve:

That's my point ... and the foundation of the prostitution industry ... there's a saying that you're not paying a prostitute for her company ... you're paying her to go away after you're done ... I believe it's true ... it beats committing to a lifetime of stress and headaches ... as you allude to.

-----

Moi:

Always feel so blessed to have never gotten married (and likely divorced), and never had children that I know of, though the means to capture the Golden State Killer could well someday be my undoing, as well, since both Mom and I did those Ancestry.com DNA tests a year or so ago. What a strange thing it would be to have some young stranger knock at the door, and say, "Hello, I think you may be my father." Wonder how many men are sweating that at this writing.

-----

Steve:

It would most likely be the state of CA that would knock on your door ... happened to a friend of mine ... like 15 years after the fact. He impregnated a woman when they were both teenagers ... she said she wanted the kid and for him not to worry ... she didn't expect anything from him ... and he moved to Colorado ... married another woman ... has kids by her ... a whole different life ...

OK ... so one day the CA Welfare Dept. knocks on his door ... wanting back child support for 15 years ... with interest ... and his current wife had no idea he even had another kid ... the whole thing exploded in his face ... when he'd all but forgotten about it.

-----

Moi:

Very ouch, indeed.

I have a friend up in Chico with an even worse story. He paid money every month to a woman up in Montana or some such place, who he had a couple daughters with, but it turned out she was also collecting welfare. He kept no records of his payments, and had to repay the entire amount, or at least a fair portion. He also had a second family with a couple kids, though I'm pretty sure the second wife knew about the first. Fortunately, he was a high-wire lineman, and had the money to swing it.

-----

Steve:

Well, I'm glad I dodged that bullet ... had one issue with a girl ... but took care of it in a more permanent fashion ... no loose ends ...

-----

Moi:

I remember you telling me about that. The trouble is when they don't want to do such things. When they want to keep their trophies.

-----

Steve:

Fortunately, she already had two ... and she hated that ... she didn't want another spud anymore than I did ... so much so ... we split the cost ... it was HER MISTAKE to begin with ... she "forgot" ... to take her "Pill" ... for three fucking days!

I told her at the time ... how can you do that? ... I don't forget to take my vitamins!

-----

Moi:

I suspect our DNA is running the show far more than we realize.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

If a Nuclear Bomb Explodes Nearby, Here's What You Should Do

<https://www.sciencealert.com/if-a-nuclear-bomb-explodes-nearby-what-you-should-do-science-do-not-drive>

-----

Moi:

Be sure to keep a helium tank or a shotgun at the ready, as well. No point in being some sort of Hiroshima survivor as far as I'm concerned.

-----

Steve:

Yeah ... like all the water and food will be irradiated ... so what's the point?

Wonder if the Feminists will still be criticizing men at that point ... most likely be begging them for protection ... looking for the ones with the mist guns and ammo ... oh but wait I forgot we won't have any because they're going to take them all away.

And ... like all the water and food will be irradiated ... so what's the point?

-----

Moi:

Nothing I ever need to experience.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

The Single Biggest Advantage Of Being A Woman In Business

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/carriekerpen/2018/03/27/the-single-biggest-advantage-of-being-a-woman-in-business/#77b5906c8f86>

-----

Steve:

The single biggest advantage of being a woman in business? ... In a word? ... Tits.

-----

Moi:

Just camouflage for the savvy.

From Sun Tzu's The Art of War by Karen McCreadie:

Master Sun talks often about deception and therefore warns against being deceived by the enemy and underestimating their ability. 'He who exercises no forethought but makes light of his opponents is sure to be captured by them.' It's important to properly assess your opponent without prejudice or assumption.

-----

Steve:

The most devious, deceptive, lying, cheating, manipulative, greedy, vindictive, calculating ... I could go on ... but you get the point ... people I've even known in my life ... were all women ... or men ... who act like them.

-----

Moi:

It always amazes me that you're still interested in chasing them. I can't even imagine putting any energy or money into a woman anymore. Looking at the eye candy ones still, but that is as close as I bother getting. I'm no hardcore misogynist – I've had many women friends most my adult life – but I'm definitely not interested in playing the "sugar and spice and everything nice" game anymore. It just ain't true – never was, never will be.

-----

Steve:

Lately I've had no energy to do so ... I've got too much work and other commitments ... basic life has become exhausting.

In general, the conclusion I've come to ... is that women are takers ... from men as least ... they do nothing for a man contrary to mythology ... this shit about women being nurturing and caretakers is flat out bullshit ... I've never met a woman like that in my life ... not in our generation and beyond ... they fuck whoever provides the most material things ... it's nothing more than thinly veiled prostitution ... hell

... our President is fucking centerfolds and porn stars ... with role models like that ... kids don't have a chance.

-----

Moi:

And so self-righteous about it when their gold-digging gets played.

-----

Steve:

Women don't treat the man in their life that they say they love unconditionally ... half as good as they treat their girlfriends ... or their rat dogs for that matter ... most would let their man die if it came down to him or their dog.

-----

Moi:

They can fondle their rat dogs – which I consider nothing more than .22 bait – all they please. Fortunately, I am partial to my own company, and prefer sleeping alone.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

The amount of fan mail the Parkland shooter is receiving is unreal  
<https://www.cnn.com/2018/03/29/us/nikolas-cruz-prison-fan-mail-trnd/index.html>

-----

Steve:

And what does that say about our society?

-----

Moi:

We're just a friggin' twisted species. Same monkey, different day.

-----

Steve:

There's something wrong with a woman who is turned on by a mass murderer.

-----

Moi:

Alexander, Caesar, Hitler, Napoleon, Manson ... all had their camp followers.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Tonight's Powerful, Healing Full Moon will have a Transformative Effect on our Relationships.  
<https://www.elephantjournal.com/2018/03/tonights-powerful-healing-full-moon-will-have-a-transformative-effect-on-our-relationships/>

-----  
Moi:

What a loony species we are.

-----  
Steve:

My sister Debby believes this kind of shit.

-----  
Moi:

Debbie is just one of many. I did my share of hanging with all sorts of people with all sorts off-the-wall delusions, but never bought into any of them.

-----  
Steve:

Given the state of the world ... the overwhelming pain and suffering it is to open one's eyes each day ... I can't blame people for wanting to escape ... but have more respect for the ones that actually do ... by checking out ... that takes true courage ... and have always found it odd that they are labeled coward ... mainstream group think twists everything backwards ... it's all lies and manipulation ... to keep you on the tread mill.

-----  
Moi:

True, true. What motivates any of us who see so much to continue on is indeed a mystery.

-----  
Steve:

The only thing that keeps me going is the hope ... however delusional ... that I'll get to some point where I'll be able to reach a plateau to rest and relax for a few years before I check out ... it seems so far away I don't know if I'm going to make it.

-----  
Moi:

You certainly endure a lot. Wish you could get out and enjoy it now.

-----  
Steve:

Minimum is 3 years ... more like 5 though.

-----  
Moi:

Ugh ... but oh well ... stiff upper lip ... carry on.

-----  
Steve:

Been carrying on my entire life ... I don't understand people being afraid of death ... when I think of it ... it literally feels like it will be a relief ... I'm looking forward to it.

-----  
Moi:

I feel the same. That's the big reason I retired early. Was just too baked to want to carry on. And I've never done anything compared to what you do.

Still hanging with the Portland woman?

-----  
Steve:

In general ... but as we only see each other every few months ... I don't see how this is going to work ... she's nice and pleasant to hang out with ... if I were retiring in less than two years it would be realistic ... but doubt this for five years doesn't make sense.

-----  
Moi:

Probably depends on what her options are in the tick-tick-tick of it all.

-----  
Steve:

Well, I'm reasonably sure we'd both prefer to see someone more often ... I'm feeling pretty isolated on my end and need to get some social contact ... although the lack of free time ... all-consuming job ... long commute ... and ever increasing health issue ... make it difficult ... no energy or time left over to have a social life.

On her end a development that is impacting her a lot ... is her mother who used to live in the Bahamas became ill a couple of month ago ... almost died ... she moved her to Portland for 6 months ... with the plan to share taking care of her between her ... and her sister in Canada. So the girl in Portland's life ... is consumed by taking care of her mother now ... it's completely changed her life.

-----  
Moi:

Nothing easy about this getting old for any of us.

-----  
Steve:

The girl in Portland ... doesn't seem to realize how fast she's going to get old ... she's my age ... 57 ... and when I've mentioned to her that I really don't see enjoying life beyond 80 ... she's shocked. She thinks she's going to be doing Zumba classes at the gym into her 90's ... her mother is like 77 ... and is falling off a cliff ... half blind ... disoriented ... heart problems ... and I don't see her living more than a couple more years. So, Christine ... that's her name ... is starting to realize that in 20 years that could be her.

I told her that your health declines in your 50's and accelerates in your 60's and 70's ... my Father was exceptional ... not many make it to 95 with few problems ... I've got more health problems in my 50's than he had in his 80's.

I just think a lot of people don't realize how short life really is ... they're all walking around thinking they're going to live forever ... and most pointedly ... that they're energy and health will be the same up until they are old. And this idea that you're going to work until you're 67 or 70 is essentially working until you have no life left for the most part.

-----  
Moi:

Only 16 years until 80 at this end, if I make it that long. Doing better than many if not most of my high school peers, but the decline is evident every day in many ways. The day-to-day is pretty much about preservation and maintenance anymore.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Historical Evidence That Jesus Rose from the Dead

<https://www.westernjournal.com/historical-evidence-that-jesus-rose-from-the-dead/>

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Steve:

What a load of total SHIT!

-----  
Moi:

What is scary is how friggin' many people believe it.

-----

Steve:

And why would you worship a murderous narcissistic tyrant of a God like the one in the Bible anyway? He was an asshole ... worse than Trump ... if he'd had a smartphone he would have tweeted for eternity ... no wonder Satan bailed on him.

-----

Moi:

I'm just not into duality or idolatry or groupthink.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

No, There Is no Such Thing as ADHD

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-theater-the-brain/201503/no-there-is-no-such-thing-adhd>

-----

Moi:

Put any kid out in a natural setting playing and working, and Mother Gaia will teach them everything they need to know.

-----

Steve:

We've created an artificial world that makes people sick ... physically, mentality, and emotionally ... then we diagnose them as having some disorder ... and drain them of their finances via the corporate medical complex ... then push them out on the streets ... then wonder why they go postal.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with Cliff McFelter on an article I sent:

Take the President's Finger Off the Nuclear Button

[www.politico.com/magazine/story/2017/10/20/donald-trump-nuclear-button-north-korea-215730](http://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2017/10/20/donald-trump-nuclear-button-north-korea-215730)

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Cliff:

How about we just take his fingers off ... Period. And then take his brain and put it in a jar ... on display at the Smithsonian. Of course, this will have to happen soon while there's still a Smithsonian. But with the lamest republicans (and gutless democrats) in the history of the country, what are the chances of getting this buffoon out of office?? Slim to none it seems ... He's just a sad commentary on human behavior. Sometimes it seems like having a ringside seat to Armageddon ... and I didn't even buy a ticket.

-----

Moi:



An interesting thing to be witness to our rise and decline, that's for sure. Very disappointing, very pathetic, to say the least. One wonders what Caligula or Nero would have done with Twitter?

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with Cliff McFelter on an article I sent:

"A Duty to Warn" and the Dangerous Case of Donald Trump

<https://www.commondreams.org/views/2017/09/15/duty-warn-and-dangerous-case-donald-trump>

-----  
Cliff:

This shows it pretty damn clear ... he's absolutely, positively unfit to be POTUS.

Still waiting for some insider to take one for the country...maybe a congressperson with a terminal illness, or a cook or butler with the same. He needs to be gone.

When Mueller exposes his illegalities with Russia, he'll most likely wag the dog with a nuke to N Korea or some such diversion tactic. He is one dangerous man.

-----  
Moi:

And itching to use that briefcase to off North Korea. Whoever's going to do the right thing shouldn't wait too much longer.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with Cliff McFelter on an article I sent:

Why Liberals Aren't as Tolerant as They Think

<https://flipboard.com/@flipboard/flip.it%2FmvWDFV-why-liberals-arent-as-tolerant-as-they-/f-abfe6e6dab%2Fpolitico.com>

-----  
Cliff:

This sounds mostly true, and fairly interesting ... but to this day I still cannot see how anybody thinks DT is presidential. Or intelligent. Or in any way fit to be president of the USA. Just baffling.

-----  
Moi:

It is beyond-all-pales boggling, indeed, indeed.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with Cliff McFelter on an article I sent:

This is how your world could end

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2017/sep/09/this-is-how-your-world-could-end-climate-change-global-warming>

-----

Cliff:

I think I'm ready for it ... so much crap going on in the world it's just a bit much to even try to follow it. I'm looking for a cave to crawl into. A warm tropical cave preferably. If these aren't the end of times, it sure is putting on a good show for us.

-----

Moi:

I think we'll manage to get through it tolerably well in the relative sense, unless there's a comet or a nuclear holocaust, but pity the future, that's for sure. Anyone age 40 or younger, maybe even 50-ish, is screwed by my reckoning.

Worldometers

[www.worldometers.info/world-population/](http://www.worldometers.info/world-population/)

Poodlewaddle

<http://www.poodwaddle.com>

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Cliff:

Yep. I really don't recall any time in the past when the future looked so bleak. I thought Nixon was a sick enough politician but number 45 is in a class by himself. I feel sad when I think of my 3-year-old granddaughter ... what kind of world will she grow up in?? If 45 prevails, it won't be a pretty one.

-----

Moi:

The one-percenters and their minions just keep chip-chip-chipping away at everyone who allows it.

Oliver Stone's "The Untold History of the United States." Well worth a watch if you haven't seen it.

Wikipedia: The Untold History of the United States

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Untold\\_History\\_of\\_the\\_United\\_States](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Untold_History_of_the_United_States)

Netflix: The Untold History of the United States

[https://dvd.netflix.com/Movie/Oliver-Stone-s-Untold-History-of-the-United-States/80127997?strackid=70d3655ea812fc20\\_1\\_srl&trkid=201891639](https://dvd.netflix.com/Movie/Oliver-Stone-s-Untold-History-of-the-United-States/80127997?strackid=70d3655ea812fc20_1_srl&trkid=201891639)

Amazon: The Untold History of the United States

<https://www.amazon.com/Untold-History-United-States->

Various/dp/B00GYG8BKK/ref=sr\_1\_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1499663124&sr=8-1&keywords=the+untold+history+of+the+united+states

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with Cliff McFelter on an article I sent:

Chilean Economist Manfred Max-Neef: US Is Becoming an "Underdeveloping Nation"  
[https://www.democracynow.org/2010/9/22/chilean\\_economist\\_manfred\\_max\\_neef\\_us](https://www.democracynow.org/2010/9/22/chilean_economist_manfred_max_neef_us)

-----  
Cliff:

Not to mention that the US is becoming the laughing stock of the rest of the world. Heard a hilarious comedy routine from the Australian PM ... he nails the absurdity of DT. It's just off the charts right now. The most unfit man in the world, at the helm of a once great nation. And due to the massive hypocrisy from the repub house and senate he's going to skate on all the obstruction charges and such ... it's a sad situation for sure. He truly is a sad excuse for a leader ... or for that matter ... a human being.

-----  
Moi:

Pathetic beyond all bounds, indeed, indeed.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with Ninos David on an article he sent:

The most ambitious country in the world?  
<http://www.bbc.com/travel/story/20180311-the-most-ambitious-country-in-the-world>

Wikipedia: Kiasu  
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kiasu>

Kiasu is a Hokkien (Chinese dialect) word that comes from 'kia', which means afraid, and 'su', which means to lose: fear of losing out. In 2007, the word was included in the Oxford English Dictionary, where it's described as '...a grasping, selfish attitude'.

In practical terms, this means Singaporeans hate missing out and love a bargain. They will queue endlessly for the latest model of a phone or even a limited-edition Hello Kitty toy in a McDonald's Happy Meal. Singaporeans themselves joke about their 'elbows out' mentality at buffet meals, piling their plates as high as possible. And going to a food court means quickly coming to terms with the Singlish word 'chope', which means reserving a space while getting food by putting something such a packet of tissues or umbrella on the table.

"Kiasuism is still rather controversial as a behaviour," said local literary critic Gwee Li Sui. "Nobody likes it done to them, and yet many quite happily practise it. When we see others show it, our feelings range from awe and mild amusement to annoyance and embarrassment."

-----

Moi:

We've got 7.6 billion people on this planet. We've gone up over 6.5 billion in the last 200 years. It was about 2.5 when you and I were born. Worldometers has us hitting 8 billion in 2023 and 10 billion in 2055. My bet is kiasuism is in its infancy.

Worldometers

<https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/>

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Ninos:

Will be gone by then, enjoy your coffee.

-----

Moi:

That I do, indeed, indeed. I've long since reached the point where doom and gloom set the happy endorphins ablaze. The Dark Side ain't dark to me, is one of my regular quips.

-----

Ninos:

That is areal and meaningful success in life. Others will get jealous of you for where you stand.

-----

Moi:

I bask in envy, too.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

South Carolina lawmaker pulls out loaded gun during constituent meeting, audience says  
<https://www.politico.com/story/2018/04/06/ralph-norman-loaded-gun-507288>

-----

Steve:

The problem with this article is it's presenting it as though he did something wrong ... if he was legally licensed and had a right to carry it there shouldn't be any problem with it ... the problem is the reaction of the fucking Nervous Nellie's that think that simply having a gun on a table is some kind of a threat to them ... people are way too sensitive about this ... they're freaked out ... there's more of a problem with people's reaction than anything else from what I can tell

-----

Moi:

PC times ... funny in a sad sort of way.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

Aging Populations Will Challenge Healthcare Systems All Over the World

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/williamhaseltine/2018/04/02/aging-populations-will-challenge-healthcare-systems-all-over-the-world/#247e6372cc34>

-----

Steve:

Yep ... this will collapse our economic system ... having a decreasing young population ... many being put out of work by automation and AI ... supporting an ever-increasing population of old people ... is not sustainable. Medicare and Social Security will bankrupt the country ... so they will reduce benefits ... and up the retirement age ... for a country that doesn't want to hire old people. We're going to see a huge population of old sick homeless people ... dying on the streets.

-----

Moi:

The future grows darker every day.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

Airmen fired, demoted over dinosaur puppet video

<https://www.cnn.com/2018/04/18/politics/tennessee-air-national-guard-puppet-video/index.html>

-----

Steve:

Sounds like they just wasted all the investment in training them.

-----

Moi:

True, true, but maybe there's too much of this sort of thing going on, and they feel the need to send a shock wave through the system.

Sun Tzu and the Lesson of the Concubines

[www.cmmmagazine.com/blogs/duc-phams-blog/duc-pham-september/](http://www.cmmmagazine.com/blogs/duc-phams-blog/duc-pham-september/)

Them puppets are a threat to law and order.

-----

Steve:

But who are the puppets, really? The next Halliburton War is queueing up.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

You Can't Handle the Truth – at Least on Twitter

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/you-cant-handle-the-truth-at-least-on-twitter/>

False information spreads much faster and farther than the truth on Twitter—and although it is tempting to blame automated “bot” programs for this, human users are more at fault.

-----

Moi:

Truth, what is that, anyway?

or ...

Truth, what a concept.

or ...

Truth, just another lie.

or ...

Truth, the five-letter T-word.

or ...

Truth: Yours or mine? Hers or his? Theirs or ours?

or ...

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with Chuck Hooper on an article I sent:

You Can't Handle the Truth – at Least on Twitter

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/you-cant-handle-the-truth-at-least-on-twitter/>

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Chuck:

There's no more truth.

PSA in which fake Obama warns about 'deep fakes' goes viral

<https://view.yahoo.com/show/nbc-today-show/clip/61099875/psa-in-which-fake-obama-warns-about>

-----

Moi:

Yowza! Makes photoshopping look pretty tame.

Truth, what is that, anyway?

or ...

Truth, what a concept.

or ...

Truth, just another lie.

or ...

Truth, the five-letter T-word.

or ...

Truth: Yours or mine? Hers or his? Theirs or ours?

or ...

-----

Chuck:

Good titles. Write the book.

-----

Moi:

I have written the book – over 4,500 pages at this writing ... for almost 30 years now ... it could be 45 one hundred-pagers ... or 90 fifty-pagers – but it can't compete with the Kardashians and Donald Trump, much less Harry Potter. My best-case fate is being on the reading list of some future Dead Poets Society. Joy to my wind-swept bones.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Duke Students Who Hijacked Alumni Event: Punishing Us Would Hurt Us Mentally  
<https://reason.com/blog/2018/04/20/duke-students-alumni-protest-university>

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Steve:

What a bunch of shit ... they should be expelled.

-----

Moi:

The last line catches it: The student activists of 2018 require a lot of hand-holding as they overthrow their oppressors.

During the rebellions of our youth, I can't recall expecting authority figures to be in any way interested in our mental health. Note to kids: Life is not fair. So it goes, too bad, so sorry, oh well, deal with it, get over it, move on. You're not the first, and you likely won't be the last (unless someone pushes the nuclear button or ebola weaponizes).

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Steve:

I can't believe someone uses a bull horn to disrupt an event ... for an institution they're getting an education from ... then claims that being disciplined for doing so ... is causing them undue mental stress ... it's absurd.

-----

Moi:

There appears to be no inanity which will not be explored to its full potential.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

Famous Cocaine Mule Sentenced to Eight Years

<https://www.rollingstone.com/culture/news/instagram-famous-cocaine-mule-sentenced-to-eight-years-w519254>

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Steve:

She's guilty as all fuck ... and blaming it all on the guy ... she's a whore as well ... oh ... excuse me ... I mean an Escort.

-----

Moi:

We all use what we got.

From Mission: Impossible II

Mission Commander Swanbeck: [during a briefing in Seville, Spain] Ms. Hall and Ambrose had a relationship which he took very seriously ... she walked away and he's been wanting her back ever since. We believe she's our surest and quickest way of locating him.



Ethan Hunt: And then what?

Mission Commander Swanbeck: Make sure she continues to see him, gets him to confide in her, and report to you.

Ethan Hunt: You made it sound as if I was recruiting her for her skills as a thief.

Mission Commander Swanbeck: Well then, I misled you, or you made the wrong assumption. Either way, we are asking her to resume her prior relationship – not do anything she hasn't already done ... voluntarily, I might add.

Ethan Hunt: No. She's got no training for this kind of thing.

Mission Commander Swanbeck: What? To go to bed with a man and lie to him? She's a woman – she's got all the training she needs.

Google Images: Melina Roberge

<https://www.google.com/search?client=safari&rls=en&q=Melina+Roberge&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8>

-----

Steve:

How do you write women so well?

<https://youtu.be/pBz0BTb83H8>

-----

Moi:

Reason and accountability ... One of my favorite movie clips of all time.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

I paid off my wife's student loans — then she filed for divorce after two years of marriage

<https://www.marketwatch.com/story/i-paid-off-my-wifes-student-loans-then-she-filed-for-divorce-after-two-years-of-marriage-2018-04-21>

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Steve:

Jesus ... glad I dodged that bullet.

-----

Moi:

Have gun, will travel.

-----

Steve:

They never talk about how women use men financially and materially ... this kind of thing is just as bad in my opinion as physical rape ... the #MeToo Movement should acknowledge that women use sex and emotions to manipulate men and use them ... and the man is left feeling violated. Any man who has bought a woman dinner and taking her out on the town and then never heard from her again understands how it feels ... it's no different than how a woman feels when she gets fucked and then never called again ... and it's probably a more tangible reason for that and that she was probably just a lousy fuck.

-----

Moi:

Take away the dance of our DNA, and what is there between us? We are two very different species.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

7 Forces Driving America Toward Civil War

<https://townhall.com/columnists/johnhawkins/2018/04/21/draft-n2473193>

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Steve:

Read the last section ... #7

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Moi:

Trying to take away everyone's guns is not even going to come close to happening. The guns stores are full of customers, and the gun ranges are, too. Went to the Manteca Sportmens Club the other day, and saw all sorts of things that Sacramento has made illegal. No way is anyone going to let the government take them away. No way will the police or military put themselves in the line of fire even trying. Whoever thinks otherwise is yapping away in the wind. All these young protesters are just wasting their time.

And I think it's less about civil war than the continued descent into chaos, into anarchy. Lots of angry groups, but all of them angry about different things. No way are they going to come together in any organized way.

They say they want a revolution, well then, they must change their minds ... Evolution is the revolution.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Dems sue Russia, Trump campaign, WikiLeaks over 2016 election

<https://a.msn.com/r/2/AAw6YTh?m=en-us&ocid=News>

-----

Moi:

What a world ... I won't miss us.

-----

Steve:

They aren't going to get anywhere with trying to sue Russia ... I'm sure the Russians are laughing it off.

-----

Moi:

Boggling how ridiculous we must look to everyone out there anymore.

-----

Steve:

Think about it ... Russia is threatening us with Apocalyptic Nuclear Weapons as recently as a few weeks ago ... and the DNC is trying to sue them? How absurd ... what a joke ... it's like going back and imagining that the Germanic Tribes would try to sue Rome for war crimes ... they would just march back over your homeland to make a point ... like ... by raping and pillaging a few hundred more villages ... just to snap you back into reality.

-----

Moi:

We are so dumbed down at this point that I'm doubtful we're capable of snapping back into anything close to reality.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

I guess the lesson here is: don't get divorced.

<https://qz.com/1250527/i-guess-the-lesson-here-is-dont-get-divorced/>

-----

Steve:

This guy is an idiot ... the lesson here is ... never get married to begin with.

-----

Moi:

Jesus friggin' Christ, how lucky I feel to have never endured such an insane existence. Thank god I never got anyone pregnant, or if I did, they've never managed or tried to find me. Would probably be living some well-hidden expatriate existence in Europe or Asia if my seed had landed, especially in one of the more crazy furrows I plowed.

Title of the book: The Way of Michael: No Woman, No Children, No House, No Debt.

----  
Steve:

My attitude towards marriage has been don't go there since I was a child ... I got married once but I had nothing to lose the way I look at it ... she made twice as much money as me ... she never wanted to have children ... and she told me you can fuck other women if you want to but you just have to share them with me ... which I did ... I looked at that as pretty good deal ... except I didn't factor in the insanity issue ... which trumps everything else in the end game.

----  
Moi:

Astounding to look back at all the zaniness my lower brain put me through. How fortunate that my fate had another end in mind.

----  
Steve:

My mom told me one time that when I was 10-years old I walked up to her in the kitchen and said I'm never going to get married

----  
Moi:

My comment to my mom sometime in late college was if there was a little red button that I could push that would erase humankind, I'd punch it without a second thought.

From Reddit. We are not alone.

"I guess the lesson here is: Don't get divorced." Ummm... no. Don't risk it in the first place: don't get married.

[https://www.reddit.com/r/MGTOW/comments/8cfr5/i\\_guess\\_the\\_lesson\\_here\\_is\\_dont\\_get\\_divorced\\_u\\_mmm/](https://www.reddit.com/r/MGTOW/comments/8cfr5/i_guess_the_lesson_here_is_dont_get_divorced_u_mmm/)

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

This Strange Syndrome Causes People to Think Their Loved Ones Have Been Replaced by Impostors  
<https://www.sciencealert.com/this-strange-syndrome-causes-people-to-think-their-loved-ones-have-been-replaced-by-impostors>

----  
Moi:

So many ugly ways to decline and demise. Why would anyone put themselves or others through so much pain and bother? Assuming we are talking final exit by our own hand, the trick is to not wait too long before letting go, to breathe the last breath with a few chips on the table. Wait too long, and it is a

pointless roller coaster ride for you and everyone around you.

Thanks for the links you've been sending. I'll be adding them to my blog in some near soon.

Final Exit and Related Links

<https://finalexitandrelatedlinks.blogspot.com>

Don't know if you've done your will yet, but you really should at least put me down as your angel of death on the power of attorney documentation.

----

Steve:

Working on finding an attorney to do the trusts ... my accountant is going to refer me.

----

Moi:

Might not want to wait too long, or it could well be she-who-must-not-be-named running your show. You might consider doing some temp thing just to make your do-not-resuscitate intentions clear.

Google Search: Do Not Resuscitate Forms

<https://www.google.com/search?client=safari&rls=en&q=do+not+resuscitate+forms&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8>

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

From 'fire and fury' to peace prize? Some talk of a Nobel award for Trump on North Korea.

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/from-fire-and-fury-to-peace-prize-some-talk-of-a-nobel-award-for-trump-on-north-korea/2018/04/30/2b7f2182-4c8a-11e8-84a0-458a1aa9ac0a\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.692ea41c94de](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/from-fire-and-fury-to-peace-prize-some-talk-of-a-nobel-award-for-trump-on-north-korea/2018/04/30/2b7f2182-4c8a-11e8-84a0-458a1aa9ac0a_story.html?utm_term=.692ea41c94de)

----

Moi:

Irony and paradox rule.

----

Steve:

Yeah ... we live in a world where people who threaten a nuclear holocaust ... are candidates for a Nobel Peace Prize.

----

Moi:

The planet of the apes, indeed, indeed.

----

Steve:

Obama didn't deserve one either ... he perpetuated a war his entire 8 years ... and oversaw more drone assassinations than any other President

----

Moi:

Boggling the decisions leaders of this world do to perpetuate their tribal calling.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

'I'm Not Happy. I Want to Die.' Australia's Oldest Scientist Will Travel to Switzerland for Assisted Suicide

<https://time.com/5260855/australia-david-gooddall-euthanasia/>

----

Moi:

At sixty-four in an already so-so body, I can't imagine bothering to go on another forty years. Why anyone would travel across the world to off themselves, is what's odd about it. Who needs government or any other sanction to make that kind of decision? Helium, gun, rope, rocks in the pockets ... Just do it.

----

Steve:

Maybe he wants to have one last really good chocolate bar before he checks out.

----

Moi:

Sweet is sweet, salty is salty, sour is sour, bitter is bitter, umami is umami. I'm sure a Snickers would do just fine. His tongue probably doesn't work all that well anymore anyway.

----

Steve:

Swiss Hooker? ... with a Snickers Bar in her cleavage? ... who knows ... LOL

----

Moi:

If anything like that still drew him, why would he want to off himself?

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Dennis and Kimberly Quaid officially divorce, she gets \$2M in spousal support  
<https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/movies-celebrity/dennis-and-kimberly-quaid-officially-divorce-she-gets-dollar2m-in-spousal-support/ar-AAwr06x?ocid=News>

----  
Steve:

This guy has been cheated on and taken to the cleaners more than once ... why any man with this kind of money and wealth would ever get married ... I don't understand:

----  
Moi:

Because our dicks convince us over and over that we're in love ... and that she really loves us. A bogging that plays out in our heads again, ever again.

Wikipedia: Dennis Quaid  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dennis\\_Quaid](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dennis_Quaid)

----  
Moi:

Three kids all total, so his DNA is happy. Saw him and his band, the Sharks, last year on the free stage at the county fair. He was incredibly energetic for a guy only a year younger than me. I figure drugs – the Wikipedia article talks about heavy cocaine use at one point – or way out there in middle-age wacko land. Easy to see why his relationships aren't the forever kind.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with Chuck Hooper on an article I sent:

This Timeline Shows The Entire History of The Universe, And Where It's Headed  
<https://www.sciencealert.com/timeline-shows-the-entire-history-of-the-universe-and-how-it-ends>

----  
Chuck:

Sooooo, maybe I am NOT immortal.

----  
Moi:

You are, but formlessly, indivisibly so. Detach from the mind-body identity, and discern your true Self in the timeless, prior-to-consciousness, pure awareness, unborn-undying zone.

----

Chuck:

Oh. Zombie?

----

Moi:

No, I think you're going to have to dig a little deeper than Hollywood fare.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

Americans Are A Lonely Lot, And Young People Bear The Heaviest Burden

<https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2018/05/01/606588504/americans-are-a-lonely-lot-and-young-people-bear-the-heaviest-burden>

----

Steve:

Yeah ... problem is our entire culture and economic system is firmly grounded in continuing that ... it's a business model ... make you sick ... then sell you shit to alleviate the pain ... just long enough to sell you some more.

----

Moi:

The trick is to learn to stand alone, and enjoy the solitude.

----

Steve:

I need a balance ... definitely need solitude ... but need connections as well ... and am not getting that at all ... work ... and life's logistics ... is all consuming ... my only down time is relaxing on my couch.

----

Moi:

A brief respite coming your way this Saturday.

----

Steve:

Looking forward to it.

----

Moi:

Me, too.



\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on a radio article he sent:

Listen to Who's Watching Us?

<https://tunein.com/podcasts/Interviews/To-the-Best-of-our-Knowledge-p498/?topicid=119469504>

----

Moi:

Despite the fact that we all being algorithmized, how many are willing to shut everything off?

----

Steve:

It's not really possible ... but you can minimize it ... have as few devices connected to the Internet as possible ... don't buy a thermostat that is Internet enabled ... yes ... I actually know people who have these.

All devices that run on electricity will be Internet Enabled in the near future ... you won't be able to buy ANYTHING that isn't ... BUT ... you don't have to connect it to your network ... like toasters and refrigerators. Some device will be problematic though ... like your TV ... Stereo ... PC ... etc. ... if you don't connect them ... they won't run in the long run .... Because they require getting updates over the Internet to keep up to date ... some of them will be designed such that they won't even run without an Internet connection ... so imagine your stereo won't turn on if it's can't sense an Internet connection ... nor will your TV or PC ... they will be totally dependent upon having an Internet connection. You will be forced to buy Internet services or be completely isolated.

And ... all of these devices ... your PC ... your TV ... your Stereo ... you Phone ... are ALREADY LISTENING AND SEEING EVERYTING IN YOUR HOUSE ... they are doing this now ... I know people who don't believe this ... they are naïve ... this is happening today ... and people are authorizing it when they accept the Privacy Policy.

----

Moi:

Fortunately, I won't have to bother about it all too much longer in the relative sense. Haven't done anything that will land me in San Quentin or Guantanamo, nor are there any plans to anytime ever. Am figuring I can get through whatever's left without too much infringement by "Daddy" Warbucks or Big Brother.

----

Steve:

The net result ... unless you get on the Gov's radar for what you describe below ... is you get inundated with adds on your Facebook and Phone ... aligned with something you said in your living room the other night ... LOL

There's a guy at my work that works in security ... and he knows all this stuff ... so he places his phone in front of a small speaker that is playing NPR 24x7 ... so whoever is tracking him is getting NPR around the clock.

----  
Moi:

The commercial stuff doesn't bother me. Sometimes they come up with something that is interesting, and maybe even worth adding to my already obnoxiously overloaded collection of stuff.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

The 10,000 Year Clock  
<http://longnow.org/clock/>

----  
Steve:

I'd be overjoyed if all time-based disappeared ... and all time referenced technology stopped functioning ... and all time based work coordination stopped ... and we were forced to reconnect with Nature's Rhythms ... if you think about it ... the beginning of the end for Mankind ... was the invention of the clock ... we stopped listening to Nature's Clocks ... and replaced them with Man's Clocks ... and started marching to that artificial rhythm ...

----  
Moi:

We've been bound by every technology, every concept we've ever created, and the clock is definitely a central player in it all. What it would be to again have only sun and moon and stars to frame our daze.

----  
Steve:

Yeah ... at least if women's period cycles were aligned with the Moon ... we could predict when they are going to go psycho ... and avoid them at those times ... LOL

----  
Moi:

I think some American Indian tribes had special isolated tents for such times.

----  
Steve:

Sounds logical and reasonable to me

----

Moi:

Menstrual Rites of the Native Americans

[www.cycleharmony.com/stories/menstrual-myths-a-rituals/menstrual-rites-of-the-native-americans](http://www.cycleharmony.com/stories/menstrual-myths-a-rituals/menstrual-rites-of-the-native-americans)

Menstrual huts were also big amongst the Native American tribes. During the heaviest four days of their period, wives would leave their homes and go to this separate menstrual lodge to commune with other women. Since women tend to menses together, these lodges were often quite full and the women inside we encouraged to engage in some serious “girl time” by discussing female issues and indulging in creative pursuits like storytelling and arts and crafts.

Wikipedia: Culture and Menstruation

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Culture\\_and\\_menstruation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Culture_and_menstruation)

Google Search: Menstrual Rites Of The Native Americans

[https://www.google.com/search?https://www.google.com/search?num=20&newwindow=1&client=safari&rls=en&ei=gIfnWoewKdX8jwSlkaTYCw&q=Menstrual+Rites+Of+The+Native+Americans&oq=Menstrual+Rites+Of+The+Native+Americans&gs\\_l=psy-ab.3...154995.154995.0.155398.1.1.0.0.0.0.220.220.2-1.1.0....0...1.2.64.psy-ab..0.0.0....0.jjSk6g1Az-w](https://www.google.com/search?https://www.google.com/search?num=20&newwindow=1&client=safari&rls=en&ei=gIfnWoewKdX8jwSlkaTYCw&q=Menstrual+Rites+Of+The+Native+Americans&oq=Menstrual+Rites+Of+The+Native+Americans&gs_l=psy-ab.3...154995.154995.0.155398.1.1.0.0.0.0.220.220.2-1.1.0....0...1.2.64.psy-ab..0.0.0....0.jjSk6g1Az-w)

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

Why Munster’s Attack Matters to Our Guns and Borders

<https://townhall.com/columnists/kevinmccullough/2018/04/08/why-muensters-attack-matters-to-our-guns--military-borders-n2468814>

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Moi:

This our modern world may be covered with asphalt and cement and steel and glass and plastic and every sort of mind-made invention, but it is still a jungle. Pay attention, you might live longer.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Michael Cohen and the End Stage of the Trump Presidency

<https://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/michael-cohen-and-the-end-stage-of-the-trump-presidency>

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Moi:

We can only hope with fingers crossed and crossed again.

-----

Steve:

Toes, too ... LOL

-----

Moi:

Of course, then Pence will be up to bat, which will only be another shade of zoo.

-----

Steve:

Another Christian-Muslim Holy War on the horizon.

-----

Moi:

Same dogma war that's been going on since Pope Urban II kicked it off in 1095. The only difference is now it's headed our way.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

NOVA: Climate Change Episode

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/earth/decoding-weather-machine.html>

-----

Moi:

Some great science going on, and no end of interesting technological countermeasures, as well. There's no denying human impact on this poor little garden world in my mind. But in the face of greed and all its hedonistic and narcissistic tentacles – along with overwhelming overpopulation and never-ending political, religious, and cultural absurdities – all the rationality in the world is incapable of changing the direction we're headed in any meaningful way. All these well-meaning efforts about as useful as band-aids on a gushing wound.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

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Steve:

Read this ... it's spot on ... and cuts through all the crap we're fed daily.

When do you know you're old enough to die? Barbara Ehrenreich has some answers

<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2018/apr/07/barbara-ehrenreich-natural-causes-book-old-enough-to-die>

And exactly the way I feel about struggling to stay alive past what I'm estimating for me is about 80 ... although it might be less ... because ... what's the point of spending your days going to Dr. appointments

... constant medical issues ... and limping through another 10 years ... in pain and suffering ... for what?  
... so you can watch another sunset?

Yeah ... I like sunsets ... and walks in the woods ... and all the rest ... but as I've got older ... which I  
"Thought" would lead to a resting point ... where I could slow down ... and have more free time ... has  
not worked out that way ... because our culture of "Faster – More – Faster" ... and economic system ...  
Capitalism ... and my job ... have opposed to becoming more stable and relaxing ... as if I've earned a  
respite ... have become even faster paced ... more demanding ... more stressful ... and intolerable ... to  
the point of breaking me ... several times now.

This is no country for old men ... it's unforgiving ... and is designed to give you barely enough to keep  
you in a state of panic over being homeless in a second ... if you don't keep working your ass off ... to  
make someone else rich ... so they don't have to work.

So I'm planning on checking out when the pain becomes too great ... and I can't limp anymore through  
another day ... which I've been doing for at least a decade or more to date.

-----

Moi:

I like to say to folks anymore that I'm in the fourth quarter of a losing game. The reason I retired on  
March 31, 2011 – year eight began a week ago – is that I had long-realized time and health are the only  
wealth we really have, and I was going to spend whatever time and health I have left on myself and  
whatever adventures come my way. It isn't about a long life, it's about quality in whatever life you have  
left. I've sat in plenty of waiting rooms already dealing with this cadaver, and have watched plenty of  
people go out clinging long past anything worth clinging to, and I have no intention of letting the AMA  
make me into one of their lab rats. Fuck the one-percenters, their minions, and their dead-end world.

-----

Steve:

Articulated well ... and I'll add ... that where this planet is going in the future ... the ones who die earlier  
... will be the blessed.

-----

Moi:

Only the dead have seen the end of war ~ George Santayana

Only the dead have seen the end of absurdity ~ Yaj Ekim

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

A millionaire mindset never made anyone rich  
<https://a.msn.com/r/2/AAvyCPB?m=en-us&ocid=Money>

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Moi:

I'm the wealthiest man in the world as far as I'm concerned. What's the point of slaving away for a beyond-the-pale pile of gold if you aren't going to enjoy the gifts it offers?

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

Are your phone camera and microphone spying on you?

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/apr/06/phone-camera-microphone-spying>

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Moi:

Can't imagine how boring it would be to spy on an old man who babbles philosophical bullshit all day. And the only way I'm ever going to kill anyone is if they force me to.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on a couple articles I sent:

Homeland Security To Compile A Database Of Journalists, Bloggers And Influencers

[https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/homeland-security-searchable-database\\_us\\_5ac7f41de4b07a3485e4bb1d](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/homeland-security-searchable-database_us_5ac7f41de4b07a3485e4bb1d)

Homeland Security will start collecting data on hundreds of thousands of journalists

<https://theweek.com/speedreads/765665/homeland-security-start-collecting-data-hundreds-thousands-journalists>

-----

Steve:

Hopefully, you won't get on their radar ... LOL

-----

Moi:

I'm probably on a list or three somewhere, but very likely a ream or three from page one. Any revolution I'm working towards is about awakening consciousness, which the bulk of the human stain is generally quite adept at ignoring.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with Ninos David on a couple articles I sent:

Homeland Security To Compile A Database Of Journalists, Bloggers And Influencers

[https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/homeland-security-searchable-database\\_us\\_5ac7f41de4b07a3485e4bb1d](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/homeland-security-searchable-database_us_5ac7f41de4b07a3485e4bb1d)

Homeland Security will start collecting data on hundreds of thousands of journalists

<https://theweek.com/speedreads/765665/homeland-security-start-collecting-data-hundreds-thousands-journalists>

Ninos:

You need to take precaution; not me, I am only a sheep herder from Kurdistan.

-----

Moi:

I am indeed a revolutionary, but only of the awakening kind, so it's pretty likely I'm way down on any lists any one-percenter minions are keeping. But if they want to waste time and resources, or lock me up, or put a bullet in the back of my head, that's okay by me. I've done had way more of everything than it ever occurred to me to want. It's their world, and they can have it. I relinquished all command and control many moons ago.

-----

Ninos: You are free and nothing matters!

-----

Moi: That's what I'm saying. It's just Geerbucks and Club Brenda and Studio 101 for me.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

A neuroscientist explains what could be wrong with Trump supporters' brains  
<https://www.rawstory.com/2018/04/neuroscientist-explains-wrong-trump-supporters-brains/>

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Moi:

Great article. Which is why I keep saying we've got six and a half more years of this absurdity unless Mueller really comes up with something impeachable or indictable, or some hero gets close enough to bring about a mortal end to it.

-----

Steve:

Well, I wouldn't advocate or support anyone doing that ... however much I disagree with the situation ... my thought when I read this was ... that I find it odd that we have been reduced to using neurological and psychological Sciences to analyze what is wrong with the brains of supporters of the president of the United States ... I think it's much simpler actually.

