



SPARTACUS no. 49

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My father, during my Berkeley years, argued with my anger at the police. His words were simple ones: “They’re *men*.” To which I’d rejoin, “But are they *good men*?” and around and around and around we’d go.

The cop who drew his club when a young mother tried to take her toddlers to

People’s Park on May 15, 1969 was not a good man. The cop who blew James Rector off a rooftop on Telegraph Avenue later that day – because some shmo a block away dropped a can into the street – was not, nor were his comrades who shotgunned almost 40 people that day. The 12 cops who whupped up on Shorty the phocemelus – that’s a thalidomide-type birth defect, no arms, no legs – a year later – while I, among others, watched – were most certainly not.

In our present, Derek Chauvin, who killed George Floyd by leaning on his neck for 9 minutes and precipitated the Black Lives Matter movement, was not a good man, and we rejoice that a jury said so. The thugs who threatened children at marches, who tear-gassed demonstrators so Donald Trump could pose for pictures with a Bible, weren’t either.

Len Davis and Antoinette Franks, New Orleans cops now on Louisiana’s Death Row ... well, that goes without saying. Leon, the dope who walloped me and several others – including an old lady and her granddaughter – at a Mardi Gras parade, probably because he was on crack, and later drew 25 years in Angola – I don’t know; I feel sorry for him. And there was a young cop in LaPlace, Louisiana, with whom I used to exchange zingers during my trials there. He tried to

disarm a psychotic who'd gone off his meds, and shot the man after he'd stabbed him in the throat – definitely, a good man.

The Capitol cops who were caught between the House of Representatives and Trump's mob on January 6, 2021, and who gave testimony before Congress in recent weeks ... well, they back up my Dad's conviction. *Men*, good men, with men's strengths and men's vulnerabilities. In this time when the actions of bad men in uniform are given such notice (and justly, necessarily so), what stands out about them is their humanity – their fear, their courage, their vulnerability, their dedication, their fortitude. These are good cops and good men.

How they behaved on January 6, and how they have behaved since, is testament to their quality. What happened to them on January 6, and the slurs directed at them after their testimony, is, no less criminal than the police brutality of the 1960s and the foul betrayal of professionalism of today. The mad conspiracy theories and craven insults voiced on Fox and by Republican politicians – in effect, calling the policemen performers in a scripted play – are *obscene*.

The purpose of their lies is obvious. The Republicans have attached themselves to the image and the ambition of Donald Trump. They do so by stoking the fears and stroking the delusions of his supporters. They cannot admit, publicly, that those supporters are capable of the criminal violence and sedition emergent on January 6. Four capitol cops have *committed suicide* since, and perhaps because of, the capitol riot and the attempts to slander those who tell the truth about it. The suggestion was made recently on Fox News' antithesis, MSNBC, that those offended by Tucker Carlson and Laura Ingraham boycott their advertisers. Not a bad idea. Certainly a just one.

And the beat goes on.

Surely there's a perspective that condemns official brutality and insists on professionalism and prudence, yet extols police who show those qualities. Surely a sane society will eliminate men like Derek Chauvin from power over others and celebrate, not mock, men like the four guys atop this issue: Gonell, Fanone, Hodges and Dunn. I'm with my Dad when it comes to them ... and with Uncle Joe Biden, who presented them in early August with Congressional Gold Medals.

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And speaking of medals ...

I know SF fans are supposed to be total nerds as hostile to athletics as SF writers are to religion, but I must admit, I enjoyed the hey out of the Tokyo Olympics.

It was the variety of sports, and the unusualness of many – sport climbing, canoeing, rowing. It was the chance to see events we rarely get to watch, wrestling, archery, the shot put, the high jump (love their *prance* as the jumpers approach the bar), even trampoline (Dong Dong was robbed). It was the unusual ascension of first-time medalists in place of favorites, alternates stepping in for superstars and showing *their* stuff, and countries winning their first hardware, ever. It was sympathizing with Simone Biles as she dealt with her mental health – and reviling Novak Joke-a-vich for raging like a fool when he lost. It was arguing over whether the transgender weightlifter from New Zealand had any business competing against contestants born female – a question blunted by her terrible performance, since no cis-female (as they say) lost any place in the standings. It was the cameras trailing wide-shouldered swimmers as they drove down their lanes like torpedoes. It was cheering on the little lady who won bronze – third place – in her third marathon, ever. In this COVID-wracked time, it was the hoot from witnessing mad melees from families back home, going apeshit over a hometown hero's victory.