Everyone I know who voted for him have their priorities rooted in their wealth and retaining it I don't know anybody who's poor who voted for Trump but I guess that's happening in other parts of the country ... of the three people I know who voted for Trump personally two of them were women and they were Latinas from Mexico and Peru and wealthy people who wanted to cut taxes.

-----

Moi:

Must be more deplorables in my midwestern-ish zone. The coastline of Kaliforny is its own little world.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

Was reading Wikipedia's slant on Arthur Schopenhauer the other day, and ran across his views on women that closely match how we have come to see them.

Arthur Schopenhauer

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arthur\\_Schopenhauer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arthur_Schopenhauer)

In Schopenhauer's 1851 essay *On Women*, he expressed his opposition to what he called "Teutonico-Christian stupidity" of reflexive unexamined reverence ("abgeschmackten Weiberveneration") for the female. Schopenhauer wrote that "Women are directly fitted for acting as the nurses and teachers of our early childhood by the fact that they are themselves childish, frivolous and short-sighted." He opined that women are deficient in artistic faculties and sense of justice, and expressed opposition to monogamy. Indeed, Rodgers and Thompson in *Philosophers Behaving Badly* call Schopenhauer "a misogynist without rival in ... Western philosophy." He claimed that "woman is by nature meant to obey." The essay does give some compliments, however: that "women are decidedly more sober in their judgment than [men] are," and are more sympathetic to the suffering of others.

Schopenhauer's controversial writings have influenced many, from Friedrich Nietzsche to nineteenth-century feminists. Schopenhauer's biological analysis of the difference between the sexes, and their separate roles in the struggle for survival and reproduction, anticipates some of the claims that were later ventured by sociobiologists and evolutionary psychologists.

When the elderly Schopenhauer sat for a sculpture portrait by the Prussian sculptor Elisabet Ney in 1859, he was much impressed by the young woman's wit and independence, as well as by her skill as a visual artist. After his time with Ney, he told Richard Wagner's friend Malwida von Meysenbug, "I have not yet spoken my last word about women. I believe that if a woman succeeds in withdrawing from the mass, or rather raising herself above the mass, she grows ceaselessly and more than a man."

-----

Steve:

Well, I disagree with the part about women being more sympathetic ... the women I've known only express sympathy as an instrument of manipulating ... to someone they are trying to get something from.

-----

Moi:

It's all about them. It always kills me when a woman's husband is dying, and she's got all her girlfriends feeling sorry for her.



\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

Could an Industrial Prehuman Civilization Have Existed on Earth Before Ours?

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/could-an-industrial-prehuman-civilization-have-existed-on-earth-before-ours/>

-----

Moi:

Anything's possible, but I'll continue to remain happily agnostic with a dash of doubt until some serious evidence turns my mind otherwise.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

Vaping now an epidemic among US high schoolers

<https://www.cnn.com/2018/04/06/health/high-schools-vaping-epidemic/index.html>

-----

Steve:

That ... and Opioids ... but the worst impact is caused by refined carbs and sugar ... LOL

-----

Moi:

I wonder how many young people really realize what painful adulthoods they're in for between now and their demise.

The Ding Bear Principle: Waiting for that shot to turn me around was the lazy man's way I often used to gradually learn the rules of any given game. Trial by fuck-up I've been known to call it.

The International Arcade Museum: Shoot The Bear

[https://www.arcade-museum.com/game\\_detail.php?game\\_id=5357](https://www.arcade-museum.com/game_detail.php?game_id=5357)

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

Why Are We Just Finding Out Now That All Two Billion Facebook Users May Have Been Harvested?

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/kalevleetaru/2018/04/05/why-are-we-just-finding-out-now-that-all-two-billion-facebook-users-may-have-been-harvested/#37a86bad5561>

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Steve:

The whole purpose of Facebook is to harvest your privacy ... this entire episode is idiotic ... Google gathers way more data on you than Facebook ... as well as every application you put on your phone ...

etc., etc., ... they are all greedy money-grubbing, ethics-violating Corporate scum-fucks ... and yes ... I just made that up on the fly ... scum-fucks ... I like that ... LOL

-----

Moi:

Title of a book, or at least a chapter.

-----

Steve:

Corporate Scum-Fucks: How the West Was Won

-----

Moi:

And because the one-percenters and their greedy minions are working so hard to build more castles and add more zeroes to their piles of gold, I get to sit around sipping coffee, writing my babble, chatting it up with friends and strangers, watching movies and wandering the web, swimming and working out at the gym, and taking naps and catching rays on park benches whenever I please. Tell me who is richer, really.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

The Man Who Spent \$100K To Remove A Lie From Google

<https://www.npr.org/sections/alltechconsidered/2018/04/03/598239092/the-man-who-spent-100k-to-remove-a-lie-from-google>

-----

Steve:

Google is the worst ... they make Facebook look like nothing.

-----

Moi:

It is generally what happens to anyone or anything that gets too much unaccountable power.

-----

Steve:

Europe has completely different laws it's unbelievable how much they protected individual person's rights they literally have by law privacy governors in every area of every country and you have a right to make any company or website or organization erase any data they have on you anytime you want

-----

Moi:

What a fucked-up country we live in.

-----  
Steve:

Europe's view is that any data ABOUT you ... you own the rights to.

-----  
Moi:

Yowza, what a concept.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Read this article and note the section on Violence. Deaths due to interpersonal violence ... including guns ... has been in decline since the 90's. While rare mass shootings get a lot of attention ... the overall number of people getting killed by homicide is not rising.

More Americans Are Dying From Suicide, Drug Use And Diarrhea  
<https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/more-americans-are-dying-from-suicide-drug-use-and-diarrhea/>

-----  
Moi:

I'm inclined towards a helium tank, but a gun will get me thereless, too.

The issue has never been about guns, but the minds pulling the triggers.

List of Causes of Death by Rate  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_causes\\_of\\_death\\_by\\_rate](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_causes_of_death_by_rate)

-----  
Steve:

Again ... when statistics are framed in the context of multiples of other variables it's misleading in other words if I told you that the cost of something went up by 1,000% but that meant that it went from one penny to ten cents ... it sounds like a huge increase because it's stated in multiples of and originally low-value ... so it tells me nothing to tell me Homicides are 25 times higher in the US and they are in other countries because I can't tell if they're extremely low in those countries ... and I would bet money that the people who formulated that statement are picking the lowest homicide rate in any Western Country and comparing it to the US purely for the purpose of sensationalizing it and making it sound as worst as they can.

The point I'm trying to make is that there is an over exaggeration of the magnitude of violence due to guns ... it simply does not exist ... I'm not saying that gun violence does not exist ... I'm saying that it's not as big of a problem as they are claiming it to be ... and it's lower now than it's ever been in history, so why are they claiming that it's an epidemic? ... That is a falsehood ...

These mass shootings that you're seeing are also caused more by the media than they are by availability of guns ... guns have been around for a long, long time ... so why do we have more mass shootings now? ... it's because of the culture and the media ... they're promoting it by sensationalizing it and making it something that's a copycat popular thing to do ... the media should be held responsible for it just as much as anybody else ...

-----

Moi:

Same is true with Trump being in the White House. The media totally gave him a carte blanche ride for the cha-ching that we, John Q. Public, paid out for every inane headline that drove any moderate, relatively sane candidates out of the arena. And we will be paying the price for their greedy folly, and our own complicity, long after you and I have departed this quagmire.

More inanity:

How Parkland students feel about their new mandatory clear backpacks

<https://www.cnn.com/2018/04/02/us/marjory-stoneman-douglas-clear-backpacks/index.html>

-----

Steve:

Why not just install metal detectors?

-----

Moi:

Transparency is so much more PC.

Besides which, how are you going to stop someone charging with a thirty-round magazine blazing away at the line of students waiting to get through the detector?

-----

Steve:

It is stressful for these kids to worry about this ... but this is rare ... they have a higher chance of getting killed in a car accident ... it's the media fueling this.

-----

Moi:

The media is all about the money. It's a feeding frenzy; truth be damned.

-----

Steve:

And I don't know what the answer is ... on one end you have freedom of the press ... necessary to provide checks and balances on the powers that be ... but ... it's being corrupted into a capitalistic driven junk news machine ... driven not by the noble cause of keeping people informed ... but for nothing more than working people up into a state of panic ... to make money ... it isn't serving its purpose anymore.

But what do you do ... control what they are allowed to put out? That's what they do in China ... and North Korea ... so they have the opposite problem.

-----

Moi:

If there's a solution to this fine mess, it's well beyond my pay grade.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with Ninos David on an article he sent:

Walking dead of Istanbul: A drug addiction with effects unlike any other

<https://www.dailysabah.com/feature/2018/04/03/walking-dead-of-istanbul-a-drug-addiction-with-effects-unlike-any-other>

-----

Moi:

Yowza, sounds like Zombieland has arrived.

Wikipedia: Synthetic Cannabinoids

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Synthetic\\_cannabinoids](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Synthetic_cannabinoids)

Wikipedia: JWH-018

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/JWH-018#United\\_States](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/JWH-018#United_States)

Google Search: Synthetic Pot

<https://www.google.com/search?client=safari&rls=en&q=synthetic+pot&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8>

Two deaths, 54 other cases of severe bleeding tied to fake weed in Illinois

<https://www.cnn.com/2018/04/02/health/fake-weed-illinois-death-bn/index.html>

-----

Ninos:

Time to take a break from all this worldly insanity ... Thank you for all your efforts in exposing the hazardous world we are living in ... I am tired!

-----

Moi:

Just trying to help you learn to laugh at the absurdity of it all. Not easy for any of us, but well worth the attempt.

There is no fate that cannot be surmounted by scorn ~ Albert Camus

The Myth of Sisyphus

Wikipedia

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Myth\\_of\\_Sisyphus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Myth_of_Sisyphus)

Sparknotes

<http://www.sparknotes.com/philosophy/sisyphus/summary/>

The Myth of Sisyphus

<http://www2.hawaii.edu/~freeman/courses/phil360/16.%20Myth%20of%20'sisyphus.pdf>

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

Middle East Drone Wars Heat Up

[dailysignal.com/2018/03/12/middle-east-drone-wars-heat/](http://dailysignal.com/2018/03/12/middle-east-drone-wars-heat/)

-----

Steve:

That's the problem with inventing weapons ... sooner or later your enemy copies them ... and turns them back on you.

-----

Moi:

Best to not be anybody's enemy, and generally avoid large gatherings for the rest of our time here is my thinking.

-----

Steve:

It's getting difficult to do either.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

NASA Twins Study Verifies Long-Term Health Effects of Space Travel

<https://www.space.com/39952-nasa-twin-study-spaceflight-health-effects.html>

-----

Steve:

My opinion is that we ... as a biological species that evolved to live on Earth ... cannot survive long terms space travel ... let alone living on another planet. Think about this ... we're stating on the one hand

that a few degrees of change in temperature will doom us to extinction ... yet we think we're going to move to another planet and survive? That doesn't make sense.

-----

Moi:

It boggles me that the leadership of this country would even consider it. A suicide mission and total waste of resources.

-----

Steve:

A focal point for distracting people from the reality that we're doomed with no hope whatsoever.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

Is everything you think you know about depression wrong?

<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2018/jan/07/is-everything-you-think-you-know-about-depression-wrong-johann-hari-lost-connections>

-----

Moi:

Attitude is all, but finding or creating an empowered lifestyle just isn't going to happen for all of us. Takes a lot of inner fortitude and resilience to endure the whacko world we have created. Soma may waylay some of the pain, but doesn't change the underlying form. And what makes us think we should always be happy in the first place?

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

Robert Mercer: the big data billionaire waging war on mainstream media

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2017/feb/26/robert-mercer-breitbart-war-on-media-steve-bannon-donald-trump-nigel Farage>

-----

Moi:

It's just a friggin' whacko world. When it comes to power and fame and fortune, consciousness can be an insatiable beast. Like you, I'm quite happy to live simply, anonymously, and free of human bullshit as often as possible. Too much money would be a total drag. No way would I want to have to play the philanthropist role. It would be a cruel fate to have to bang heads with the hoity-toity's playing all their insipid hoity-toity games.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

Fight or freeze: What we did when faced with a gunman  
[www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-43217137](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-43217137)

-----

Steve:

Without practice it's difficult for people to overcome what's natural ... which is to either run or freeze ... grabbing a gun is a case by case basis under the circumstances ... and most people just do as their told rather than risk it.

But the bottom line is ... if a guy is not there for money ... in which case he most likely doesn't want to shoot anyone ... but rather is just intent on killing as many people as possible ... if you're cornered ... it's either fight for your life or get slaughtered like sheep ...

-----

Moi:

Depends on the variables of the situation, and how quick you are to recognize the options.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

California's gun seizure squad finds an arsenal under a bed  
<https://www.cnn.com/2018/03/01/us/california-gun-seizure-squads/index.html>

-----

Steve:

People are already talking about repealing the 2nd amendment

-----

Moi:

Good luck to that little fantasy. Kind of like deleting one of the books in the Bible.

-----

Steve:

And would start a civil war.

-----

Moi:

Like I've said before, am pretty much to the point of ignoring all the politicians and bureaucrats. Not even sure I'm interested in being a human being anymore. Only sixteen years until age 80, if I bother enduring all this aging bullshit that far.

-----



Steve:

Perhaps we'll have a major world war ... that will break the monotony.

-----

Moi:

Unless the bombs were being dropped in my back yard, even that wouldn't do much. Too numb from the perpetual war we've been waging since before we were born.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Yale's Most Popular Class Teaches You How to Be Happy (You Can Take It Online)

<https://www.mydomaine.com/yale-online-happiness-course--5a998df8c718e>

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Moi:

And a certificate, too ... Yowza.

-----

Steve:

I'm officially certified Happy! ... by Yale!

-----

Moi:

Will check back in on that one tomorrow. Meanwhile, hang it proudly for the other minions of NASA so that you can bask in their envy.

\* \* \* \*

Response to a video from cousin Steve:

"Of course ... But Maybe"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0O5h4enjrHw&feature=youtu.be>

Oh My God - If Murder Was Legal

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iHnsajl-kB8>

-----

Moi:

These are classic. Two thumbs up.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

Much of the modern world is explained by one population spike  
<https://qz.com/1216675/much-of-the-modern-world-is-explained-by-one-population-spike/>

Worldometers  
<http://www.worldometers.info>

-----  
Steve:

Good article ... yep ... Environmental Collapse ... that's the ticket!

-----  
Moi:

What goes up must come down ... the joy of statistical certitude.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

The Population Bomb Has Been Defused  
The Earth and humanity will survive as fertility rates fall almost everywhere.  
<https://www.bloomberg.com/view/articles/2018-03-16/decline-in-world-fertility-rates-lowers-risks-of-mass-starvation?cmpId=flipboard>

-----  
Moi:

I'm betting that eight billion people divided into who knows how many self-absorbed tribal mindsets, madly consuming and battling over limited resources, will still manage to work their way into one dystopian nirvana or another.

-----  
Steve:

Yeah, it's amazing how twisted this guy's view is if you scroll down he still says the population is going to come close to 12 billion it's already twice what the planet can sustain for any length of time

-----  
Moi:

A first draft of something I put together today based on Worldometers:

200 million in Year One Anno Domini  
First billion mark reached in 1804 Anno Domini  
Second billion 126 years later in 1930 (Dad age 4, Mom age 1)  
2.6 billion 23 years later in 1953 (Moi Year One)  
Three billion in 1960 (Moi 7 years old)

4 billion in 1974 (Moi 21 years old)  
5 billion in 1987 (Moi 34 years old)  
6 billion in 1999 (Moi 46 years old)  
7 billion in 2011 (Moi 58 years old)  
8 billion projected in 2023 (Moi 70 years old, maybe)  
9 billion projected in 2037 (Moi 84 years old, likely long gone)  
Ten billion projected in 2056 (Moi 103 years old, very likely long gone)

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

Oklahoma plans to use new execution method  
<https://www.cnn.com/2018/03/14/health/inert-gas-death-penalty-oklahoma-bn/index.html>

-----  
Steve:

The alarming thing about this ... is that they are asserting that if the death penalty is declared Unconstitutional ... they're going to go ahead and do it anyway.

Personally, I'd beg for the Death Penalty vs. being in prison the rest of my life ... what's the fucking point of sitting in a box waiting to die ... with shitty food at that.

-----  
Moi:

I don't know, given how tired I so often am of the human paradigm, staring at a wall for the rest of my life sounds kind of nice. Government-sponsored meditation might be the answer.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

Evolve or die: Why our human ancestors learned to be social more than 320000 years ago  
[www.latimes.com/science/sciencenow/la-sci-sn-humans-turning-point-20180315-story.html](http://www.latimes.com/science/sciencenow/la-sci-sn-humans-turning-point-20180315-story.html)

-----  
Steve:

Thank God modern technology affords withdrawing from too much of that socializing ... I enjoy a reasonable amount of that .... But when it's forced to survival requirements ... it sucks ...

-----  
Moi:

Back then it was probably just a relatively few grunts and hand motions. No Wikipedia and Shakespeare to fill our heads with trivia and silliness.

\* \* \* \*

Response to a video from Ninos David:

Pounce or Play? Curious Cougar Stalks Canadian Photographer

<https://sputniknews.com/videoclub/201803091062355008-curious-cougar-stalks-canadian-photographer/>

-----

Moi:

Used to do a lot of backpacking and hiking alone in the mountains. Wonder how many times I was watched by hungry eyes. How wonderfully naive I was in the innocence of them youthful years.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with Ninos David on an article I sent:

The Problem Isn't Just Trump. It's Our Ignorant Electorate.

<https://www.thedailybeast.com/the-problem-isnt-just-trump-its-our-ignorant-electorate?source=politics&via=rss>

-----

Ninos:

Absolutely not. Not only there is pervasive ignorance, but a great and dangerous divide in the society. Perhaps, eight years of Trump will give America a good day of therapeutic reckoning that will sustain it for another century. Enjoy your coffee.

-----

Moi:

I'd take that bet if I was going to be around that long. As far as I see it, the US of A's center stage time as a world power is coming to a close. We are going to be gobbled up by the hungrier and more capable.

-----

Ninos:

It always happened that way.

-----

Moi:

History is just the play of patterns.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

The issue with millennials isn't narcissism but our depressing culture of mass consumption

<https://www.nbcnews.com/think/opinion/issue-millennials-isn-t-narcissism-our-depressing-culture-mass-consumption-ncna839331>

-----  
Moi:

It's a ruthless friggin' world – always has been, always will be – and everybody pretty much has to figure out how they're going to deal with it on their own. Ultimately, nobody can save you but yourself.

Everyone is doomed sooner or later, anyway, and so is the earth, and so is the universe. So the faster anyone can reign in all the dread fired up by their imagination, and live as fully as possible in the present, the higher level of self-actualization they will play out in their existence.

I'm just playing out what's left as quietly and peacefully and minimally as possible. Got no DNA in the bother ahead, so it's just watch and wait for whatever quality-of-life time remains.

\* \* \* \*

Brainstorming response to Chuck Hooper's "Fifty-Nine Minutes to Great Storytelling" series:

Amazon: Charles E Hooper  
[https://www.amazon.com/Charles-E-Hooper/e/B01AAXZE84/ref=sr\\_ntt\\_srch\\_lnk\\_4?qid=1518284755&sr=8-4](https://www.amazon.com/Charles-E-Hooper/e/B01AAXZE84/ref=sr_ntt_srch_lnk_4?qid=1518284755&sr=8-4)

#### FIFTY-NINE MOMENTS

- 59 Moments to Me, My Self, and I
- 59 Moments to Truth or Consequences
- 59 Moments to Diddly-Squat
- 59 Moments to Okey-Dokey
- 59 Moments to Eternity
- 59 Moments to Oblivion
- 59 Moments to Laissez-Faire
- 59 Moments to So It Goes
- 59 Moments to Fearlessness
- 59 Moments to Timelessness
- 59 Moments to Truth
- 59 Moments to Born Anew
- 59 Moments to Nirvana
- 59 Moments to Passé
- 59 Moments to Godlessness
- 59 Moments to God
- 59 Moments to Rationalism
- 59 Moments to Existentialism
- 59 Moments to Annihilation
- 59 Moments to Common Sense
- 59 Moments to Discernment
- 59 Moments to Critical Thinking
- 59 Moments to Gumption
- 59 Moments to Grit
- 59 Moments to Resourcefulness

59 Moments to Imagination  
59 Moments to Inventiveness  
59 Moments to Creativity  
59 Moments to Wit  
59 Moments to Born Again  
59 Moments to Ingenuity  
59 Moments to Enterprise  
59 Moments to Reality  
59 Moments to Absurdity  
59 Moments to Humility  
59 Moments to Hopelessness  
59 Moments to Minimalism  
59 Moments to Evermore  
59 Moments to Hedonism  
59 Moments to Discipline  
59 Moments to Narcissism  
59 Moments to Ecstasy  
59 Moments to Heaven  
59 Moments to Hell  
59 Moments to Buddha  
59 Moments to Null and Void  
59 Moments to Emptiness  
59 Moments to Nothingness  
59 Moments to Now  
59 Moments to Here  
59 Moments to Here Now  
59 Moments to Negation  
59 Moments to Anarchy  
59 Moments to Skepticism  
59 Moments to Cynicism  
59 Moments to Pessimism  
59 Moments to Doubt  
59 Moments to Nihilism  
59 Moments to Bullshit  
59 Moments to Om  
59 Moments to Quantum  
59 Moments to Abyss  
59 Moments to Agnostic  
59 Moments to Atheism  
59 Moments to Freethinking  
59 Moments to Belief  
59 Moments to Death  
59 Moments to Eternal Life  
59 Moments to Nonbelief  
59 Moments to Illusion  
59 Moments to Delusion  
59 Moments to Matrix  
59 Moments to Craving

59 Moments to Satisfaction  
59 Moments to Contentment  
59 Moments to Immortality  
59 Moments to Solitude  
59 Moments to No Other  
59 Moments to Detachment  
59 Moments to Singularity  
59 Moments to Totality  
59 Moments to Absoluteness  
59 Moments to Indivisibility  
59 Moments to Success  
59 Moments to Failure  
59 Moments to Happiness  
59 Moments to Sorrow  
59 Moments to Joy  
59 Moments to Oneness  
59 Moments to Ecstasy  
59 Moments to Infinity  
59 Moments to Infinitesimalibility  
59 Moments to Peace  
59 Moments to Freedom  
59 Moments to the Beyond the Pale  
59 Moments to Perfection  
59 Moments to Imperfection  
59 Moments to Tranquility  
59 Moments to Bliss  
59 Moments to Meditation  
59 Moments to Contemplation  
59 Moments to Acuteness  
59 Moments to Obtuseness  
59 Moments to Heaven  
59 Moments to Hell  
59 Moments to Perdition  
59 Moments to Brahman  
59 Moments to Samadhi  
59 Moments to the End of Time  
59 Moments to the Beginning of Time  
59 Moments to the Success in Failure  
59 Moments to the Failure in Success  
59 Moments to Future-Past  
59 Moments to Serendipity  
59 Moments to Dharma  
59 Moments to Artha  
59 Moments to Kama  
59 Moments to Moksha  
59 Moments to Go

59 Moments to Dreamtime  
59 Moments to Pause  
59 Moments to Stop  
59 Moments to Separation  
59 Moments to Unity  
59 Moments to By Golly  
59 Moments to the Great Pfft!  
59 Moments to Manifest Destiny  
59 Moments to Unmanifest Destiny  
59 Moments to the End Before All Beginnings  
59 Moments to the Beginning After all Ends  
59 Moments ... To Be Continued

\* \* \* \*

Response to a video from cousin Steve:

New Rule: Distinction Deniers

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N1MZRRowhMtc&feature=youtu.be>

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Moi:

The world is many shades of gray. I have a penis, and it has caused me to do many things I might not do again, but I refuse to feel guilty about it. Minnie Driver and the PC collective will just have to deal with it.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an email from Bruce Styles on his current health status:

Tough news about your brother, and good news on the back, but that blood pressure is definitely dicey, especially the top number. I'm sure you've caught one of my standard quips more than once: This getting old is getting old. Got a helium tank and sundry firearms at the ready is all I can say. I have no intention of putting up with a bunch of torturous bullshit in dealing with the inevitable. Quality of life is all.

Final Exit

<http://finalexitandrelatedlinks.blogspot.com/>

And regarding Trump and this world goes, as I've said before, I've pretty much given up on bothering about it anymore. The human race isn't heading any direction I'm interested in watching up close and personal. Too friggin' crazy to think there's anything but more and more horror and absurdity ahead. Not worth getting worked up about at this stage of the game, especially for those of us who haven't cast our DNA into the future dreamtime.

Thanks for the overview on Medicare. I turn 65 in November, but am pretty ignorant about the process at this writing. Someone told me a few daze ago to be sure to get Plan F, so your mentioning A and B and D is another good tidbit.

Two questions:



Should I sign up online, or go live into the Social Security office?

As a former insider to the game, are there any particular insurance providers you would recommend? My mother uses United Health Care, which is what I'll probably lean towards unless I can find something that covers me with low or no payments. If you can offer any good info, let me know.

Good luck with it all, El Dude.

Ciao ciao,

M

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

Father lunges at Larry Nassar in court before being restrained  
<https://www.cnn.com/2018/02/02/us/larry-nassar-attack-court/index.html>

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Moi:

How is any parent not paying very close attention to any adult who spends a great deal of time around their children? How is any parent not empowering their children to speak up when something unacceptable is happening to them? If those were my daughters, you can be sure Nassar's balls would have been flushed down the toilet a long time ago.

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Steve:

I'm assuming it was the aura of the mythical Medical professional. Same thing happens with Catholic priests.

-----

Moi:

When it comes to your children, trust no one, especially fucking Catholic priests. Pedophile, Inc. I call the Vatican anymore.

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Steve:

But they're messengers of God ... so it must be God's Will ... right?

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Moi:

What a delusional world ... I'm so over us.

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Steve:

There's a video of a woman stating that its Gods Will that Trump got elected ...

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Moi:

Implying that we and all the other critters are nothing more than mindless chess pieces.

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Steve:

If this mess is Gods Will ... I'm not impressed.

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Moi:

Just watched "The Unbelievers" last night. Pretty good. Amazing that rationality is losing out to absurdity, but oh well.

The Unbelievers

<https://dvd.netflix.com/Movie/The-Unbelievers/70293728?trkid=201886046>

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Steve:

Yeah ... so much so ... you can go on tour preaching reality.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

In New York, Gun Owners Balk At New Handgun Database

<https://www.npr.org/2018/01/31/581879702/in-new-york-gun-owners-balk-at-new-handgun-database>

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Steve:

People who actually believe that a database like this will tell you anything about under the radar criminals with guns ... are too stupid to be making policy ... and should be automatically removed from office ... overnight ... and it should be a felony to be that stupid.

-----

Moi:

That is one of the big reasons I refuse to be bothered by all these gun laws that Sacramento keeps spewing out. I'm not the guy they have to worry about intentionally hurting anyone, and if they want to waste taxpayer money sending me to jail for having things that were legal when I bought them, then so be it. If something was to happen that puts me behind bars, I'll just look at it as another adventure in my already very shades-of-gray sixty-four years.

\* \* \* \*

A letter sent to my sister and brother-in-law, Ann and John Christensen, while reinstating my teaching credential with a Cultural Language Acquisition Development (CLAD) Certificate at Humboldt State University in Arcata, California, in 1999:

Hey, A & J,

Until your note the other day, I for some reason I thought you were already moving into your new workplace. Didn't realize all the financial prep is still happening. Dad just mentioned something about you having a reorganization bid accepted by a bank. Sounds like "big-time" to me.

When you last wrote you mentioned something about my getting out of teaching because I didn't feel I was a good teacher, which is not the case as I see it. I've always thought I was a good teacher ... was so full of pep and enthusiasm in those mid-thirties ... brought so many things into the classroom that no one ever did for you or I.

But what I was, after two years in Ojai, was incredibly "world-weary"; a major case of burn-out. Oak Grove had sucked it all out of me. I just didn't have any more energy for artificial school settings. I was bored with teaching, done with idealism and martyrdom, done with Southern California, suffering more pain than I would ever want to deal with again, reading Hindu writings for the first time, exploring hallucinogens for the first time, buying guns and learning how to shoot, doing whatever it suited me to do, and beginning to have an awful lot of thoughts pour out.

In retrospect, a major factor in it all was that my body took a nosedive into an all-time low because of general the wear-and-tear and the cumulative consequences of a variety of work and play-related injuries. In the ten years since leaving Ojai, I've probably spent at least 30 grand out-of-pocket, plus two or three work comp claims. Have spent a good deal of time in waiting rooms and laid up in bed. It is amazing what a person will go through to continue on.

And there were just a bunch of other things I felt drawn to do: Move back to Northern California, write a bunch more aphoristic silliness, buy and shoot more guns, read all kinds of military and strategy books, experiment with even more drugs, work a bunch of different jobs, and spend a whole heck of a lot of time wandering about, sitting at coffee shops chatting with all kinds of people, reading, writing, sitting, watching, thinking, dreaming ... doing nothing in particular and everything in general.

Then came carpal tunnel at Kinko's, and here I am ... in Arcata ... back in school ... starting a "new phase" as one former employer called it. Who knows where it will lead this time. Am just sort of wandering as I always have through whatever comes my way ... no real agenda ... lots of potentials.

It ain't over till that last whispered breath eases out of me.

And that's the way it was ... and is ... in my view of things, anyway.

Hope you guys blast off. Keep in touch when you've got time.

Take care,

Michael

\* \* \* \*

An all-purpose letter sent to a few friends in Chico after moving back to Stanislaus County to work for Creative Alternatives in 2000:

Hey there. Thought I'd let you know what's up since I last saw you.

It's been one of those years filled with change, but things are finally stabilizing nicely.

Am living in Turlock working for Creative Alternatives, a residential and foster home organization I worked at before going into teaching over a decade ago. Am about three months into playing Administrative Assistant in the foster home program. Started in February as a roving child care worker in the group homes, upgraded to running a classroom at the Reyn Franca special education school in April, and landed the current position a little over three months ago.

After the cool, moist air of Arcata, it was something of a shock returning to the area where we were raised. Hot and smoggy and crowded. The trade-off is that it's been pleasant being closer to family, and interesting connecting with old friends. Going back into places you've spent a lot of time in always brings back lots of memories. Feel like I'm traveling in a time machine sometimes.

Am living in a nice little studio apartment practically right next to the office where I'm working. A pleasant little stroll and I'm there.

Spend free time puttering about, as is my nature. Always seem to come up with plenty of dinkabout projects to keep amused.

Hope all is well. Keep in touch and get in touch with me if you get down this direction.

Take care,

Michael

P.S. Have "The Stillness Before Time" website back up at a different address. Added a bunch of new material in a random push-button design I'm calling "The Matrix." I've designed it so that I can add, delete and change it quite easily. If that sort of thing interests you, see the link in the signature below.

\* \* \* \*

After sending Gianni Grassi of Carmel the Ashtavakra Gita links below, he asked: I am curious how scriptures approach you, how you meet them and then how any change occurs.

Wikipedia: Ashtavakra Gita

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ashtavakra\\_Gita](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ashtavakra_Gita)

The Heart of Awareness (Byrom)  
<http://theheartofawareness.blogspot.com/>

Ashtavakra Gita (Marshall)  
<http://theashtavakra.blogspot.com/>

Bitten by the Black Snake (Schoch)  
<http://bittenbytheblacksnake.blogspot.com/>

A Duet of One (Balsekar)  
<http://aduetofone.blogspot.com/>

Ashtavakra Gita (Richards)  
<http://anotherashtavakragita.blogspot.com/>

Astavakra Samhita (Wood)  
<http://astavakrasamhita.blogspot.com/>

Ashtavakra Gita (Vedic)  
<http://ashtravakrageeta.blogspot.com/>

Ashtavakra Gita: I Am Shiva  
<http://ashtavakragitaiamshiva.blogspot.com/>

Ashtavakra Gita: Sri Ramana Maharshi  
[www.sriramanamaharshi.org/resource\\_centre/audio/ashtavakra-gita/](http://www.sriramanamaharshi.org/resource_centre/audio/ashtavakra-gita/)

Everything just sort of happenstances into my awareness in a variety of ways as I wander about. Nothing organized about my journey, or what I've written. Very eclectic, very shoot from the hip, very much a chameleon. Have never belonged to any group, never followed any dogma, never sat with any guru. I always say the universe is my teacher. Things just sort of happen. Running into you is an example. I wandered over to Monterey, bought a cup of coffee, and there you were at a nearby table. We talked several times, and I walked away with a few more goodies in my bag of tricks.

And any changes in perception just sort of happen, too. Not sure I can really state there have been any great flashes of insight, other than to say, if something makes sense, it makes sense, and it gets absorbed into my little play of consciousness, my little dreamtime, and intertwines however it will.

\* \* \* \*

Response to a letter from Linda McFelter in Chico after moving back to Turlock to work for Creative Alternatives:

Hey, Linda,

Sorry to hear things aren't going so well for Cliff. Was thinking he had more of a regular thing going with Dan at Chico State, but I guess that didn't work out has he'd hoped. Too bad he never got in with Bill Graham or some other big-time concert outfit. Sometimes our callings are hard to come by.

Hadn't realized Gypsy was in Washington DC. What an experience, I'm sure. I think she's going to have an interesting life. Has quite a head on her shoulders, and has seen and done so much more than many kids her age.

You asked for more details about my work. Am mostly in the foster family side of things at Creative Alternatives, but have a few fingers in the group home and non-public school pies as well.

By "eclectic" I mean: advertising, personnel intake and exit paperwork, first aid/cpr training, foster parent training, client transportation, helping create the intensive therapeutic care program, organizing special events, re-designing forms, updating the web site, newsletters, digital photography, computers, tracking a variety of managerial type things, editing for others, possibly researching grants, general support, input, problem-solving and whatever else needs to happen.

It suits me.

And I have a little corner office with a view. Very nice to have such a job at this point in my life.

A very quiet, pleasant evening at this end. Took a bit of a nap after work, and after eating, went down to the gymkhana horsing events at the County Fair. The actual fair doesn't start till Friday, but they always do the horse stuff (FFA, 4H, English and Western) the week prior. Did the photography for it and the Fair for a couple years, years ago. The people running it are old friends from the early post-college Waterford News era.

After that I came home, sipped a beer out in the patio, wandered across the street to the club jacuzzi, and am back on the patio sipping another beer. Pretty quiet, as I said. The day was on the mild side weather-wise, and right now there's a bit of a breeze, and it's just downright perfecto mundo.

Tomorrow morning it's chiropractor time. The body's a bit tight, but the month-plus of back bother I've been enduring has past (Wallahoo!) Will probably head into Starbuck for a coffee and some work time prior to the appointment at nine. Have to whip together a newsletter by next week, and haven't been able to focus in the office because so many other project are pulling me every which way.

Hope all's well enough.

Michael

P.S. Still do string figures once in a while, but not regularly since I'm out of teaching.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

Humanity Officially Started Ruining The Planet In 1965 - Welcome To The Anthropocene Era  
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/bridaineparnell/2018/02/19/humanity-officially-started-ruining-the-planet-in-1965-welcome-to-the-anthropocene-era/#1eda5ef05636>

-----  
Steve:

More like 1865 ... the Industrial Revolution put us on a path of consuming fossil fuels ... wood ... then coal ... then oil ... then gas.

-----

Moi:

Yup, the nuclear thing was just another turn in the trail of tears.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Boom turns to bust for millennials across advanced economies

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/markets/boom-turns-to-bust-for-millennials-across-advanced-economies/ar-BBJBu4?ocid=Money>

-----

Moi:

The future is definitely sucky for all them kids swarming in playgrounds across the board. How fortunate we've been to have been boomers.

-----

Steve:

I think our parents had it better than us ... in the context of living during the high point of the Roman Empire ... it's been downhill since 1970.

-----

Moi:

Even though it may not have been the peak of empire, I consider our time to be much better on the whole. They had to get through the Depression, World War II, and the Cold War. I missed Vietnam because I drew 237 for the last draft, and have always managed a critical mind, a full belly, safe harbors, and oodles of adventures they never began to experience. They endured, we frolicked.

-----

Steve:

While I agree with the dogging the major wars component ... I don't consider my life full on frolicking ... I work constantly and it only pays the bills ... our parent were able to buy a house on far less than what it takes us to do so.

The ratio of an engineer's pay in Silicon Valley ... to the cost of a house ... in our parents time was 2:1 ... it is now over between 10:1 to 15:1.

My mother told me that during the 50's and 60's ... if you had a job you could buy a house ... it was cheaper than renting ... those days are gone ... and the quality of life was much better due to the population being far less.

When my parents moved to the Bay Area ... there were only 1 million people ... 1.5 when I was born ... and now it's over 8 ... and they say it will be 10 by 2020.

The petri dish is full.

-----

Moi:

My view comes from being more observer-philosopher than participant in the rat race. Have never had much ambition for this world. Lived in the Bay Area a couple times – Alameda in the mid-70's and Los Gatos in the early 80's – but most my existence has been spent in the Central Valley – Stanislaus County, Sacramento, and Chico, with brief spurts in Reno, Ojai, and Arcata – which has also grown way too crowded for my taste, but not nearly as much as your turf. I can hardly stand going that direction anymore. Way too overwhelming to bother through.

-----

Steve:

I can see that in people who visit the Bay Area ... from less populated areas. When Becky comes out to visit from the boonies in Michigan ... she gets stressed out just driving down the street. She lives on what amounts to farm country ... and I think we in this area are all stressed ... for so long ... we don't realize how it's impacting us until it reaches a critical fracture.

I need to get out of there as soon as possible ... or at least shut down work and commuting ... but I've got another 5 years by my calculation.

-----

Moi:

I'll definitely be looking to move north when Mom passes, something with fewer people, less heat, more water, cleaner air. Eugene, Fort Bragg, Arcata, and Crescent City are all on the possibilities list. Depends whether I want to go coastal or stay in valley mode.

-----

Steve:

And somewhere that's not a target for Nukes.

-----

Moi:

Or right in the bulls eye so as not to have to endure the daze after.

-----

Steve:

I would imagine it would be best ... over quick ... wonder if you'd feel anything?



-----  
Moi:

I suspect not. Probably one of the more efficient means to get out of here. Instant burnt toast. Go directly to ashes. Do not pass Go. Do not collect \$200.

-----  
Steve:

Well at least you save the cost of being cremated.

-----  
Moi:

Too late. Already booked. Neptune Society in Modesto. No muss, no fuss.

-----  
Steve:

What did that cost?

-----  
Moi:

Something in the neighborhood of \$1700 a few years back. Includes getting the ashes dumped around Angel Island. Both Mom and I signed up. Not sure what Ann and John have planned, but pretty sure they'll be doing something in the same vein.

Neptune Society of Central California  
<http://www.neptunecremation.com/index.shtml>

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from Ninos David:

Study By MIT Economist: U.S. Has Regressed To A Third-World Nation For Most Of Its Citizens  
<https://www.themaven.net/theintellectualist/news/study-by-mit-economist-u-s-has-regressed-to-a-third-world-nation-for-most-of-its-citizens-Sb5A5HZ1rUiXavZapos30g>

-----  
Moi:

The one-percenters and their minions are in charge, always have been, always will be, in the so it goes of the rise and fall of humankind.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

This is what your smartphone is doing to your brain – and it isn't good  
[www.businessinsider.com/what-your-smartphone-is-doing-to-your-brain-and-it-isnt-good-2018-3?r=UK&IR=T](http://www.businessinsider.com/what-your-smartphone-is-doing-to-your-brain-and-it-isnt-good-2018-3?r=UK&IR=T)

-----  
Moi:

Is there really anything about the world since the advent of agriculture that we were meant to do? Being an anonymous part of a small nomadic hunter-gatherer tribe sound pretty good sometimes.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

Why You Should Choose a Pagan Diet  
<https://experiencelife.com/article/mark-hyman-peganism/>

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Moi:

Alas that all things we shouldn't eat are so tasty and mind-altering. So it goes.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

In Winston Churchill, Hollywood rewards a mass murderer  
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/global-opinions/wp/2018/03/10/in-winston-churchill-hollywood-rewards-a-mass-murderer/>

-----  
Steve:

Interesting how dramatization of historical figures paints very different images. If Germany had won World War II Hitler would have been documented in the history books as being a great leader and savior of his country and Europe. Essentially this article is written from the Viewpoint of an Indian whose country was subjugated and brutally manipulated by the British for decades but you see the movie today written from the Western perspective and he's portrayed as a fearless leader and a hero.

-----  
Moi:

I suspect leaders across the world through all time would be classified as war criminals if they were on the losing side. Certainly Bush, Cheney, and Rumsfeld would be high on my list if I was from the Middle East.

Google Search: Winston Churchill, War Criminal  
[https://www.google.com/search?client=safari&rls=en&ei=VhykWqvGM8q8jwOd6JIo&q=Winston+Churchill%2C+War+Criminal&oq=Winston+Churchill%2C+War+Criminal&gs\\_l=psy-](https://www.google.com/search?client=safari&rls=en&ei=VhykWqvGM8q8jwOd6JIo&q=Winston+Churchill%2C+War+Criminal&oq=Winston+Churchill%2C+War+Criminal&gs_l=psy-)

ab.3...102349.109262.0.109710.13.13.0.0.0.0.303.1514.2j8j0j1.11.0....0...1.1.64.psy-  
ab..2.4.706...0j0i131k1j0i22i30k1.0.2GMwOiRB48w

Top Ten American War Criminals Living Freely Today  
[www.rense.com/general69/tpten.htm](http://www.rense.com/general69/tpten.htm)

United States War Crimes  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United\\_States\\_war\\_crimes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_war_crimes)

Google Search: American War Criminals  
[https://www.google.com/search?client=safari&rls=en&ei=yymkWorsMYrmjwOq2YPACw&q=American+War+Criminals&oq=American+War+Criminals&gs\\_l=psy-ab.3..0j0i7i30k113j0l2.103739.105496.0.108634.9.9.0.0.0.225.1281.1j6j1.8.0....0...1.1.64.psy-ab..2.7.1187...0i7i10i30k1j0i8i7i30k1j0i13k1.0.vkHmYtkgsaw](https://www.google.com/search?client=safari&rls=en&ei=yymkWorsMYrmjwOq2YPACw&q=American+War+Criminals&oq=American+War+Criminals&gs_l=psy-ab.3..0j0i7i30k113j0l2.103739.105496.0.108634.9.9.0.0.0.225.1281.1j6j1.8.0....0...1.1.64.psy-ab..2.7.1187...0i7i10i30k1j0i8i7i30k1j0i13k1.0.vkHmYtkgsaw)

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Steve:

Alternative facts.

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Moi:

It's all relative. Mainly depends who holds the winning club. Losers and dead folks don't get much chance to hold trials or write history books. Despite our inexhaustible self-promotion, we aren't the good guys.

Eduardo Galeano  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eduardo\\_Galeano](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eduardo_Galeano)

Mirrors: Stories of Almost Everyone  
[https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1568586124/ref=oh\\_aui\\_search\\_detailpage?ie=UTF8&psc=1](https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/1568586124/ref=oh_aui_search_detailpage?ie=UTF8&psc=1)

Amazon: Eduardo Galeano  
[https://www.amazon.com/Eduardo-Galeano/e/B000AP701M/ref=dp\\_byline\\_cont\\_book\\_1](https://www.amazon.com/Eduardo-Galeano/e/B000AP701M/ref=dp_byline_cont_book_1)

-----  
Steve:

Agreed ... that was my point about Churchill ... whoever wins writes the history books ... our heroes are someone else's war criminals.

I've come to the conclusion there are no good guys ... only people who vilify those above them ... until they become one of the wealthy ... then they vilified the poor.

All of the Democrats that were vilifying Trump ... are at the same time ... jumping for joy that they 401Ks are going through the roof ... when the reason for that ... is that they've sold out the future of their children ... my sister Barbie is among them ... she hates Trump ... viscerally ... but is gleeful that her retirement funds are going up ... even though it is at the cost of the future of her kids and grandkids ...

her children will be paying for that bump she's got ... for the rest of their lives ... long after she is dead and gone.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

Why It's No Longer Possible for Any Country to Win a War

[http://time.com/4826856/russia-trump-north-korea-china-war/?utm\\_campaign=time&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_source=twitter.com](http://time.com/4826856/russia-trump-north-korea-china-war/?utm_campaign=time&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com)

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Moi:

Good one. Let us hope it's true, at least for what remains of our diminishing window of time.

\* \* \* \*

Response to a letter from high school friend Tom Carson:

Tom,

Sounds like all is going pretty well for you and yours.

So, you're up in Davis. Do you ever run into Bruce in Sacramento? Had lunch several months ago on one of his Stan State days. Visited Warren when Dave and Carol were in town. Ran into Cathy and Nick at Barnes & Noble. It's been interesting seeing people over time now that I'm back in the area. So many tangents we've all taken.

You asked what I've been doing, and I realize I'm not sure exactly when I last saw you. Figure it must have been in the time period when I left Creative Alternatives in the mid-80's to get a teaching credential. After a summer at UOP, I interned teaching a 5th grade at Hughson Elementary and subbed the next year. Moved down to Ojai to teach 5th/6th at Oak Grove School, a private school started by Krishnamurti, a philosopher I whose work influenced my thinking in the post-college era.

After a couple years in Ojai, I realized I was running on empty as a teacher. After a stint as a morning bread baker in Ojai, I moved up to Chico where I spent the 90's in a variety of jobs including sales, stock and custodial work at a downtown office supply business, partnering up with another fellow in an almost-successful attempt at starting a head-injury residential care business, fixing ATM's and deposit pulls for Wells Fargo Armored, working graveyard production line and then Express Area at Kinko's, and a little part-time barista work at Starbucks on the side. Even drove a taxi through the nights for six months or so.

Got myself a sobering case of carpal tunnel at Kinko's, and after a year on disability, Work Comp Rehab sent me over to Humboldt State for a semester to dust off the teaching credential with a CLAD Certificate. Wasn't sure what I'd be doing next. Was just waiting for the wind to gust one direction or another. Thought it might even be teaching English in Asia, but hadn't really come up with a definite plan.

When I came to see the parents the Xmas of '99, I called up Blane Franca to get together for a drink. We had become good friends running the Foster Family Agency during the CA years. He's now Executive Director, and though it hadn't even occurred to me to come back to CA, he offered me a job. Thought it

would be nice to be closer to the parents and said yes. After some time in the group homes and teaching special education at the non-public school in Denair, I'm now back in the Foster Family Agency multi-tasking away administratively in a corner office with a view.

Life is rather strange, Tom. Though I never would have dreamt it back in high school, it's ended up that I've lived a very haphazard, exploratory life. Lots of people, lots of jobs, lots of travels, lots of thoughts, lots of experiences most people don't ever contemplate, much less do.

Don't know if you'll find it interesting, but I've also put together a little philosophical work, mostly aphoristic, that should be coming out on a website in a couple weeks:

The Stillness Before Time  
<http://thestillnessbeforetime.com/>

So that's it in a nutshell. Not the life anyone might have expected of a little old farm boy coming out of a dusty, small-town in rural California, but it's certainly been interesting.

Hope to run into you sometime.

Take care,

Michael

\* \* \* \*

A Poem for Michael

His goals are few,  
with no worries to pursue.  
A life well-stirred,  
as variety is to stew.  
Branching from his native view,  
He's learned a thing or two:  
How to handle a machine that spews,  
Managing a newspaper crew,  
How a lens can capture you,  
Writing philosophy of the zoo,  
Even joined a staff or two,  
To teach others what to do.  
Now he speaks with a clue,  
Of how he's gained his world-view.  
There's nothing left to misconstrue,  
He's living life impromptu!

Rhonda Allen, 2002

\* \* \* \*

A letter of inquiry about getting *The Stillness Before Time* published:

Michael J. Holshouser  
1112-4 Cedar Creek Drive  
Modesto, CA 95355-5213  
(209) 668-5732 (H) 634-9736 (W)  
mholshouser@creative-alternatives.org

Editorial Department  
Workman Publishing  
708 Broadway  
New York, NY 10003

June 14, 2001

To Whom It May Concern:

Enclosed is a work written several years back. You might find some aphorisms suitable for “The Little Zen Calendar” or another of a similar nature.

There is a great deal of additional material as well.

Sincerely,

Michael J. Holshouser

P.S. No need to return it if you are not interested.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an email from Barney Barbour of Chico:

Hey, Barney,

Happened to go into my Hotmail account and discovered your latest note. Don't often check that realm anymore, so you might want to just use the work one (mholshouser@creative-alternatives.org).

So, you wanted to hear from me instead of all the little email forwards. Count your blessings that I just send on the more interesting stuff.

Well, what is happening is not much, really. This life seems to be running on the edge of an unassailable monotony. Do lots of different things, but at this point in life, they've all been done far too many times before in one form or another. I think if you were to mesh the three lead characters in Hermann Hesse's Siddhartha, Narcissus and Goldmund, and Steppenwolf, and Albert Camus's The Stranger, you'd have a pretty good idea what it's like to be me.

Have actually had a pretty fair year, though. Work is tolerable, though not as interesting as it was in the early days. Routine has always been my challenge, so I'm pretending enthusiasm best I can. At this in point in life, the money and benefits is worth the trade-off. Have had too many adventures in this life to remember anyway.

To be rich or dead, that is the question. Too rich to be bothered, or too dead to care.

Took several quick trips this year: Santa Cruz, San Francisco, Monterey, and a couple to Chico. A long one in November was a week down Highway One from Carmel to North Los Angeles. Very pleasant. One of the nice things about being down this hellish Central Valley zone is its two-hour access to both the coast and the Sierras.

Just got the annual exam, and most the numbers are hanging in there. This 48-year-old body's holding up nicely compared to what many of peers have going on. The liver numbers, however, are a bit high, so the doctor is having me come in for a hepatitis panel. Who knows, might be in your boat before long.

Shannon came down the other day for a quick, pleasant visit. Definitely the most comfortable woman I've ever hung with.

What else do I do with my time? Putter and wander. Sit in coffee shops (we now have a Starbucks just down the street), watch three or four movies at a time in the local multiplexes, read books and magazines both real and fictional (with increasing difficulty telling the difference), write and transcribe my silliness (yes, it still dribbles out in it's own fashion), work out at home and gym on a pretty two to three times a week, wander the retail world (for things I don't really need), clean the apartment (and finally throw out stuff I never really needed), chatter occasionally with strangers and friends (often times preferring the company of strangers), see the parents every week or two, go out drinking sometimes with a few of the buddies at work (see liver concerns above).

Only thirty years to go barring an unexpected visit from Joe Black.

Take care,

Michael

\* \* \* \*

A Letter to the Editor to Time Magazine:

### HARSH REALITY

After a lifetime watching countless "special reports" of idealistic yada-yada about "How to Save the Earth" (August 26, 2002), all I see anymore is more forests being cut down to sell advertising and keep college-educated yuppies employed.

The down and dirty harsh reality is that we as a species are never going to voluntarily turn around the cataclysm toward which we are madly racing. Technology cannot forever fend off the statistical reality that with every rise must come a fall.

All the "problems" we face boil down to one fact: there are too many human beings on this planet breeding and consuming as mindlessly as fruit flies. Unless there is a major die-back of five to six billion, one Easter Island scenario or another will be this planet's fate.

Every garden needs a pruning, and ours is long overdue. Whether through environmental collapse; a meteor from the abyss of space; a tiny predator out of the jungles of Africa; or some sort of final solution

by a religious zealot, a rogue state, or an MIT lab tech, the human population needs to be drastically reduced if the diversity of this planet is to survive.

Meanwhile, keep spinning the ‘we can save the earth’ fantasy as much as you please. Useless as it is, regurgitation of the same-old-same-old sells papers, pays for the SUV’s, and may even get that future lab tech into MIT. Just don’t expect everyone to buy into the delusion.

Michael Holshouser  
Turlock, California

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with high school friend David Hughes on an article I sent:

Take it from the insiders: Silicon Valley is eating your soul  
<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/jan/01/silicon-valley-eating-soul-google-facebook-tech>

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Moi:

All's well enough in the so-it-goes at this end ... Still drinking coffee and JD, writing my babble, catching what zzz's I can, watching our Brave New World spin down the craps table ... I've been backing away from social media and other online time more and more ... The human paradigm only makes me weary anymore ... Getting back to Old School, the analog world, whenever possible ... Spend a fair amount of time at Club Brenda right across the street from Studio 101, keeping this life-torn cadaver in the game as best as possible ... Mom is doing very well in her 88th year; spend quality time with her at least once a week ... Ann and John are also hanging in there ... How about you and Carol up there in Lincoln Town?

-----  
David:

Howdy doo, Mr. Holshouser. I see we're getting off to a cheerful start in 2018. Things are going pretty well, actually. Plenty to keep us busy. Too much time on the internet is making me a bit crazy. Other than that, good. Skimmed through that just now, will read it more thoroughly later. Seems compelling at first look. I know I'm addicted to that dopamine loop; psychologically. FB gives you the illusion of being connected, of maybe even influencing things.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with Cher Matthews, store manager while I was at Kinko's in Chico:

Cher,

Sounds like you're still going as strong and enthusiastically as ever. Was thinking you'd left Tri-Counties several years ago to follow your star, but maybe I'm just lost in time as per usual anymore.

Hadn't thought about enneagrams for years. Had a girlfriend back in Ojai in the late 80's who was into them. I believe she had me pegged as a nine; just looked it up online, and it seems to fit. She'd lived in a Gurdjieff community at some point, and was pretty well-versed in a variety of spiritual arenas.



So, with a birth date of November 14, 1953 . . . in horoscope lingo, I'm a Scorpio . . . in tarot, I'm a Charioteer . . . in whatever you call the Chinese model, I believe I'm a Water Snake. Am not sure about any other such systems inspired by time and space, but they all add to the amusement inspired by this label or that.

No, I haven't read Tolle's "A New Earth" yet, and I'm kind of doubtful I'll ever more than browse it. Reading the jacket summary online, I'm thinking he's not really saying anything I haven't already read or written who knows how many times. And, frankly, I don't really feel the need to read all that much anymore. Once in a while I'll pick up one of my favorites, or peruse a few books while at a book store. But these days, a good walk, a cup of stained water, some sitting time, and a bit of puttering about, is about all that's required. Whatever ambition I may have once had, not that there was ever much, has, I'm afraid, long since dissolved. I may be a light, but I'm evolving – or devolving – into some sort of manana-enjoy-a-nap-on-the-grass mode.

As far as humanity awakening in our lifetime, I'm not at all that confident that our kind as a whole will ever wake up to an enlightened paradigm. Too many people, too much self-absorption, too much delusion, too much ignorance, too much attachment to the mind-made concoctions of time, too much everything, and not enough resources (i.e., oil) or time (i.e., global warming) to pull it together anytime soon, if ever. Individually, yes, there will perhaps be a fair number who discern the bigger picture, but six, seven, eight billion all at the same time? Highly improbable. I'll be happy to be wrong, but the leading indicators in this field of vision are not pointing in an optimistic direction. Call me Eyeor, I suppose, but, oh well.

Anywho, enough of my cynical, dark flavoring. It's good to hear from you! I'm glad you're doing well. I've always appreciated your boundless energy and good intentions. Good luck with your transformative work. And keep in touch.

Ciao,

Michael

-----

Cher,

Buenos good morning!

Oh, I don't know if I'm all that present all the time, either. It is, indeed, more than a little challenging to be in the world and not of it. But the "work" is staying present, and I give my self over to that which cannot be named whenever the thought comes to mind. Depends, I suppose, how distracting the noise of the world is in any given moment. So, do not think me as free as my chatter might both wish and pretend.

More on the humanity's potential paradigm shift: My view is that the change in consciousness of which we're speaking requires a world-wide disaster of biblical proportion. This "Great Fall" as I've come to think of it, is the tsunami of all the things we as a species have wrought, including over-population, mass extinction, global warming, pollution, resource depletion, all the divisiveness of mind, et cetera ad infinitum. In my vision, we are obviously in the early stages of this coming avalanche, and I think it will accelerate into full collapse for the remainder of this century.

I believe that if there's to be a mass wake-up, it will only come after we hit the wall, and only by those who are able to re-formulate a healing, right-relationship with nature. I just don't see a paradigm shift happening until everything we have created up to now is ripped from our self-absorbed little fingers. And even then, given my observations of humanity across the board, I'm doubtful enlightenment will ever fully reign. Superstition, tradition, general ignorance, lack of discipline, and just plain foolishness, are just too powerful for most minds to discern, much less overcome.

The challenge for those of us who would entertain a more enlightened world, is to individually, indivisibly play out our own process, and to continue doing what we can to help others who come into our sphere of influence awaken as they are able, and then to witness whatever unfolds with a certain air of detachment.

But, my cynicism notwithstanding, I will, as I said previously, be more than happy for your optimistic prediction to be right, and mine to be wrong.

One of my favorite quotes is by Ambrose Bierce from his work "The Devil's Dictionary" is the "Definition of a cynic: A black-guard whose faulty vision sees things as they are, not as they ought to be."

So, enough of my silliness, where are you living these days? Still in Redding? I've pretty much let go of anything past friendship. How's your love life?

Ciao,

Michael

P.S. I like the word "incinerate," and good old Ram Dass re: parents is right on once again.

\* \* \* \*

Response to a letter from Selena Mitchell Quan of Chico:

Selena,

Gosh, 15 years, so many adventures. Not sure exactly what was going on when you graduated and left town. What year was that, anyway? Somewhere 93-ish? Am thinking I was still taking care of Hugh, the head-injured fellow. Such a fog of memories. Lost in time, I am, I am. Well, that whole attempt to start a head injury residential care business kind of fell apart, after which I did a variety of odds and ends things before getting out of Dodge 1999-ish.

The main sources of income from '93 or so included ATM tech for Wells Fargo Armored, taxi driver for Eagle Taxi, part-time barista at Starbucks, selling Corian cutting boards at craft fairs for Meraz & Associates, and key-op and express coordinator at Kinko's. Also fixed up for some old friends what had deteriorated from Grandma's one-bedroom cottage on Oleander Avenue into a pretty battered drug hovel. Slowly brought it back to life, and had some interesting times in the five or so years I spent there. All very blurry and mixed as to the what-happened-exactly-when, but a good stage for many adventures, nonetheless. Like I said, lost in time.

In 1998, I developed carpal tunnel syndrome at Kinko's, and used the rehab opportunity to leave Chico and go over to Humboldt State for most of '99 to brush off a teaching credential with a CLAD certificate. Through the usual serendipity that runs this existence, I came back in early Y2K to the home area near Modesto to be near my parents and work for Creative Alternatives (<http://www.creative-alternatives.org/>), a homegrown group home/foster family/nonpublic school outfit I'd spent a couple years with during the mid-80's. Am currently at Reyn Franca School, a K-12 special education school for emotionally/behaviorally disturbed kids the public schools can't handle. The job description at this writing includes transportation, company-wide training, and jack-of-all-trades support of whatever needs happening. Something of an insane asylum to be sure. Very crazy what's up and coming, but I guess it's what they call job security.

So, anyhow, it's a fairly low-key existence at this writing. Will be turning fifty-five in November. Still a solo act despite a few attempts at relationship here and there through the years. At this point, I've pretty much finally realized it just ain't my cup of tea. I'm just too content to hang out with a cup of stained water and a book, mixed in with long, wandering saunters whenever possible. Live in a studio apartment a block south of Stanislaus State in Turlock, within easy walking access to most of the necessities of modern living. Guess the inherent frugal nature inspired by being raised in a rural setting without much money by parents and grandparents who endured World Wars I & II and the Great Depression fits in nicely with the latest carbon footprint craze.

Still writing, of course. Ye old aphoristic silliness keeps on bubbling away, oftentimes almost camera ready. Over 2650 pages transcribed from all those notebooks and scraps of paper onto which I've been scribbling for the last nearly 20 years. An undated journal of random thoughts about anything that came to mind through all the whatever. Nothing that's setting the world on fire, of course, but an amusing, effortless inclination that's held up to the test of time when most other things fell to the side. Don't know that you have time or interest, but a downloadable copy of "The Stillness Before Time" and a link to a blog titled "The Return to Wonder" is online at a website that I put together while attending Humboldt: <http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/>, Along with a longer booklist and more movies, there are a few things that were written after your departure that you might enjoy.

Anywho, that's enough about the life and times of Michael for now. What's your story!? All I think I know is that you and Doug headed back to San Francisco, got married, and voila, evidently split up but still keep in touch, and there you are in Fresno with a different last name, and an unanticipated but I suppose not unsurprising occupation. Inquiring mind want to know.

Ciao,

Michael

P.S. Was that contact info on Brian Cohen of any help to Doug?

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with high school friend Esther Osborne that began with her comment: I know that you sense my "madness," do you suppose others do? I try to hide it, but it comes out once in a while.

-----  
Moi:

I don't think comes off that bad. Just a zero-tolerance for bullshit, which I think is par for the course for having survived the world to the ripening old age of "fifty-four, thank god there ain't much more." We've both been through a lot in our own way, and some things just get more than a little tiring.

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Esther:

Yes, my patience is just about played out. Sometimes, I feel like I can't breathe and have to force my self to breathe with big sighs. You amaze me with your intelligence, insight, and observation abilities. I have difficulties with people that have little thought process and are able to get through life caring about who wins a damn ball game, who is who in entertainment, or to me is just trivial shit. Maybe, I'm just jealous because I'm unable to do that, or that I'm not able to relate to those people.

-----

Moi:

Oh, I don't know that I'm always as patient as you might think. Believe me, I can rage as well as you. You only see me at Geerbucks after I've done my hot bath, deep breathing, and whatever other tools of detachment that I can muster to take on the world yet another day. Also, in my wanders far and wide, I have mastered the zen poker face, which has stood me well many a time. And I gotta say, other than in a cursory way, I'm not all that interested in the silliness so many people think is important. I just sort of watch this inane world in wonder most of the time. People like us are just aliens here, and, I suppose, just need to relax and enjoy the show as best we may. Take more long walks, sit alone, let go of the silliness, enjoy the things that matter to you, discover the infinity within.

-----

Esther:

Well said. I'm just trying to figure out the relax part. I've been surrounded by so much family for so many years that I have difficulties being alone. Do you ever feel lonely??

-----

Moi:

Okay, you asked for it. I'm going to wax philosophical; do my mystical vision thing. Forgive me if I'm overstepping my bounds, but this sort of thing is what my life is really about. Big difference between lonely and alone. The reality is, in my view of things, that we are all very much on our own from beginning to end. Whether alone or in a crowd, we are each in our own little bubble of awareness through which our individual consciousnesses play out. What we're typically taught to do in our part of the world is avoid looking at it, even to run from it, to keep busy gathering things, or achieving this or that. To make ourselves dependent on others for our happiness. I think we are sort of taught, even encouraged to feel lonely. In other parts of the world, people are taught to examine their inward nature through techniques like meditation, yoga, martial arts, and the like. However you approach it, essentially what you're doing is observing your mind, your body, your senses, your version of the world, whatever it may be. Eventually, if you're fairly observant, if you're fairly earnest, if you're fairly detached, you may even learn to embrace the infinity, the totality, the clayness of which we are all equally created. There is nothing that is truly separate. We are all connected at the fundamental, essential, holographic, matrix, quantum level. We are all of the same oneness, the same singularity – which is the aloneness, the source of all creation. In other

words, we all very much alone, together. The most simple thing in the world to see, but probably the most challenging, arduous journey anyone can ever undertake. So, do I feel lonely? No, I don't think so. Not like when I was younger. I enjoy being around people, but I also very much enjoy wandering here and there alone. I think, as unlikely as it is to ever happen, that if I was never to see another human being for the rest of my life, that I would do just fine. So, I don't know if that helps, but it's the best I can offer up.

\* \* \* \*

Responses to emails from former Chico girlfriend, Shannon Rooney:

Hey there,

Well, I generally haven't been into all this online stuff. I have enough computer time at work, and with transcribing all my philosophical banter. Fiddled briefly with social networking a few years ago on MySpace, but then got bored with chatting with people I'll never meet, and deleted it sometime back. But, at your prompting, I've just upgraded the Facebook page for friend and family viewing. Not interested in it being open to strangers, so you and two others should be the only viewers at this writing. I think I've got the walls and moats in good order, and will just tinker on it, and invite in people I know in real-time as the mood strikes. I guess, on the whole, I just prefer the real three-dimensional virtual reality. A walk, a drive, time at the gym, writing my philosophical silliness, puttering with all my other little hobbies and interests, chatting with friends and acquaintances at coffee shops, watching a bit of everything through Netflix – are far more enjoyable to me. Will probably be adding family photos that I've been gradually scanning, one of my many projects, so stay tuned if you want to see the family, friends, Dad's artwork, and other silliness gradually appear.

What a drag that CCTC want to create more bother for you, but that's what happens when we play with fire.

And, yes, happiness that Obama will get his chance to save our world. I'm also an absentee voter; have been for many years, so I cast my ballot several weeks ago. Not expecting him to be able to accomplish much, given the nature of the world, but at least he's intelligent, articulate, pragmatic, and, as far as my awareness of politics goes, grasps a larger view than any leader we have in our lifetime seen. Interesting times, in the curse sort of way, that's for sure. As far as I'm concerned, the human drama has passed through the apex of its potential, and the decline of our species, whether quickly or slowly, is underway. Certainly, our portion of the world is undergoing a major metamorphosis as the new generation comes of age. With all the tsunamis of our creation surging towards us in time, I think the middle class will begin a rapid decline as the stresses of overpopulation, the battle for resources, and our innumerable imaginary differences, come to a head. John may call it negative thinking, as you say, but reality has a way of ignoring wishful, hopeful, idealistic thinking. So batten down the hatches, watch your back, and enjoy the show as best ye may.

Ciao for now,

Michael

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Hey there,

Interesting, but I'm never sure how seriously to take all these conspiracy theories. And the trouble with the lizard-brainers behind the veil, is that they and their descendants will ultimately pay the same price as the bottom-feeders. And if we as a species can't pull it together, and we are obviously not, then, so be it and oh well. You and me, we got ours. We've walked many forests, sat by who knows how many rivers, swam in an ocean or two, and had the opportunity to participate at a level of existence that no generation heretofore ever has, nor will relatively few hence ever again. Those who survive, if mammalian life does survive itself, will both despise and envy what our time has had, and spent. And as one person said to me recently, "Could it have been any different?" So, enjoy the day as best ye may.

Ciao,

Michael

-----

Shannon,

It is all so silly anymore. Every morning I wake up, put on my game face, and just putter away as I always have. We've all got to do something to get through the day-to-day, and, whether deep or shallow, everyone has what calls them. Will probably continue this existence for as long as I feel like enduring whatever pain the body has in store, but other than getting through it as reasonably as possible, I have no agenda worth a tinker's damn.

As far as putting pen to paper goes, I don't consider myself a great writer by any means, and only do it because thoughts – field notes, I sometimes call them nowadaze – keep coming to mind and I enjoy the linguistic exercise. Yes, I put them out there in cyberspace, and sometimes make up hard copies to give away, but would probably write even if no one was around to read them. Although I've joked in the past that I'm toying with history, in reality the world is far too confused to hear anything I have to say, and I neither expect nor care that anything ever comes of anything I've ever written.

So, as far as your writing goes, I say if you enjoy the process, then great. If not, stop, eat more food, drink more wine, watch more movies, and take more long walks with le Blue.

Ciao, ciao for now. Enjoy the day as best ye may.

M

-----

Hey, hey,

Yuppity-yup on your first paragraph. An amazing one-time light show that often requires more than its share of stoicism. It is you, you are it. Ain't no two or more ways about it. And it will all be over for both of us relatively soon.

When I wrote about John still being in your corner, it's more about him not booting you out. I'd hate to see you having to live in that nice new car or push a grocery cart around. I certainly don't expect that you two will ever be much more than roommates. How you ever even got together is in fact a great curiosity to me.

And as you might well imagine, I've always considered marriage counseling to be something of a joke. My view of relationship at this writing is that you either get along, see eye to eye, so to speak, or you don't, and no amount of trying to work things out is going to change that. You play out who you are, he plays out who he is, and the only decision to be made is whether you want to continue being a part of of each other's dream. John offers a safe harbor, so, given your alternatives, in my mind it seems pragmatic to endure it as best you are able.

As far as your physical security goes, are you at all eligible for disability anymore? And have you worked enough to get Social Security when you hit 62 or beyond?

Regarding your wrist issues, I strongly suspect it may well be too much tension in the neck and shoulder areas around the spine, and, though I understand insurance won't cover it, highly recommend either chiropractic or heavy-duty massage if you can somehow manage it. Below are some health-givers I went to before leaving for Humboldt.

Russ Kalen and his CranioSacral technique might be very helpful, especially given your head injury:

Russ Kalen  
<http://drkalen.com/>

Jenny Fitton introduced me to what I call gentle chiropractic, officially known as Directional Non-Force Technique:

Wellness.com: Jennifer Fitton  
<http://www.wellness.com/dir/438013/chiropractor/ca/chico/jennifer-fitton-dc>

Directional Non-Force Technique  
<http://www.nonforce.com/>

Michael Tonettii had a great set of hands back when I was putting money into my body:

Health Grades: Michael Tonettii  
<http://www.healthgrades.com/provider/michael-tonetti-g4rb6>

Dealing with Gravity  
[http://dealingwithgravity.com/sub\\_bio.shtml](http://dealingwithgravity.com/sub_bio.shtml)

And as far as the printer goes, I hope you realize that I bought it to help you get out of teaching and writing into a more enjoyable livelihood. Your Rock On! entrepreneurial effort seemed like an idea worth pursuing, a fun little project for me, as well, and it was unfortunate that natural ingredients couldn't hold up to weathering. At this writing it's obviously way more technology than either of us will ever need given our ambitions for this world. I would prefer the money to the possession of another thing, but am ready to write it off and take it off your hands, so that you can focus on your health and other more important things.

Had some brake and alternator work done on the van yesterday, and plan to get up there mid-October.

So, see you in a few weeks.

Ciao, ciao,

M

\* \* \* \*

Facebook Messenger response in 2015 to Clay Barth from the Class of '72:

Hey, Clay,

The 45th reunion, assuming we do it, will be in 2017. Don't know where it will be – Kathy's place in Denair worked out great last time, and I'm thinking she might go for it again – but with all the email addresses and Facebook pages, we're pretty well dialed in on getting the word out whenever it happens.

This getting old thing is definitely getting old as far as I'm concerned. It's been an interesting life, but there's sure a lot of snap-crackle-pop going on in this body with all it's been through. Am in reasonably good health as far as the numbers go, but I'm not tossing it around near as much as I used to, that's for sure.

As far as relationship goes, I've had a number of girlfriends through the years – even had a few pop the question to me – but always enjoyed my solitude too much to settle down. Men and women are different species as far as I'm concerned, and good friendships have always suited me best. A sociable loner is how one friend labeled me. That said, it seems like you've had a couple of pleasant marriages while they lasted, and a nice collection of offspring to show for it, so good luck to you on running into someone that clicks.

Don't know if you ever get out to California to visit your clan, but if you do, we should get together for some catch-up.

Take care,

M

\* \* \* \*

Letter to Chuck Chojnacki regarding the debt owed from the failure of our brief Chico Hedway partnership:

Michael J. Holshouser  
1112-4 Cedar Creek Drive  
Modesto, CA 95355-5213  
Cell: (209) 988-6271 Work: (209) 668-8594  
mholshouser@gmail.com

January 4, 2010

Charles Chojnacki  
2316 Masterson Court  
Santa Rosa, CA 95403



Dear Chuck,

Hope this finds you and yours healthy and happy in the opening days of the new decade. I'm doing well in a low-key way over in the Central Valley where I was raised. Still working for Creative Alternatives wearing a variety of hats. It's not the geography I'd favor living in if I had my druthers, but it's close to my aging parents in a tolerable zone, so I'm relatively content.

It's been over fifteen years since you promised to pay your half the debt that I covered out of my retirement savings in our close-but-no-cigars residential care attempt. It was an interesting time, full of possibilities. I think we had a good partnership going for a good purpose, and have always wondered what would have happened if Marge and the State hadn't pulled the plug.

I haven't made an issue of it so that you would have an opportunity to create a secure haven for yourself and your children. I've always hoped that at some point you would have the means, either through your own effort, or through inheritance, to make things right between us.

In the rural roots I come from, the mark of a man is his word. As Seneca said a couple thousand years ago, "Nothing deters a good man from doing what is honorable."

Hope to hear from you.

Take care,

M

\* \* \* \*

Letter to Larry Ellison after watching the America's Cup in San Francisco:

Michael J. Holshouser  
1112-4 Cedar Creek Drive  
Modesto, CA 95355-5213  
mjholshouser@gmail.com

Larry Ellison  
Oracle Corporation  
500 Oracle Parkway  
Redwood Shores, CA 94065

July 15, 2013

Larry,

While perusing the America's Cup online site, I segued over to Wikipedia to read your biography – which says you came out of your youth a religious skeptic – and thought I'd send a little philosophical work written twenty-ish years ago, on the off chance it might ring true for you.

Also, bon voyage in San Francisco. Quite a thing to have the America's Cup in our back yard. These catamarans you folks have designed are amazing. Am looking to get over there a time or three for some wine-and-song viewing from the shoreline. Had a San Francisco Pelican years ago – which I foolishly let go as I headed off for a new adventure – that taught me just enough on a couple nearby Sierra foothill lakes to dimly appreciate what goes on out there.

Am also reading Patrick O'Brian's Aubrey-Maturin series – the fictional books upon which the movie "Master and Commander" with Russell Crowe was based – and highly recommend a look-see if you haven't ever picked them up. O'Brian's articulate view into the world of sail, the play of history during the Napoleonic era, the early years of the sciences exploring the unfolding panorama of the planet, along with the seemingly endless foibles of human nature, is a wonder to read. A number of resource books and online websites – O'Brian has quite a following – are available to add spice to the reading. It was disappointing the powers that be in Hollywood didn't see fit to follow-up with a sequel.

Congrats, by the way, on a most interesting life. You've certainly gleaned a no-holds-barred statistical sample of what this mortal theater offers. Best wishes and keep on enjoying as best ye may.

Ciao, ciao,

M

\* \* \* \*

Email to Robin Slovacek:

Hey there,

As far as the second book goes, I got as far as the first sixty pages, and then – between all the distractions I manage to come up with in the retired life – moved back to working on getting the bulk of everything else, what I call the compendium, edited and uploaded. Another 70 chapters of ten pages each to go on that little project.

Essentially, the big picture is that everything that's been written since 1990-ish, an undated journal of thoughts, will be posted online in the three components below for the dream of consciousness to do with whatever it will or will not. All no charge, as I am not interested in marketing it, or creating some traveling salvation show. My solitude is far too precious to surrender to that sort of on-stage silliness.

So. anywho, this is a general sketch at this writing of how it will all be organized:

The website for the original book of 50 pages of aphorisms, essays, and lists of movies and books, with links to everything else:

The Stillness Before Time

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/>

The second book, currently 60 pages posted, with a vague intention to gradually get it up to 100 to 200 pages before it's over:

The Ponderings of Yaj Ekim

<http://theponderingsofyajekim.blogspot.com/2010/05/ponderings-of-yaj-ekim.html>

And the compendium of everything else, probably well over 3,000 pages once everything's uploaded:

The Return to Wonder

<http://thereturntowonder.blogspot.com/>

So, it is for you and others to share or not. Plenty of other silliness already out there – as Sandra Ma says, lots of babble – so I sure wouldn't be surprised if it goes largely unnoticed in the annals of whatever time remains in this unfolding dystopian drama. The memes are strong, and every day stronger. So it goes.

Enjoy as best ye may.

Ciao, ciao,

M

\* \* \* \*

Email to Misty Jones:

Hey there,

The thing about the Central Valley is that it is fairly dense as far as free-thinking goes. The memes are strong and stronger every day. There are some nexus points where people explore awareness if you are ever willing and able to make the move, but meanwhile, alas, you must carry on, stiff-upper-lip-it, so to speak, in chameleon mode. It is doable if you hold to the inner clarity that in this asylum of a world, where absurdity reigns, it need not be you who wanders about babbling inanity. Though ever a challenge, it can be endured if you stay true to your Self.

Meme

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meme>

Groupthink

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Groupthink>

Brainwashing

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brainwashing>

Propaganda

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Propaganda>

Catch-22

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catch-22>

\* \* \* \*

Response to an inquiry from Ingrid Koch on Facebook:

Hey, Ingrid,

Sorry I didn't get back to you sooner. Must have missed your original message. Yes, the name Holshouser (We pronounce it Holtzhowzer) is German in origin. I believe it means wood house. As far as I understand it, my father's side came through England in what is now South Carolina during America's colonial period. After the Civil War, younger sons headed out to Texas, and my father was two years old when my grandparents moved out to Hughson – a small rural town in Central California – just before the Great Depression.

My mother's side is also German – Kurtz is her maiden name – was also pre-revolutionary, but came through the North via Pennsylvania on into Ohio. My understanding is that they were Brethren as far as religion goes. My mother's parents, both from Ohio, attended college, married, and had my mother in Southern California. They moved up to Modesto – about ten miles away from Hughson – before World War II. Mom and Dad met at the wedding of mutual friends, and married a few years later during the early 50's.

As far as Facebook goes, many of those thousand are people I actually know, and many are cyber folk I've run across through internet travels. I use Facebook to connect with people who are inquiring into the world on a deeper level. I use my page to post a variety of interesting links and graphics, as well as my own thoughts. If you work your way down my wall, you will find a wide variety of things to ponder.

And I believe the distance between Switzerland and California is about nine time zones apart, so for all practical purposes your day is my night. It's just past 16:00 hours at this writing.

Take care,

M

P.S. I was also going to mention we don't know much about our European ancestry because most records were destroyed during World War II. Most likely migration to the New World occurred because of a combination of religious persecution and economic opportunity. It's rumored that the Holshouser side had a big land grant in South Carolina through its years in England, but I haven't felt all that inspired to dig into it more deeply.

\* \* \* \*

Email to Gina Vance of Integrative Wellness in Modesto after a reflective meeting on my writings:

Gina Vance  
<https://www.facebook.com/gina.vance.7>

Gina,

Well, that was quite an unexpected adventure! Very insightful in many ways. Afterwards, I hit a burrito truck, and then headed out to the Mall, where I just sort of wandered on empty. Came home, crashed, and now I'm up in the wee hours, straightening up the studio, prepping for the work day, and full of the thoughts below. Hopefully, I'll get a few more hours of sleep before hitting the road.

So, I looked at the Yellow Pages in the current phone book, and found web designers on Page 664. I also googled, and see there are a number free sites available where you can design your own website with web tools they provide, including geocities.yahoo.com.

Free Web Pages

<http://www.google.com/search?client=safari&rls=en-us&q=Free+Web+Pages&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8>

Was also thinking you might consider utilizing Facebook and/or MySpace, which would also both be free. Seems to be a popular venue for musicians and other artists, so why not you and your crew? Not sure if it's as professional as the website you already have, but it would certainly be less expensive.

Speaking of which, don't know how much further you really want to delve into my existence, but a couple friends recently enticed me into setting up a Facebook site (I'd played with, and shut down, one on MySpace a year or so ago – didn't find chatting with "friends" who I would likely never meet all that interesting – generally prefer the real virtual reality), so I'll be sending you an invite in the very soon. Features a variety of photo albums of myself, family and friends that I've gradually been scanning these last six months.

Also, here are a set of blog links from an alter ego with a German last name you'll recognize from our afternoon introspection. I've been on quite a creative roll of late:

Uncle Sam Says

<http://unclesamsays.blogspot.com/>

Uncle Sam Says Archives

<http://unclesamsaysarchive.blogspot.com/>

Of A Philosophical Nature

<http://ofaphilosophicalnature.blogspot.com/>

The Return to Wonder

<http://thereturntowonder.blogspot.com/>

Jester Amok

<http://jesteramok.blogspot.com/>

The Lizard-Brainer Awards

<http://lizardbrainerawards.blogspot.com/>

Yes, I am easily distracted from my true avocation, whatever that be. Maybe we should call it the no-agenda agenda. But, then again, isn't the this-and-that of the day-to-day the nature and definition of philosophy. Besides which, it makes for more material to burn in the furnace of the Soul (Sounds like another possible title: "The Soul's Furnace" or some such thing. Yes, somewhere I keep a list titles)

Hey, it was great fun – completely unexpected, serendipitous in a most delightful painful way – and I'm looking forward to spending time with you in the now and then, as you have time and inclination.

Ciao,

Michael

P.S. I'd be interested, if you're open to it, in making copies of the pages you were reading in those reference books. Some pretty amazing, insightful stuff.

\* \* \* \*

Email to Susan Warren of Chico:

Hey there, hi there, stranger.

Just thought I'd let you know your painting, probably the only original work I'll ever own, is a centerpiece favorite in my apartment. The other day when I was looking at it, it occurred to me to google your name, and see if you were out there in cyberland. Found your website pretty quickly – the picture of Katie and her boyfriend was the eureka moment.

Looks like life is going well in your school career, and your paintings are pretty impressive by my eye. I re-framed "Empty Offer" a few years ago when the original plastic version gave way to time, and the abuse of my transience. I've always been very fond of it because the message so well reflects my mystical cynicism.

For some reason I pictured that you were in Marin County. I vaguely remember you mentioning Oakley and the name of your Free-something school, but didn't realize it was just on the other side of Stockton. I'm down in Turlock south of Modesto, near where I was raised on a peach and walnut ranch in smallburg Hughson.

Am still working for the same outfit, Creative Alternatives, out at Reyn Franca School, our nonprofit special ed site in Denair. Life is low-key and stable for the time-being. Will be hitting 55 in November, and, although ye old back has its debilitating moments, the measurable numbers seem to be holding up well enough.

The philosophical ramblings are still a-bubbling up in the here and there. Not likely they'll ever get published, but it's been one of those enjoyable little pastimes. Don't think you were ever that interested in them, but a website with a blog link that runs through my workplace server is below if you're inclined, or know somebody who might be.

The Stillness Before Time

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/>

Anywho, hope that you're healthy and happy, enjoying life, and that the boys, who must now be in their 20's (time and mind being what it is, I've lost track), are also doing well.

Take care,

Michael

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Susan's response to the email above, intertwined with my responses:

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Moi:

Hey there,

Friday morning, and I'm at a coffee shop next to the garage where the school van is getting an oil change and a brake check. The teachers and aides are having what we call an "Articulation Day" today, and since my current role is organization-wide training and school transportation these days, I get to kick back a bit and take care of details, including a couple pints of joe, maybe some lunch, and a good deal of catch-up and other thoughts interspersed in your email below ... :)

-----  
Susan:

Hi Michael, I have a little time at home while my dinner cooks to write a few more lines. I just finished a yoga class and will dash off to eat as soon as it is done – I worked hard in class and I'm hungry!

So, yea ... those boys ... Jay is going to be 30 in July (!!!) and has been married for 4 years to a woman I adore. They just moved from Seattle to a suburb in Houston TX (culture shock for all of us) ...

-----  
Moi:

Yeesch, I just don't think I'd be wanting to make that sort of switch. Have spent a lot of travel time in the Southwest through the years, and I'm afraid the desert climate is not too high on the list of zones I'd be wanting to live in whatever time is left. Not that the Central Valley is high on that list, either, but here's where the parents and job are, and so I'm committed for the time-being. More on that below.

-----  
Susan:

... and John is 26, living in AZ working for Southwest Air ... (I like to joke and tell everyone he is a pilot--he is a baggage handler). They both moved to be with their dad in AZ when I got the job at Freedom 13 years ago (that was a dramatic change).

Must have been real sudden shift in your reality. No kids in the nest, all alone in a very different reality from Chico, a new career, and not a friend much closer than a hundred miles. More yeesch.

-----  
Susan:

John has stayed in AZ with all of his high school buddies and Jay just recently followed his dad to TX to help with his swimming pool business. Jay really got into the Rave scene (yes and ALL that) where he met his wife, Beth. They seem to be outgrowing some of not-so-great stuff around that scene and he mainly focuses on DJ-ing as a hobby and avocation. They moved to TX when his wife lost her job with a sub-prime mortgage company. She is now having an identity crisis that I am trying to support them through.

-----

Moi:

We had a lot to deal with when we were young, too, but I think everything that's going on in current times would be even more overwhelming. I'm not sure what I'd do if ye old genetic lottery time machine had dropped me off at this point in human history. Amazing how much has happened in this last half century, and, of course, the century or so of industrialization before that. Life has never been easy for any human being, but humankind is definitely treading new ground in our little interactive dream of consciousness.

Ah, poor Beth, a cog in the sub-prime fiasco. Can't believe the "experts" allowed this mess to happen. My only advice to anyone young or old is to work hard and well, and try to enjoy whatever you do, but don't let it define you.

-----

Susan:

John came out here for a while after high school but really missed his friends and moved back after a few years. He was with his high school sweetheart until recently and is really starting to blossom now that they are moving on ... taking akido classes and looking for more creative outlets in the future.

So that's the kids.

So, me in a nut shell ... I lived in Bethel Island in a quiet little place that I loved (and hated) for 9 years. Some good living and learning there. B.I.'s motto is that it is a drinking town with a fishing problem. I kept to myself and really learned how to enjoy being alone and connecting with nature – I lived right on the water – it was very beautiful.

-----

Moi:

Looked up Oakley and Bethel Island on Google Maps, and it does kind of look like an interesting place. Have never spent much time on the Delta; it's definitely a hole in my California experience. Seems like mosquitos might be a bit of a bother, but I would think it would be pleasant to have a kayak or small motorboat to putter about. Not much of a fisherman, I'm afraid. My grandfather and father did quite a bit before I came along, and together we did some trolling on a lake or two, but my father was so involved with trying to survive as a farmer that he didn't have the energy or inclination take off much for such things. He had great artistic potential as a outdoor sculptor, as well, but was never able to spin into a moneymaker, and so let everything drift into the back yards of several family members.

-----

Susan:

I also really focused on being the best teacher I could be – what a tough job!!! It took me some time to figure out how to manage (I am STILL doing that to a certain extent) but I think my students and the staff like me – aw shucks ... they gave me a teacher of the year twice – imagine that! I can picture retiring here.



-----

Moi:

Gotta tell you that your being considered a most-excellent teacher doesn't surprise me at all. My sense is that you have always given your best foot forward to everything you do. Excellence, quality – "Areté" the Greeks called it according to Pirsig in "Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance" – seem to me to be fundamental aspects to your character. Although I faded from your life, you were very much a presence in the Chico zone, and I have a number of memories of watching you participating with dance groups and gatherings that were so much a part of the Chico scene during that time. Don't know if all that is still the same. It seemed to evaporate in the mid-to-late 90's, but maybe it was just me pulling back, and going other directions.

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Susan:

I moved away from Bethel Island to be with a fiery Argentine man ... almost married him but my friends and family intervened – thank god! We all agreed that I dodged a bullet!