I remember the Olympics from 1960 – Valery Brumel outperforming John Thomas in the high jump – and 1984, when the Russians boycotted and America reeled with joy. I remember '88, when the closing ceremony featured an ersatz alien exiting a flying saucer atop the stadium, hailing the athletes of planet Earth and embarrassing the Worldcon committee past belief. I remember the great opening ceremonies in China and in Russia. I remember Kerri Strug making her last vault despite a wrenched ankle in 1996, on the insistence of her sadistic coach – but *making* it. (U.S.A.! U.S.A.!) And don't get me started on the *Winter* Olympics...

Nerd I was born and nerd I remain, but I luvs me my Olymps.

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In *The Zine Dump* #52, my latest “zine about zines,” I reviewed Rich Lynch's latest collection of fannish history thusly:

I Remember Me and Other Narratives | Rich Lynch, PO Box 3120, Gaithersburg MD 20885 | rw_lynch@yahoo.com | “Walt Willis articles and essays from *Mimosa*.” I'll say that again, putting due emphasis where it belongs: “*Walt Willis* articles and essays from *Mimosa*.” If, like me, you got into fandom in the late '60s and into zining some time after that, the name of Walt Willis is more than historical, more than legendary, it is *mythic*. His fannish work ... is the standard by which all subsequent written fanac is judged. He was recipient of the first fan fund, predecessor to TAFF. With Bob Shaw, he wrote the epic fanfiction *The Enchanted Duplicator*. Willis is the standard by which all written fanac is judged. He passed in 1999, and I never got to meet him ... except through the epic majesty of Richard Bergeron's *Warhoon* 28 and these columns and articles from *Mimosa*, Rich & Nicki Lynch's Hugo-winning journal of fannish history. I can find no price for this zine in its text (nor a proper colophon, tsk) so contact Rich at the address above. Do it!

Rich asks me to add that the zine is *free to download* through eFanzines.com or Fanac.org. Done! The same, I'm sure, is or shortly will be true of

Through Time & Space: Forry Ackerman's Remembrances from *Mimosa* | Rich Lynch, see above | The fannish career of # Forrest J. Ackerman has seen no better account than his articles in the Lynchi's Hugo-hoarding zine, collected here in another invaluable volume. And what a career – the world's #1 SF fan since fandom's inception, detailing the facts and feels of those many years. Cool illos by Teddy Harvia atop every article, too. I have to lapse into “me” talk at this point. A neighbor kid's mention of a magazine showing “the face of the Mummy” led me to *Famous Monsters of Filmland*. Walking into the St. Louiscon hotel in 1969, 4E Ackerman was the first fan I recognized and talked to. T'was I who had to tell the Ackermmonster, in 1986, that I couldn't accept his vote in the 1988 Worldcon race because he'd already voted. Seeing Forry seated alone in the Noreascon 4 con suite and getting a cheery wave in reply to our salute. I wonder why 4SJ never wrote about those great moments in SFnal history.

Since it will be months before I commit another *Zine Dump* to the deep, and boy does *that* sound suggestive, here are some other zines I've seen since that last *TZD* came out.

Brooklyn! no. 113 | Fred Argoff, Penthouse L, **1170** Ocean Parkway, Brooklyn NY 11230-4060 | \$10/4 issues, quarterly | **Note correct address!** My aged eyesight misread Fred's street number in *TZD*52. Fred's quarterly love letter to his borough of domicile is always a nifty trip, more so this time because of its theme: *Brooklyn in brick*. This issue is chock-a-brick with photos of cool houses and apartment buildings in everyone's favorite NYC borough, seasoned with a folk tale called “Three Little Pigs from Canarsie” told in Brooklynese and the editor's fantasy of founding his own Brooklyn in North Dakota. Labor of love here, entertaining and evocative as Hell...s Kitchen.

Christian New Age Quarterly Vol. 25 No. 1 | Catherine Groves, PO Box 276, Clifton NJ 07015-0276 | info@christiannewage.com | This issue of the most spiritual (obviously) publication I receive deals with the editor's thoughtful and insightful self-analysis, mulling over the place of Suffering – low self-esteem, depression, the wrack of oncoming senior years – in Christianity and life itself. If that sounds like typical fannish life, well, I think them usual in almost *every* life, which is why zines like *C*NAQ* have such value. Michael and Judith Landaiche add their responses. My own immediate thought is of the only name I understand the Almighty gives Himself in Scripture – “I AM.” For some reason this agnostic, who finds the existence of spirit in the universe a question both baffling and fascinating, finds comfort in that.