-----

Moi:

Always amazes me how women are drawn to that passionate flame, and often pay a price of one sort or another – sometimes an unwitting child, sometimes a black eye. Another woman friend up in Chico did the same thing a few years back with a guy from somewhere up north, and his jealousy and temper really took her on a ride she was happy to end. Can't tell you how many women friends I've known through the years who've lived to regret marrying and mating the guy whose whole repertoire was being able to throw a football, drive a hot car or motorcycle, or supplying the drugs. I'm sure it's the reason some cultures mandate arranged marriages. So, my conclusion is that passion can be great fun, but, as I think is written in the Tao te Ching, a hard wind can't blow all morning, or something like that.

-----

Susan:

I have lived in Concord for going on 3 years now in my most favorite house ever – a cute little brick back cottage built in 1947 with a big yard for a garden. I just had 11 raised beds put in and all I want to do is garden these days.

-----

Moi:

Looking at the map of that whole Contra Costa geography, Concord looks like a bit more of a commute for you than Bethel Island, but probably closer to a less delti-esque fishing and drinking mindset. The gardening option sounds good these days to me, too. As much as I'm still drawn to it, I'm more than a little weary of this racing mind-made world into which our species is careening. Was raised on a small 30-acre farm, but it was peaches and walnuts, and my parents weren't into raising vegetables or livestock on the side. I've helped start a few gardens with others – my specialty is prepping the soil – but have never really tilled anything to fruition on my own. Sometimes I've thought about retiring up to a small

community like Harbin Hot Springs, where I spent some time years ago, and taking up with the garden crew. But I ponder a lot of possibilities, and that retired portion of life is not in the immediate telling.

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Susan:

But – no can do. As well as working full time I am now a full-time student in a yoga teacher training program put on by my local yoga studio. So, I am a busy girl. At 49, I have put the African dance behind me somewhat ... Zydeco is about as close as I get ... or the occasional Samba at a party to show off. Yoga seems to be much more my speed.

-----

Moi:

Alas, these meat machines do slow down. Immortal soul, mortal body – is how I call it. Recently I heard or read, can't remember which, "The hard part about growing old is remembering you were young." But yoga is a good thing – used to do it quite a bit in the post-college years – and "busy girl" that you have always been, why not teach it?

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Susan:

How long have you been in the Modesto area? What is your work like? I know now to stop keeping my eye out for you in when I visit the Chico coffee shops.

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Moi:

Like I said in the original email, I'm from the Modesto zone originally, and through a series of serendipitous events, my wandering star brought me back in 2000. Had a lot of different jobs in the years I was in Chico, and the last one at Kinko's disabled me for a bit with carpal tunnel syndrome 1998-ish. Can't remember the exact timeline, but there was between a year or two of disability. Went over to Humboldt State for eight months of State-paid rehab to brush off the teaching credential with a CLAD certificate. Wasn't sure what I was going to do with it – didn't really have a desire to go back into the day-to-day of a classroom – but it was the only empowering option the rehab process allowed. As fate would have it, just as things were wrapping up in December 1999, I happened to email an old buddy, Blane, at Creative Alternatives, where I'd worked a couple years in the mid-80's, about getting together for a beer when I next got down there visiting family at Christmas. He wrote back that he was now executive director, and that I should come back. So, being the natural born "path of least resistance" practitioner that I am, here I am.

Creative Alternatives is a moderately-sized, homegrown non-profit that got its start 30-plus years ago (<http://www.creative-alternatives.org/>). It currently has three programs: group homes, foster family agency, and non-public special ed schools. When I was there in the mid-80's, it was still mom and pop in size and mindset. By the time I returned in February 2000, it had transformed under new leadership into a more corporate entity. Eclectic character that I am, I've worn a number of hats in these eight-plus years. Worked at first for a brief while as a child care worker in the group homes, then ran a junior high classroom at Reyn Franca School for a semester, and then moved over the main office where I worked in the FFA in a variety of functions including certifying new families, facilitating organization-wide

training, instructing first aid/cpr, fundraising for the emancipation scholarship program, taking pictures of special events, creating a variety of forms and spreadsheets, putting together the silent auction and Christmas party, acting as inhouse Notary Public, and whatever other little projects needed a go-to guy.

However, California's hemorrhaging budget has been impacting our taxpayer-funded agency, and the industry in general, pretty harshly, and it's forcing our management team to cut and splice in whatever way doesn't impact their own paychecks and perks. The initial change put me back out at Reyn Franca School in a coordinator position for the last year and a half at the same salary. But, alas, in a series of personnel moves that subverted the need for my role as coordinator, I was recently downsized pretty drastically to an hourly training/transportation position. A key factor in all this is Blane, my executive director buddy, being sidelined by health problems for the last six months, leaving his second-in-command in interim charge. Although Joey and I get along very well, personal loyalty doesn't carry the same weight as it did with Blane in better times. Though I'm sure the downsizing was carried out with his knowledge and reluctant blessing, it might not have happened if he'd been face-to-face at the helm. Anywho, after re-configuring the retirement deductions that I was feeding the full percentage possible, it works out to be about the same take-home disposable income. Though I'm still contributing to a company matched 403B, the 401K that I've been stoking full-steam these past eight years is now adrift as is in our lackluster economy.

And, as you might well guess of moi, I'm actually "so it goes" fine with it. I have done a great deal of largely unappreciated work by the powers-that-be in my time here, and was growing weary and somewhat bored with the mad pace of everything that had over time accumulated on the plate. The current job description is much more laid back, and suits my philosophical wander-about inclination. Am still making more than anything than I had going in Chico, and there are excellent health benefits, good vacation, holiday and sick leave, and a few other perks that make it worth staying. Don't know what else I'd do anyway – no major adventures are calling out on the horizon, pretty content just to be anymore, and starting over just isn't as appealing as it was in the younger daze.

Am not real hot about the Modesto zone, either, but it's been an interesting experiencing coming back to the original area after so many years elsewhere. Chief among the pluses, is that it has allowed me to be closer to the parents as they transition through their end game years. Good son that I am to good parents they've been, my intention is to see them through whatever's to come, and after that, I'll probably put myself into out-in-the-pasture mode. Dad, an ambulatory but frail 81, with the distinctive signs of minor stoke-driven dementia and/or early Alzheimer's, has all but lost short term memory and the ability to logic out much of the day-to-day. Mom, 77, a mild-mannered low-key woman, is still doing pretty well. She plays a lot of bridge with a variety of groups, participates in a sorority called PEO, and, barring something unexpected, probably has a fair number of years left on her calendar.

I usually get up to Chico every year for a week-ish. The first several years, it was at Halloween, but when the powers-that-be quashed the masked ball festivities, I switched to the greener spring. I think that's when I ran into you to at Bidwell Perk. Wish now that I'd spent face-time catching up with you on life and times, but I was booked to chat with the guy you saw me with, and blew the opportunity.

Chico's really the zone where I have the greatest sense of connectiveness. Kind of a curious thing that I left, I suppose. Had a great time in the not-quite ten years there, but the horse got shot out from under me job-wise enough times that I guess I was ready to get out of Dodge. And carpal tunnel was the ticket. Didn't know where it would lead, but, for whatever reason, that's the way I do things. Not very

pragmatic, I suppose in retrospect, but, thus far, the life and times of Michael have been a pretty interesting wander.

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Susan:

You know ... Empty Offer was and is one of my favorite works of art. I don't think I can explain it but that image just really spoke to me and I had to paint it. I am glad I did and I am so glad that you own it and appreciate it!

-----

Moi:

Empty Offer is a great piece for my point and purpose, and I imagine it will be with me until the last wheezing breath. One of these days, if you'll deign it, I'll have to buy you a bottle of wine to get your signature on it.

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Susan:

Thanks so much for getting in touch :]  
I am off to eat some dinner.  
I look forward to hearing from you again,

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Moi:

Well, that's probably more than enough for now. The van's still not ready, but I suppose I'd better move on to a few work-related things while I'm on the clock. More another time soon-ish :]

Ciao for now,

Michael

P.S. Picked up this Apple MacBook a couple months ago. Used to have a company laptop, but it crashed and burned a year or so ago, and the boys in the band are switching most everyone back to desktops. So well. Anywho, these new versions have a quaint little camera, a new novelty in ye old little techno zone, so, for vanity's sake, a snapshot of my favorite coffee mug is attached :]

\* \* \* \*

Response to an email from Joseph de Nicola:

Hey, Joseph,

Thought I'd shoot you some thoughts about your comment: "Reading your The Stillness Before Time, I don't get the impression of you as a cynic."

At this point, it seems like there's a bit of every label in me. And just because I write what I write in *The Stillness Before Time* doesn't mean I'm in denial about where we're heading as a species. Even if everyone suddenly woke up and started paddling furiously, by all the indicators in my vision, we'd still be drifting in a very strong current towards the falls.

I'll be glad to be wrong, but we're on new ground in the historical movement of our little human drama, and I'm not as optimistic as you seem to be that technology can keep us from the brink for much longer. Too many people, too much greed, too much ignorance, too much insanity, too much everything ... And the reality, from a statistical perspective, harsh as it may be, is that everything that goes up must eventually come down.

So, I suppose the compromise between us is to hope for the best, but plan for the worst.

And enjoy the day as best we may.

Ciao,

Michael

\* \* \* \*

Response to an email from Shannon Rooney:

Hey there,

John doesn't seem to be a perfect fit for you, but, then again, who is for any of us at this stage of our lives? All our lists of what we don't like about others grows daily longer, I'm sure. At least he's in your corner, and you have a roof over your head for the time-being. You may not need that security if your Mom leaves you a decent inheritance, or the rock enterprise become lucrative, but for now it's a safe, pragmatic haven.

Speaking of relationship, it may be premature to bring it up, but before you hear it from someone else, I thought I'd let you know that Susan Warren and I are kind of hooking up in a distance relationship of sorts. I don't even know if you know who she is, but I met her in Chico in the early 90's while she was raising a couple boys and going to school. Nothing happened back then, but we've reconnected on Facebook, and have spent enough face-time to warrant bringing it up out of respect for what you and I had, and in many ways, at least in my mind, still have together.

She lives in Concord, and works teaching art at a high school in the Antioch area. Her boys are all grown up and in worlds of their own. Not sure where it might end up, but early indicators are strong that we may be hanging out quite a bit as time and distance allows. She's got a personality and intelligence that resonates nicely, as did yours, with my own. She's rather idealistic in a Buddhist sort of way, so some of my predispositions towards things that shall not be named are a bit rough for her to comprehend embracing.

So, like I said, it's perhaps premature to bring it up, but since you were the most successful relationship I've had in my life, thus far, I just felt you should hear it from me first. Kind of a surprising turn of events, and nothing I would have expected given my often stated, and rather negative views toward male and female relationships, but, as is often said, never say never.

Anywho, enough of that. I'm sitting in a coffee shop waiting for some tire and brake work on the school van to be completed at the garage next door. The day is cooler than the last few, so it's pleasant set of moments to get paid to sip coffee and ponder the mid-life reverie.

Hope things go well with your Mom. Sounds like she needs to stop resisting residential care, or at least surrender to live-in assistance. What a bother the endgame is. At this end, Sister Ann and I are going to meet with a lawyer next week to be sure Mom and Dad's trust is set up for all the contingencies we may be facing before it's over. Ugh!

So good luck, and enjoy as best ye may!

Ciao,

Michael

\* \* \* \*

Letter sent to several politicians regarding changes being considered to the California Worker's Comp Program:

Michael J. Holshouser  
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Modesto, California 95355-5213  
Home: 668-5732 Work: 634-9736  
mholshouser@creative-alternatives.org

August 27, 2003

The Honorable John Burton  
California State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Mr. Burton:

It has come to my attention that a 15-visit cap to chiropractic care in Workers Comp situations is being considered by the Workers' Compensation Conference Committee, and I want to express my concern about such a limit.

In 1998, while working as a key-op at Kinko's in Chico, I came down with a disabling case of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome. I was forced to leave that line of work, and in the next year or so went through a period of rehabilitation, which I am pleased to say has allowed me to return to the workplace

The return to reasonable health has been a long and winding road. The initial use of medication was ineffectual, and included unpleasant side-effects. And as I considered the option of surgery, it became clear that success was not always assured. Several people I talked with that had undergone it were still suffering from the condition, as well as the often very painful results of the operation itself.

So, in my own loosely scientific way, I chose to explore other routes before undergoing an irreversible procedure. My goal was to somehow overcome this very depressing disability, and to return to a suitable, satisfying line of work. In the four years since being sidelined, I have explored a number of alternatives including acupuncture, acupressure, cranial-sacral therapy, massage, and stretching. I even toyed for a brief time with such unlikely remedies as magnets.

Although each in its own right produced interesting results, none proved so effective as a branch of chiropractic care called Gentle Chiropractic. This approach is much more subtle than traditional chiropractic care in that it focuses on the soft tissues of the body to align the skeletal system rather than the reverse.

Gentle Chiropractic has allowed me to return to the working world, and to continue as an involved, contributing member of society. I currently work in an administrative and training role for Creative Alternatives, an organization that operates foster homes, group homes, and non-public schools in Stanislaus and Merced Counties.

A 15-visit limit on chiropractic care for Workers' Comp cases would not have made this possible for me, and I fear many others who are likewise motivated to remain in the workforce, but be unable to because such a return might require several years of rehabilitation.

I realized the State of California is facing a tremendous budgetary crisis, but I do not believe a 15-visit limit on chiropractic care will be in the best interest of its work-injured citizenry in the long-run. Rehabilitation can be a lengthy process, and injured employees should not be forced to take medication and undergo invasive surgery that offers no guarantee of success. Responsible, dedicated, tax-paying workers should be allowed to heal themselves in whatever way is in their best interest.

I hope you will bear in mind these thoughts in your consideration of the matter.

Respectfully,

Michael J. Holshouser

\* \* \* \*

Response to a woman named Kathi on MySpace, who spotted my foster care coordinator role at Creative Alternatives, and wondered about my views on foster care:

Kathi,

I'm with one of the many private non-profit agencies out there that are overseen by the State of California to certify foster parents. We are probably middle-sized as things go, with an average of 100 foster children ages 0 to 18 in about 60 foster homes. We also have 17 group homes with just under 140 children ages 6 to 18, and have a couple special education schools with somewhere in the neighborhood of 100 students.

Re: the foster care system. Could be better; could be worse. And frankly, I'm not sure what could really be done to make it all that much better. Nations across the world handle what I call the throw-away kids in a variety of ways, and some I've heard about are a lot less pretty than ours. Don't know how true it is, but I've heard that in China and Russia they have centers that are like concentration camps. In some of the

larger cities in Brazil, I've heard there are kids running in feral gangs, and sometime the police shoot them.

What's really too bad, of course, is that people bring kids into this world that they can't or won't raise well. And then there are the many places in the world where wars are raising children as refugees, and others where culture are being decimated by AIDS, famines and other horrors.

Like anything in the human service sector, the effectiveness of any given system boils down to the people who get involved, and to what level they are capable of doing the right thing. Foster parents, social workers, counselors, management and support staff – what we do is a very bureaucratic exercise, and the day-in-day-out is very much a never-ending marathon. And, unfortunately, there is no shortage of kids being taken away from their families for every reason imaginable.

Trouble is, once a child is twisted by abuse and neglect, it's really hard for them to ever get back on the track they would have been on if they had gotten a fair shake in the first place. Factor into that, things like genetic issues and substance abuse, and the whole thing spins even further a-field. Although there are probably many exceptions, the future for many of these children, and the future of our culture as a whole, is not likely to be a pretty sight.

My particular role in all this is fairly eclectic. The primary job duty is to bring aboard new foster parents, but I'm also in charge of training, some scholarship fund-raising, and a variety of special projects and sundry needs that come up now and again. As I said above, a challenging marathon.

Anywho, hope all this isn't too depressing. It seems to be my nature to be a little too serious about things. And in my vision, the world seems pretty darned mad these days, and is only getting zanier every day. But despite all the confusion, we as individuals can still be good caretakers in our own little zone. So, being a good mom to your children, a good caretaker to all those animals, a good friend to all your friends, and a good human being in general, will be as good as it gets in your part of the world.

Enjoy the day.

Ciao,

Michael

\* \* \* \*

Response to an inquiry by Nancy Moore of Santa Cruz about my perspective the September 11, 2001 attacks on the World Trade Center complex in New York City:

Nancy,

I pretty much put everything in a big picture historical-anthropological context.

I feel compassion for the people who are enduring this at a personal level, but in my view, this is a cause-effect thing that reaches back far into the imagination of time.

It ripples from the mythological differences between the major religions that sprang out of the Middle East, all the conflicts in that region that happened before and since, the creation of Israel after World War



II, oil, the Cold War in Afghanistan, the bombing of Libya, the war between Iraq and Iran, the on-going containment of Iraq, and all the countless slights that slap back and forth in anything connected with that area of the world.

The United States is the current Rome, and any Rome has countless enemies that seek its downfall. Terrorism is the only means the powerless have to wage war on the guy with a biggest club. The big guy calls the little guy a cowardly barbarian, but I'm not sure there's really a difference between a cruise missile targeted from hundreds of miles away, and a bomb left in a backpack in a cafe. Both evoke terror and suffering.

The small group that pulled this ingeniously simple act off, whoever they may be, has set in motion a tsunami in time that will ripple across the world in many ways for years to come.

It was bound to happen sooner or later, and my only surprise, frankly, is that it didn't happen sooner.

And it will, I am sure, happen many times in many ways for the rest of human history.

And I'm sorry to say that I think that we may well see things down the pike that will make September 11 look like a walk in the park.

It's the nature of the beast.

Michael

\* \* \* \*

Letter of inquiry about getting *The Stillness Before* time published:

Michael J. Holshouser  
1112-4 Cedar Creek Drive  
Modesto, CA 95355-5213  
Cell: (209) 988-6271 Work: (209) 668-8594  
mholshouser@creative-alternatives.org

April 2, 2007

Editorial Department  
Att: Black Sparrow Books Submissions  
c/o David R. Godine, Publisher  
9 Hamilton Place  
Boston, MA 02108-4715

To Whom It May Concern:

While watching *Factotum* a few weeks ago, I was inspired to send you folks an unsolicited work a la Bukowski.

The *Stillness Before Time* is also online at the website:  
<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/>

More recent ponderings are at a blog titled The Return to Wonder:  
<http://thereturntowonder.blogspot.com/>

And if such aphoristic fare ever proves to be of interest to a paying audience, there's plenty more in reserve.

As I have no agent, if you should be inclined to publish, you can either recommend one, or we can deal directly with a fair formula contract and handshake.

Ciao,

M

\* \* \* \*

A couple letters to Arthur Braverman, the Japanese teacher during my two years teaching fifth-sixth grade at Oak Grove School in Ojai, author of several books on several Japanese Zen masters:

Amazon: Arthur Braverman  
[https://www.amazon.com/Arthur-Braverman/e/B00IU7QHN4/ref=sr\\_ntt\\_srch\\_lnk\\_2?qid=1518461690&sr=8-2](https://www.amazon.com/Arthur-Braverman/e/B00IU7QHN4/ref=sr_ntt_srch_lnk_2?qid=1518461690&sr=8-2)

Michael J. Holshouser  
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[mholshouser@creative-alternatives.org](mailto:mholshouser@creative-alternatives.org)

January 3, 2007

Arthur Braverman  
45 Taormina Lane  
Ojai, CA 93023-3627

Arthur,

When you gave me Nisargadatta's "I Am That" in my world-weary state at Oak Grove in the late 80's, it was a crystal seed that precipitated a wild ride in the 90's. Lots of adventures, and an outpouring of thoughts that still have their moments. Enclosed is a short work that came together for a few publishing inquires that never materialized, but is meanwhile a nice once-in-a-while give-away to people open to such things. In retrospect, I sometimes joke that it should have been called *The Silliness of Time*, but the more serious-sounding title beat it to the punch.

Your name popped in my head a few weeks ago, and when I googled, lo and behold, you've been busy. Will be looking forward to seeing what you've put together in your most recent work when I get the incoming Amazon order. I still recall all the time you spent sitting in the Pavilion and up on the hill. Am afraid I'm still not much good at anything so disciplined, but once in a while I give it a lax shot. Went to

one of those 10-day Vipassana retreats in the Yosemite area a few years back. Enjoyed it quite a bit, but I suppose you could call me zazen-challenged as far as being regular in the day-to-day goes.

Anywho, thanks for being one of the many catalysts in my little life journey. Had read all sorts of Taoist, Buddhist, and a variety of other philosophers up until that point, but for some unknown reason hadn't touched on the Bhagavad Gita and other Hindu writings. The next few years were a real avalanche up in Chico, where I spent the 90's in a variety of jobs and living situations. Lots of coffee, walkabouts, and who knows how many notebooks full of scribbling. Anthropological field notes, I sometimes call them. Over 2400 pages transcribed, so far. It does get old at times, and I don't consider myself that great a writer, but the random enjoyment of stream of consciousness aphoristic wordplay, coupled with the discipline of running a newspaper pre-Oak Grove, keeps pen and paper at the ready. And the thoughts keep rolling out, so much the same, yet each so different in its own little way.

Moved back to the original geography in the Modesto area in Y2K, where I work a bureaucratic job for a local nonprofit, spend time with the parents, and wander relatively anonymous about the sundry. Not sure I'm really any less world-weary and bemused at times, this manifest realm is not always easy on mind, but so it goes.

Hope this finds you and Hiroko both well.

Thanks again,

M

-----

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Modesto, CA 95355-5213  
Cell: (209) 988-6271 Work: (209) 668-8594  
mholshouser@creative-alternatives.org

March 31, 2007

Arthur Braverman  
45 Taormina Lane  
Ojai, CA 93023-3627

Arthur,

I've very much enjoyed reading *Living and Dying in Zazen*. I knew you had spent quite a bit of time in Japan, and met Hiroko there, but getting more details about the many adventures of yourself and other foreigners, as well as hearing about the Zen teachers whose paths you crossed, was all very interesting. It has even inspired me to sit a bit more to "watch my delusions," though I'm afraid I prize my still-reasonably-healthy-but-aging knees far too much to even think about trying the lotus position.

Don't know if you found my aphoristic work of much interest, but I wanted to let you know it has gone through a pretty significant editing, something I'll probably do every once in a while in whatever years

are left. Mostly vocabulary, punctuation and grammar, along with a few clarifications – the essential point, of course, remains the same.

A downloadable copy is available at the website if you're inclined. Hope it's okay that I added your title to the booklist.

Take care,

M

The Stillness Before Time  
<http://thestillnessbeforetime.blogspot.com/>

The Return to Wonder  
<http://thereturntowonder.blogspot.com/>

\* \* \* \*

Letter of recommendation for ex-girlfriend Shannon Rooney:

Michael J. Holshouser  
1112-4 Cedar Creek Drive  
Modesto, CA 95355-5213  
Cell: (209) 988-6271 Work: (209) 668-8594  
[mholshouser@creative-alternatives.org](mailto:mholshouser@creative-alternatives.org)

June 9, 2007

Shasta County Superior Court  
Courthouse  
1500 Court Street  
Redding, CA 96001

To Whom It May Concern:

Shannon Rooney and I were very close during the late 90's in Chico where I met her while working for Kinko's. Our two-year relationship came to a gradual close when I suffered a carpal-tunnel disability, and moved to Arcata in 1999 to attend Humboldt State to re-certify a teaching credential. After obtaining a CLAD certificate, I moved back to the Modesto area to be closer to my aging parents. Since February 2000, I have worked for a nonprofit organization called Creative Alternatives in a variety of administrative roles. Currently, I am at Reyn Franca School, a nonpublic special education school in Denair near Turlock. During my eight years in the Modesto area, Shannon and I have remained close friends through emails and time together when I visit the Chico area.

Shannon and I both shared an ironic sense of humor, and our time together was almost always enjoyable in a casual sharing of thoughts and observations of the world around us. Our interests were very simple, including making meals, sitting in coffee shops, and walks in Bidwell Park and the nearby foothills of Forest Ranch and Cohasset. While I was in Arcata, she and I often met at the half-way point in Weaverville, where she grew up and lived during her early adult years. We usually stayed at her mother's

place, and I was able to meet many of the people, and see many of the places that had impacted her early life.

I consider Shannon to be a very intelligent, personable woman with a great aptitude for verbal and written communication. In her earlier life, she was a prolific poet, and in the years we were together, and since, she has done a great deal of column writing for the Chico News & Review and other print media. While we were together, Shannon was attending Chico State to earn an English degree. To this she added a teaching credential, which has given her an opportunity to teach English at Butte College, and also at a variety of area elementary and high schools as a substitute teacher.

Because I have continued to be one of her confidants in the years since our break-up, Shannon has kept me abreast of what happened in April in Redding. Being caught and charged for shoplifting was a very real wake-up call for her, and she has since pursued help for what she calls an addiction from a number of sources including counseling, a 12-step program and an online support group. She is both embarrassed and remorseful for her actions, and has every intention of never allowing it to happen again.

Regarding Shannon's emotional and health issues, I can say I have witnessed first-hand a woman who has repeatedly endured a great deal of hardship from a variety of fronts throughout her life. She was an unexpected child born after the adoption of two older siblings, has endured a very debilitating chronic autoimmune condition, experienced a very harsh divorce, and has since had an often-difficult time raising their son due to court battles repeatedly initiated by a vengeful ex-husband. These, along with a variety of other challenging life experiences have, I believe, contributed to a chronic depression, which may have played a part in the shoplifting activity, the consequences of which she now faces.

From what I understand, I think there is little question that Shannon is guilty of the charges she faces. The question is what consequences she should pay. The two things that I would ask the Court to consider in making this decision are her fragile health and what she has to offer society. Rather than have her serve time in jail, I would encourage the Court to have her do some sort of work release program or community service, or a combination of both. This might include writing or speaking about her experience to individuals, groups or the community in general.

I would also encourage the Court to find a way, if at all possible, for Shannon to retain her teaching credential. It is the most viable way for her to earn a livelihood, and a very real way for her to contribute to the overall benefit of society.

My sense is that Shannon is a generally good person who got herself immersed in an activity she now deeply regrets; one that she will never do again. I believe, if given the opportunity and motivation, she will use her many skills to wield this experience into something that will benefit many individuals and the community at large for years to come.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Holshouser

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

Stop Being Rude To Amazon Alexa, Carol

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/curtissilver/2018/02/13/stop-being-rude-to-amazon-alexa-carol/#7f04358340fc>

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Steve:

It's a machine ... politeness is to not hurt people's feelings ... machines don't have feelings

-----

Moi:

But someday they will be coded by evil programmers to remember and wreak untold havoc.

-----

Steve:

This is nothing compared to what is going to happen when they have robot prostitutes ... think about what people will do to those ...

-----

Moi:

Surely, there must already be early models out there grinding away.

-----

Steve:

Yes ... there is even a company that will "rent" you one. Where I think this is going ... is that they will become indistinguishable from actual women ... and a company that makes these will partner with Uber ... and Uber will partner with a self-driving car company. So ... you get on your phone app ... pull down menus to pick what you want ... it shows up at your door ... you have your fun ... then send it on its way.

In my opinion this will be nothing but fantastic for men ... they can rent by the hour or weekend etc. ... get an android woman that "learns" what you like ... just like Siri or Alexa but on steroids ... and it magically becomes the woman of your dreams. And when your done ... you send it back ... and can enjoy your life without all the headaches of a "relationship."

Women on the other hand ... are fucked. They won't have any leverage anymore ... and no one will want to put up with all this crap they've had to for the last 10,000 years ... so there won't be any need for them anymore. Especially if the robots get cheap ... which they will. Just look at cell phones ... it used to be a luxury to own one ... you had to be rich ... and now ... I see homeless people in wheelchairs begging for change ... while talking on their cell phones.

Looking forward to it ...

-----

Moi:

Another level of brave new world.

Brave New World

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brave\\_New\\_World](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brave_New_World)

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

The Marriage Market May Be More Imbalanced Than You Think

<https://medium.com/migration-issues/the-marriage-market-may-be-more-imbalanced-than-you-think-fb580717f163>

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Steve:

Yeah ... look at the area I live in ... there are a LOT of educated rich dudes here to compete with ... and few women .... And they are all gold diggers ... which is why they call this "Man Jose" ...

It sucks being a single guy in this area ... unless you're rich ... which I'm not ... and I'd add that in general ... it sucks being male in the US ... women complain about being Sex Objects ... but simultaneously advertise themselves as such ... then complain when they get approached for sex ... which is insane.

And women treat men like Success Objects ... they fuck whoever provides the most material wealth ... which is essentially prostitution in my book ... so most women in this area ... are whores ... and I'd add that that is true in any major city in the US in general ... and our culture promotes that as a way of life.

-----

Moi:

We're in a time of the anarchy of all values across the world, of which the dance of male-female is likely first and foremost center stage. Nobody's fault, really, just the consequence of too much technology, too much affluence, too much knowledge, too much religion, too much et cetera et cetera, all highlighted by too many friggin' people jammed into too little space on this magical spinning garden world. No solution except major dieback or complete extinction.

\* \* \* \*

Emails to Marge Brooks, a Hughson Union High School English teacher and occasional contributor the Modesto Bee, thanking her for all her good teaching:

Mrs. Brooks,

Hey there! Glad to see you're still around and writing. Thanks for all the good teaching and other memories way back when the way it was, was the way it was.

Michael Holshouser

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And a follow-up email to her response that she didn't realize I was back in the area:

Marge,

Sorry not to get back to you sooner. The filter routed you to the spam folder, and I only check it once in a while to make sure I'm not missing someone important.

Came back into the area in 2000 after a couple years teaching in Ojai, ten odds and ends years in Chico, and part of another doing rehab for carpal tunnel at Humboldt State in Arcata. Have been working for Creative Alternatives for nine years wearing a variety of hats – the current one is out at the Reyn Franca School special education site in Denair.

Have also, of course, spent a fair amount of time with the parents. Dad just come home from a stroke that we originally didn't think he'd survive. He's still ambulatory, but his mobile-but-weak-and-uncoordinated right arm is starting rehab. He's had several TIA's and seizures these last several years, which have taken away his short-term memory and ability to logic out much. Along with being very deaf and completely toothless, I'm afraid he's well into that challenging time of life.

Anywho, on the personal front, it's been quite an existence, so far, filled with a healthy statistical sampling of life experiences. Literally no stone unturned if there was a glimmer of interest. Will be turning 55 in November, so it's been nearly two score since the HUHS years started. Pretty amazing how far ye old mindset has traveled.

Probably one of the greatest ironies is how much of this life has been spent writing, taking pictures and putting together things like newspapers, rodeo programs, yearbooks, newsletters, brochures, flyers, weddings and other special event photography. Considering I never did anything much extra-curricular like that in high school, it's one of those curious things.

Also ended up being something of an aphoristic philosopher with a little work titled "The Stillness Before Time" online at the address below. Don't know if it will be your cup of tea, but it reflects the journey that started in little old Hughson. Nothing that's all that popular at this writing, but there's a fair number of people who've found it matches their thoughts on life and times.

The Stillness Before Time

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/>

Hope all's well for you. Just wanted to say again how much I appreciate everything you offered as a teacher and well-intentioned soul during those years our lives crossed.

Take care,

Michael

\* \* \* \*

Response to a letter from Merritt Hulst, a friend from the Waterford years:

Michael J. Holshouser



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Modesto, CA 95355-5213  
Cell: (209) 988-6271 Work: (209) 668-8594  
mholshouser@creative-alternatives.org

May 5, 2008

Merrit,

Finally getting this to you. Not sure at what point in the 90's that I sent whatever version you already have. It's been an evolving, serendipitous process, and I figure this latest update will have a few more sections, additions to the book and movie lists, plus a fair amount of editing of vocabulary, grammar, spelling and the like. Though articulating ye old thoughts has always been an enjoyable pastime, my linguistic abilities, as much as I would desire it otherwise, alas, have more than a few limitations. So, this little philosophical work is always getting tinkered with in this way or that whenever I bother to take a look at it. Probably will until the last wheezing breath. And if you go to the website and link to the blog titled, "The Return to Wonder," you'll get a sense of how all these little ditties just keep on bubbling up in the day-to-day. I often ironically call it "The Silliness of Time" rather than the more serious-sounding title that popped into mind early in the game.

And if you do take a peek at the blog, what you'll find is just a fraction of the compendium of all that's poured out since things started percolating, in what I sometimes call my mystical uprising, 1990-ish. Over 2665 pages digitally transcribed so far from who knows how many notebooks and scraps of paper. Of course, what I'm saying doesn't seem to be all that appealing to most folks, and will probably never be officially published, which is fine. Such things are not all that marketable (i.e., it's not Harry Potter). It's really more of a pleasant diversion than anything that's going to change anything. Nothing that hasn't been put into words somewhere in the boggle of human history, I'm sure.

But it's been an interesting, amusing process, nonetheless. Have passed it on to a number of people through the years. Some toss it, some ignore it, some return it, some argue it, and those for whom it is written, sometimes inhale it like a breath of fresh air. Some, including three retired spiritual bookstore owners, have bought copies for their families and friends. So, who knows what's to come of it in the long haul. An unanticipated life, of that there can be little doubt. Free will looking forward, fate looking back – is how I've come to view it.

Seems like being a part of a Quaker church is a good fit for you. What little I know of their interpretation, they've always seemed like one of the more reasonable approaches to what Jesus was trying to get across about community and relationship before he got himself crossed. Sure would have been interesting to have seen what his teaching might have flowered into if he hadn't wandered – intentionally by the hand of god, or naively in his own arrogance – into martyrdom via Jerusalem's power elite. I, as you might well guess, think the latter. But, whatever the case, in the crap table of the human drama, his roll of the dice has played out in every way imaginable across the board, and here we are, the theater of man, exponentially accelerating in every way mind and technology allow, far and away more confused and conflicted than it could have possibly been 2000-plus years ago. Why hasn't he come back to redeem his many followers? To this fine mess . . . Would you? If there is a supreme being in some sort of Zeus-like persona, he/she/it probably isn't as much dead as exasperated to tears and unutterable boredom with all our vain free will patter. Just one life of all this inanity has been enough for me to oftentimes be world

weariness to the extreme. Can't imagine having to endure it for the rest of time. Suppose you might call it creator's remorse, or some such thing.

And, of course, it doesn't surprise me that you're still the handyman ministering to friends and strangers alike. All those hours we spent working on your house, chatting away while you made signs, and who can recall how many other little escapades, are fond memories upon which I have often reflected. Tried contacting you when I first came back to the area sometime post-Y2K. Got a hold of David – Sorry for your loss, by the way. Missed saying something to you when we talked on the phone. In my few interactions with him, he seemed to be everything that was said of him in the Modesto Bee obituary – and he gave me Analise's phone number. Left a message, but didn't follow up when there was no response. Just kind of figured you had moved on to new adventures, and let it go at that. Only decided recently to give it another try by mail to David's address, which you seemed to have received, as you say, in a rather unfortunate turn of events.

Took a look at Analise's updated website, by the way, and it's pretty impressive. Quite a whirlwind of creative talent you've hooked up with. Must take you on many adventures outside the realm of the Waterford daze.

Anywho, I've babbled on enough for now. It'd be good to see you again someday. Doubt I'll get down to San Diego anytime soon, I'm afraid. Am less of a traveler than in the younger days, and am somewhat adverse to Southern Cal and all its urban zaniness. It's often overwhelming enough in the Modesto/Turlock zone without seeking it out in spades down there. Lived in Ojai a couple years while teaching at Oak Grove School, and, although it was an interesting experience, it was enough to put anything south of San Luis Obispo behind me. Currently live in an apartment a few blocks from Stanislaus State, and – despite its many man-made ponds and some architectural designs that would have Ayn Rand's Howard Roark spinning in his fictional grave – long, solitary walks several times a week have become one of the favored pastimes. So, hopefully, you'll wander up this direction in the not-too-distant future, and have some time to ruminate on life and times, and all our many adventures over a few cups of stained water.

Keep on enjoying.

Ciao,

P.S. Since you played a significant part in the younger daze – amazing that it's been 20-ish years, how quickly it all passes, such a mirage of memories, not exactly sure when or how I drifted on – I'm also enclosing a life resume that I keep for kicks that will give you a snapshot of some the things that have happened along the way in this rather oblique existence.

\* \* \* \*

Breadcrumbs: Life Resume

[http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_68.html](http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_68.html)

Michael J. Holshouser

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Modesto, CA 95355-5213

mjholshouser@gmail.com

## EDUCATION

Cultural Language Acquisition Development Certificate  
Humboldt State University, Arcata

Multiple Subject and Single Subject Social Studies Credentials  
University of Pacific, Stockton

Bachelor of Science, Business Administration  
California State University, Chico

Associate of Arts, Business  
Modesto Junior College

## TIMELINE

Turlock - Retired April 1, 2011

Aimless wandering and any general puttering that comes to mind in whatever time is left In the magical mystery tour for this aging sack of flesh and bones.

Turlock - 2000 to 2011

Employee & Foster Care Training Coordinator and RFS Student Transportation –  
Residential Care, Foster Family Agency & Reyn Franca School, Creative Alternatives, Turlock and  
Denair  
RFS Coordinator – Reyn Franca School, Denair  
FFA Coordinator – Foster Family Certification and Training, Turlock  
Administrative Assistant – Creative Alternatives, Turlock –  
Foster Parent and Employee Training, FirstAid/CPR Instructor, Advertising, Interim Human Resources  
Coordinator, Transportation Coordinator, ITFC Program Coordinator, Notary Public, Graphic Arts, Grace  
Bishop Scholarship Chairman, Christmas Party and Silent Auction Chairman, Special Projects  
Coordinator  
Instructional Aide – Reyn Franca School, Creative Alternatives, Denair  
Child Care Worker – Residential Care Homes, Creative Alternatives, Turlock  
Technical Support – Sandpiper Technologies, Manteca

Chico - 1990 to 1999

Express Coordinator, Machine Operator, Copy Consultant – Kinko's  
Sales, Craft Fair Coordinator – Meraz & Associates  
Barista – Starbucks  
Security – Grass Valley World Music Festival - Maple Creek Presents  
Taxi Driver, Dispatcher – Eagle Taxi  
Sales – Christensen Designs, Manteca  
Author, Publisher, Website Design – "The Stillness Before Time"

ATM Technician – Wells Fargo Armored Service Corporation  
House Restoration – 1111 Oleander Avenue – Lee Hoffmann  
Security – Chico World Music Festival - Maple Creek Presents  
Security – Shakespeare in the Park - Maple Creek Presents  
Clam Shucker, Dishwasher – Annual Bravo Opera Ball - Zephyrs  
Auction Aid – Public Estate Auction – Mansfield Auctioneers  
Operations, Teacher, Partner – Residential Care – Chico Hedway Programs  
Sales, Ferry Harvest Farmers Market – Mountain Fruit Company  
Social Security Administration Payee – Patrick Dauwalder  
Sales, Stock, Custodial, Inventory – Sierra Stationers  
K-12 Substitute Teacher – Butte and Tehama County Schools

Ojai - 1988 to 1990

Morning Bread Baker – Ranch House Restaurant  
Housesitting/Caretaking – Various Ojai Homes  
Fifth-Sixth Grade Teacher – Oak Grove School  
Summer School Director, Bus Driver, Yearbook Advisor, Options Instructor,  
Drama Lighting Director – Oak Grove School  
Waiter, Host – Franky's Restaurant, Ventura  
Arts and Crafts, Trail Riding, Counselor – Gold Arrow Camp, Huntington Lake

Hughson - 1983 to 1988

Fifth Grade Teacher – Hughson Elementary School District  
Child Care Worker – Creative Alternatives, Turlock  
Assistant Social Worker, Foster Home Program – Creative Alternatives  
Photographer – Weddings, Special Events, Portraits – Self-employed  
K-12 Substitute Teacher – Stanislaus County Schools  
Forklift Operator – Martella Walnut Huller  
Publisher, Sales, Layout – La Grange Rodeo Program  
Animal Trail Naturalist – Old Oak Ranch, Columbia  
Word Processing Instructor – Alpha Com  
Editor, Columnist, Photographer, Sales, Layout – Hughson Chronicle  
Children's Program – Strawberry Bluegrass Festival, Yosemite  
Teaching Aide – Modesto Montessori School  
Hired Hand – Roen Ranch Right Fork Cattle Company, Waterford

Los Gatos – 1982

Consultant – California Commission on Violence Prevention, San Jose  
Sales – Chanticleer Children's Bookstore

Waterford - 1980 to 1982

K-12 Substitute Teacher – Stanislaus County Schools  
Forklift Driver – Martella Walnut Huller, Hughson  
Publisher, Sales, Layout – La Grange Rodeo Program

## Home Reconstruction & Caretaking – Merritt Hulst

Waterford - 1978 to 1980

Editor, Columnist, Photographer, Sales, Layout – Waterford News  
Yearbook Advisor – Waterford Elementary School District  
4-H Photography Instructor – Waterford 4-H Club  
Sales – Combined Insurance Company, Merced County

Sacramento, Reno – 1977

Department Manager, Home Division – Weinstock's, Sacramento and Reno

College Years – 1972 to 1977

Industrial Specialist, Engineering Branch – Alameda Naval Air Rework Facility  
Waiter, Busboy, Dishwasher – Sizzler Steakhouse, Alameda  
Swimming Instructor, Lifeguard – Ceres Recreation Department  
Forklift Driver, Weigh Station Master, Sample Machine Operator, Bin Tagger  
Joan of Arc Field Station, Hughson

The Early Years – 1953 to 1972

Farm Hand – Holshouser & Son (Family Farm), Hughson

## SKILLS, HOBBIES, INTERESTS

Writing, problem solving, organizing, systems analysis, marketing, sales, human resource development, training, special events, bookkeeping, computer software, coding, copy machines, automatic teller machines, inventory control, form design, photography, drafting, housesitting, caretaking, general mechanics, bus driving, forklift driving, and other agriculture-related equipment handling.

String figures, knot tying, origami, paper planes, calligraphy, drawing, perceptual activities, military history and technology, trap and target shooting, archery, chess and other board, card, and dice gaming.

Walking, bicycling, swimming, racquetball, gym time, cross-country skiing, backpacking, spelunking, car camping, campfire design, sailing, paintball, four-wheeling, horseback riding, traveling, massage, yoga, macrobiotics, dancing, plants, reading, philosophy, channel surfing, aimless wandering, and general puttering.

Personable, articulate, disciplined, meticulous, punctual, eclectic generalist.

## ADDITIONAL STUDIES

Learn to Sail in Four Days – J World Sailing Courses, San Francisco Bay  
First Aid/CPR Instructor – American Red Cross, Stanislaus County  
Notary Public – California, Stanislaus County  
InDesign, Entourage, iPhoto, PageMaker, Photoshop, QuarkXPress, Eudora,

Communicator, Palm Desktop, Graphic Converter, ScanWizard,  
iView MediaPro, PageMill – Creative Alternatives, Turlock  
Michael Meade Mythology Workshop – Mosaic Multicultural Foundation,  
Community Church of Mill Valley  
10-Day Vipassana Meditation Course – California Vipassana Center, North Fork  
Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, Powerpoint), HTML Web Design –  
Humboldt State University, Arcata  
Windows 98, Netscape, Internet Explorer, Regular and Color Copiers,  
and other related technologies – Kinko's, Chico  
Automated Teller Machines (ATM's) – Wells Fargo Armored, Chico Area  
Appleworks, Quicken – Chico Hedway Programs, Chico  
Hunter Safety and Self-Defense Firearms Training – Safer Arms, Chico  
Inventory Control – Sierra Stationers, Chico  
Hand Drumming – California State University, Chico  
Joel Kramer Yoga Workshop – Northern California  
Macrobiotic Workshop – Macrobiotic Center, Harbin Hot Springs, Middletown  
Tri-County Math Project – University of California, Santa Barbara  
Bill Martin Language Workshop – California State University, San Jose  
Right Side Brain Drawing – California State University, Long Beach  
Great Books Leader Training – Junior Great Books, Santa Barbara  
Direct Instruction – California State University, Stanislaus, Turlock  
How Children Learn – Ottawa University Extension Class, Modesto

## WEBSITE AND OTHER ONLINE CREATIONS

### Website & Book

The Stillness Before Time  
Reflections from a Fellow Sojourner  
<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/>

A 50-page PDF can be downloaded at:  
<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/stillness.pdf>

Facebook, Google Plus, Blogger, Twitter

Facebook: Michael Holshouser  
<http://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=1166861214&ref=name>

Facebook: Michael's Little Warehouse of All Things Amusing, Absurd & Profound  
[http://www.facebook.com/note.php?note\\_id=390323775911](http://www.facebook.com/note.php?note_id=390323775911)

Facebook: Le Fichier Circulaire de Michaël  
<http://www.facebook.com/LeFichierCirculaireDeMichael>

Facebook: Yaj Ekim  
<http://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=1166861214&ref=name>

Blogger: Michael Holshouser  
<https://www.blogger.com/home>

Twitter: Michael Holshouser  
<https://twitter.com/#!/YajEkim>

## Main Blogs

The Stillness Before Time  
<http://thestillnessbeforetime.blogspot.com/>

The Ponderings of Yaj Ekim  
<http://theponderingsofyajekim.blogspot.com/>

The Return to Wonder  
<http://thereturntowonder.blogspot.com/>

Breadcrumbs  
<http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/>

## Odds and Ends

Final Exit  
<http://finalexitandrelatedlinks.blogspot.com/>

The Blind Men and the Elephant  
<http://theelephantandheblindmen.blogspot.com/>

The Joyful Curmudgeon  
<http://thejoyfulcurmudgeon.blogspot.com/>

Of A Philosophical Nature  
<http://ofaphilosophicalnature.blogspot.com/>

The Four Agreements  
<http://donmiguelsevenagreements.blogspot.com/>

Le Fichier Circulaire de Michaël  
<http://michaelscircularfile.blogspot.com/>

50 Rules Kids Won't Learn in School  
<http://50ruleskidswontlearninschool.blogspot.com/>

12 Rules You Can Live By  
<http://12rulesyoucanliveby.blogspot.com/>

How to Work in Any Environment  
<http://howtoworkinanyenvironment.blogspot.com/>

Once Upon a Christmas  
<https://onceuponchristmas.blogspot.com/>

Ditties for the Bluegrass Pyre  
<https://dittiesforthebluegrasspyre.blogspot.com/>

Election 2016: The Rise (and Fall?) of Donald Trump  
<https://theriseandfallofdonaldtrump.blogspot.com/>

Eight Translations of the Ashtavakra Gita

The Heart of Awareness (Byrom)  
<http://theheartofawareness.blogspot.com/>

Ashtavakra Gita (Marshall)  
<http://theashtavakra.blogspot.com/>

Bitten by the Black Snake (Schoch)  
<http://bittenbytheblacksnake.blogspot.com/>

A Duet of One (Balsekar)  
<http://aduetofone.blogspot.com/>

Ashtavakra Gita (Richards)  
<http://anotherashtavakragita.blogspot.com/>

Astavakra Samhita (Wood)  
<http://astavakrasamhita.blogspot.com/>

Ashtavakra Gita (Vedic Scriptures)  
<http://ashtravakrageeta.blogspot.com/>

Translations of Other Ancient Writings

Ashtavakra Gita: I Am Shiva  
<http://ashtavakragitaiamshiva.blogspot.com/>

Tao Te Ching: Verse One  
<http://taotechingverseone.blogspot.com/>

Tao Te Ching (Marshall)  
<http://theperennialway-taoteching.blogspot.com/>

Bhagavad Gita (Marshall)  
<https://bhagavadgitamarshall.blogspot.com/>

Yoga Sutras (Marshall)



<http://yogasutrasbypatanjali.blogspot.com/2014/03/unity.html>

Dhammapada (Marshall)

<http://buddhasdhammapada.blogspot.com/>

Avadhut Gita (Shastri)

<http://avadhutgitabydattatreya.blogspot.com/>

Song of the Avadhut (Abhayananda)

<http://songoftheavadhut.blogspot.com/>

Atma Bodha (Chinmayananda)

<http://theatmabodha.blogspot.com/>

The Essence of the Ribhu Gita (Ramamoorthy & Nome)

<http://theribhugita.blogspot.com/>

Yoga Vasishta Sara (Ramasramam)

<http://yogavasishtasara.blogspot.com/>

Crest-Jewel of Discrimination (Madhavananda)

<http://crest-jewelofdiscrimination.blogspot.com/>

Mandukya Upanishad & Mandukya Karika of Gaudapada (Panoli)

<https://mandukyaupanishadpanoli.blogspot.com/>

Gaudapada: Advaita Vedanta's First Philosopher (Jones)

<https://advaitavedantasfirstphilosopher.blogspot.com/2020/02/on-tradition.html>

Translations of Ancient Writings by Bart Marshall

Ashtavakra Gita

<http://theashtavakra.blogspot.com/>

Tao Te Ching

<http://theperennialway-taoteching.blogspot.com/>

Bhagavad Gita

<https://bhagavadgitamarshall.blogspot.com/>

Yoga Sutras

<http://yogasutrasbypatanjali.blogspot.com/>

Dhammapada

<http://buddhasdhammapada.blogspot.com/>

\* \* \* \*

Response to cousin Steve on human greed:

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Moi:

The Monopoly game taught us everything we needed to know about capitalism. Round and round until the one-percenters and their minions own it all; the rest minding the hotels or homeless. Capitalism, or as I call it, consumerocracy, is about greed and self-interest, and egalitarian ethics has never been, nor will ever be, a concern to those who wield the whip. Few ever willingly hand over or share power, fame, or fortune. The masses may whine and grumble, but, unless they are inspired to revolution – which only puts new masters upon the throne – their lot is whatever crumbs drift down from the heights. Might makes right is the human paradigm that has played out over and over since long before we wandered from the jungles of origin out into the world. Nothing you or I say or do will change that.

\* \* \* \*

Response to cousin Steve on civility and the human paradigm:

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Moi:

Civilization is defined as “the stage of human social development and organization that is considered most advanced.” Civility is defined as “formal politeness and courtesy in behavior or speech.” If getting along and supporting each other is the goal, the peak of any civilization, any community, any group, is gauged by how many abide the Golden Rule: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. No synergy bent on a cooperative, health-giving one-for-all-all-for-one can long sustain without it.

\* \* \* \*

Response to cousin Steve on an article about America’s quest for happiness:

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Moi:

No matter where we meander, no matter where we rest our weary heads, getting through any given instant still boils down to a mindful dollop of detachment. Not taking it all so seriously, not taking ourselves so seriously, is the first and last challenge. Conscious of it or not, in one way or another, we are all playing out the Atlas of our conditioning, and learning to set down our imaginary universe may not be as hard as we choose to believe.

\* \* \* \*

Response to cousin Steve on an article speculating that the world is a simulation:

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Moi:

Seems obvious that it is the awareness in all of us that's the source of this quantum theater. Not sure why we always need gods or aliens or some Matrix programmer to explain the inexplicable mystery that will always be an inexplicable mystery. You are it and it is you, and it ever boils down to just being in the moment, in whatever indivisible here-now the mind and senses are playing out.

\* \* \* \*

Response to cousin Steve on another article speculating that the world is a simulation:

Moi:

The Matrix was an enjoyable movie, and certainly one that wrapped our minds around an interesting concept, but it was just a movie. I find it more than a little unlikely that we are wired up in a vat playing out a universe programmed by a galactic junior high student. I even find it curious anymore that we are so geocentric as to think there are other worlds with civilizations and life forms that parallel our own. I don't say there isn't other life out there in the vast timeless reaches, just that we are likely a unique one-of-a-kind creation, seemingly well on our way to a very dystopian extinction.

\* \* \* \*

Response to cousin Steve on an article about the quest for happiness:

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Moi:

Have never understood the futile quest so many people undertake for happiness. To me life is about living in the given moment, being as aware of eternity's passing with as much attention as the mind-body is capable of giving it. In this play of consciousness, some moments are indeed less painful than others, but there is no way they can always be joyful, pleasurable, or whatever other nirvanic soundbite we might give it. Life is process, life is segue, and all the punctuation marks, all the pleasures and pains, pass as timelessly as the points between. The people who are afraid to die are afraid to live, afraid to give themselves over to the eternal now we all really are, have ever been, will ever be. To be as innocent, as simple, as untainted as a child, is to give your self, your awareness, over to the undying moment, and few of we mere mortals are capable of that once desire and fear have become the all-consuming wraiths they are.

\* \* \* \*

Response to cousin Steve on an article about happiness in the workplace:

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Moi:

The quest for happiness has never been an issue for me. If you think about it, it ain't going to happen. All my workplaces have always just been workplaces, and my satisfaction with them entirely based on my own sense of self-actualization. Working in some sort of children's playground with swing sets and slides is yet another rung of absurdity in these our times as far as I'm concerned. Being in the moment is its own intangible reward.

\* \* \* \*

Response to Bruce Styles and his rant about Donald Trump and the unfolding takeover of the White House:

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Moi:

And not to break your bubble, but our little republic was well on its way to being lost long before you and I were born. I've been using a variety of terms for years – corporate oligarchy, consumerocracy, consumptionocracy – to imply it nothing more than another footnote in the dreamtime of history. Ye old USofA was a nice little experiment, with all sorts of high-sounding wordplay and patriotic symbology, to which we were conditioned to pledge allegiance, just as doomed to failure as any city or nation state ever has been. The few have always ruled the many. Only the faces and names and means and memes change. Just a matter of how and when, never if. Trump and his crew of Alt-Righters are just the current issue, the current tools. The dress code may not be black or brown or march in lock-step, but the one-percenters and their minions are ever in charge. And the masses, the mob, the plebes, the proles, the citizens, call them what you will, loyally, blindly, incoherently, go along as long as they have their bread and circuses. And the hydra of technology only makes it easier and easier to sway them this way or that. Whine and moan and stomp your feet and even rebel all you will, it changes nothing.

You might want to re-read some George Orwell:

Nineteen Eighty-Four

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nineteen\\_Eighty-Four](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nineteen_Eighty-Four)

Animal Farm

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Animal\\_Farm](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Animal_Farm)

Goodreads Quotes: George Orwell

[http://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/3706.George\\_Orwell](http://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/3706.George_Orwell)

Terry Gilliam gave us another good one:

Brazil (1985 film)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brazil\\_\(1985\\_film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brazil_(1985_film))

And, of course, Aldous Huxley:

Brave New World

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brave\\_New\\_World](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brave_New_World)

And let us not forget Ray Bradbury's contribution to the mix:

Fahrenheit 451

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fahrenheit\\_451](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fahrenheit_451)

Two of my Orwellian favorites:

The past was erased, the erasure was forgotten, the lie became truth.

Now I will tell you the answer to my question. It is this. The Party seeks power entirely for its own sake. We are not interested in the good of others; we are interested solely in power, pure power. What pure power means you will understand presently. We are different from the oligarchies of the past in that we know what we are doing. All the others, even those who resembled ourselves, were cowards and hypocrites. The German Nazis and the Russian Communists came very close to us in their methods, but

they never had the courage to recognize their own motives. They pretended, perhaps they even believed, that they had seized power unwillingly and for a limited time, and that just around the corner there lay a paradise where human beings would be free and equal. We are not like that. We know that no one ever seizes power with the intention of relinquishing it. Power is not a means; it is an end. One does not establish a dictatorship in order to safeguard a revolution; one makes the revolution in order to establish the dictatorship. The object of persecution is persecution. The object of torture is torture. The object of power is power. Now you begin to understand me.

So it goes, too bad, so sorry, oh well, deal with it, get over it, move on.

Take a nice walk today. Sit in the sun, smell some roses. Don't resist when a shadow in a black suit puts the barrel to the back of your head.

Ciao ciao,

M

\* \* \* \*

Response to Gary Gerard on a Christian conversion story he wanted me to read:

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Moi:

Just finished reading the story you sent. Thanks for the good intentions, but it just doesn't do a thing for little old agnostic moi. I reside in the indivisible don't-know-don't-care, have no sense of there being a god outside my Self, and what happens if anything after this body falls off is of absolutely no concern. The existential here-now dreamtime is more than enough. By my reckoning, all mythologies are nothing more than human-created, fear-based, greed-laced, egocentric-ethnocentric-geocentric-heliocentric mind gorp.

So, from my perspective, enjoy the moment as best ye may; it is all you have and have not.

Ciao ciao,

M

\* \* \* \*

Response to Ross Avila asking about whether or not I had suffered in my quest:

There's a dark side to meditation that no one talks about  
<https://qz.com/993465/theres-a-dark-side-to-meditation-that-no-one-talks-about/>

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Moi:

Have definitely had my times of agony and ecstasy. The mind is quite adept at torturing itself in every way imaginable. We are all mentally disordered to some degree by my reckoning. To be totally detached, and still be in the world, is only for the rare few, and even those few likely suffer at times if they are at all

honest about it. The collusion of identify that our kind has orchestrated in its ascendance from the jungle has brokered every possible illusion and delusion that imagination can imagine. And the day ain't over.

The brain is an apparatus that evolved to survive a world far different from the overpopulated, so-called civilized one our tool-making ability has unleashed. I think the source of our rampant mental illness is the obvious fact that we are no longer living in the relatively simple garden that created us, and it is just too much for many if not all minds to easily wrap their heads around.

The mind is a tool, and when contemplation and meditation begin to examine that device, what it is, and all the assumptions it has made in formulating its world, its universe, things can get a bit iffy. To go all the way, to achieve a state of illumination, requires the doubt, the aloofness, of an unflinching scientist bent on truth. It is a journey which few begin, much less finish. Many are called, few are chosen, and even fewer volunteer.

\* \* \* \*

Response to a movie trailer from cousin Steve:

The Red Pill (2017)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wLzeakKC6fE&feature=youtu.be>

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Moi:

Looks interesting, but I don't have Amazon Prime, so I'll catch it when it comes out on Netflix, or maybe on Youtube, if it shows up there.

The whole battle of the sexes thing is pretty much a non-issue for me at this writing. I'm no longer in the work place, feel no need to die for any nation state or belief system, am all but done with women for anything but light banter, and have absolutely no interest in joining any movement or group. I retain absolute power over my inner world, and do not require the sanction of any man or any woman to live out what's left of my existence freely, and in peace.

Along with reading some of the men's books you've previously mentioned, I gave a men's group a short try back during the college years in Chico, and my observation with it and some other group discussion experiences, including Christian bible groups, is that they tend to process the same things over and over, and end up promoting weakness and disempowerment. And I have never been interested in being a sheep in anyone's flock.

Did you ever read "Iron John" by Robert Bly? Haven't looked at it for years, but my takeaway memory on it is that a boy must steal the key from under his mother's pillow, and never give it away to any other woman. If you do, my experience is that they will both weaken you, slow you down, and as the song goes, take your soul if you let them. Only the rare woman will ever even begin to comprehend or appreciate a man's world. From my perspective, it's a waste of time to even bother trying to explain or justify the perception of maleness this meat machine has formulated. It doesn't make me a misogynist; it just means the given anatomy, the given sensory play, no long hypnotizes me, no longer inspires me to dance a dance, to play a game, in which I am no longer interested.

Iron John: A Book About Men

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iron\\_John:\\_A\\_Book\\_About\\_Men](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iron_John:_A_Book_About_Men)

Iron John

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iron\\_John](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iron_John)

\* \* \* \*

Comment on an article sent to cousin Steve:

Contaminants in water are legal but still pose big health risks, environmental group says

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/2017/07/26/contaminants-water-legal-but-still-pose-big-health-risks/510237001/>

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Moi:

The chemistry we have unleashed across the planet in the last century or so is yet another major aspect of the unfolding nightmare for the future. The Central Valley is a toxic waste bin, and having lived in it most my life, it is a wonder I'm still on the walking side of grass. One of the top reasons I long to move further north is to get to someplace with "cleaner" air and water.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article sent by cousin Steve with a comment that he finds it ironic and hypocritical that someone is fired because he questions his company's diversity policy:

Google Reportedly Fires Employee Who Slammed Diversity Efforts

[www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2017/08/07/542020041/google-grapples-with-fallout-after-employee-slams-diversity-efforts](http://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2017/08/07/542020041/google-grapples-with-fallout-after-employee-slams-diversity-efforts)

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Moi:

The tyranny of political correctness.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

After Studying the Lives of 724 Men for 79 Years, Harvard Reveals the 1 Biggest Secret to Success and Happiness

<https://www.inc.com/dana-severson/after-studying-lives-of-724-men-for-79-years-harvard-reveals-1-biggest-secret-to-success-happiness.html>

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Moi:

Our species has made it this far because belonging to groups enabled our survival, so it makes sense at a molecular level that having close bonds would forge happier, longer lives. The trick is coming up with viable connections in this our dysfunctional, disconnected world.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve with the comment: WTF is causing this? Disillusionment with just about everything from Government, Private Sector, American Culture, Vilification of Men in General in our Culture?

Drugs, jail, video games tell tale of the lost American male

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/markets/drugs-jail-video-games-tell-tale-of-the-lost-american-male/ar-BBEOYJY?ocid=Money>

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Moi:

I think civilization does not work as well for men as it does for women. We were designed for a harsher world, and the one we are in now is just slavery to nothing all that interesting across the board. Knowing all I know, all I have experienced, I find it hard to imagine what I would do if I was starting over.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve and his comment: I feel so sorry for these people ... it must be soooo stressful being filthy rich ... I can't imagine the stress that must cause ... I'm so glad I don't have that problem:

I'm Rich, and That Makes Me Anxious

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/money/personalfinance/im-rich-and-that-makes-me-anxious/ar-AAuxirX?li=BBnbfN>

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Moi:

I have come to think that I am wealthier than Gates, Buffet, Ellison, and all the other one-percenters combined, because I have enough, and do not worry whether or not I wake up tomorrow. To master contentment is the first and last challenge.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

My wife had a baby, and I started thinking about suicide. A psychiatrist's diagnosis surprised me.

<https://www.vox.com/first-person/2017/10/3/16411378/male-post-partum-depression-mental-health>

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Moi:

A few thousand years ago, it was just a cave or a teepee, hang out in the forest, bring home a slab of meat, and let the kids run wild. Now it's a two-story-five-bedroom house, a monotonous mind-numbing job, parent-teacher conferences, rat dogs and yowling cats, debt up to your ears, and slavery to a woman's futile attempt to attain happiness. We're just fucking lucky that we managed to ride it out solo, Cuz.

\* \* \* \*



Response to an article from cousin Steve with the comment: It's definitely a fucked-up situation ... but the problem isn't the guns ... although it makes it possible ... but it's the person that goes commando and flips out ... and I don't know how to fix that:

The Las Vegas shooter had 23 guns. Here's what we know about them.

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/checkpoint/wp/2017/10/02/video-from-las-vegas-suggests-automatic-gunfire-heres-what-makes-machine-guns-different/?utm\\_term=.822a02983d7b](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/checkpoint/wp/2017/10/02/video-from-las-vegas-suggests-automatic-gunfire-heres-what-makes-machine-guns-different/?utm_term=.822a02983d7b)

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Moi:

We are what we are: the planet of the apes. It's been going on since some angry primate picked up the first stick or rock. And there ain't no fixing it, that's for sure. You can't legislate sanity.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

Why Loneliness Is a Public Health Threat

<http://fortune.com/2017/08/07/loneliness-public-health/>

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Moi:

I think technology has made many realize how lonely they are, and stoke it as never before.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

The secret to office happiness isn't working less – it's caring less

<https://qz.com/1048352/the-secret-to-office-happiness-isnt-working-less-its-caring-less/>

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Moi:

Each of us has to find our own way in dealing with everyone else – parents, mates, children, bosses, coworkers, priests, politicians, one-percenters, whatever – telling us what to do or how to live. It's not easy standing alone free and clear. Never had much ambition for this or any other world, so I've managed to remain relatively detached much of this inane life. Buddha caught it with his third noble truth.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

This Map Compares the Population of the Real World vs. Social Media

<https://www.visualcapitalist.com/map-populations-real-world-social-media/>

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Steve:

It is a major contributor to the downfall of the world, and it's driving people collectively insane on a massive scale.

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Moi:

It's both intellectually fascinating and emotionally exhausting watching our tool-making ability take us deeper and deeper into the abyss.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

A Quantum Theory of Consciousness  
[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/a-quantum-theory-of-consciousness\\_us\\_596fb782e4b04dcf308d29bb](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/a-quantum-theory-of-consciousness_us_596fb782e4b04dcf308d29bb)

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Moi:

I, Quantum

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

Happiness may be healthier for some cultures than others  
[www.cnn.com/2017/09/25/health/happiness-where-you-live-partner/](http://www.cnn.com/2017/09/25/health/happiness-where-you-live-partner/)

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Moi:

I definitely am not, have never been, will never be, a cheerleader for anything or anyone, and I'm not unhappy about that.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

Paul Craig Roberts To The American Left: R.I.P.  
[www.zerohedge.com/news/2017-10-24/paul-craig-roberts-american-left-rip](http://www.zerohedge.com/news/2017-10-24/paul-craig-roberts-american-left-rip)

Moi:

All empires fall, some more quickly than others.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with Chuck Hooper on an article I sent, along with a quote from Thucydides, to which he responded his next book would be "Trump's WWII."

Russia Is Now Providing North Korea With Internet: What That Could Mean For Cyber Warfare  
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/outofasia/2017/12/01/russia-is-now-providing-north-korea-with-internet-what-that-could-mean-for-cyber-warfare/#2c93c698386b>

Thucydides, The History of the Peloponnesian War: It is not so much your hostility that injures us; it is rather the case that, if we were on friendly terms with you, our subjects would regard that as a sign of weakness in us, whereas your hatred is evidence of our power.

-----  
Moi:

WWIII has been happening ever since WWII ended in my thinking. Trump's version is just another chapter in the long line of idiots in charge of the ongoing decline and inevitable collapse of the current Rome. History does not repeat itself, but the patterns do.

\* \* \* \*

Response to Lise Welsh's query about my health, and why I hadn't made it back up to Chico to visit friends for a while:

At a swim party the summer after the last trip to Chico, I walloped my forehead, and got a nice little concussion that really did a number on the neck and brainstem. A fitting addition to all the lifetime issues already in place. Do not drink and dive is the moral of the story. So, anywho, since then I have spent a lot of time rehabbing in a variety of ways, including rehab, arch-supports, rolfing, somatics, kettlebells, stretching, swordplay, cardio machines, jump-rope, walking, and whatever other dynamic low-impact exercises come to mind, including a lot of playing about in the pool and spa at the Brenda Athletic Club, literally across the street from the Lakeside Apartments studio I've lived in for eighteen years now – Studio 101, I call it.

The good news is that it's all working out quite well. The concussion issues have been waylaid nicely, and I'm feeling better than I have in years. I'll turn 64 in a few weeks, and am in pretty darned good shape compared to most men my age. But as far as travelling goes, I just haven't been in the mood to go to all the effort of packing and unpacking, and dealing with all the madness a road trip entails. Studio 101 is very close all kinds of everything commercial, as well as CSU, Stanislaus, and it's very easy to not get in my car as much as possible anymore.

Me mum, age 88 and doing well, lives on her own in a condo in Modesto, and my plan, such as it is, is to stay in this area until she passes, and then move north, either out of Kaliforny to someplace like Eugene, or over to the coast somewhere Fort Bragg north. Need to be someplace with fewer people, more rain, and cleaner air. I was born and raised on a 30-acre peach ranch in Hughson, a small town between Modesto and Turlock. Don't know what the population was back then, but now there are a million and a half people between Stockton and Merced, plus all the north-south traffic on Highway 99, and I'm sick to death of all the congestion, all the dust, all the toxicity of all the pesticides that have been used since WWII, as well as the Christian-Republican-and-other-parochial-bullshit mindset that permeates the Great Central Valley ... but I need to stick it out in good-son fashion so that Mom has a decent endgame. Can't begin to express how fortunate I feel to have had such a great woman as my mother.

Sooooo ... that's the so-it-goes life-and-times of Michael in a nutshell as of 27 Oct 2017. Whoo-hoo.

\* \* \* \*

## Michael Holshouser: A List of Injuries and Strains

1960's and 70's – Tractor driving: lower back, left arm and shoulder; heavy lifting and moving.

1957-ish – Golf club backswing to forehead, and monkey bar fall causing classmate's tooth to cut into top of head.

1967 through 1972 – Broke left eardrum three times, resulting in skin graft to ear drum. This, coupled with driving tractor, forklifts, vehicles with open windows, and sitting too close to a few concert and nightclub speakers, worked together to cause loss of high range sounds.

1969 through 1972 – High school physical education: running, jumping, throwing, wrestling, and other boy stuff. First hemorrhoids because of lack of fiber in diet and the resulting constipation.

1969 through 1975 – High school and Sunday afternoon football; some broken knuckles and a jammed finger joint; two major memories during frosh-soph years in football practice of a block that caused a snap in lower back, and a tackle that caused severe pain to (left or right?) shoulder/collarbone.

1972 to 1977 – Day packs full of college textbooks.

1972 to present – Backpacking, car camping, hitchhiking with a heavy backpack in Europe.

1972 to present – Coffee, alcohol, marijuana.

1972 through 1985 – Forklifiting at Joan of Arc field station and Martella's Walnut Huller.

1975 to present – Transient working life with many moves.

1978 – Heavy lifting and moving at Weinstock's.

1975 through 1980 – Two or three solid hits to left jaw.

1980 – Peed blood after prepping on cold day for calf-tying event at La Grange Rodeo.

1980's to present – Two or three bicycle crashes.

1980's – Carrying photography equipment for Waterford News, weddings, special events.

1980 – La Grange Rodeo calf-tying practice strain.

1981 – Motorcycle slide on asphalt on left side in light clothing.

1985 to present – Graveyard shifts and sleep deprivation: Creative Alternatives, bread-baking, Kinko's, taxi driving.

1886 – Bicycle strain on left knee.

1989 – Wave head first into sand.

1989 to present – Gun shooting recoils and archery pulls.

1989 – Falling onto feet while tying down rack on VW van.

1989 to present – Hallucinogens and other drugs.

1990's – Heavy lifting and moving at Sierra Stationers and Kinko's.

1998 – Carpal tunnel syndrome disability from Kinko's.

1999 to present – Bad posture in computer use.

2000's – Heavy lifting and moving at Creative Alternatives.

2000 to present – A couple mild concussions after passing out tightening upper back and neck.

2008-ish – Twice hit in left eye by racquetballs, the second time causing temporary blurriness for several days.

2013-ish – Sidewalk curb slip onto left knee.

2014-ish – Rolling fall down Marriott Hotel marble stairs.

2016 – Diving concussion at summer swim party.

2016 – Trigger finger, left middle finger, one cortisone shot in early 2017, operated on in June 2018.

2017 – Right shoulder nerve damage by rolling fall over shouldered fold-up chair.

2018 – Right eardrum perforated twice from excessive pressure from chewing too much gum resulted in mild tinnitus.

2020 – Failed carpal tunnel operation on right hand, thumb and two fingers totally numb. Carpal tunnel also getting more challenging in left hand.

2021 – Spinal stenosis in upper back and neck.

Life, it'll kill ya.

\* \* \* \*

Comment on an article sent to cousin Steve:

An Audi commercial in China compared women to used cars. It didn't go well.

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2017/07/18/an-audi-commercial-in-china-compared-women-to-used-cars-it-didnt-go-well/?utm\\_term=.59fd7a483987](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2017/07/18/an-audi-commercial-in-china-compared-women-to-used-cars-it-didnt-go-well/?utm_term=.59fd7a483987)

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Moi:

The thing to remember about the male-female partnership is that it evolved back when we were indigenous, and suited survival in a perilous analog world. Civilization, and all its technologies and prescribed memes, have made it all but unendurable to anyone who is not willing to slave away their existence for the sake of their genetic coding.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

Silicon Valley is obsessed with meditation, and there's new evidence it changes the brain for the better  
[www.businessinsider.com/effects-meditation-brain-changes-health-science-2017-8](http://www.businessinsider.com/effects-meditation-brain-changes-health-science-2017-8)

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Moi:

Meditation puts you in touch with the real you, with the awareness you truly are. All this identity bother is the fluff of the delusion of illusion.

\* \* \* \*

Comment on an article sent to cousin Steve:

The unknowable Stephen Paddock and the ultimate mystery: Why  
[www.cnn.com/2017/10/06/us/unknowable-stephen-paddock-and-the-mystery-motive/index.html](http://www.cnn.com/2017/10/06/us/unknowable-stephen-paddock-and-the-mystery-motive/index.html)

Wikipedia: 2017 Las Vegas Strip shooting  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2017\\_Las\\_Vegas\\_Strip\\_shooting](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2017_Las_Vegas_Strip_shooting)

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Moi:

People get upset when they can't get the answers they want. Sure, it could be they'll find a brain tumor or some such thing, but I figure Paddock was just jaded and irritated with human bullshit. And instead of just quietly blowing his own head off – which he ended up doing anyway – decided to go out with a bang, get himself in the history books, and raise the bar doing it. Not something most people will want to believe, but it seems pretty clear and likely in my estimate. We're all the same monkey; the differences are in the choices we each make.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

Women and Men Die of Different Causes in Middle Age  
<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/women-and-men-die-of-different-causes-in-middle-age/>

Moi:

Likely a helium tank or something gunpowder-ish for me on that day when things get too bothersome to endure anymore. Will probably need to go out with a few chips on the table to assure I don't accidentally get stuck in the limbo of a rest home Alzheimer's unit staring at the walls for as long as this already bothersome body carries on. What a horror show so many play out because they are afraid to let go.

\* \* \* \*

Response to a comment from Stephanie Stolt, Certified Rolfer and Somatic Experiencing Practitioner:

Stephanie Stolte  
<http://stephaniestolte.com>

Hey, Stephanie,

When you asked at the last Rolfing session whether I meditated, I was kind of surprised, but then later realized I'd never sent you the links to all my writings online. The answer to your question is that contemplation and meditation have been the one consistent thread through my adult existence. My writing time in that timeline began after the wave injury in 1989, and at this point there are just over four thousand pages of aphorisms and essays, the most recent posted in *Breadcrumbs: The Unfolding Next Round*.

And then there are all the other blogs, with all sorts of other writings and whatever else has spiked my interest. I'll chain them to this one in succeeding waves.

Other than that, still happy camping with the last session. You've certainly changed up my game.

Enjoy the day.

Ciao ciao,

M

\* \* \* \*

Response to Bruce Styles on his latest and very painful bout with the aging process:

These bodies can be real torture units, that's for sure. Don't know if it applies to your situation, but I've really found a lot of my bothers are caused by a tweaked-out skeletal structure. All the work I've done this past year with Rolfing, arch supports, diet, and a very dynamic low-impact exercise and stretching program – including a lot of low-gravity time in the pool at Club Brenda across the street – are really putting this mind-body back on track. A lot of work, and there's still plenty of snap-crackle-pop bother, but it's pretty amazing how much better I feel than this time last year. Fortunately, I've always enjoyed being in this body exercise-wise, so I am able to be relatively disciplined about the regimen I've created.

Insurance-wise, I retired without it, figuring/hoping I could make it to Medicare – I don't much trust the AMA for any more than cut-and-splice and medication, which I don't much care to partake anyway – but Obamacare came along, and the IRS forced me to sign up with Covered California, which has done right by me, so far. I also get a free smartphone. Whoo-hoo for free stuff. Hopefully, Trump and his minions will continue shooting themselves in the foot for at least another couple of years. If not, I always keep the helium tank and a .357 (or some such thing) within arm's reach.

Anywho, off into the day. Good luck with things.

Ciao ciao,

M

\* \* \* \*

Forwarded to Gianni Grassi with the comment: All very gradual, ever-contracting and expanding in this mind, that's for sure.

Buddha at the Gas Pump

427. Panel Discussion: "Sudden or Gradual: Two Paths to Realization?"

<https://batgap.com/panel-discussion-sudden-gradual-two-paths-realization/>

Michael Rodriguez, Isa Gucciardi, David Buckland, Rick Archer

There is a perennial debate in spiritual traditions regarding whether realization is direct (sudden) or progressive (gradual). But is this a false distinction? Realization is often sudden, no matter how many years of practice may have led up to it, and even after realization, most people find that refinement, clarification, and the working out of personal shortcomings continue indefinitely.

Who wouldn't prefer direct realization to years of purification and practice? But how many examples of purely direct realization can we find? Can a path be both direct and progressive? Is it possible to have a taste of our true nature from the outset, and then spend a lifetime clarifying and embodying it? Also, is there one watershed breakthrough which can be universally agreed upon as final "Realization," or are there many degrees and stages of realization, each of them important stepping stones in a never-ending journey?

Proponents of the direct path sometimes argue that if we regard spiritual development as progressive, we will forever be anticipating, never arriving. But some spiritual seekers, not appreciating the distinction between understanding and experience, mistake intellectual understanding with enlightenment, and consider themselves "finished" when they are just getting started.

\* \* \* \*

Response to Robin Slovacek's 64th birthday question about the influence of Jiddu Krishnmurti on my life:

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Robin:

Happy Birthday and many, many blessings, Michael. Actually, I was going to ask you a question: Did you have a chance to listen to J. Krishnamurti in person? If so, what a wonderful experience that must have been for you.

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Moi:



Krishnamurti used to come to Ojai for a couple weeks of talks every year. I went down three times in the late 70's and early 80's, but never actually met him. Ended up teaching fifth-sixth grade for a couple years at the Oak Grove School in the late 80's, a few years after his death. An interesting experience – he certainly had a large impact on my life – but "wonderful" isn't a word I tend to use for such things.

He set the bar high and clear, and I've never considered following him or anyone else since, though I probably wouldn't have anyway; it not being my nature. He wrote who knows how many books, and there are all kinds videos available, as well. These are the books listed on my website, but anything you pick up is pretty much talking about the same things:

Think on These Things  
The First and Last Freedom  
Freedom from the Known  
The Ending of Time  
Commentaries on Living Series  
The Awakening of Intelligence  
Education and the Significance of Life

Jiddu Krishnamurti  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jiddu\\_Krishnamurti](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jiddu_Krishnamurti)

Oak Grove School  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oak\\_Grove\\_School\\_\(Ojai,\\_California\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oak_Grove_School_(Ojai,_California))

Krishnamurti Foundation of America  
<https://kfa.org>

Introduction to the Teachings  
<https://kfa.org/introduction-teachings/>

Complete Collection  
<http://beta.jkrishnamurti.org>

Store  
<https://store.kfa.org>

The 64th was a most excellent day ... Thanks for the good wishes ... Hope all is well.

\* \* \* \*

Response to Raphael Tyszkiewicz's 64th birthday comment on my Facebook timeline page: Happy BE Day Michael! ... Thank You for your creativity ... I read your works, enjoy a lot ... and duplicate.

Hey, Raphael,

Saw your comment on my Facebook page, and just wanted say that I'm pleased you've found all my babble interesting. Thought I'd make sure you've got all the links to everything posted, including the PDF's. Well over four thousand pages, so far, and more popping into mind many if not most daze.

Everything written this year is posted in "Breadcrumbs: The Unfolding Next Round" at the link below. For some unknown reason, Blogger hasn't let me upload anything since October 11th, but I'm sure it will work out sooner or later.

Feel free to pass anything on to anyone you think might have mind for it.

Regards,

M

## Website

The Stillness Before Time

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/>

## Main Blogs

The Stillness Before Time

<http://thestillnessbeforetime.blogspot.com/>

The Ponderings of Yaj Ekim

<http://theponderingsofyajekim.blogspot.com/>

The Return to Wonder

<http://thereturntowonder.blogspot.com/>

## Breadcrumbs

<http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/>

## PDF's

The Stillness Before Time

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/thestillnessbeforetime.pdf>

The Ponderings of Yaj Ekim

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/theponderingsofyajekim.pdf>

The Return to Wonder (Major edit underway – New copy colored blue)

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/thereturntowonder.pdf>

Breadcrumbs (Compendium)

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/breadcrumbs.pdf>

Breadcrumbs 2018

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/breadcrumbs2018.pdf>

Breadcrumbs 2019

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/breadcrumbs2019.pdf>

Breadcrumbs 2020

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/breadcrumbs2020.pdf>

Conversations

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/conversations.pdf>

Definitions

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/definitions.pdf>

Titles, Titles & More Titles

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/titletitlesandmoretitles.pdf>

Ditties for the Bluegrass Pyre

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/dittiesforthebluegrasspyre.pdf>

Once Upon a Christmas

<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/onceuponchristmas.pdf>

(Please note that all writings are subject to annual updates and editing, so downloading current PDF copies every year or so might be a good idea if you want the most current version. This applies especially to Breadcrumbs, which is likely an ongoing work until the last wheezing breath)

Current Breadcrumbs

Breadcrumbs: The Unfolding Next Round

[http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_52.html](http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_52.html)

Breadcrumbs: Standouts from "The Return to Wonder" Edit

[http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_83.html](http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_83.html)

\* \* \* \*

A Google review written for Stephanie Stolte:

<https://www.google.com/search?client=safari&rls=en&q=Stephanie+Stolte&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8#lrd=0x809053ed61b0d3a7:0x51c3fb7a25266d3b,1>

Stephanie Stolte

<http://stephaniestolte.com>

In less than a month, I will be 64-years old. I began driving a tractor on our small family farm in Hughson when I was eight, and swimming in the canal across the road by the time I was nine, and have lived a hard physical working and playing life ever since. There have been myriad injuries of every sort in all arenas - head, eyes, neck, back, pelvis, arms, hands, legs, feet, you name it – and I have explored a variety healing techniques, including chiropractic, massage, acupressure, acupuncture, rehabilitation, medication, and a few others whose names I have forgotten. Many eyes have witnessed this mind-body, and all of them have helped keep it in the game, but none have accomplished the integrated restructuring that Stephanie Stolte has managed since I first contacted her in February earlier this year. Her gentle but firm hands have

gradually peeled away bother after bother in this tip-to-stern, injury-laden bag of bones and flesh and goo. Things that I never would have dreamed to not be enduring anymore. Every day I wake up freer and freer of chronic pain and limitation, and am moving more and more fluidly – and with more balance and flexibility and dexterity and strength – than I have in who knows how many moons.

Healing, whether in body or mind or spirit, can be a long and winding process. There is no rewind button, and to expect any practitioner to cast a fix in one session would not be realistic. Stephanie has an intuitive awareness of the many dimensions and interrelationships within all things. Her ongoing studies in a variety of schools of thought, including Rolfing, Cranial Sacral, Somatics, Reiki, Sourcepoint, and human psychology in general – along with her innate ability to draw me into a partnership in my own healing – have all contributed to my being able to play out whatever time is left in a rejuvenated state of health and well-being that I never believed I would enjoy again. As I stated above, I have known many healers in my efforts to deal with all the issues that have racked this temporal container since those youthful daze in the peach orchards and swimming holes, and I rate Stephanie high among them. Her already sizable, ever-expanding repertoire regarding the human mind and body, coupled with her wisdom, her intuitive, empathetic, holistic grace, has transformed this old guy existence in ways for which I am forever grateful.

Namaste,  
Michael Holshouser

Rolfing  
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rolfing>

Craniosacral Therapy  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Craniosacral\\_therapy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Craniosacral_therapy)

Somatics  
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Somatics>

Reiki  
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reiki>

Sourcepoint Therapy  
<http://sourcepointtherapy.com/about/>

\* \* \* \*

A Christmas story idea back in the 70's – after reading J.R.R. Tolkein's "The Hobbit" and "Lord of the Rings," and playing an Old School board game version of Dungeons & Dragons – passed on freely to a variety of possible writers, illustrators, and screenwriters through the years that never made it off the ground. This was the latest summary. Maybe someday, somebody will do something with it. No need to thank me.

Michael J. Holshouser  
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[mjholshouser@gmail.com](mailto:mjholshouser@gmail.com)

December 25, 2015

## ONCE UPON A CHRISTMAS ... IN A NOW NOT TOO FAR AWAY ...

Santa's evil twin brother steals the magic indivisibility ring, the magic shrinking-present bag, and all the presents, a week before Christmas, and takes everything down to his dark fortress at the South Pole. The story begins showing the joy of yet another year of the North Pole crew happily putting it all together, and then one morning, a week before the big night, everything is gone. No one knows where. The boy elf overhears Santa telling his wife about his evil brother for the first time, and that he doesn't know what to do. Santa is bedridden by depression, and everything comes to a standstill. The boy elf pulls together crew of friends, and sets out to save Christmas. After a convoluted and dangerous journey, against all odds, and down to the wire, the victorious fellowship returns to the North Pole just in time to save Christmas.

dragon (how the North Pole stays warm)

magic indivisibly ring (how Santa travels simultaneously through time and space)

magic shrinking-present bag (how Santa carries all the presents)

boy elf

girl elf

son of Rudolph

young dragon

grinch

elf

dwarf

fairy

owl

mouse

cricket

Santa's evil twin brother

witch wife

evil son and daughter

wizard brother-in-law

dragons

wolves

trolls

orcs

rats

bats

flying monkeys

\* \* \* \*

Response to being blocked on Facebook by longtime online friend, Sandra Heber-Percy, a.k.a., Sandra Ma, who was born in Italy, but left her family to be a sannyasi in India many moons ago. I had been posting some things on her Facebook wall that she felt would upset many of her less-awakened acquaintances. Many of them are in the "devotion stage, or kindergarten of dos and don'ts," she wrote. "Sandra has to be careful." In our back and forth she stated that there are periods of life in which those awakening try to awaken others. "I had my period 15 years back; now I am too old to try and tickle the world with Truth more than mildly as a pastime."

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Moi:

I'm probably a little more wild than I should be on my side of the world. Expecting to get shot any day now by some Christian zealot for all my blaspheme about the Son of Santa Claus. That or some dull, rusty knife-work by the Muslim version of true-believership. We awaken at our own peril.

Truth goes well with my morning coffee shop time. And after saving the world an average of at least three times over with other regulars of many persuasions that haphazardly stop by, I retire to my hammock, a few chores, some food, and later to the club across the street for a mild workout and swim, followed by more food and a movie. I usually share an afternoon or evening meal, and maybe a movie or sporting match, with me almost 88-year-old Mum at least once a week. Through it all, occasionally jotting down the ditty or three that spontaneously pop into mind for the next day's coffee klatsch. About 150 pages so far this year, largely unread and unknown, which, as you well understand, is all right by me. It's all so passé anymore, anyway. So, pleasantly bored, I am, abiding this world until it has had its fill of me, and finally lets me go home.

Breadcrumbs: The Unfolding Next Round  
[http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_52.html](http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_52.html)

\* \* \* \*

Betty Goesch of East Pine Street on my childhood penchant for cookies and water faucets:

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Moi:

The first seven years of my childhood were spent in a newly-built G.I. Bill three-bedroom home on East Pine Street, at the time a twelve-house cul-de-sac in Hughson, California. There is little to tell of those early years before we moved out to the thirty-acre peach ranch on Hatch Road, but two anecdotes shared by Betty Goesch, a neighbor in the house at the corner of Pine and 7th Streets, stand out. The first is that at some point I wandered around and turned on all the faucets on the block. The second was that my mother would occasionally take me down to Betty's for a morning coffee klatch. Betty would always have cookies and milk, and I must have been somewhat vocal about asking for them before they were offered, because Betty says my mother told me not to ask anymore. My response, according to Betty was to enter her house, take a sniff, and announce that it "sure smells like cookies." Nothing remarkable, but mildly amusing that the rascal-rogue-cad-rake-blackguard-scalawag-scoundrel-reprobate-ne'er-do-well nature was evident at such an early age, nonetheless.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

Former Facebook executive Chamath Palihapitiya: "You don't realize it, but you are being programmed"  
<https://qz.com/1153007/former-facebook-executive-chamath-palihapitiya-you-dont-realize-it-but-you-are-being-programmed/>

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Moi:

Nothing new, methinks. Technology has always shaped our minds. We can't help ourselves. The clock is a great example. Did time exist before them hands started spinning in our heads? Consumption and propaganda: over-the-counter-in-the-isles-within-every-screen soma. Huxley caught it in Brave New World, and Orwell in Nineteen Eighty-Four and Animal Farm. Some wake up; most don't. We're not as superior as we like to believe. Oh well, so it goes, deal with it, get over it, move on. Not our world for much longer, so no worries.

-----  
Steve:

The invention of the clock wasn't intentionally designed to dick to you into looking at it. What's insidious and sinister about it is that corporations are manipulating people through tapping into that best thing to do is not use any of that shit

\* \* \* \*

Comment on an article sent to cousin Steve:

Having a high IQ is a curse ... just look at Donald Trump  
<https://www.theguardian.com/science/2017/dec/10/having-a-high-iq-is-a-curse-just-look-at-donald-trump>

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Moi:

Have never taken an IQ test, and I'm pretty sure it wouldn't be all that high at this writing the way this brain is dealing with all that's been done to in in the last 64 years: concussions; alcohol, drugs, and caffeine; pesticides, preservatives, hormones, and medications; gun solvents and lead residue, under-the-kitchen sink who-knows-what; circadian rhythm and sleep deprivation issues; early stages of dementia, Alzheimer's, and who-knows-what-other aging issues; philosophical malaise; et cetera, et cetera.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

Why The World Is Getting Better And Why Hardly Anyone Knows It  
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/stevedenning/2017/11/30/why-the-world-is-getting-better-why-hardly-anyone-knows-it/#384253b27826>

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Steve:

So, this article is predicating the statement that the world is getting better upon the fact that there's fewer people starving, etc., etc. What it's not taking into account is that the world, i.e., Earth is not itself any better. It's going to hell in a hand basket because we're destroying it. It's like saying that a train that has luxury food and sleeping compartments on it that's headed for cliff is getting better because everybody's having a good time, but when we get to the cliff we're fucked.

-----  
Moi:

I think the human drama can be synthesized into a very simple fact: Everything we do is about endorphins. Relationships, sex, food, drink, drugs, entertainment, power, fame, fortune, work, play, art, games, sports, war, et cetera ad infinitum. We are quantum-chemical-biological patterns, and feeling good is a huge piece of our survival mechanism. Some are naturally "happy" much of the time, and others inordinately "sad" much of the time. Most of us, of course, cross to and fro as ebb and flow dictates. To become master of one's patterned make-up in this sensory play is the challenge.

As challenging and wearing and exasperating as it is, the fascinating thing about living in this time is that we get to watch a fair portion or both the rise and fall of a modern Rome, as well as witness at least part of the inevitable crash and burn of the human cancer and all its vanities. Drag to see the world be undone so badly, but Gaia doesn't give a hoot about its anything – creation, preservation, and destruction are equal dynamics in this dreamtime – so why should we?

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

The ages people are happiest with their money, their looks, and life  
<http://www.businessinsider.com/what-age-are-people-happiest-2017-12>

Happiness ... Sorrow ... Pleasure ... Pain ... What are they, anyway? ... How preoccupied we are with the ever waxing and waning ephemeral states of mind ... Pffft on all of it ... Change is ... So it goes, deal with it, get over it, move on.

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Steve:

I also don't think you can generalize like they did ... being 60 and comfortable vs. 60 and homeless are two different things.

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Moi:

Writers and talking heads filling space with mind gorp to get a paycheck.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

Former Facebook Executive Antonio Garcia Martinez Predicts Collapse Of Civilization Within 30 Years  
<http://www.inquisitr.com/4411550/former-facebook-executive-antonio-garcia-martinez-predicts-collapse-of-civilization-within-30-years/>

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Moi:

He is much more optimistic than I.

\* \* \* \*



Response to an article from cousin Steve:

PhD students have double the risk of developing a psychiatric disorder than the rest of the 'highly educated' population

<http://www.businessinsider.com/phd-students-could-face-significant-mental-health-problems-2017-8>

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Moi:

It just does not pay to be either too smart or too stupid in this insane asylum. Learn to breathe in, breathe out, I say, and let go what does not matter, which by my middle-way reckoning at this writing, is a fair portion of all of it.

\* \* \* \*

Response to cousin Steve's sending the links to books on the competition between men and women:

The Red Pill

<http://theredpillmovie.com/>

The Myth of Male Power

<http://www.warrenfarrell.org/>

Who Stole Feminism?

[https://www.amazon.com/Who-Stole-Feminism-Women-Betrayed/dp/0684801566/ref=sr\\_1\\_2?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1501887792&sr=1-2](https://www.amazon.com/Who-Stole-Feminism-Women-Betrayed/dp/0684801566/ref=sr_1_2?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1501887792&sr=1-2)

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Moi:

We will see how powerful women are when things really go down. The duplicity of civilization's political correctness allows them to pretend they are more than they are, more than they ever can be. Let them pretend, I say, let them have all the rope they want, and see what they do when the noose rests about their pretty little necks, and the boys their mothers bred are too impotent to pry it off.

Who builds the roads and bridges and buildings and dams? Who mines the coal or mans the oil rigs? Who lifts and carries the heavy loads? Who fights the wars? And on and on and on. Women are good at stirring froth and nurturing the young, but it is men who bend steel, carve wood, tunnel into the earth, and fend off the beasts.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent with the comment: Yeah ... I saw this ... My thought after reflecting on it is ... that we're all the walking dead now ... and aren't even aware of it ... so the people who did this research are missing the point:

When you die you know you are dead: Major study shows mind still works after the body shows no signs of life

[www.independent.co.uk/news/science/mind-works-after-death-consciousness-sam-parnia-nyu-langone-a8007101.html](http://www.independent.co.uk/news/science/mind-works-after-death-consciousness-sam-parnia-nyu-langone-a8007101.html)

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Moi:

Just a collection of molecules pretending to be alive.

\* \* \* \*

Comment on an article sent to cousin Steve, who suffers from CFS:

Scientists Edge Closer To Elusive Lab Test For Chronic Fatigue Syndrome

[www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2017/07/31/540565526/scientists-edge-closer-to-elusive-lab-test-for-chronic-fatigue-syndrome](http://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2017/07/31/540565526/scientists-edge-closer-to-elusive-lab-test-for-chronic-fatigue-syndrome)

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Moi:

The trouble with science is that many so-called scientists are often unable to grasp there are some things that cannot be easily measured, or may be completely immeasurable, but that does not mean something is not real. Sometimes the question, the hypothesis, is not large or small enough for the answer. The true scientist never assumes a final conclusion.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

Smartphones making teens isolated, immature, suicidal

<https://www.axios.com/smartphones-making-teens-isolated-immature-suicidal-2468699706.html>

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Moi:

The reality is that we are all ultimately very much alone. Our tribal instincts, our socialization as a species, is nothing more than evolutionary wiring. The challenge is to realize it at such a level as to be alonely, not lonely. It is a sovereign state of mind that does not dread solitude.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from Ninos David:

Greece: A (Basket) Case Study In Savage Globalization

<http://www.mintpressnews.com/greece-a-basket-case-study-in-savage-globalization/230221/>

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Moi:

The irony, of course, is that it was the Greeks – Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Thucydides, Herodotus, Athens, Sparta, Alexander – that set Western Civilization in motion, and began the conquest and colonization of the world by taking down Persia and Egypt. Yet for the Greeks to think they are more disenfranchised than anyone else is absurd. Across the world, billions of people are living out harsh lives with no hope of ever freeing themselves from the chains of powerlessness, of despair and futility, created by the inherent

violence of greed. "Poor me, poor us" will be an echo across the world for the rest of human history. And as for the violence, I suspect we have only scratched the surface of the horrors this century and beyond will witness.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

Is Marriage Improving Your Health?

[https://newsstand.google.com/articles/CAIiEJSFZKcrnPjsms1xCfb\\_7SwqFggEKg4IACoGCAowl6p7MN-zCTDIkko](https://newsstand.google.com/articles/CAIiEJSFZKcrnPjsms1xCfb_7SwqFggEKg4IACoGCAowl6p7MN-zCTDIkko)

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Moi:

Define health.

And what of happiness?

My observation of married men is that they live in a state of trepidation: "Let me see what the wife thinks" or "I don't think the wife would like that." or "Let me see if the wife has anything planned." And why is it so many practically live out in their garage?

Marriage might work for many men, but I have no doubt I am much healthier and happier flying solo. Can't tell you how many have said to me, "You're lucky."

\* \* \* \*

Response to Ronald Arrington's "Today's Daily Scripture" on unmasking Lucifer's tricks and lies:

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Moi:

I am awareness, alone and absolute. The dualistic notions of gods and devils, good and evil, right and wrong, and all the other countless fear-ridden concoctions of human consciousness, of human imagination, are not a reality for me.

But thanks for sharing.

Enjoy the day.

Ciao ciao,

M

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

The Uninhabitable Earth

<http://nymag.com/daily/intelligencer/2017/07/climate-change-earth-too-hot-for-humans.html>

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Moi: Yet another round of mental masturbation that concludes with the pitiful, absurdly delusional four-letter H-word: Hope.

Even if everyone woke up to climate change – which they're not going to do – and made some heroically significant changes to their lifestyle and breeding practices – which they're not going to do – and all the one-percenters and their minions set aside their greed – which they're not going to do – and all the politicians and lobbyists and donors stopped being corrupt and happily worked together – which they're not going to do – and all the nation states across the world turned off their war machines – which they're not going to do – and scientists and technicians and industrialists managed to close the freezer door – which they're not going to do ... and on and on and on ... ad infinitum.

In other words, the dystopian reckoning is coming, so keep your powder dry, and make sure you save one bullet.

\* \* \* \*

Comment on an article sent to cousin Steve:

There's a dark side to meditation that no one talks about  
<https://qz.com/993465/theres-a-dark-side-to-meditation-that-no-one-talks-about/>

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Moi:

To me the meditative, contemplative life, is a solo act. I don't do groups unless a paycheck is involved. Too much bullshit anytime you hook up with anything organized.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

Humans Are Genetically Predisposed to Kill Each Other  
<http://rdouglasfields.com/2016/10/humans-genetically-predisposed-kill/>

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Moi:

No doubt about it in my mind. It is only because of consequences (e.g., San Quentin) that a fair number of people are still alive in my trail of existence. I am a natural born killer who chooses not to.

Revenge has a long memory, I always say. I suspect the trick to not getting caught carrying out any act of passion, is setting aside the passion, and coming up with a solid plan that includes things like no smoking gun, no fingerprints, no DNA, an alibi, and plausible deniability. There are a fair share of perfect crimes committed daily by those who give it careful thought. Politicians and bankers and bureaucrats are first and foremost examples.

\* \* \* \*

Response to a Youtube video from Jeremiah Fair:

Richard Rohr: Becoming Stillness  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9TGS-JD80nE>

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Moi:

Just finished listening to the Richard Rohr clip. Definitely makes some interesting points, but his talking about the timeless stillness, the formless indivisibility of the mystery within and without, left me as always wondering why anyone who grasps the irony and paradox of it all, would ever need to believe in any god, ever need to belong to any religion, ever need to pray for any this or that, or ever need to partake in any idolatry of thought or form. Surely, the fearlessness, the absoluteness, the indelible grace, of the timeless awareness, the eternal nowness prior to consciousness, is more than enough for anyone who has discerned the mystery firsthand.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

How Loneliness Begets Loneliness  
<https://flipboard.com/@flipboard/flip.it%2Fp0Jt.I-how-loneliness-begets-loneliness/f-138d81685%2Ftheatlantic.com>

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Moi:

Good article, well worth passing on, but not a major issue for me. Ultimately, from my perspective we're all very much alone, so the trick is to discern the grace in being "alonely." I've always been a self-sufficient sociable loner – being raised on a farm no doubt played a big part in learning to enjoy my solitude – and it's generally been relatively easy to chatter away with friends, acquaintances, and strangers. Hanging out at coffee shops and the gym offer all kinds of regular interactions, and my philosophical view and writing, as well as all the online silliness, have provided outlets, as well. "To have friends, you have to be a friend," is a line I heard years ago, and it has served me well.

\* \* \* \*

Response to cousin Steve on the state of things:

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Moi:

We're all slaves to one thing or another in this sorry-ass one-percenter world, and many if not most are far lower on the totem pole than you or I.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

Third Way Man: How Your Soul Dies  
<http://thirdwayman.com/letters/how-your-soul-dies.php>

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Moi:

INFINITE MOTIVATION for only \$10! Step right up, folks! Step right up!

Thanks for sharing, but I don't think I'm one of the chosen few. I've had plenty of fire-in-the-belly times, plenty of most-excelling adventures, plenty of creation-preservation-destruction moments, for my purpose. Don't feel the need to be inspired any more. Don't need or want to care that much. Don't need or want to pretend there's something to hope for in the dark clouds we both see forming much closer than the horizon. Guess you could say I'm feeling more than a little done with our kind. I wish everyone well, but I'm over us. Good luck to the progeny who've got more years to face, more "skin in the game" than you and I, is all I have to offer.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

Is the Universe Conscious? Prominent Scientists Say Yes

<http://www.corespirit.com/universe-conscious-prominent-scientists-say-yes/>

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Moi:

I tend to differentiate awareness and consciousness; awareness being the same timeless empty-infinite in all sentient life forms, and consciousness being the thought, the movement, the noise, the sense of time in each individual mind. We think ourselves separate, but in reality we are all ultimately very much the same eternal mystery.

\* \* \* \*

Response to Ninos David's comment: We are living in very strange times, and among very strange and dangerous creatures, which are conducive to mental health issues.

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Moi:

Destiny is all, and we've both seen and done plenty in our little window of time. All we have left to do is stay vigilant, locked and loaded, and watch and wait as our fate plays out. The challenge in whatever time is left is to maintain the best quality of life the body and mind allow.

\* \* \* \*

Response to cousin Steve on computers and technology:

Moi:

I long for the simplicity and tranquility of Old School. What a blessing it was to wander about alone and unburdened by the weight of the world in all the many screens.

\* \* \* \*

Response to Berj Moosekian regarding the Buddha quest:

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Moi:

Was thinking after you left, that the Buddha quest is less about consciousness experiencing something more-more-more, than it is simply being free of a sense of identity, free of all the conditioning. free of all the delusion, free of all the inanity, free of all the weight of pretending to be a human being. It is simply about being the awareness, unchained, at peace in the given moment.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

Stress really is killing us

<https://flipboard.com/@flipboard/flip.it%2FtwHtKd-stress-really-is-killing-us/f-65fb99311b%2Fcdn.com>

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Moi:

Pretty astounding what hells our minds can create. Just started Year Eight in my zen-guy retirement on April 1st. Still feel some of the angst of the working world, but not near what goes on for you and all the folks in Silicon Valley. I think being raised the son of a poor white farmer in a small rural town created far fewer expectations than you felt in your domain. I tried to play the ambition game, but never really had the fire in the belly to take it far.

\* \* \* \*

Response to Cliff McFelter regarding Donald Trump's rise to power:

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Moi:

You've ranted well everything I've been thinking. It's just too fucking crazy for words. And me in Turlock, surround by Trump-ites. Some friendships are definitely getting stretched. This must be how many looked at Hitler and Mussolini in their rise to power. How long Trump will last has got to be a bet in Las Vegas. Who knows, teflon-coated as he is, he may even get through this four years, and go for eight. The foolishness, the stupidity of our electorate leaves all possibilities on the table. It just shows the failure of our educational system that the memes of ignorance are as strong, if not stronger than ever.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

All-American Despair

<https://www.rollingstone.com/culture/culture-features/suicide-rate-america-white-men-841576/>

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Moi:

Loneliness and other psychological states aren't an issue. I'm mainly tired of the physical pain and all the related bothers of being in an aging and worn-out body. Unless something gets to me first, it's pretty

likely I'll quietly off myself someday. There's nothing I 'need' to do anymore, and because I never let anything hit the bottom of the bucket, pretty much everything in the 'want' arena has been fulfilled, as well. Never had that many things I desperately wanted to do, anyway. The world has put up with me, and I with it. We won't miss each other. Will try to stick it out at least until Mom departs, but that could change if things gets too much worse.

-----  
Steve:

I've got issues with both ... and see them as related. Loneliness and Isolation for me are a byproduct of my physical issues getting to the point where I'm too tired and immobile to do the things I like to do ... which is frustrating and depressing at times. I don't see any point in sitting around another 20 years after 70 or 80 years old ... pondering which is going to die first ... me ... or the planet as a whole.

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Moi:

The world stuff definitely seems to be coming to a head faster that I would have guessed just a few years ago, that's for sure.

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Steve:

Shit is hitting the fan as we speak ... the water situation is going to hit a lot faster than anyone anticipated ... like right now ... millions of people are going to die in the next 5 to 10 years ... turning into billions after that ...

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Moi:

We've overstayed our welcome, anyway.

\* \* \* \*

Follow-up on a conversation with Chuck Hooper:

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Moi:

Regarding understanding the human paradigm, 1984 and Animal Farm are two of the top five books I would encourage any young person to read. The other three are Machiavelli's The Prince, Sun Tzu's Art of War, and Carnegie's How to Win Friends and Influence People. The sixth and seventh would be Conrad's Heart of Darkness and Golding's Lord of the Flies.

\* \* \* \*

Letter for a scrapbook being put together by middle daughter Ruth Testman for her mother's 70<sup>th</sup> birthday. Ray and Glynda Lee have three daughters: Sarah, Ruth, and Jenny. Glynda Lee is the oldest daughter of Glenn and Lee Hoffmann, and has two sisters: Susan and Debra.



November 19, 2019

Hey, All,

It would be a book-length letter to get down all the good memories of my times with the Hoffmann-Kemp-Testman Clan. You have all played a very large part in my existence since meeting Deb the last year at Chico State in 1977 – over forty years ago – and I am very grateful for all our good times together and what you have so willingly shared. Not sure exactly when I first met Gynda Lee, but it was sometime in one of my many visits with Lee and Glenn in Los Gatos in the late seventies and early eighties, at least a few years before she moved to Harbin Hot Springs and met Ray.

My anecdote is that things likely would have been very different if I hadn't reached out and pulled Glynda Lee back onto the curb as a car did a very fast right turn through the crosswalk while we were walking and talking in downtown Los Gatos those many years ago. Pretty sure the impact would have been crippling, if not fatal. Not sure she will even remember it, or realize how close it was. So Ray may well have me to thank for his long and happy marriage, and the girls for their relatively young existence. You're welcome.

Happy 70, Glynda Lee! Thanks for all the good times.

Best wishes to all.

M

P.S. The reason you haven't seen me for several years was a concussion and neck injury while at a pool party the summer after I last saw you. Nothing close to fatal, but it changed up the game, and keeps me more inclined to stay closer to home.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

Cruel jokes about the old are everywhere. When will we face our ageism epidemic?

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/nov/10/ok-boomer-jokes-ageism-francine-prose>

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Moi:

Hard to deal with the fact that we're older and more pathetic by the day. I wonder if it has ever been all that different? Have the young ever really been interested in old people and whatever wisdom they have to offer?

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from Ninos David:

The 1950's Are Greatly Overrated

<https://aawsat.com/english/home/article/1974096/noah-smith/1950's-are-greatly-overrated>

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Moi:

Compared to the 30's and 40's, the Great Depression and World War II, it was pretty darned good, so go fuck yourself, Noah Smith, who's too young and stupid to know anything I need. to hear.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from Ninos David:

Foreign Money Flows Into US Politics

<https://www.voanews.com/usa/us-politics/foreign-money-flows-us-politics>

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Moi:

The United States is toast. The irony is how many haven't realized it.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

How Deep Sleep May Help The Brain Clear Alzheimer's Toxins

<https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2019/10/31/775068218/how-deep-sleep-may-help-the-brain-clear-alzheimers-toxins>

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Steve:

Yeah ... I saw this ... concerns me ... because I've done a sleep study ... and they said that I'm getting "0" time in the deepest Non-REM phase of sleep ... which is what they are now saying is where the best part of sleep is.

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Moi:

The results of a sleep study taken fifteen-ish years ago were that my REM cycles were all either squashed or extinguished entirely. Five hours of sleep in a row is extremely rare at this writing, and two to four the average. The joy of retirement is that I can nap whenever narcolepsy strikes. The future is dim and dimmer.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Empty half the Earth of its humans. It's the only way to save the planet

<https://amp.theguardian.com/cities/2018/mar/20/save-the-planet-half-earth-kim-stanley-robinson>

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Moi:

Yet another pie-in-the-sky waste of ink. Even the 200 million-sh that was just two thousand-ish years ago would probably be too many for this world to recover what we tend to call normal anytime ever.

\* \* \* \*

Response to a couple articles from cousin Steve:

Coffee intake and decreased amyloid pathology in human brain  
<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41398-019-0604-5>

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Moi:

An average of two pints a day at this end. Life is killing me anyway, so whether things are for good or ill, may as well get what little pleasures I can before that last wheezing breath.

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Steve:

Hangxiety': why alcohol gives you a hangover and anxiety  
<https://amp.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2019/jan/27/hangxiety-why-alcohol-gives-you-a-hangover-and-anxiety>

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Moi:

Interesting article, but I think I must be one of the exceptions. I am relatively gregarious, and anxiety has never been either a before or after issue in any of my drinking situations. There have been plenty of hangovers, of course; painful, but never cause of any notable dread. For me alcohol just something to do in the here and there; a when-in-Rome thing if in a social setting. Don't do that much bar time anymore, but never hesitate to imbibe if the situation arises. As I replied about coffee in the other email, life is short and getting shorter by the second. I'll be 66 in less than a month, and the little pleasures that can be mustered are what whatever remains are about.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

Exclusive: Satellite images reveal China's aircraft carrier 'factory,' analysts say  
<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-china-military-carrier-exclusive/exclusive-satellite-images-reveal-chinas-aircraft-carrier-factory-analysts-say-idUSKBN1WW0KM>

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Steve:

Personally, I think China is gearing up for a big war. They're taking over Australia, South America, and Africa. From a business perspective, we've already lost. The nail in the coffin would be just waiting for us to implode from all of our debt, and then move in and take over the world.

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Moi:

They seem to be in the driver's seat. These Un-United States are on the ropes as far I see it. No cohesive vision, lack of leadership, polarized electorate, insubstantial economy, bloated bureaucracy, corruption across the board, we're done.

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Steve:

Greed.

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Moi:

The human drama in a nutshell.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

Suicides and homicides on the rise in young people

<https://www.nbcnews.com/health/mental-health/suicides-homicides-rise-young-people-n1067786>

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Steve:

I read this down into the point where the guy says that no one knows why this is happening and I had to roll my eyes because I can't understand why anybody would be surprised by this if you're a young kid today and you're watching the news or reading anything online it is essentially telling you that your future is f\*\*\*\*\*, and that it's going to be horrific and apocalyptic. It's going to scare the hell out of people and make them anxious. Why would you be surprised if they kill themselves?

-----

Moi:

Even all you and I have done is pretty darned pointless as far as I'm concerned anymore. We just sort of continue out of habit, and for what, really?

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

Humans Will Never Live on Another Planet, Nobel Laureate Says. Here's Why.

<https://www.livescience.com/will-we-ever-live-exoplanet.html>

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Steve:

I completely agree with this 100%.

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Moi:

I just shake my head at anyone who believes we will ever get off this planet in any meaningful way. And what is the friggin' point of colonies on the Moon or Mars that will be unsustainable without prohibitively expensive supply chains? And with all the dominos a-quivering on this dying planet, how will anything so outlandish even get off the ground? The absurdity is boggling.

-----

Steve:

Completely agree. All it takes is one simple look at this planet; we can't even keep it alive. We're killing it as fast as we can, and we think we're going to go to a dead rock and turn it into something like what the Earth used to be? It's entirely absurd.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on links he sent:

Stephen Kinzer is the author of nine books, including: *The True Flag*, *The Brothers*, *Overthrow* and *All the Shah's Men*. He is also an award-winning foreign correspondent and writes a world affairs column.

Commonwealth Club Radio Program

Mind Control and the CIA

<https://www.commonwealthclub.org/events/archive/podcast/stephen-kinzer-mind-control-and-cia>

[http://dts.podtrac.com/redirect.mp3/audio.commonwealthclub.org/audio/podcast/cc\\_20191003\\_FEA\\_Stephen\\_Kinzer\\_for\\_podcast.mp3](http://dts.podtrac.com/redirect.mp3/audio.commonwealthclub.org/audio/podcast/cc_20191003_FEA_Stephen_Kinzer_for_podcast.mp3)

<https://www.podcastrepublic.net/podcast/976334034>

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Moi:

I think the CIA has done more to derail the United States foreign policy than we could even begin to guess.

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Steve:

The sad part about this book ... which I'm reading now ... is that they ran a program that experimented on human beings ... to the point of death ... with all sorts of horrific experiments ... and they actually hired the same psychopaths who ran similar programs for the Nazi's and Japan during WW2.

-----

Moi:

At this point, I pretty much just consider myself to be a relatively anonymous life form that happened to be born in this slice of the world. I have no interest in subscribing to any tribal mindset, any groupthink, and you can be very sure I will not be found waving any flag for any nationalistic concoction ever again.

-----

Steve:

My thought on this book is that it will put a lot of the more conservative crowd into a state of denial ... it essentially points out that we are no better regarding committing atrocities than anyone else on the planet ... according to this guy ... we did all of the same nasty stuff to people that any despot we vilify has.

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Moi:

Different day, same monkey. History does not repeat itself, but the patterns do. Deny it all they please.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

A sliver of the atmosphere is about to cause big problems on Earth  
<https://www.inverse.com/article/59351-earth-atmosphere-carbon-dioxide-global-warming>

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Moi:

More joy, oh boy. I like to figure we'll barely get out before the real shit hits ... if we're lucky.

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Steve:

I came down with a bad cold immediately upon returning home after the family reunions, and have been struggling, trying to work through being sick for the last two weeks. This happens constantly and to be honest with you I'd be perfectly happy to check out this very minute. Struggling to stay alive for brief moments of relaxation with the majority of your life being pain suffering and working just doesn't make sense to me anymore.

-----

Moi:

I hear ya. All this effort for the occasional tidbit, the occasional hiatus, what's the point? The serenity of oblivion is the siren's call for me, too.

-----

Steve:

Don't know if there is anything on the other side of what we see now ... but whatever it is ... can't be much worse than what we have now ... from a global perspective ... I guess we're a lot better off than most of humanity ... so I'm grateful for that ... so I'm seriously praying there's no such thing as reincarnation ... don't want to come back further down the totem pole than I am now ... my greatest hope is that there is nothing ... I don't see any point in anything else ... but then I don't see any point in the entire Universe ... I've thought about this over time ... and just don't get it ... I work for NASA ... and am deeply interested in finding out what the point of this all is ... I'd really like to know ... because it's all very complicated ... so last night I'm watching a show on Black Holes ... fascinating ... but I think to myself ... so what? ... what's the fucking point of all of this ... and where did it come from? Seems like a waste of everything to make all this ... only to result in massive numbers of beings ... all struggling and suffering from day to day ... think about not just the misery on this planet ... but all planets across the Universe ... if there is some kind of God that designed all of this ... he's a total fucking sadist ... or completely incompetent ... or both.

-----

Moi:

The way I see it, this is a one-time magical mystery show. The whole human drama is a collusion of imagination based on whatever seed the awareness inhabits. From timeless oblivion into a brief nature-nurture-sensory-pretend-time-exists quantum dream, and then back to timeless oblivion. No god, no heaven, no hell, and nothing in-between; just a mystery playing out of its own accord. If there's more to it than that, I really don't need to know, don't need to care.

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Steve:

I think what all comes down to is regardless of what it is we experience in terms of consciousness in the present moment the big question is whether or not consciousness exists beyond the death of your body and if it does in what form?

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Moi:

I look at awareness as being prior to consciousness, and consider that to be the source in which consciousness, again, a one-time show, plays out whatever dream the nature-nurture sets in motion. All life is filled with the same timeless awareness; all dancing about spontaneously like clouds in a clear sky. No need to make it more complicated than that in my mind.

-----

Steve:

Seems like humans are the only species concerned with this ... I doubt animals have ever thought about it.

-----

Moi:

Something in our genetic code does not deal well with the insoluble. Only the rare mind is content in the agnostic state.

agnostic | ag'nästik | noun a person who believes that nothing is known or can be known of the existence or nature of God or of anything beyond material phenomena; a person who claims neither faith nor disbelief in God.

-----

Steve:

Seems to me to be the only logical perspective to adopt as you can neither approve nor deny the existence or non-existence of some supreme being. Personally, I think it's a matter of context of the word and how you interpret that metaphorically. God to me is simply all there is in the universe in that context it's a metaphor

-----

Moi:

Call it whatever we will, everything is the same mystery. It is the challenge of the busy mind to discern the stillpoint of its awareness.

-----

Steve:

At this point my mind has so much inertia from being at the grindstone for decade after decade, that I think I would have to become a hermit and live in a forest for at least a year before we quiet down

-----

Moi:

That's why some leave everything and sit in monasteries for the rest of their daze.

\* \* \* \*

Regarding an incident with another member on Friday, August 16, 2019, at Brenda Athletics Club, Turlock, California:

Patty,

Jen needs to go. What happened last Friday crossed the line of civility and should not be tolerated. It began when I was talking to Steven "Bear" Olsen at a table by the pool. From the walkway above, Jen began harassing him, as she has way too many times since this whole fiasco began in May. I interrupted, saying, "You need to stop harassing Bear," and she turned her obsessive poison on me. It eventually led to her getting her husband out in the parking lot, and both of them calling me to come out and fight. My response was, "Go away." I didn't hear it, but other witnesses, including BAC staff, said she walked off yelling, "I'm going to go home and get my gun and shoot his fat ass." Anybody who heard the exchange was stunned. After hearing the whole thing, a man who was swimming with his son got out and left the club. On Saturday morning, Bear and I went down to the police station to file a report. The police listened closely and asked penetrating questions, but essentially said they cannot do anything until a threat is in progress. So that leaves Bear and I, as well as other BAC members and staff, having to be on guard that either Jen or her husband might come back with harmful intent.



The Members Summary of Club Etiquette and Rules clearly states that "Members and Visitors must refrain from: Aggressive behavior in any form, including physical abuse, verbal abuse, threats or intimidation, harassment, coercion and/or conduct which threatens or endanger the health or safety of any person at BAC. Harassment of any type is against BAC policy and will not be tolerated."

Please put a stop to all this.

Respectfully,

Michael Holshouser

cc: Bob, Yessenia

-----

Michael,

We have begun our investigation into the situation that took place last Friday at Turlock Sport. We will be talking with witnesses as well as you, Steven and Jennifer within the next couple of days and will then make our decisions regarding how BAC intends to proceed.

Thank you.

Patty Glennon  
Director of Human Resources/Payroll  
JKB Development, Inc.  
patty@jkbenergy.com  
Phone: (209) 632-2647 ext. 305  
Fax: (209) 667-2742

-----

Patty,

Calendar's pretty much open; just let me know where and when. Use email and/or text (209) 416-7193. Don't always track the things closely, so a day or two in advance is best.

Sorry for all the bother. Wish I hadn't opened my mouth and made myself a target. Hopefully, it will all be settled without too much further ado.

See you soon.

Patty

-----

Michael,

Let's meet at Turlock Sport tomorrow morning at 9:30.

-----  
9:30 tomorrow it is.

-----  
Hey, Patty,

Shared the news with Bear this morning, and we are both in total effective immediately unconditional cease-and-desist drawdown mode. Hopefully, Jen can do the same.

Apologies for all the bother.

Regards,

M

-----  
Thank you, Mike, we appreciate your efforts.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

Why Are Young People Having So Little Sex?

<https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2018/12/the-sex-recession/573949/>

-----  
Steve:

People having less sex because they're overworked and burnt out and stressed, and who the fuck wants to have sex when you feel like that?

-----  
Moi:

What a different world from the one we came up in. I can't imagine staring into a dumbphone watching pornography if there was a pretty girl sitting across from me, wishing I'd rip off her clothes and ravage her.

-----  
Steve:

Yeah, but they don't want anything to do with you when they're young and hot these days because they're too busy watching lesbian carpet-munching flicks.

-----  
Moi:

That's okay. I haven't got anything to offer them anymore, anyway. I be a solitary creature wandering about, aloof and free in a casually friendly don't-tread-on-me sort of way. No more partnerships, no more

tribal mindsets. Friends and acquaintances fill the bill. Just putting in whatever time is left, watching the show play out until this sack of flesh and bones becomes too intolerable to endure. And then I will let go this dream of existence, and happily evaporate back into the void.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Unintended Consequences

<https://www.npr.org/programs/ted-radio-hour/662611757/unintended-consequences>

Moi:

Pandora's Box on steroids, and no way to shut it down but through some huge collapse that takes down the techno world in a major way, and even then everything's so screwed-up that I can't imagine humankind would ever get back to any balance you or I would recognize, much less embrace.

Pandora's Box

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pandora%27s\\_box](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pandora%27s_box)

Imagine the 1984 that Orwell would write now.

-----

Steve:

What I see ... is that while the western modern technical world is focused and enthralled with its own inventions ... wasting time on Facebook and shots of Kim Kardashian's butt wiggling on Snapchat ... the rest of the "real" world ... and planet ... is dying ... and no one is paying attention but the scientist working on this.

The current book I'm reading is clarifying for me just how bad the situation is RIGHT NOW ... not in the distant future. China, North Korea, India, Pakistan, Vietnam, Laos, Burma, Syria, Yemen, Saudi Arabia, etc. etc. ... are all running out of fresh water NOW. If this book is correct ... the shit is going to hit the fan real soon ... like within 5 to 10 years max. All of the countries I mention here are currently having major issues with water ... and they have dependencies ... China controls the water in the Himalayan mountains ... which is upstream from India, Pakistan, Vietnam, Laos, Burma etc. ... so if they start to divert water to their people ... which they will have to do ... because they are running out of water right now in the north ... there will be wars over water ... very soon ...

It's a lot closer than people think ... 5 years on my analysis ... 10 max.

-----

Moi:

So glad I'm not any younger than I am.

\* \* \* \*

Email to Susan Cunningham, Medicare Broker

Hey, Susan,

Happy first day of Medicare to me.

Went into the Turlock Social Services office yesterday and canceled both Medi-Cal and Covered California, which will officially take effect December 1st per bureaucratic procedure.

I'm also corresponding with Assurance Wireless about the phone, and it looks like I may be able to continue the Lifeline plan for the time-being. Don't have a lot of need for a phone most daze, so it will be convenient if I don't have to make any changes anytime soon.

There will be some follow-up residue with a couple medical things that took place these last few months – the eyelid operations and a cortisone shot for another trigger finger issue – but I was told by the office staffs that those sorts of things would still be covered by Health Plan of San Joaquin/Medi-Cal for a prescribed amount of time. And if not, I'm cautiously confident that Medicare will take up the banner for whatever window I have left in this earthly existence.

Will see on Sunday when I go over to Mom's whether AARP has done the speedy thing mailing out my Plan F and D materials. No immediate plans to do anything AMA at this writing, so no worries if things haven't arrived yet. Not sure about how the Silver Sneakers (or whatever it's called) program will work out, but that won't be an issue until late December since I've already paid the Brenda Athletic Club for the year, and asking for a refund wouldn't be worth the bother.

Will give the folks at Alignment a call tomorrow to give them the sad news about my alas-oh-well departure from their health care umbrella. Hopefully, it won't cause too big a tremor on Wall Street.

Anywho, I think that covers everything for now. Thanks again for all your hard work getting me set up. I'll be sure to call whenever any questions come up.

Take care,

M

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on a link he sent:

-----

Steve:

Good News ... I just checked the Indian restaurant that we've gone to in the past ... they can't have the buffet due to COVID ... but they offer a "Bottomless" 10 item dinner ... which sounds great:

Buffet | Passage to India

<https://www.passagetointia.net/restaurant/buffet/>

Let me know when you're free to come over this way ... we could hit it up and go for a drive somewhere to get out for the day ... then hit the movie routine in the evening ... and you could crash at my place so you don't have to drive home in the dark.

Hope you are doing well.

-----

Moi:

Getting by. Think I mentioned I got a couple epidurals in the upper back this last month. So-so results. Along with the carpal tunnel operation that went south and left the right hand relatively useless, trigger fingers and arthritis are adding to the bother big-time. What little luster there was to existence has grown even dimmer.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with Ninos David on an article he sent:

The Greater Insult

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ttevamkS6gw&feature=share&fbclid=IwAR15xeJv6sTMvOGE0wuzXvKVmqEKGMkXNWhNKgqn\\_hd212ham1C7e8GOA-Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ttevamkS6gw&feature=share&fbclid=IwAR15xeJv6sTMvOGE0wuzXvKVmqEKGMkXNWhNKgqn_hd212ham1C7e8GOA-Y)

-----

Moi:

That's the god I don't bother believing in.

-----

Ninos:

It was for your entertainment ... Who said you were believing in ... But that thing is very helpful, hopefully, to a lot of lost souls.

-----

Moi:

I didn't take it as anything else. Just a quip back at you. I prefer agnostic to atheist. Don't know, don't care ... is my motto.

It is a mystery, always has been, always will be. No need for religion and all its dogmatic absurdities.

The whole thing is nothing more than an imaginary touchy-feely, three-dimensional dream. What else is there but this moment, really? Whether or not we enjoy or suffer through it does not matter to anything but an assumption born of vanity.

We are ultimately the awareness prior to consciousness, not the mind-body and all its vain imaginary concoctions.

\* \* \* \*

An email sent to Shanti Sadan:

Your website was discovered recently when a friend shared with me a link to your rendition of

the Ashtavakra Gita by Hari Prasad Shastri, which has proven a welcome addition to the eight other translations in my collection.

Below are website and blog links to almost thirty years of largely unknown writings seeking a publisher. The first book, *The Stillness Before Time*, was self-published using Lulu several years back, but has not been taken any further than downloadable PDF's since.

Get back to me if you are interested.

Regards,

Michael Holshouser

Website

The Stillness Before Time  
<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/>

Main Blogs

The Stillness Before Time  
<http://thestillnessbeforetime.blogspot.com/>

The Ponderings of Yaj Ekim  
<http://theponderingsofyajekim.blogspot.com/>

The Return to Wonder  
<http://thereturntowonder.blogspot.com/>

Breadcrumbs  
<http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/>

\* \* \* \*

Response from Ram Dass about a copy of “*The Stillness Before Time*” sent to him in the quest for a publisher:

Ram Dass  
524 San Anselmo Avenue, #201  
San Anselmo, CA 94960

May 6, 1992

Michael Holshouser  
P.O. Box 3122  
Chico, CA 95927

Michael,

Your material is so beautiful. I am enjoying the play of words immensely.

I really don't quite know what to do with the material, but I will send it on to Toinette Lippe, who is my publisher, and get a reaction from her, because the material taste so wonderful to my heart. Thank you for sharing it with me. I will pass on Toinette's response when it comes.

In love,

Ram Dass

-----

Response six months later:

Ram Dass  
524 San Anselmo Avenue, #201  
San Anselmo, CA 94960

November 12, 1992

Michael Holshouser  
P.O. Box 3122  
Chico, CA 95927

Dear Michael,

I've sent the book to Toinette Lippe at Knopf and to Jeremy Tarcher, and neither of them felt that they could publish it. Toinette said she thought it was a lovely book, but didn't think that she could market it. Jeremy Tarcher also said that he felt these kinds of books were not easily marketable. So, there we are.

At this point I have nothing more to offer, other than my love and my heart's support. I personally still think the quotes are beautiful.

In love,

Ram Dass

\* \* \* \*

While wandering Santa Cruz for a few daze sometime in the early 2000's, I dropped a card with "The Stillness Before Time" website address in the mail slot of Journeyworks Publishing in Santa Cruz. They sent it back with this message handwritten on the back:

Mr. Holshouser,

This was left in our mail slot, and we are returning it to your because we do not publish any materials that are not commissioned by us and written by our in-house staff.

Good luck to you.

Journeyworks Publishing

\* \* \* \*

Response from Leo Buscaglia about a copy of “The Stillness Before Time” sent to him in the Quixotic quest for a publisher:

Leo F. Buscaglia, Ph.D  
P.O. Box 599  
Glenbrook, Nevada 89413

October 25, 1994

Dear Michael,

A very special thanks for sharing you little book, “The Stillness Before Time” with me. I found it a very personal book, and full of food for thought.

Your wisdom and unique perception of life and the human condition have added to mine.

Warmly,

Leo Buscaglia

\* \* \* \*

Response from Jay Leno about a copy of “The Stillness Before Time” sent to him in the quest for a publisher:

We thank you for your kind expression of sympathy. Your warm wishes are of great comfort.

Jay & Mavis Leno

\* \* \* \*

Response to cousin Steve regarding detachment:

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Moi:

I've come to see it all as a ceaseless rolodex of irony and paradox for everyone at every level in every way. And I well know how hard it is to play the detached game when you're swimming with sharks in the deep end. In his bid for enlightenment and inner peace, Siddhartha, who could have been a warrior king, chose to be a deadbeat dad, living homeless in forests and parks, playing god to a court of jesters. Not a role for which most have aptitude, much less aspiration. And really just another facet in the vanity-vanity-all-is-vanity of it all.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an email from cousin Steve:

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Moi:

It is all the winds of nature-nurture, and we are all as conditioned, as molded as any other creature born of this garden mystery. I feel quite content at this point in life that ye old dick no longer rules, and what women say or do is of little or no concern. Other than Mom, Ann, and a few female friends from the younger daze, my most enjoyable and meaningful relationships are friendships with men. I have absolutely no interest in anything intimate or binding with the unfairest sex. I am just watching the human drama play out with a relatively detached eye, and absolutely no hope or belief or concern that we are capable of ever getting past ourselves. We will do whatever we do until time and circumstance drive us to extinction.

\* \* \* \*

Email to Cousin Steve about a visit to Morgan Hill:

-----

Moi:

You invited me to come over a week or so ago, and the reason I haven't gotten back to you is that I'm dealing with both a bladder issue and spinal stenosis in the neck and upper back. Along with the failed carpal tunnel operation last year, the good times are farther and fewer between. Got a lab test for the bladder the other day, and am scheduled for a couple steroid epidural shots at a pain management clinic in the next few weeks. Not sure when I'll get over your direction again.

Spinal Stenosis

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spinal\\_stenosis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spinal_stenosis)

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with the Stanislaus County Library about an Online Library Card:

Michael Holshouser,

I have received your library card application, but it looks as if you've had a card in the past. I have updated all your account information. When the library reopens, you can come into one of our locations with your photo ID and replace your physical card if needed. For now, I am including your card number in this email so you can access our online e-resources while we are closed.

Let us know if you have any questions. We are available at (209) 558-7808.

Please visit our website at <http://www.stanislauslibrary.org/> and make sure to click the e-resources tab to take advantage of everything available to you at home.

Card Number: 0207193533

PIN: Last 4 digits of your phone number

Debra Catramis, Library Assistant II  
Circulation Department  
Stanislaus County Library, Modesto Branch

209.558.7808 www.stanislauslibrary.org

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Moi:

Thanks, Debra,

I was a bit confused by the first paragraph in red on the Library Cards page. It seemed to say there is a different number to access the online feature. My oopsie; am all clear now.

Digital Services Library Cards

[http://www.stanislauslibrary.org/about\\_cards.shtm](http://www.stanislauslibrary.org/about_cards.shtm)

My mom, Beverly Holshouser, is the main reason I am dialing into your online realm. She's a dedicated lifetime user of the library system. Ninety-one years old and still going fairly strong. She prefers hard copy and ordering live over the phone during these our World War Covid times, but I just wanted to see if I could up her game and give her the option on her Amazon Fire.

Will drop by the Modesto location sometime soon to get you a current copy of my driver license.

Take care, keep up the good work.

Ciao,

M

\* \* \* \*

Response to Creative Alternatives after giving two-week notice:

Joy, Bruce, Brandi, & Rene,

Your unexpected offer on Friday has given me great pause over the weekend. But after weighing all the options, I've decided to decline and continue my plan to leave Creative Alternatives effective March 31st. My time is short, and getting shorter ever so rapidly, and it's a good moment, while there's still reasonable health and energy, to take a break and push on to new adventures.

Thank you again for an enjoyable and enlightening eleven years. We've had some great times, and it's not hard to imagine that we'll run into one another in a variety of ways down the road.

Wishing you all the best.

Respectfully,

Michael

\* \* \* \*

Complaint to Sivana East about changes to articles submitted to their platform:

Sivana East  
<https://blog.sivanaspirit.com/author/mjholshouser/>

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Moi:

The original title of my submission was "Of the Human Journey" -- which I still prefer.

You changed it to "Reflections On The Human Journey: Modern Times & Spirituality".

Please consider renaming it to "Of the Human Journey: Reflections on Modern Times & Spirituality".

Thank you,

M

-----  
Matt:

Hi, Michael,

There's no way to make edits yourself, but I'd be happy to do anything you'd like. Just let me know what you want to change. You can even send me a document.

Looking forward to it!

Namaste,

Matt  
Customer Service Yogi  
[www.sivanaspirit.com](http://www.sivanaspirit.com) | [info@sivanaspirit.com](mailto:info@sivanaspirit.com)

-----  
Matt:

Hi, Michael,

I'm sorry there's been some frustration, I can understand. I noticed you've submitted some more articles since you sent this email. Did you still want to close your account? We'd love to have you stay on with us.

Namaste,

Matt

-----  
Moi:

Hey, Matt,

Thanks for getting back to me. Yes, I've been frustrated that I couldn't make some changes to my submissions, and that there was no response to several attempts to communicate about it.

The main thing I'm not happy about is the title change and subtitle additions to my "Of the Human Journey" essay. Began to question what I signed up for, but after a few days pondering it, I decided to swallow the vexation and uploaded a few more things. So, no, I won't be shutting down my page at this writing.

Here's what I would like to see changed if you can manage it:

Reflections On The Human Journey: Modern Times & Spirituality  
<https://blog.sivanaspirit.com/mf-gn-of-the-human-journey/>

The original title of my submission was "Of the Human Journey." It was changed to "Reflections On The Human Journey: Modern Times & Spirituality" – which I do not care for at all. The simplicity, the austerity, of the original title conveys exactly what I want it to. I would prefer the original, but as a compromise, I would go with "Of the Human Journey: Reflections on Modern Times & Spirituality."

Also, I wasn't real hot on subtitles being added, either. As with the main title change, they deflect my words with a tone, an agenda, that is more that of Silvana's editor than mine, which strikes me as contrary to the intention of the platform.

Ten Reflections  
<https://blog.sivanaspirit.com/ten-reflections/>

In "Ten Reflections," I would like to see the Roman numerals in bold, either left-justified or centered. Should have done it when I uploaded, but clicked the button too quickly.

Thanks for your ear.

Regards,

M

P.S. I wonder if you could also place the articles in this order:

Of the Human Journey  
Got God?  
The First Page  
The Last Page  
Ten Reflections

Thanks again,

M

-----

Matt:

Hi, Michael,

No problem, I understand the frustration. Unfortunately, it's a bit difficult to get to all the emails sometimes!

I changed the title per your request. We do require subtitles in articles, however. If you'd like we can change them around if you have any requests for that. I also updated the Roman numerals.

As far as the order of the articles, unfortunately I can't change those :(

But I'm happy to make any other changes you need. Reach out anytime!

Namaste,

Matt

-----

Moi:

Hey, Matt,

Looks good, thanks, I am content for now.

So, where are you folks located? The USofA or some foreign port?

Ciao for now, take care,

M

-----

Matt:

Great!

We're actually in sunny Encinitas, California. How about yourself?

Namaste,

Matt

-----

Moi:

Nice seaside location in sunny Southern Kaliforny. Probably drove through there once or twice in my journeys down the coast in the younger daze.

Modesto, California, at this end, Central Valley, about a hundred miles south of Sacramento, half-way between San Francisco and Yosemite.

-----

Matt:

Oh, nice. So you actually have trees where you live? I miss those.

Hope you have a great holiday!

Namaste,

Matt

\* \* \* \*

Cover letter for a packet given to Dr. Jeffrey Levin, Neurologist MD, FAAN

October 19, 2020

Dr. Levin,

Last week when you asked me what I had done in this existence to achieve all this pain and suffering, my tongue was tripping over the rush of thoughts. Hard to encapsulate a life in a twenty-minute examination.

So, here is a line item full monty for your belated amusement: Life resume, life injuries, life work.

Thank you for the new round of referrals.

And hats off for the many years of witnessing and serving we who suffer. It is a great weight, I am sure.

Regards,

Michael Holshouser

\* \* \* \*

An email back and forth with Shannon Rooney:

-----

Shannon:

Quite the little global pandemic we're getting to witness, eh? Have you managed to stay Covid-free?

-----

Moi:

Yup, quite a show, and I'm betting it's just getting started. The year 2020 is going to go down in the history books. Living pretty monk-ish these daze, so it's no problema, so far. Got some double-layered cotton masks after the Santa Rosa fire in 2017 that I'm rotating through anytime there's an outdoor adventure. Was wearing them for several weeks when Paradise went down -- the smoke was really thick down here -- and it's nice having them for the annual Valley dust and pollen fest, too. Ye old lungs are feeling pretty happy at this writing, and the anonymity is an added plus.

How are you holding up?

You still teaching at Butte? Must be quite a headache doing it online if you are.

-----

Shannon:

I'm fine! Although I think I may have had Covid in February, as I had all the symptoms. I am soon to get a test to find out. I don't know anyone at all who has gotten it, or at least who has gotten badly enough to have to go to the hospital.

I haven't taught for 3 years! Yeah. I've had 3 years off, and it's been good on many levels, but mostly the de-stressing level. I may still work, but only if I can find a job I can tolerate or even like. We're still in the same house on Hill View, which has proved to be a nice little haven. Still have my two dogs, Blue and Violet, and I have a cat named Bob.

Did I tell you I have a grandson? His name is Brevan and he turned 3 on March 25.

-----

Moi:

My cousin, Steve, who is a NASA engineer in the Bay Area, thinks he may have had an early version of COVID-19 back in September. He's got one of those immune disorders along with a bunch of other health bothers, so it will be interesting to see whenever they get a test available.

Yes, you mentioned you were a granny now. How's Austin doing with that? What's he up to now?

Was wondering if Blue was still hanging in there. Must be pretty old by now.

Am in my tenth year of retirement – April 1, 2011 was the first day – and I'd have to be hard-pressed to want to go back to work anytime ever. Very done with this world and our kind at this writing. Doing nothing special is all I have to offer anymore. The babble is still dribbling out. Here's the current year to date.

Breadcrumbs: The Unfolding Next Round

[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_52.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_52.html)

All the plagues geographies throughout time have witnessed,  
Are Mother Nature's attempts to stop the human one.  
One of these fine daze, she will get it right.

Yaj Ekim

-----

Shannon:

Blue is approximately 13, but he's in REALLY good health and is still peppy and goes for walks every day and plays with his toys. He's an amazing dog. I am so fortunate to have such a dog in my life.

Austin seems to be doing well with fatherhood. It's too bad Sarah found it necessary to go live with her mother in Mill Valley. They could have much more successfully co-parented here in Chico where Brevan was born and where she was living at the time. After a lot of turmoil, they do seem to be doing okay in terms of doing what's best for Brevan. And he's a great little kid! So smart, healthy, funny, and so much more. I really enjoy being with him, especially now that he's 3. I think that's the age when kids get more fun. The baby stage is not my favorite, although it has its good moments.

I will check out your babblings!

Had to get on my phone to send these ... the 1st 2 r recent, the last is from a few months back ...

-----

Moi:

Good-looking kid.

-----

Shannon:

Yes he is! We are SO fortunate. So many kids these days come with autism or cancer or some other medical thing. He's healthy, developmentally on target and beyond, and just fun to be with. I love him to the moon and back. His mother is kind of a bitch (long story) but he turned out great, so that's all that matters.

-----

Moi:

Can't imagine anything worse than having a child who wasn't healthy and bright. Life is tough enough without having some deficit from the get-go.

So, what's Austin come up with to make his way in this world?

-----

Shannon:

Teaches guitar.

-----

Moi:



Is he in a band?

And has Michael got himself disbarred yet?

Just spotted your book title in the signature, and found it on Amazon.

-----

Shannon:

No, he's not in a band. You don't have to be in a band to teach guitar. He's spent many years studying music and guitar.

If you want to read something go read MR's Yelp reviews. There's at least 10 that are bad, and some are pretty extreme about it. All the local attorneys despise him. Several have told me that.

RE the book, prob pretty ridiculous, but it was something to do and experience.

Oh ... just saw your question about Michael ... I don't think he's been disbarred ... yet ... but he has a TERRIBLE reputation amongst the other attorneys in Chico, and I know people have made complaints about him at the State Bar site. A couple people even contacted me when they saw my last name was Rooney (on social media or wherever) and told me their tales of horror ... just like that lady did when we went to Paradise that time to have dinner with ... was it Glenda Lee's family? I dunno. Can't remember shit these days.

Could you please resend me the link to your work? I wanted to look at it but now I can't find it.

-----

Moi:

Good old Michael, I suspected he wouldn't get past his m.o. Has Austin managed to invoke more of you than him in his?

Breadcrumbs: The Unfolding Next Round

[http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_52.html](http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_52.html)

And ditto on the memory thing.

-----

Shannon:

No. Behaviorally and in speech, Austin is quite like Michael. Unfortunately. Arrogant, Narcissistic, Self-Aggrandizing, Self-Promoting, Maverick, etc etc. He can be quite charming when he wants something, and is generally pretty charming (putting forth a very friendly facade, in general) just like Michael. But he is entrenched in victimhood, which Michael wasn't. That's one of few differences. He is as abusive verbally. I really don't want to be around him except to see Brevan, who I cherish. What can I say, I just have to let it go. Let it all go. Which I pretty much can do ... now.

Please send your link! I have time to read the next few days.

-----  
Moi:

Here ya go, this year to date, plus links that will take you to the rest of my online world, over 5,000 pages at this writing.

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Shannon:

Thx!

New poem I wrote 2nite ... still kinda "in process" I think.

Alpine

Blue  
alpine lake blood  
flows  
within my body;  
green  
alpine meadow thought  
engulfs my mind.  
I am of  
the high country;  
it's no secret,  
although secrets  
of the high country  
I keep.

I have bear's patient pace,  
and my doe ears twitch.  
I am granite  
exposed  
as snow melts,  
revealing what  
had been hidden.  
I burn  
in spring sunlight  
the false story  
told below – down,  
far down,  
where the  
valley dwellers dwell.

But I am  
no valley dweller.  
I am of the

high mountains;  
I stand strong  
as yellow pine  
and lodgepole pine,  
as enduring as white fir  
and red fir.  
I am pitcher plants  
so full of bugs.  
I am Grey Fox  
eating a mouse and Owl  
hunting at night.

I've left no trail,  
so don't  
try to follow me;  
you would  
just end up  
more lost  
than you  
already are.  
My mountain lion eyes,  
golden and deep,  
can truly see you.  
My red-tailed  
hawk cry  
can pierce  
your quivering heart.  
I have green  
alpine meadow  
thought  
caressing my mind  
and blue  
alpine lake blood  
in the vessel  
of my body.

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Shannon:

Do ever come up to Chico anymore?

-----

Moi:

Nice one!

No, haven't been up there since I last saw you. That pool concussion the following summer really took it out of me. The interest in travel has waned to the point I as rarely as possible even get in my car.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Millions have watched Michael Moore's eco-doc Planet of the Humans on YouTube—here's why it's so controversial

<https://www.vogue.in/culture-and-living/content/michael-moore-planet-of-the-humans-documentary-youtube-controversy>

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Moi:

Our way of life is ultimately unsustainable. Anything short of a major die-off is just blather.

-----

Steve:

The interesting things about this particular issue ... is that Michael Moore has always been seen as a uber left wing icon ... and now he's stating that all this cleaner and greener technology ... is not as green as people are selling it as ... I respect that ... he's telling the truth ... even if it rubs his support base the wrong way.

-----

Moi:

I've always considered the green energy movement to be just another layer of the absurdity. It always boils down to too many fucking people, and if no one wants to have that conversation, so well, not my problem.

-----

Steve:

I totally agree with that ... everything everyone is talking about is not addressing the root problem ... people ... here's a message I sent in an exchange with my other friend Mike:

I pity the entire planet ... everyone's kids ... the future is doomed ... I know we have different levels of optimism vs. pessimism on that ... but when you look at the variables ... inertia ... and what it would take to turn things around ... it's far too late ... way way way too late ... you would have had to take drastic measures back in the 60s and 70s to even have a chance ... that was 50 years ago ...

To save the planet you would have to:

Get people to die earlier ... like no older than 80 ... 70 would be better.

Get people to stop having more kids

Get people to stop buying ANYTHING you don't need to sustain life ... Housing, Food, Transportation (efficient)

Get people to be OK with living in small apartments instead of single family homes with yards etc. Live like they do in Hong Kong

And all of that would impact the foundation of Capitalism ... so you'd have to throw that out and move way more towards Socialism  
Any much more ...  
None of that is going to happen ... None of it ... only not having kids is materializing ... and that's not being driven mostly by the real reason we should be reducing that ... it's being driven by the sheer cost of doing so.

-----  
Moi:

Amazing what a self-absorbed species we are, and not a chance in hell we'll ever get past it.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an email from Jace Ortega:

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Jace:

Hey, Mike,

Pardon the length and any grammatical errors.

I would've written sooner, but shit happens. I just want to thank you again for the coffee and talks. It's not too often I meet someone capable of stimulating conversation. Most people talk about a whole lot of nothing and it's difficult to follow and engage. At least to someone as disconnected and detached to the world as I.

I've been doing some more research on the matter and it seems as though, at the time, I was undergoing some type of mystical experience. It's more common than I realize; I'm not the only one to claim to be Jesus as a result of the whole ordeal (although the marks on my body keep me from dismissing it completely.) I was experiencing a lot of emotional pain and isolation at the time and perhaps one of the ways the brain and body copes is by changing its physiology – inducing a temporary state of psychosis, or what spiritual-types might call “enlightenment.” It was a leap of faith moment in my life. I stopped kidding myself; I integrated the shadow, and followed my intuitions. I read that people who have strokes, aneurysms, and other brain malfunctions describe the experience as intensely religious and spiritual. Now I know where all the religious imagery, myths, and esoteric knowledge comes from: a break in normal states of consciousness. I had stolen secrets from my subconscious and there were severe psychological repercussions as a result. I got what I always wanted: the ability to articulate my thoughts to my own satisfaction. Am I any happier? Can't say. Now I only remember the experience as a distant dream.

My parents didn't like the new mouth of mine but it wasn't until I got my new warehouse job at Amazon did they get off my case. My Christian father doesn't appreciate my ramblings about what I think the Bible is really about and who Jesus really was, I think most people have a very surface level cookie cutter understanding of religious texts and knowledge. It was humanity's desperate attempt at understanding its nature and destiny. They confuse the words on the page for the message itself. I guess most of the message is lost in time and translation.

Things are still unfolding with my cousin. Neither of us are the type to care about the opinions of others,

we have very similar personalities. But it doesn't change the fact that she's a whore who treats love like a game. She seems hell bent on being provocative towards me while refusing to give me clear signs of interest. She likes me when it's convenient, and to speak the rules of the game is to lose the game, so it seems to me. It was fun and cute at first but to care about someone is to give them power over you. She preoccupies too much of my monkey thoughts, and I know that even if I get what I want I will never be satisfied, my thirst will never be quenched, and my itch will never be scratched. I guess the kind of love I'm looking for only exists in fairy tales, and a mystical experience isn't going to change that. Perhaps it exists under very specific circumstances but love and sex has never been a positive force in my life, it only brings me pain and disappointment. How anyone makes it work is a mystery to me. Now I understand why a god would want to destroy a once beautiful creation; it stops dancing and making beautiful music. But was it ever beautiful? Who knows.

Right now the world is burning and the only thing I can care about is myself.

Cheers,

Jace

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Moi:

Hey, Jace,

Good to hear from you. You're definitely wandering down the road less traveled. An lonely sojourn, indeed, and absolutely no predicting where it will lead. Best not expect too many people will ever truly understand or accept it, that's for sure.

Your leaving Stan State certainly beat the COVID-19 wave. The campus is empty for the rest of 2020, and I suspect it will be many moons before we'll be allowed to while away the hours in any coffee shop lobbies.

No big news at this end. Lots of solitary time writing, watching Netflix, taking long walks, and a fair amount of time hanging in the apartment patio. Definitely suits my Zen-ish nature. Kind of like being back in Old School times, but with technology to watch the world turn. We're definitely witnessing an interesting time. Seen lots of history, but never a pandemic.

Good luck with the cousin thing, and be wary about confusing love with lust. I'm frankly not sure women really know what love is – seems like it's more about their fear of loneliness, the need to be entertained, and free access to your wallet – but they certainly are attached to the word and all its romantic notions. I've been with many in my life – several that would have been good mates and mothers, had I been inclined – but on the whole feel quite lucky to have never gotten married or have any children that I know of. I've always been something of a sociable loner, and un-compromised solitude is very precious at this stage of life.

Anywho, hope things work out relatively smoothly with your family. Alas that true believers are all but incapable of going to any great depth in the quest you're on. Jesus wasn't the first or the last to suffer for trying to share the good news.

And rotsa ruck with the Amazon thing. A couple of my neighbors work at the warehouses in Patterson and Tracy. Sounds like nothing I've ever experienced in all my vocational adventures.

Take care, ciao for now,

M

P.S. Although I have little doubt you would or could abandon it, be sure to stay in touch with your creative aspect. It's the juice that will sustain you in whatever's ahead.

P.P.S. I sent you a couple emails after I last saw you, and just realized the reason they were kicked back was because the 'j' on 'jacebo12' was left off. That's why I posted things on your Instagram account.

### Website

The Stillness Before Time: Reflections from a Fellow Sojourner  
<http://www.thestillnessbeforetime.com/>

### Main Blogs

The Stillness Before Time: Reflections from a Fellow Sojourner  
<http://thestillnessbeforetime.blogspot.com/>

The Ponderings of Yaj Ekim  
<http://theponderingsofyajekim.blogspot.com/>

The Return to Wonder: Field Notes from the Unknown  
<http://thereturntowonder.blogspot.com/>

Breadcrumbs: Bits and Pieces from a Dream of Time  
<http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/>

### Recent Breadcrumbs

The Unfolding Next Round (Current year unpublished elsewhere)  
[http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_52.html](http://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_52.html)

### Miscellaneous

List of Top Books for the Up and Coming  
[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_79.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_79.html)

Michael Holshouser: Life Resume  
[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_68.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_68.html)

### Quotes

There's no such thing as history, only historians ~ Peter Greenaway

The individual has always had to struggle to keep from being overwhelmed by the tribe. If you try it, you will be lonely often, and sometimes frightened. But no price is too high to pay for the privilege of owning yourself ~ Friedrich Nietzsche

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

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Steve:

If this doesn't clarify Human Nature ... I don't know what does ... and you want People to save the Planet? Hell ... they will actually stand over a dying person ... sticking it to them verbally ... while filming it ... that's humans for you ...

Eastern Freeway crash: Porsche driver Richard Pusey wants bail

<https://www.9news.com.au/national/eastern-freeway-crash-porsche-driver-richard-pusey-wants-bail/f2fafd19-45a5-41ca-adf9-887cf2af8a70>

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Moi:

We just so need to be extinct.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth to an email sent by Shannon Rooney:

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Shannon:

Quite the little global pandemic we're getting to witness, eh? Have you managed to stay Covid-free?

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Moi:

Yup, quite a show, and I'm betting it's just getting started. The year 2020 is going to go down in the history books. Living pretty monk-ish these daze, so it's no problema, so far. Got some double-layered cotton masks after the Santa Rosa fire in 2017 that I'm rotating through anytime there's an outdoor adventure. Was wearing them for several weeks when Paradise went down -- the smoke was really thick down here -- and it's nice having them for the annual Valley dust and pollen fest, too. Ye old lungs are feeling pretty happy at this writing, and the anonymity is an added plus.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with Carrie Melissa Dempsey during early COVID-19 pandemic:

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Moi:



So how are you doing, Kiddo?

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Carrie:

Alive and kicking. How are things out there?

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Moi:

Just watching the show per usual. Kind of enjoying the solitude this social distancing is requiring. Spending a lot of time in me patio feeding the birds.

How are the kids?

Are you bearing the brunt of home-schooling?

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Carrie:

Yes. I am bearing much of the burden. I'm working from home now for Aetna so it's been a lot of juggling. Kids are good though. They are loosening the restrictions in FL this week. Going to be interesting to see what happens

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Moi:

I'm thinking the next not few years are going to be pretty harsh in all sorts of unpleasant ways. Hope I'm wrong.

-----

Carrie:

Things definitely seem to be getting progressively less pleasant. I imagine we'll do ourselves in the next hundred years or so

-----

Moi:

It has been like watching a slow-motion train wreck most of my life. There were 2.6-ish billion people when I was born in 1953, and the Old School world I wandered then was so much more beautiful, so much less crowded, such a different pace. Harsh as it would have been, how I envy the ancestors who witnessed it during the hunter-gatherer times long before civilization took root. One of the pluses about being old is that I won't have to endure all the bother too much longer.

Worldometers: Current World Population  
<https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/>

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Carrie:

I understand.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Do you want to save the world? Stop reproducing  
<https://city-press.news24.com/Trending/do-you-want-to-save-the-world-stop-reproducing-20200503>

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Moi:

"Love my kids too much to bring them here," is one of my standard ripostes.

Breadcrumbs: The Standard Ripostes  
[https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction\\_39.html](https://michaelsbreadcrumbs.blogspot.com/2015/01/under-construction_39.html)

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Steve:

Good article. His book is available on Kindle.

When I send this to people have kids that get mad and irritated which is a reaction but I noticed some people underpinned by cognitive dissonance I can't fathom how anybody who has children today doesn't drop to their knees and weep when they think about the hell they're going to be living in the future

-----  
Moi:

Would we have come here voluntarily if we knew how hard we had to work and how much we would suffer?

And yet here we are still.

-----  
Steve:

The most baffling thing is why anybody wants to cling to it to begin with I think if it weren't for the reality of pain and uncertainty of watching the job that would be huge numbers of people checking out if you had a magic pill that you can hand out and just say swallow this and you'll go off like a light switch I wonder how many people would take it?

-----  
Moi:

I suspect not too many. Oblivion is pretty final.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on a video I sent:

"Tell me the story about the virus"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bea4jCAkXsI>

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Steve:

I found that interesting but when pondering realized it's a nice fairy tale people aren't even waiting till this subsides to render their excessive greed the people at the top of profiting off this like they have off every calamity and the minute it's gone people are going to go back so what they were doing and probably even more

-----

Moi:

We'll all be working hard to get back to whatever new hedonistic-narcissistic normal we can.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

Interesting movie based on a true story if you haven't seen it.

Hustlers

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hustlers\\_\(film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hustlers_(film))

The Hustlers at Scores

Here's a modern Robin Hood story for you: a few strippers who stole from (mostly) rich,(usually) disgusting, (in their minds) pathetic men and gave to, well, themselves.

<https://web.archive.org/web/20181221104047/https://www.thecut.com/2015/12/robin-hood-strippers-scores-c-v-r.html>

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Steve:

Heard of it but now watched it ... Jennifer Lopez

-----

Moi:

Definitely knows her pole.

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Steve:

She's a good-looking Latina ... above my pay grade ... but good looking ... her husband is a very rich man ... I don't think my pension and social security would satisfy her ... nor would I care ... I've never been one to put out money to have a woman ... ever ...

-----

Moi:

She's had a remarkable career, but I'm getting she would be way too much work no matter how much money you had.

I'd say you've put out a lot of money on women, but at least they've had to put out an equal amount on you.

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Steve:

I guess it depends on your definition of "a lot of money" ... believe me ... I haven't put out that much at all given what I see most men doing ... and yes ... I require at least being equal and on par in return.

Note also that I've been in multiple relationships in my life where women put out a whole lot more than I ever did ... my Dad used to break up laughing when I told him about these things ... he was dumbfounded ... he thought I was pulling black magic in that regard.

I've had wives and girlfriends that have paid entirely for lengthy trips to Hawaiian Islands ... Jamaica ... Mexico ... and many domestic vacations ... all bought and paid for by them. I never spent that kind of money on a woman in my life ...

The result is that when I broke up with them ... I've never felt like I was taken for anything moneywise ... and I have a clear conscience ... in that from my perspective I always treated them well ... on an interpersonal basis ... and gave them the best sex they've ever had ... in their lives. Note that I did put a lot of time and energy into doing things like cooking us meals at home etc ... because all but two of the women I've known in my life didn't know how to cook if their lives depended on it. I've tended to be with the hot and sexy Barbie doll types ... that look hot and are good in bed ... but don't know shit about traditional domestic functions ... they would spend two hours in the bathroom every morning making themselves look good ... while I'm cooking breakfast ...

Generally I've had hot passionate sexually rooted relationships ... and a lot of good companionship along the way as well ... but I don't date women who expect a lot materially ... and if that ugly characteristic rears it's head ... I walk ... some other guy can be that sucker ...

-----

Moi:

Congrats on being such a skillful player and staying so free.

-----

Steve:

The thing I'm smiling about through all of this virus shit ... is that the winners are the men ... and the losers the women ... every guy I know says he's saving a ton of cash by not going on dates ... and I guess women are just going to have to learn how to cook food again ... as our mothers did ... because they can't manipulate men into buying them meals anymore ... poor babies ...

-----

Moi:

The new normal is unfolding its wings.

By the way, according to Wikipedia, Lopez and the millionaire divorced in 2014, and she's now engaged to Alex Rodriguez.

Jennifer Lopez

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jennifer\\_Lopez#Personal\\_life](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jennifer_Lopez#Personal_life)

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Steve:

That's who I was referring to I thought she had already married him by the way there's been a lot of articles in the news about him cheating on her while they're engaged

For her last birthday he bought her like a million-dollar car or something like that

-----

Moi:

A sure sign he was messing around.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

Covid-19 has blown apart the myth of Silicon Valley innovation

<https://www.technologyreview.com/2020/04/25/1000563/covid-19-has-killed-the-myth-of-silicon-valley-innovation/>

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Moi:

I'm thinking the innovation mentality is on the backburner for the duration. The good times are over. The USofA is well on its way to losing its king of the mountain slot. A whole bunch of human beings may well be happy to have a bowl of rice and beans before this is over. As I've been fond of saying in recent years: Old School will rise again, and Americans on the whole are not even close to having the grit and gumption to make it happen.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve (a.k.a., Blue Mind Bliss) on an email back and forth he had with his sister, Barbara Threefoot:

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Steve:

FYI ... discussion between Barb and I ... thought you might resonate with it ... regarding Quality of Life Value ... and Level of Effort to keep moving ... and for what? I honestly can't answer that question anymore ...

From: Blue Mind Bliss  
Sent: Wednesday, April 22, 2020 1:50 PM  
To: BARBARA THREEFOOT  
Subject: RE: Jason's 39th Birthday

Understood ... hope that is all working for you ... on my end I'm in a high risk group as well ... numerous ones ... as my immune system has been fucked for decades ... and due to numerous bouts of sever bronchitis in the past that put me in the hospital for lung X-rays etc ... my lungs are already damaged ... combined with severe allergies ... and that I tend to catch flus and colds easily ... not a good combo ... all of that on top of chronic fatigue and fibromyalgia ... and a host of back and other issues ... I'm pretty miserable even without COVID ...

Given all of that ... I live a solitary life as it is ... no pets, kids, or anyone else coming and going ... only time I come in contact with people is grocery shopping ... I do miss the gym ... and as I can't do my physical therapy for my degenerative disk issues because it's closed ... my back is deteriorating ... compounding existing issues.

I get to the point where I wonder what the point of all this is ... I do risk analysis and mitigation formulation for NASA ... in various IT contexts over the years ... you essentially find issues and evaluate options to fix them ... a fundamental concept is that you don't choose an option where the Level of Effort to execute it ... exceeds the Value you gain in doing so ... kind like you would not put \$10,000 into fixing a car that is only worth \$5000. I think about this when I wake up and I'm in pain every day ... from head to toe ... and I have to take a cocktail of drugs and such to get moving and mitigate the pain ... and push through another day of work ... and it is starting to feel like the Level of Effort is exceeding the Value I am getting out of Life these days ...

Love You Too ... Take Care

Steve

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Barbara:

From: BARBARA THREEFOOT  
Sent: Wednesday, April 22, 2020 1:13 PM  
To: Blue Mind Bliss  
Subject: RE: Jason's 39th Birthday

We are being extremely cautious. We are both considered high risk for complications. We are not letting anyone into our house. Haven't seen Xander for weeks. Disinfecting every day. No social events. Marshall

is being very careful while working on Andrew and Ariel's house: wearing masks, working alone when no one is there, picking up supplies by curb side pick-up (no going into stores).

So far Oregon has pretty good numbers, but it may be closer to June before things open up a bit. But this will most likely continue into next year. Hoping testing increases dramatically over the next few months so we can all feel a little safer going out.

Hoping you are staying safe and healthy down your way!

Love you!

Barb

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Steve:

Hi Barb,

I'm comparing notes on what I'm seeing people do for isolation ... are you not letting anyone into your house ... even your kids, etc? I guess that means Marshall isn't going to his weekly guys get together then as well?

I'm seeing various levels of compliance here ... some people are simply ignoring this and going to BBQs and the like ... others are locked down ... most of the people I see ignoring this are Republicans

-----

Moi:

My level of effort isn't near what either you and Barb go through, and I question the bother of it more than just a few times a day. Life has become more habit than anything else. No real enthusiasm for anything. Keep the game mask on, but it is a shallow cover. The carpal tunnel operation went very south because I did way too much way too quickly. Very torturous at times. Getting old has gotten very old, and being an invalid only makes it harder. Hanging on mainly for Mom. An increasingly dubious last commitment.

-----

Steve:

First ... sorry to hear about your carpal tunnel ... I've got similar issues but have dogged surgery so far. I didn't realize that yours was not working out ... hopefully that situation will get better somehow.

Second ... note that I've sent similar messages like this ... to Barb ... as well as other siblings ... over the years ... conveying a sense of hopelessness and worse. I never get a response ... and didn't on this one either ... nothing ... dead air. If one of them sent me a message like this I'd at least respond with some communication of compassion and empathy ... or call to see if they are OK ... it baffles me that over the years ... when in moments like when I wrote this ... that my siblings just ignore it ... makes me wonder why the fuck I bother with them anymore ... let alone leave them anything I've killed my self to acquire over the years through working myself to death.

-----

Moi:

Very few women do I engage in anything more than small talk anymore. Mom and Ann are tolerable, so I gladly do Mommyduz, and Ann will get everything whenever my wrap comes, unless I find some young philosophical Peter Pan who will appreciate and make use of my world. Had one young Turk in mind, but he's now living with mate and child in Colorado. Not a convenient pass-off, but who knows.

Not sure you should leave me whatever estate you have in mind unless you're okay with that sketch of a plan.

Anywho, ciao, ciao, glad we have each other, even though it is a bit of a distance thing. Enjoy your day in whatever pointless way amuses you.

-----

Steve:

At this point I don't have anyone else to leave it to ... I am leaving my motorcycles to a couple of riding buddies ... because it's a good match ... and I don't see you as taking up riding the world's fastest production bike anytime soon ... LOL

-----

Moi:

Nope, not likely, a little old Honda CB350F proved to me that I wasn't a biker back in the early 80's. It was great fun until I took a slide on asphalt in light clothing rather than go through a barbed-wire fence. Decided then and there that wasn't the way I wanted to die.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

A general strike could happen in the US. But what comes after could change everything  
<https://www.salon.com/2020/03/31/a-general-strike-is-on-the-horizon-in-the-us-but-what-happens-after-could-change-everything/>

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Steve:

Great article regarding a fundamental existential question pertaining to Capitalism:

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Moi:

Hard for me to imagine the revolution, the rationality, the setting aside of greed, it would take to create something more balanced and ethical for all. I do not believe it is even remotely possible for our species to accomplish such a thing. Alas that my vision for the future is far more dystopian, far more Orwellian.



\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

Bear Market Will Now Enter A New And More Explosive Stage | Seeking Alpha

<https://seekingalpha.com/article/4331691-bear-market-will-now-enter-new-and-explosive-stage>

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Moi:

Trusting the market as you do, I put my pittance in the money market years ago. Alas that Mum kept a sizable portion in it. Don't know what I would have spent it on anyway. The world as we knew it will never be the same. So it goes. Don't worry, be happy, and other yadda-yadda.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

11-year-old girl brings loaded AR-15 to gun legislation hearing in Idaho

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/bailey-nielsen-idaho-ar-15-gun-legislation-hearing-11-year-old-girl/>

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Steve:

And her Father was glowing ... "That's my girl!"

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Moi:

Dad had a few well-worn guns in the house -- a pump-action 12 gauge and Sears and Robuck-ish .22 -- and I don't recall anything ever being said about gun safety. Had a BB gun soon after we moved to the ranch when I was seven. Wandered around the house sniping all sorts of innocent sparrows and such until I got bored with it. Dad hunted birds and fished when he was young, but wasn't at all into it by the time I came along. I shot his stuff out at the back of the compound just a few times, but it didn't do much for me at that point. Wasn't until '89 that I finally decided to go the way I have with weaponry. Not doing much at this point, but it's nice to have them in hand.

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Steve:

I'd love to spend more time with mine ... problem is I can't stand ranges ... at least the ones in my area ... too many rules ... the one by me literally makes you plug your barrels with bright orange plugs ... every time they break to check and change targets ... do they do that are your range?

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Moi:

Not happy about the range I typically use at this end, either. Used to have access to 600 acres of rolling grassland with a canal running through it. Unfortunately, the cattle rancher friends sold it and moved up to Northern California. Great for shooting ground squirrels and target practicing while I had it.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

How Fast-Approaching Sexbot Technology Is Making Women Fearful

<https://www.returnofkings.com/78819/how-fast-approaching-sexbot-technology-is-making-women-fearful>

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Moi:

Robot or real are both too much bother. A good fantasy is much easier on both mind and wallet. If I was starting over and knew what I know, I'd be a monk from the get-go.

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Steve:

I think how this is going to pan out is they will make sex bots indistinguishable from real women someday and they will become cheap like cell phones have but people will rent them not own them nobody's going to want to take care of one unless it's so advanced that it does all your house cleaning and everything else for you there are people that are already developing this business model they'll drive a sex bot to your house to hang out with it for a couple of days and then send it back it's essentially robotic prostitution which in my opinion is actually a good thing because it removes real people from the equation and then it solves that issue of women being abused or anything like that these feminists that are preaching against this in my opinion are in line with what this guy says in the article they're just afraid of losing their sexual power and which is the opposite and hypocritical of what they're claiming to begin with how can anybody make a moral argument against f\*\*\*\*\* a machine you have to basically outlaw dildos then because women are using machines to f\*\*\* themselves with those as well

-----

Moi:

Who knows where the male/female paradigm will go before it's over? It's already so friggin' whacked out. If it does turn into the dystopian reality I'm predicting, it won't be at all pretty for the girls who believe they're all-powerful. All I can say is that I'm glad to be done with it.

-----

Steve:

I had a thought after that last message ... while I believe if there was enough time left for sexbots to develop into that level of sophistication ... the planet will most likely fall apart before we ever get there ...

-----

Moi:

I think a fair portion of the technology the masses take for granted will not be so readily available at some point because of overpopulation, climate change, economic collapse, resource depletion, major conflicts,

and the like. Sexbots will be the least of the future's worries.

-----

Steve:

What would be hilarious as a movie theme or a book theme would be to look into the future, and we get to the point where there are sex bots everywhere and people have stopped having sex with each other. Men don't give a s\*\*\* about or support women anymore, so the women fall off the face of the planet because they don't have anybody they can manipulate into paying for their s\*\*\* anymore. And then there's a major epidemic that wipes out all the humans and the planet is left populated by sex bots that are all f\*\*\*\*\* each other.

-----

Moi:

There was a taste of that in the movie, A.I. Artificial Intelligence, by Steven Spielberg in 2001.

A.I. Artificial Intelligence

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A.I.\\_Artificial\\_Intelligence](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A.I._Artificial_Intelligence)

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

Girl, 6, survives mountain lion attack in California after adult pushes animal into bushes

<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/girl-6-survives-mountain-lion-attack-after-adult-pushes-animal-n1137731>

-----

Steve:

Yeah I read about this stop far from one of the places where I go mountain biking it seems to happen every once in a while if I recall correctly there is a woman years ago who is horseback riding near Stanford and got attacked by one as well

-----

Moi:

Always wonder how many critters watched me hiking and backpacking, completely oblivious to the potential danger in me younger daze.

-----

Steve:

Here's two for you:

Antelope Hits Biker During Race

<https://youtu.be/89-yq2jlnnc>

Man Gets Chased By Bear While Riding His Bike!

<https://youtu.be/noCWtagaDJQ>

-----

Moi:

The bear one is especially scary. Would probably carry at least a .357 revolver out in the wild with me anymore.

Had a dog run right through me on a 10-speed on a country road once. Wasn't barking or anything. Like it didn't even see me. Very strange. Twisted up the front wheel real bad. Fortunately, the owner happened to see it happen from her house, and paid for a new one. Her husband wasn't too happy about it, but her doing the right thing worked out for me.

Chewey on the inside:

Wild Polar Bear Tries To Break In | BBC Earth

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RJra0fcMsVU>

-----

Steve:

Unfortunately, you risk going to jail for that ... getting a felony ... and having all of your guns taken away ... for life. I had a conversation with two park rangers nearby here ... where I've run into wild boar on many occasions ... hiking and mountain biking ... and they told me they wouldn't hike out there without a gun ... which both of them had on their hips ... but we're not allowed to defend ourselves any more ... either against wild animals ... or wild humans.

-----

Moi:

I don't get out into the wild much these days anyway, but if I were to, it would be concealed, and buried temporarily if need be. Not likely a ranger would even be nearby if something were to happen. Breaking the law is more an issue for you and your pension than it is for me and my squat.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Female sniper with 309 confirmed kills revealed in fascinating pics of the most lethal World War II

<https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/10792272/female-sniper-fascinating-pictures-lethal-world-war-two-sharpshooters/>

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Moi:

A friend of mine who is teaching some kids how to shoot hunting rifles says the girls are doing better than the boys. That detail thing.

-----

Steve:

Could be that they realize that because of feminism and ubiquitous hatred and anti-male culture we live in men are abandoning them in droves and have no intention to defend them anymore so they're going to have to do so for themselves

-----

Moi:

I think women are just better at focusing on mundane detail for longer periods. More to do with evolution of the species than the misogyny and misandry wrought by the incivility of civilization. I tend to suspect the partnership between male and female was much less contentious when we were hunter-gatherers. We were not designed for the world we have created.

-----

Steve:

You have to take into consideration to that there's a difference between the type of women that are interested in becoming good at marksmanship than the average woman they are a very small minority of women so I don't think they represent the bell curve the type of woman that would be interested in gun ownership and shooting has a higher percentage of testosterone in their system I would suspect they are probably more akin to men and women's bodies than the average women I don't know very many women who are feminine who have any interest in shooting guns whatsoever

-----

Moi:

I'm not sure that is true in this case, it being something of an unusual situation, but on the whole, yes.

I once knew a remarkable young woman who was incredibly beautiful and intelligent and very feminine, who was the daughter of an avid hunter and gun instructor, and killed and dressed her first deer before she was a teenager.

Misogyny aside, my point was about women having a greater ability to focus on mundane details for longer periods, an evolutionary trait that was shaped back when survival of the species was much more tenuous.

-----

Steve:

I don't consider my statements "Misogyny" ... just a potential alternative contributing factor to what we're discussing. Regarding the woman you're talking about ... no doubt there are some in that range ... but they're not the bell curve in any context ... they are for the most part anomalies ... I suppose in more rural areas there might be more of them ... but most women aren't "Hunters" raised by fathers who were ... hunters in general are a dying breed ... 80% or more of people live in cities now ... and not many of them are hunters. I can only go by what I've experienced ... and most of the women I've met that are

“actually” interested in guns ... fall into the minority ... and yes ... they tend to have been brought into it by their fathers ... and live in more rural areas.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

Trump’s budget proposal would give NASA one of the largest increases in years  
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2020/02/07/trump-nasa-budget-proposal/>

-----

Steve:

Yeah, but what's going on behind the scenes is a whole other matter. They are gearing up to execute one of the largest disruptions to the entire organizational structure and workforce in the history of NASA, and it's not going to be pretty. People are already leaving and transferring. Last week the CIO announced she is resigning because of the clouds she saw coming over the horizon.

-----

Moi:

So why isn't that in the news?

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Steve:

I have no idea but it's an internal resourcing restructuring it's really an internal matter you don't normally see things like that reported on the news till after they happen

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Moi:

How is it going to impact you?

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Steve:

It's got very ominous overtones for everybody I wish I had more money saved because if it's impacts my position to significantly I might retire but I don't really have enough money to do so yet I would like to work another 5 years I'm involved in something right now that I'm getting interested in but it's possible that the way they structure things will be so caustic that it won't be enjoyable anymore

-----

Moi:

Sure sounds bleak, rotsa ruck. What percentage would your retirement be if you were to retire now?

-----

Steve:

Not enough to pay my bills I realize that it's hard for you or other people in my family to understand this but I make over \$160,000 a year and I'm living paycheck-to-paycheck my bills every month are between 6 and \$8,000 per month this house alone cost me \$4,000 per month just for the bills for it and that's not counting maintenance and all of that other stuff

I actually don't know what good it would do for me to leave you this house because you wouldn't be able to afford to live in it I'm actually planning it so that if possible I would leave enough money to pay off the mortgage but I've kind of put my heart into this place and I really wouldn't want to give it to somebody who's just going to turn around and sell it to cash out my game plan would be to leave enough money to pay off the mortgage and the property taxes for about 10 years that way you'd be able to live in it without expending a lot of personal funds how does that sound to you?

Saw could change from day to day depending on my financial situation if I end up moving to Washington I may just cash out of California all together and get the f\*\*\* out of here and never look back and that would mean liquidating everything I have here and moving North

Moi:

It is pretty-darned expensive over here anymore; can't imagine getting by in your zone on my relative pittance. You have a great place, but you're right that I wouldn't be able to afford inheriting it at this writing. Might be able to swing something once Mom passes, but that isn't likely going to be soon the way she's going. And who knows, you may be a free man up in Oregon or Washington one of these daze if Trump's crew gets another four years of clear-cutting the American Nightmare. If you do retire early, maybe you could become a security consultant for one conglomerate or another to make ends meet.

-----

Steve:

If I were to retire today ... I'd move into my rental in Oregon ... so I could live there for a couple years while I scout for a house in Washington ... I'd probably rent this place out in the meantime ... or sell it ... I'd have to think about that. As much as I love the bay area ... or used to ... it's hell to live in these days ... my focus would be to find a nice quiet place to live out my remaining daze ... and the SF Bay Area is not that place.

I have a friend of mine in Washington with money ... retired ... Old School friend ... he came down this way a few weeks back ... we got together with another friend from back in the day. This friend of mine is willing to bank roll buying a piece of property ... where we would all build houses ... and build our own little community where we'd all retire to ... up in Washington.

-----

Moi:

Trump & Crew may be doing you a favor.

-----

Steve:

Trump will get us into a war ... sooner or later ... do you really think that Iran has gone silent for good?

-----

Moi:

No doubt Iran and a fair portion of the world is churning away on every ways and means to bring our little dreamtime to its knees.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article he sent:

Professor: We can fight climate change by not having any more babies – then letting human race become extinct

<https://www.theblaze.com/news/professor-we-can-fight-climate-change-by-not-having-any-more-babies--then-letting-human-race-become-extinct>

-----

Moi:

Pointless bullshit.

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Steve:

She doesn't look to me like somebody who would have any difficulty not having children as I would be difficult to find anybody to want to put their dick in her

-----

Moi:

No argument there.

-----

Moi:

I just do not get tattoos and piercings and whatever else this current crop of herd-ish debutantes thinks so important. I say t-shirts and baseball caps are the go-to if you've got a mania you want to broadcast to no one who cares.

-----

Steve:

I agree!

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:



'Wind Of Madness' Is Sweeping Earth, U.N. Secretary-General Says

<https://www.npr.org/2020/02/04/802723312/-wind-of-madness-is-sweeping-earth-u-n-s-guterres-warns>

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Steve:

... "education, gender equality and health care" ... are not going to solve the world's problems. In fact, healthcare and feeding people and keeping them alive into their hundreds is going to make the problem worse. And gender equality doesn't do a damn thing for alleviating the world's problems.

-----

Moi:

It sounds good when you're clutching at straws to keep your paycheck.

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Steve:

The only people I've heard say the obvious which is that we need for about half of the planet to die off to stabilize things are comedians

-----

Moi:

I'd say it needs to be a lot more than half. I'm thinking whittling us down to 150 to 200 million would do the trick. Some sort of lottery where everyone takes a pill and 7.6-ish people keel over on the spot. Let the rats have a field day, and then take them out, too.

\* \* \* \*

Email to CSAA Insurance Adjustor Jessica Smith regarding a fender-bender to the Ford Aerostar on January 28, 2020:

Hey, Jessica,

Here are some pics and a map of the accident. The pics were taken later that day. Haven't run into the fellow who hit me at the club across the street where we are both members, but will get back to you if I do and there's anything to report. Will also try and get a shot next week of the landscaper's truck and trailer. He usually parks in the same place next to the red curb in front of the Lakeside sign.

And here also is the name and phone number of the apartment neighbor who witnessed it:

Ellie Oushan  
(209) 409-6641

The irony in all this, of course, is that after a lifetime of nothing more than a light tap on the rear a car at a stop sign up in Chico back in the 90's, I have spent this existence driving all sorts of vehicles in every sort of landscape, and have never been in a major accident. And here I am backing up carefully, as I always do

in the apartment complex I've lived at for twenty years, and get dinged by an old guy in a shiny-new mongo pickup truck, who doesn't even live here, using the parking lot to go back the other way on Tampa Street. Illegal, I was told by a friend this morning, but alas, too late for a police report.

So it goes.

Regards,

Michael Holshouser

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

Realism Is False

[https://www.edge.org/conversation/donald\\_d\\_hoffman-realism-is-false](https://www.edge.org/conversation/donald_d_hoffman-realism-is-false)

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Moi:

What point to measuring the immeasurable? What point in defining the indefinable? It will ever be a mystery no matter how far the busy-busy minds in the Ivory Tower take it. We are all walking the same stage in different universes, and this mind is finally content enough just to be the timeless awareness of it all as much as the mind allows. Long solitary walks, staring at walls, and hanging out at the club and in coffee shops is much more satisfying than sitting in long-drawn-out symposiums fashioning complex algorithms and pretending you know something. "All is One" is as unified a theory as I need anymore.

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Deborah Hunt wishing her a happy belated birthday:

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Moi:

Hey, Deb,

Steve just emailed me it was your birthday last Sunday. Thought I'd wish you well up there in the Oregon zone. What are you up to these daze?

M

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Deborah:

Hi Mike,

Thanks for the birthday wishes. Am working on staying warm up here in the Oregon zone. Just wish we'd get sun or rain, instead of constant drizzle or deluge. Not much sun these days, mostly grey. Am not really used to living in a valley that's so far from the ocean, which I really miss. It takes a good hour to get there.

Other than that, I stay home mostly except to go out for groceries or dr appointments. Have joined the gym but don't go much ... which I think they rely on to get more income with less-crowded space as people drop out over the months following x-mas and the new year.

Am hibernating with winter's sleep, rejuvenating before spring arrives. We're about a month behind California. When the equinox arrives in March, we rapidly go into the light, so much so that by the summer solstice in June, we have an hour more light every a.m. and p.m. than California. Which conversely means we get an hour more darkness in the winter every a.m. and p.m. Thus, the hibernation ...  
*Zzzzzzzzzzz*

So much for the weather report. Have been paying more attention to the impeachment hearings lately. Don't think he'll get impeached, but it will put a major wrench in the remainder of his presidency, which will hopefully not get him re-elected.

We're definitely living in some interesting times. What a choice we made to be born when we were.

Am trusting your life is full and that you are ever evolving, learning, loving.

Cousin Deborah

-----

Moi:

Certainly interesting times, but I imagine they always have been in whatever way the dreamtime allows.

Weatherwise at this end, it's looking a lot like a drought year. Don't think it got below freezing this winter. The climate is definitely changing, and the human paradigm is spinning its predictable absurdities faster and faster. Pity the future is one of my regular lines anymore.

Pretty much just living a simple, quiet, happenchance life at this end. The usual puttering and wandering, and a fair amount of aqua chi and stretching time at the club across the street. See Mom at least once a week for a meal and catchup, usually at the one or two buffets we favor. Football season is coming to a close, so the one sport I give much attention to will be in hibernation mode until August.

And, of course, still bubbling the babble in the here and there.

The Stillness Before Time  
<http://thestillnessbeforetime.com>

Keep on keeping on as best ye may.

Ciao, ciao,

M

\* \* \* \*

Back and forth with cousin Steve on an article I sent:

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Moi:

Just watched this on Netflix. Discovered it through some preview a week or three ago. Well done, but ultimately in my mind just another window into the futility of protesting the inevitable.

Racing Extinction

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Racing\\_Extinction](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Racing_Extinction)

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Steve:

I've been telling people that Civilization is in decline and that the planet is dying for over a decade probably because I'm closer to the source of the information working at NASA and the researchers they've literally hosted climate conferences at my work and people that I know used to think I was being extremist when I made these comments and now they're all freaking out because they realize it's true I've been telling them for years I things are far worse than they're letting people know because they don't want people to panic well it's time to panic

-----

Moi:

Seems like I've been saying we're on our way out most my adult life. Saw the decline and fall on the wall back in college when I took an environmental geography class as an elective. Most people don't even begin to realize how too late it already has been their whole life. Pity the young who will endure the real collapse. No point in panicking; just eat your steak and keep your .357 or whatever within easy reach.

-----

Steve:

And lobster ... Don't forget the lobster.

\* \* \* \*

Response to an article from cousin Steve:

Does Consciousness Pervade the Universe?

<https://www.livescience.com/does-consciousness-pervade-the-universe.html>

Panpsychism

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Panpsychism>

New word for me, but one that fits how I've come to view things. In my writings, which are nothing new in the annals of philosophy, I call it the awareness prior to consciousness, and, as inexplicable as it may sound to the rational, scientific mind, see it very much as the permeating, indelible reality in this mystery. Though they can obviously become just as inanely dogmatic and idolatrous as any religion, Eastern philosophies with their meditative/contemplative approaches are generally more attuned to the

connectiveness of it all. Western thinking is immersed in dualistic notion, which is so obviously absurd that I as rarely as possible enter into conversations with Christians or any other deity-worshippers.

\* \* \* \*

### SPAM RESPONSES (A.K.A., WTF IS THIS SHIT!?)

Greetings,

As I have said in other introductions, all these thoughts began coming to mind in 1989 towards the end of my teaching years in Ojai. After moving up to Chico in Northern California, I began transcribing all the notebooks that were piling up. Since money and being on stage have never been all that motivating, I was not sure what to do with it all, if anything. As the gold rush of the early internet and email began to roll, I got the idea in the mid-90's to send it out randomly – spam before the word spam became prevalent, at least in my mind – and began haphazardly collecting email addresses from all the uncloaked emails being forwarded during the web's early daze. My bad-boy sniping across the digital void evoked a variety of responses, not all of them happy or pleasant. It was not a lengthy escapade, and eventually, while on disability and attending Humboldt State a few years later, I took an HTML programming class, created the website, and have used it ever since as center stage.

As to the wide range of responses, Lao Tzu said it well in Chapter 41 of the Tao Te Ching:

Higher people hear of the Tao  
They diligently practice it  
Average people hear of the Tao  
They sometimes keep it and sometimes lose it  
Lower people hear of the Tao  
They laugh loudly at it  
If they do not laugh, it would not be the Tao

(Taoism.net and “Tao Te Ching: Annotated & Explained,” published by SkyLight Paths in 2006 at <http://www.taoism.net/ttc/complete.htm>)

So, for good, for ill, or for nada, it is out there in the winds of time, toying with history. Whoo-hoo.

Enjoy in joy as best ye may,

M

\* \* \* \*

I have been receiving your email for awhile now. I am wondering if we have met?

Richard Miller

\* \* \* \*

If you're up to it, send me the entire file so far of all the chapters and I'll let others see it as well.

joy ...

Richard Miller

\* \* \* \*

Response:

Richard,

What I've been doing is sending these chapters one at a time so that people might actually take a few moments to read the whole thing. Too much at once, with all of us wrapped up in so much busy-ness, might be overwhelming and just get filed away or deleted. As it is, many just ask to be removed from the random email list I came up with, often with an exclamation point or so.

But if you have a way of setting up the whole thing on your website, or can give me hints on how to set one up for free, I'm interested. At this writing, I'm not that into the internet, nor am I in the financial position to afford it.

Meanwhile, feel free to forward what you have to people that you know are interested in this sort of thing. More will come, about thirty chapters plus a few essays. The reason they are arriving so slowly is because I don't have internet access at home and use the computers at the local university as I get over there.

Because some people have asked for actual copies, I'm thinking about offering Kinko's-made, spiral-bound versions for about \$15 in the near future. Several publishing companies I contacted a few years ago liked the work, but said it wouldn't make them any money. I wanted to tell them it isn't about money, but oh well. So, I decided to give it away free on the web, but if some people want to pay, so be it.

Let me know what you think.

Michael

P.S. What I'm sending out is only the tip of the iceberg. All total, I've transcribed almost 1300 pages of this aphoristic silliness, and still have another 20-30 notebooks, plus the daily percolations. A lot of it is, I suppose, pretty repetitious, but we're all here doing one thing or another, and this, ridiculous as it sometimes seems to be, is what comes through me. C'est la vie.

\* \* \* \*

thanks for responding to my email. Have you posted your words on any sites. I have a web address (<http://members.aol.com/milleryoga/>) and might enjoy linking to your poetry. I teach throughout the US, Canada and in Europe (non- dualism utilizing the tradition of yoga) and enjoy letting people know of various expressions of the Infinite.

joy ... Richard Miller

\* \* \* \*

You might send some of the poetry to Inner Directions Magazine that published non-dual literature.

mail@InnerDirections.org

www.InnerDirections.org

Matthew Greenblatt is the publisher.

I have my website on aol for free. I don't know whether hotmail has its own sites that you can build into for free.

I will let people know of your poetry.

joy, Richard Miller

\* \* \* \*

Would you mind resending chapter 15, 16, 17, 18?

I was away in Italy and missed these emails. They expired by the time I got to download them.

Thanks, Richard Miller

\* \* \* \*

Hey, that was neat. Thanks for the thoughts.

Love,

Ann Holshouser

\* \* \* \*

Dear Mike,

Thank you for sharing that with me. You have put into words what I so often feel. If I remember correctly, you are an excellent photographer – and now I see you are also an excellent writer. I would be interested in seeing the complete work. Is it available from your publisher?

I trust you are happy and well.

Christine Beard

\* \* \* \*

Hey, Cousin Michael,

You're getting pretty good at all this zen-style writing.

Thanks for the enlightening moments.

P.S. I erased, erroneously, several e-mails you sent me previously ... I didn't know who they were from and just deleted them out of habit. But since they kept coming, I checked the two you just sent me and was surprised. So, I'm sorry, but the others are gone. Perhaps, if you have them somewhere, like in "Mail you've sent" like AOL has, you could resend them. Mia culpa.

See you hopefully one day again,

Deborah Hunt

\* \* \* \*

Your essay takes the form of traditional sermons that paint a gloomy picture of humanity and then call for the renewed commitment to the creed. We need more than that. We need tools that make this transformation possible. And then these tools are best offered freely, without a need to bring people to their knees.

David Merritt  
Editorial Associate  
Magical Blend Magazine

\* \* \* \*

Who are you? (Jack Rawlins)

\* \* \* \*

Dear Friend:

This is an immediate auto-response thanking you for taking the time to contact Senator Boxer via email. Be assured that your message will be reviewed and that we will make every attempt to respond to your concerns, requests and or opinions in a timely fashion. Thank you.

\* \* \* \*

Thanks.

Mary Flynn

\* \* \* \*

Hi Michael,

Very interesting short story. Also very deep. Leaves room for much thought.

Please check out my web site at: [northvalleyroads.com/mac](http://northvalleyroads.com/mac)

Thank you

Scott MacKenzie

\* \* \* \*



I don't know how you got our e-mail address , but please don't send us any more as we only use this to contact people who I have given the address to you are not one of these people, it will be a waste of your resources to send anymore as I will delete it before I even read it.

Thank-you

Bruce Lewis

\* \* \* \*

Hi Michael ...

just got the passages from your "book." Do you call it your book? Thanks very much for sending them my way. I liked what I read ... but I must say I will have to go back to read over some of the passages more slowly ... I got the gist of what you're saying overall though, and I as I said, I like it. When do you write all this stuff? When do you think it? I guess that's really an unnecessary question ... We think that all the time; every day ... the mind never really stops, does it.

A lot of what I read, reminded me of some of my Zen reading ... It also reminded me of a book I've read (and reread) ... "Das Energi" by Paul Williams. Have you read it? ... or heard of it? I think you'd like it.

My experience with Zen comes primarily from Charlotte Joko Beck ... the book you saw at Kinko's ... "Everyday Zen" ... and another that she also wrote, "Nothing Special." They are both very good.

Oh yeah, the other book I thought of while I read your passages, is "The Celestine Prophecy." I can see a lot of parallels in your writing to the philosophies contained in that book.

Some of what you write seems to be a little doomsday ... some of it seems to "look on the bright side of life."

I'll have to read over it again ... I will definitely hold onto it, and perhaps pass it on to some folks.

A question ... Do you really think "Godness" is beyond the rational mind? I mean, I think I have a pretty rational mind, and I don't feel like it's beyond me.

Thanks for sending your writing to me. This life is so incredible ... or maybe the fact that we can think so damn much about it, is what is really incredible. I do love it.

Madeline Medeiros

\* \* \* \*

Michael,

PLEASE REMOVE visible@maui.net FROM YOUR MAILING LIST IMMEDIATELY

THIS IS A PROBLEM FOR ME. I GAVE YOU THIS ADDRESS AND THE PERSON DOES NOT WANT ANY MORE OF YOUR E-MAIL.

THANKS,

JOHN  
omsatnam@hotmail.com

\* \* \* \*

STOP SENDING ME THIS BORING PEDANTIC BULLSHIT ... ALL OF THESE THINGS HAVE BEEN SAID MUCH BETTER BY PEOPLE FAR BETTER INFORMED, MORE ARTICULATE, AND ACTUALLY POSSESSING THE CREDENTIALS TO SAY THEM. I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU GOT MY ADDRESS, PROBABLY FROM "PSYCHO-BOY" JANN OM SAT NAM. BUT YOU ARE ANNOYING ME. IF YOU CONTINUE I AM GOING TO START SENDING YOU YOUR OWN CORRESPONDENCES BACK SEVERAL HUNDREDS OF TIMES. YOU DON'T WANT THAT- OR WORSE, CERTAIN OTHER AMUSING LITTLE THINGS I KNOW HOW TO DO. CEASE AND DESIST. CONFINE YOUR MISSIVES TO THE RESIDENTS OF SEDONA, SANTA CRUZ, AND THE OTHER AIRHEAD CAPITALS OF THE WORLD. SOME OF US HAVE MINDS OF OUR OWN.

ALOHA,

LES VISIBLE

\* \* \* \*

Response:

Jaan,

Here's what your good buddy sent me. Seems to be a very disturbed, self-absorbed fellow in my view of things. A simple "please stop" would have been enough. But we'll just leave "Mr. Postal" alone. Frankly, I wasn't too impressed with his stuff, either.

What I was surprised to find out was that there are credentials for this sort of thing. Would ask him where, but don't really feel the need to frame another piece of paper.

Hope you're having fun. Take care.

Michael

\* \* \* \*

Please refrain from sending further unsolicited e-mail to this address.

Brandon Fesler

\* \* \* \*

PLEASE STOP SENDING ME THIS FUCKING SHIT, I DON'T FUCKING CARE!!!!

Lucas M. Wilson

\* \* \* \*

I DON'T CARE ABOUT THIS BULLSHIT, PLEASE TAKE ME OFF OF YOUR LIST!!

Lucas M. Wilson

\* \* \* \*

Thanks for your essay, but it is not the kind of piece that we use. Please drop U.S. News from your e-mail list.

Doug Stanglin

\* \* \* \*

please remove me from this list.

Bill Fishkin

\* \* \* \*

please remove me from this list. Thanks.

Chuck Worth

\* \* \* \*

Michael,

Please take us off your mailing list.

Joe Martin

\* \* \* \*

Thanks for thinking of me, but please remove me from the list.

Ray Bransky

\* \* \* \*

please take me off this list. thanks

Joan Hamilton

\* \* \* \*

Please don't send – give thanks

Kaera Anzalone

\* \* \* \*

eat me

Nicole Seredszun

\* \* \* \*

Hello.

We appreciate your e-mail, however, because our group is distinctly involved in stopping child pornography on the internet, we must ask that you refrain from using this e-mail address to forward your variety of insights into life. Our group receives quite a lot of e-mail, and yours, unfortunately, is being deleted, because it is not within the realm designed for this address (ehap@hackers.com). In the future, please take this e-mail address from your list. We appreciate the thought, but this address is really only intended as a means of forwarding information to us involved in child-pornography. If you have any further comments/questions, please refrain from using the ehap@hackers.com address in the future.

Thank you.

RSnake

\* \* \* \*

I'm not really sure who you are or how we might have met. Can you clue me in on that?

Also, I really am swamped with school and work, and so don't have time for critique right now. I think maybe you would be better served by sending your work to someone else.

Thanks,

Eirik Ott

\* \* \* \*

Remove me from your mailing list!

Alex Mak

\* \* \* \*

Unless you plan on telling me who you are and how you got my e-mail address, I'd appreciate it if you STOPPED sending me e-mail.

Thanks,

Eirik Ott

\* \* \* \*

Please remove me from your email mailing list.

Thanks,

Nancy Praizler

\* \* \* \*

Mike:

I've been enjoying "the stillness"

Talk with you the next time.

Gene

\* \* \* \*

please take me off your e-mail list

Tom Gascoyne

\* \* \* \*

Please take us off your email list.

Keith Hollenbeck

\* \* \* \*

Dear Michael,

I'm enjoying "The Stillness Before Time" very much. Thank you for sending it for review. In my line of work I have a lot of time for reflection, especially while airborne on a 4 hour leg. The world looks mighty small from 7 miles up! Again, appreciate your sharing with me.

Sincerely,

Patrick Fitzgerald

\* \* \* \*

Dear Mr. Holtzhouser,

Thank you for sending me your essay/dissertation.

I find no argument with it, just an acceptable viewpoint which I am happy to forward to a number of people.

As a Christian, Anglican-flavored, theologian, I STILL have no quarrel with it -- but then, I've been accused of being liberal.

Good fruits, it seems to me, are the important thing.

I even had to give up being an anti-bigot, bigot, because I judged people who were judging people. However, I find fundamentalist Evangelicals and their anal-retentive God, so off-putting, I try to avoid their company if at all possible (I have a son who's a right-wing, knee-jerk, reactionary, born-again Southern Baptist who is legalistic 'til hell won't have it).

Let us break their bonds asunder ...

Warm regards,

Nancy Eckert

\* \* \* \*

I forgot to tell you I'm very fond of James Hillman. If you're interested, you may want to take a look at Blue Fire.

Nancy Eckert

\* \* \* \*

Thanks for the latest pieces ... so, do we ever get to meet for coffee so we can talk about this? I feel like I have all these unprocessed reactions that I'd like to share with you ... let me know.

Blessings to you.

Mary Flynn

\* \* \* \*

Michael,

This is really excellent and thought provoking! I really enjoyed it and would love to see it in one of those little books that people carry in their purse to remind them of where they have been whether in physical reality, or in mind. It seems that we forget on our journey what is and what seems to be, therefore slurring our realities. This would serve to remind us when we most needed to remember, because we would be drawn to discover it over and over again upon instinct. Everything has a purpose, even if we do not see it or admitt to it, but eventually we come to know it even if we do not realize it.

Eva Questo

\* \* \* \*

Hi Michael,

I'm enjoying the chapters ... every now and then run across something that strikes a particular chord.

thanks again for sharing.

Madeline Medeiros

\* \* \* \*

Shannon,

I am going through my last 4 months E-mail and just read this from you. Sorry I haven't been keeping up. I know the semester is almost over but your welcome to E-mail and I'll check back in a day or two. Hope everything worked out and thank you so much for all the E-mail!!!!!!

That stuff from Michael Holshouser is absolutely beautiful, were do you get all this stuff from? Take care hope your feeling better soon.

Lynn Marie Ott

\* \* \* \*

Dear Michael,

I wanted to write and tell you how much I appreciate your E-Mails regarding "The Stillness Before Time." I have enjoyed them a great deal. I just read the for the first time today because I have not read my E-mail since January.

Thank you again,

Lynn Ott

\* \* \* \*

'nuff said.

Eirik Ott

\* \* \* \*

Hello:

I don't know who you are and I do not accept emails from people I don't know. Please remove me from your mailing list.

Thanks.

Lynn M. Wilson

\* \* \* \*

Thanks very much for the poem. best,

Leah Garchik

\* \* \* \*

Dear Michael,

I don't know where you got my email address but I'm glad you sent this to me. I loved it. Where is chapter one?

Lynne Thomas

\* \* \* \*

Dear Michael:

Thanks for the latest installments!

John King

\* \* \* \*

Hi Michael:

I didn't know who you were. We only get 25 hours a month for email and run out early every month, so we only use email for business and just have to delete everything else so didn't even look at what you sent. Sorry about that. Hope all is well.

Lynn M. Wilson

\* \* \* \*

PLEASE REMOVE ME FROM YOUR MAILING LIST!

Barbara Evans

\* \* \* \*

This one I like. Short and to the point. "No system is required to discover and own your birthright." Very true. I used to live in Westhaven, near Trinidad. I would spend many hours perched on a cliff above the rolling sea drifting with the wind and clouds. Introspection ruled. The peace I encountered there stays with me still, no matter where I go. There was no particular brand of faith, or sacred chant, or ordained direction involved in my self-awareness, just a willingness to look and think and feel and be. Inner peace is obtainable. Self-awareness is obtainable. And no system is required ...

Pat Fitzgerald

\* \* \* \*

remove us from your list

The Synthesis

\* \* \* \*

hi mike,

thank you for sending me your stuff, but i rarely get around to reading it and do not see a way in which i can help you get published. I have my own zine and we do print fiction. i would strongly suggest printing your own zine adding some pictures and circulating it at coffee shops. so, so what you will, but if you could get me off your list that would be greatly appreciated.

keep on writing,

dna

\* \* \* \*

who are you?

Chatty

\* \* \* \*

How did I get on your list????? What you say is true. I just want to know why you mailed this to me.

Sharre T



\* \* \* \*

again.. who are you?

Chatty

\* \* \* \*

thanks for the latest chapters...I always setting each new piece aside for a time when I can spend time reading and contemplating...so much more of that these days than in the past ... another one of the gifts I have in my life today ... see you soon

Mary Flynn

\* \* \* \*

Hi Michael,

You might want to submit some of your poetry to an upcoming collection of work by northstate artists, "Portfolio North." Deadline will be Sept 15., watch for more info in the Free Press.

Greg (Redding Free Press)

\* \* \* \*

enjoying the chapters ... sometimes I open one up, I think that they are like opening a book to some random page ... and that the answer to my most recent question will be waiting on that page for me. Sometimes it really works!  
Hope you're having a fun summer ... I am!

Madeline Medeiros

\* \* \* \*

Claims to religious persecution are misbegotten paths to glory.  
Countless peoples of every persuasion have suffered throughout history.  
Many, perhaps most, have claimed themselves chosen by the divine.  
The arrogance of collusion has always been an enticing delusion.

Nice closing line!

John King

\* \* \* \*

Please stop sending your poetry to this e-mail address. This is my work e-mail address and your poems simply clog the system.

Jaffe

\* \* \* \*

Michael ...

please remove me from your poetry list

i am having trouble keeping up with my email

good luck

Chatty

\* \* \* \*

Hi there,

Great writing, all good, all true,  
Sure, keep it coming,  
Keep me on your mysterious list  
of interested parties  
Love to keep reading your words,  
feeling your passion,  
find out how it all ends,  
forever and ever,  
OK?

R Birnberg

\* \* \* \*

Dear Michael Holtzhouser

Thank you for your kind comments about my work. I think you will find more each time you reread the works. Also available is *The Shogun Scrolls* and *The Living Tao* both published by Tuttle as well.

While on the subject of rereading, I think your paper is most intelligently put together and I will reread it. This section is quite right on, especially to me, as a writer.

"Words, whatever the language, are conceptual icebergs each and every one of us envision differently. Thoughts of god, love, morality, money, tradition, politics, ad infinitum, inspire a myriad of responses, often conflicting because of rigid, dogmatic attachments to time. Yet, at the origin of all consciousness, that field from which this grand three-dimensional mirage has come to pass, is very much the same oneness, the same universal, timeless, eternal truth, despite our sophomoric arguments over the endless permutations of knowledge we ourselves have contrived."

Stay in touch and best regards.

Hanshi S. Kaufman

\* \* \* \*

I finally have had a chance to really read your work. Magnificent!! Well said!!! I shall pass it on to the very few who can really understand it.

Thanks for sharing ... pearlie girl

Shirly Einhorn

\* \* \* \*

Who is yaj\_ekim@hotmail.com?

AWAYWORDS

\* \* \* \*

Dear Michael,

I don't know how you got my e-mail address, but thanks for sending me your thoughts on life and humanhood. I do recognize Kathleen's address.

Who are you?

Suzie Muchnick Spencer

\* \* \* \*

Please do not send this type of unsolicited e-mail again. If you persist I will contact hotmail and have your account shut down.

Clancy Priest

Chico Systems Administrator

[1]  
[SEP]

\* \* \* \*

Dear Clancy,

Sorry to have bothered you. Some people enjoy what I'm sending, and since you hadn't contacted me earlier, I would have assumed you were one of them. No need to be so threatening. "Please take me off your mailing list" works quite well.

[1]  
[SEP] Take care,

[1]  
[SEP] Michael

\* \* \* \*

My apologies if I sounded rude, it is not my nature. I have users that get so touchy about receiving this sort of e-mail. I thank you for your quick response. And again, sorry if I was rude.

Thanks,

Clancy Priest

Chico Systems Administrator

\* \* \* \*

Hi Michael,

You sent me some rambling prose about the Stillnes Before Time. I skimmed the work and the writing was interesting. I'm a busy man and an email that long usually gets trashed, so before you send me another, I'd like to know who you are, how you chose me for your email list, and what your point is with this writing.

Think,

Mark Mavis

\* \* \* \*

It doesn't matter. You sent me some writing and it must've been a mistake.

AWAYWORDS

\* \* \* \*

I don't know who you are. I don't know any Michaels. Well not any more. I'm not sure how you got my address. I haven't read any of the pieces you've sent. I'm also a writer and I do read for others but I need to know who they are.

Elizabeth (AWAYWORDS)

\* \* \* \*

Illusion, more illusion.

yogi-doc

\* \* \* \*

Dear Michael,

Thanks for sending Chapter Two. Are you open to the exploring the possibility that there is something more to realize than "There is only the absolute And an infinity of appearances Disguising the way home"? There is an even larger and far more scary reality to be awakened into than the absolute dimension of our existence. And many of your fellow realizers of the infinite are here doing this work with us in a white-hot cauldron of mutuality. You're invited.

Love,  
Ted Strauss

\* \* \* \*

Great stuff!

Peter Reck

\* \* \* \*

Yaj Ekim,

Thank you for your email. I will let you know when something new is available. Right now I am working on six pieces that will shortly be published, including a novel and a series of Zen Fairy Tales for Children of All Ages.

Incidentally, if you would like to be put on my mailing list you may forward your snail address which is kept confidential. Due to the incredible amount of email I am getting from around the world, I will be putting up a Homepage in the very near future.

You are obviously fairly well enlightened as well, from what I am reading that you are sending. Keep it up.

Hanshi S. Kaufman

\* \* \* \*

Dear Michael,

Victoria here from Steamboat Springs. Thank you so much for your mail! I love your postings and support your wonderful ability to write from your heart.

I'm off to teach at Kripalu for 3 weeks, I am assisting the DansKinetics teacher training program. I was in Estes Park last weekend and got to take classes from Nischala. She and Baskhar are as wonderful as ever and upon seeing her my heart nearly exploded from my chest and I began to sob. I don't think I have ever had anyone effect me the way she does, and I can feel that by merely being in her presence my heart expands and grows. What a miraculous thing!

Be well and happy! We have had two snow storms so far, but leaves are still hanging on to the aspen and cottonwood trees.

Thanks again for sharing your great writings.

Namaste,

Victoria L. Strohmeyer

\* \* \* \*

Hello,

Is it possible to purchase through you a copy of REFLECTIONS OF A FELLOW SOJOURNER BY Michael J. Holshouser? My E-mail address is [litegraph@aol.com](mailto:litegraph@aol.com).

Thank you!

Sharon G. Amestoy

\* \* \* \*

Thank you for your E.Mails, but I am not interested in them. So please don't include me in your mailing list.

Sincerely,

Rosemary Atri

\* \* \* \*

MERCI DE NE PLUS M ADRESSER DE COURRIER

Thirion

\* \* \* \*

Dear yaj\_ekim,

Received 'Stillness'. We're all volunteers at non-profit JFL and up to our eyeballs, so it may take us some time to look at your manuscript and get back to you. Thanks for putting us on your addressee list.

We'd love to know how you found out about us. Hope you and yours have the best for the holidays

JFL staff

\* \* \* \*

Dear Michael,

I invite you to check out an essay I've posted on the web. I'd love to hear your reactions. To read it, go to [www.sanielbonder.com](http://www.sanielbonder.com) and click on the Saniel & Other Adepts button. Then click on my photo - Ted - and you'll see a link to my essay titled Mutuality.

Ted Strauss

\* \* \* \*

Hello Michael

I have enjoyed reading your passages. One thing I noticed is that it takes me a while to get through them because I am forced to stop and ponder. You do have a very interesting view, though. I better be off. By the way, Shannon is in here (English lab) :

Sara Godbold

\* \* \* \*

Hi Michael,

Thank you for sharing your "silliness" with me. It comes at a time when I am feeling rather "spiritually depleted". I've printed "The Stillness" so I can reread them when I feel the need to reflect.

How "gifted" you are. I wish I could walk in your shoes for one day and feel such calmness. Perhaps as my year rushes to a close, I will begin to have the time to explore my inner self with more respect.

Just finished up my last big show of the year, and it's time for a little blessed peace!

If you are in the area of Folsom, please call. It would be nice to see you out of the "show environment".

Thank you again for your insightful and inspiring thoughts. Many blessings for this season.

Your friend,

Marilu

\* \* \* \*

Hi there Michael,

I really do enjoy your reflections, they really match a lot of the ones I too, have made. Many merely call us selfish in our endeavors to be at one with ourselves because there is a whole world of others, however, you can not be true to anyone but yourself. You can see your reflections in other people and that may draw you to them, but it is you that you are trying desperately to love and understand. If you can become master, and lover of your own soul and give yourself the freedom to be exactly who you are in a world that may displace you, then you have accomplished something, and when the end comes you will walk with those who have always seen and known the truth.

Yet the need for some kind of companionship outside ourselves ebbs at our souls also. A bond of separately connected energy forms surges and mingling amongst one another is divine. To feel the gentleness, strength, and love of someone else's soul is to feel the passion for mystery and ultimate emotion and awareness. I do hope the three of us shall mingle in mind and spirit and learn far more than we anticipated. Ultimately it is all about learning.

Hugs,

Eva Questo

\* \* \* \*

Michael,

Thank you so much, I will read and enjoy every word.

See ya soon.

Wendy Coggins

\* \* \* \*

Hello.

I've enjoyed reading the poetry that you've sent, but I wonder ... who are you?!

Deborah Gissing

\* \* \* \*

The Science of Kindness

"Those who attend will be taking a journey to the core. We will go past the fear of the future, and regrets of the past, into the heart of every moment."

"When you understand how to just be you, you can hear the sound of infinity. When you can nurture this state of consciousness, the quality of time shifts and prosperity can flow through you."

Thursday December 24th at 7 PM with Dr. Hari Simran Singh Khalsa yogi-doc

\* \* \* \*

Michael,

Thank you. I really enjoy your writing, I find you quite deep and intellectual. Let's get together and talk sometime, perhaps over coffee.

Wendy Coggins

\* \* \* \*

Dear sir,

I am thoroughly enjoying you're beautiful writing, Stillness before time.

I have a yoga studio in Los Angeles, and have studied extensively with J. Krishnamurti as well as Jean Klien, U.G. and other advaita, non-dualist guys and your writing is another shining jewel in this shining world. I'm wondering if I have perhaps missed a chapter, I think i inadvertently erased one, could you re e-Mail me chapters 1-9.

Thanks in advance,

Robert Birnberg  
Community Yoga  
Los Angeles

\* \* \* \*

MERCI D ARRETER DE M ENVAHIR DE MESSAGES

Thirion

\* \* \* \*

I have been  
l i k i n g  
(there's no good word)  
your beautiful  
writing.

Diana Lang

\* \* \* \*

The body is more than a dream. It is the gateway to higher awareness. Try reading this message without your body. Feel your feet on the ground and rejoice in the bald reality of being in a body.

amba stapleton

\* \* \* \*

Amba,

Higher awareness is just a dream, too. And I do enjoy this body, especially when it isn't achy.



Take care,

Michael

\* \* \* \*

Hi. I don't know who you are but I did enjoy your poem.

Thanks, Mark

\* \* \* \*

What is this?

Mack Mahon

\* \* \* \*

Hi again. I plan to look in the student book store for your book. Let me know if there's a better place to find it.

Mark

p/s Have we met?

\* \* \* \*

Michael: ok, I'm interested and plan to get a copy. Keep me on your list.

Mark

\* \* \* \*

I find it rather amazing you're able to put into words some of the thoughts I believed nobody else ever had. Thanks for your sharing. By the way, I'm from Chico also, for the past 30 years at the U.

Mark

\* \* \* \*

Mark,

I think there are more of us than you might think. We are the mystics, the seers, the students, the thinkers, the witnesses of the human drama. We who discern the unity of all things, and yet must participate and endure the insanity of so many who do not, and probably never will. We pass each other every day, but most of us remain unseen because that is our way. Those whose fate it is to become known are really no different or better in my way of thinking. I suppose it's just the nature of the theater to place some on pedestals for history's sake.

About ten years ago, after 35 plus or minus years of drinking fully of this theater, I was sagging under the weight of world-weariness, and these aphoristic thoughts just started coming to mind. Because part of my experience was as a small town journalist, it was easy to carry a notebook and write them down. What you're getting is about 40 to 50 pages of over thirteen hundred thus far transcribed, with at least twenty

more notebooks to go. And more still trickling into consciousness daily. Much of it is very repetitive, of course, and probably, I must admit, therapeutic. To what ends, if any, I know not, but it's been interesting to play it out as a scribe. We've all got to put in our time somehow.

Michael

P.S. Am not sure how I got your e-mail address, perhaps from a mutual friend or randomly from forwarded material. The way this whole thing has unfolded has been quite a haphazard process.

\* \* \* \*

Michael,

Thanks for your reply. My theater has not often been the written word but the classroom, along with some face to face counseling. My field is social work and I've been employed in some capacity in over 10 different agencies. This is my last semester at CSUC and I'm not sure what's next. I like your thought that there are many others who do think enough to care. I find the lack of concern for what's happening in the world and the apathy toward others discouraging, and so I keep struggling with the question of why and what's it all about. About 10 years ago I began the long process to find some answers through meditation. My only regret is that I didn't start much earlier. I'm still looking for the answers, but I think my questions are getting better. My fear is that maybe there are no answers. Anyway its comforting to know others wonder too.

Mark

\* \* \* \*

Mark,

Somewhere along the line I reached a point where either I didn't have any more questions, or I didn't need any more answers. Am not sure why, or whether it's a good thing, but these days I just take what comes the best I can.

Once upon a time, I was a lightweight activist/idealist, but anymore the whole mess is just too bogging for any manmade remedy. I'm kind of waiting for mother nature to bring some order back to things.

As for when you started meditating, at least you started. Out of six plus or minus billion, probably only a sliver ever get around to really examining things. Count yourself lucky (or unlucky) to be one of them.

Take care.

Michael

\* \* \* \*

Dear Michael,

Thank you for your emails. Your words ring true for All of humanity. How did you get my email address? I am also living in Chico, California. Please check out my web site: [www.angelfire.com/hi/samaadhi](http://www.angelfire.com/hi/samaadhi). Talk with you again, hopefully.

Samadhi

\* \* \* \*

Have enjoyed reading your work ...

Thanks, Herb

\* \* \* \*

Dear Michael,

I have lost Stillness Before Time chapter 1 to 13  
can you resend them,I am enjoing them very much  
thanks.

Simon Marrocco

\* \* \* \*

Hi Michael,

Yes, I now remember you, and your poetry is superb! Thank you for writing. Please check out my web site: [www.angelfire.com/hi/samaadhi](http://www.angelfire.com/hi/samaadhi). Also, go to [spiritweb.org](http://spiritweb.org), scroll down to chat rooms, and register in, then go to either MtShasta (my hangout) or Stonehedge. You will find me there as "Samadhi".

Bye for now ...

Samadhi

\* \* \* \*

Dear Michael,

Lovely poetry ... thank you for sending it ...

Samadhi

\* \* \* \*

Hi Michael,

I love receiving your thoughts.  
Are they published in book form?  
I'd like to buy it so I can read it in 3-D with my hands on paper.  
You know what I mean?  
You are doing such a good work.

Appreciatively,

Diana Lang

## To Whom It May Concern

It is certainly a curious thing to have gone this mystical direction in life. Most definitely a road less traveled. As far as discussing it with others goes, I think, as with any specialty, any sphere – science, mathematics, music, sports, business, politics, et cetera ad infinitum – that we all tend to search out like minds to focus on our interests and passions. Scientists with scientists, mathematicians with mathematicians, musicians with musicians, athletes with athletes, businessmen with businessmen, politicians with politicians, et cetera ad infinitum. Our little “lost” tribe of seers, being somewhat scattered about the globe, are not always easy to run across. You just never know who will be sitting next to you in some coffee shop, bar, or park bench.

Personally, I have always been generalist and chameleon enough to enjoy chatting with whoever about whatever comes up. There is great freedom in anonymity. Many people I know quite well have very little if any clue about what I have done or what I have written. It has just never come up. I may probe and plant seeds, but do not worry whether or not they take root. Some minds are fertile; some are barren. It is just the way it is.

As far as staying connected with family, friends, and acquaintances goes, we each have to decide what is important to us, and it may be for some that burning bridges and moving on alone is only option they allow themselves. The high school class of my small rural town origin celebrated our 40th reunion a few years back, and those who came had a great time reconnecting and sharing their life journeys. Very few of them would ever be at all interested in my thoughts on things – many of them are true believers in one dogma or another – and I am okay with that. No point beating yourself over the head over things you cannot change.

The big view of it is that I am one of who knows how many awakened eyes in this magical mystery tour, as likely are you if you are reading this. Whether anyone else hears the call is something over which none of us has any say. Nor does it really matter. We may point the way to a larger vision, but it is each, abiding in their own set of capacities and limitations, who must, to whatever degree, wander the pathless land very much alone. We are but ephemeral seed crystals, of our own devices, for consciousness to do with what it will.

Everything I have written since 1989, except for a couple notebooks that were lost, along with a few other oopsie moments on the computer, is my gift to the future, such as it is. It is up to you and others I have befriended through the years to pass it on if you deem it to have merit. It has been an interesting pastime to give so much of my time over to it: to think it, to scribble it, to transcribe and edit it, to throw it about like Johnny did apple seeds. There may be in the neighborhood of five thousand pages worth by the time I exit this center stage. And what happens to it is for time to tell. I leave it to you to decide.

So it goes, either way. I played my part, I said my piece, I had my fun.

M

P.S. For best viewing online, using the largest screen you have available to explore my little theme park, is suggested. Scrolling down and down on a phone screen is just not going to give you the same entrée.

P.P.S. Regarding the name Yaj Ekim ... It is just a reverse spelling of the first and middle names ... Michael Jay Holshouser ... Mike Jay ... Yaj Ekim.

P.P.P.S. Coincidentally, make of it whatever you will, or will not, Yaj is an Indian boy's name meaning worshipper, sacrifice, another name for Shiva, a sage. And Ekim is a Turkish name for October meaning "sowing" (of seeds). All kinds of absurdity can be read into that by the many so-inclined – none of which was in mind when I came up with the idea to reverse the letters to my name. See P.P.S. for details.

P.P.P.P.S. Yes, I am Shiva. And so are You. No, I am not Shiva. And neither are you. Irony and paradox rule.

## **Th-Th-Th-That's All Folks!**

Pointing to the whole elephant, as entertaining as it has been, has been an interesting lesson in futility.  
Time to close down the show, and move on to an observation of silence mode.  
Fare thee well, adieu, adios, auf wiedersehen, sayonara.  
Regards and best wishes to all.

That said ...

## **Stay Tuned**

Given how this mind works, likely a few more ditties in the here and there,  
For as long as these temporal lungs are still drawing air,  
So stay tuned, you Wascally Wabbit.

## **Thucydides**

(c. 460 – c. 400 BC) Athenian historian and general  
History of the Peloponnesian War

My work is not a piece of writing designed to meet the needs of an immediate public,  
but was done to last forever.

## **Yaj Ekim**

Define forever.