Far Journeys Vol. 1 #3 & Vol. 2 #3 | Justin E.A. Busch, 308 Prince St. #422, St. Paul MN 55101 | Two issues of a very handsome genzine, but my review must start with a gripe. Justin is apparently the official fanzine reviewer for the National Fantasy Fan Federation, but advertises no e-dress. This is the era of eFanzines.com and PDFed publications; without e-mail access Justin is *not* going to see more than a superficial smattering of the fanzine expanse! And he has a neat+ publication to trade: the earlier issue is a tribute to Bela Lugosi, with good articles and *really* good illustrations, the second a thicker and more various production with cool and informed pieces on Richard Strauss and *Also Sprach Zarathustra* and classic fanzine covers. Superb! You'll forgive me, though, if I'm most excited by the piece on Theodore Sturgeon's book reviews in *Galaxy* – I've begged permission to reprint.

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Since the Delta variant has succeeded in sending even us fully-vaxxed souls back into seclusion, we've been avoiding movie theatres and haunting the streaming services. The original films on Netflix, et.al., alas, have been mostly third-rate fare, though – as I've said before -- foreign TV has taken up some of the slack. Nothing great, but serviceable – it would help if I could talk my father-in-law into spending a few bucks and renting a *good* flick. I *ache* for Mads Mikkelson's *Another Round*, but it's extra money, so ...

Oscar buzz has already begun for the exquisite *Jessica Chastain* for her forthcoming Tammy Faye Bakker movie, and I cover myself in rejoicing; the glorious split-chinned redhead deserved both of the Oscars she's been nominated for (*The Help* and of course, *Zero Dark Thirty*) and other performances as well (*The Debt*, *Molly's Game*, *Mrs. Sloane*, *A Most Violent Year*). Besides which, I worship her *bunions*! My delight is tempered only by possible competition from the divine Michelle Pfeiffer **PFEIFFER** in *French Exit* and Mila Kunis in *Four Good Days*. I'd love to see them honored too. Their movies could be considered 2020, though.

I note a new film being touted about everybody's favorite serial killer, Ted Bundy. IMDB lists multiple dramatizations and documentaries with his name attached. Some have been good cinema, but I can't help thinking that whenever Bundy looks up from Hell, he rejoices in his undying fame. (“You mean *infamy*,” I hear you cry. Same difference to creatures like Bundy.) Still, as an aficionado of the aberrant, I'll watch.



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As August begins, COVID again intrudes into our minds. Mindful of the booming infection rates among the young and the imbecile – those who resist vaccines or masking – we await the word on booster shots. The second Dr. Fauci says to bare our arms, we'll go.

This is Florida, beset with a psychopathic governor who declaims that scientific sense is tyranny, and promotes a long-discarded “right to choose”, not to mention a brain-dead percentage of the population willing to believe him. Therefore we mask anew, avoid public excursions, and cheer on every tough vaxxing measure ordered by Joe Biden. Phooey on libertarianism; I believe it's the government's duty to secure the common good, which means protecting public health. If Uncle Sam can require a license to drive and demand inoculation against polio to attend school, he can demand we mask up and get our shots against COVID. “Freedom” my ass, at least on this point.

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Before we shrank back into our holes, Rosy and I celebrated our 20th. Knowing my interest in military history, she took me to the local vets' museum, a very comprehensive look at the USA at war, rich with uniforms and guns and maps and a model of the U.S.S. *Constitution*, a.k.a. *Old Ironsides*, shown with some fat man here →. Rosy and I visited the grand



old ship some years back.

We also celebrated with our first dinner out of the year, at a first-rate seafood place on the Banana “River,” actually a lagoon abutting Cape Canaveral. Luscious the victuals and happy the time.

Pending? Europe next April, as I've said, and perhaps – COVID and finances permitting – New Orleans in early October for the local convention, ContraFlow. There are more pressing expenses that need to be met, but indeed, we miss The People.

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So sometime in May Rose-Marie – that’s my wife, if you didn’t know – finally did what I’ve been begging her to do since we married, and got a mammogram. They found something.

It wasn’t much, three tiny calcification spots. No one was particularly worried. But it was enough to force *la belle* to get a biopsy – two, actually. If she had nerves about the procedure, it was that it would hurt.

I kept *my* terror to myself.

So one morning I drove her down the local causeway to Cape Canaveral Hospital, and a couple of hours later picked her up. Friends who had had the procedure had assured Rosy that the test was not all that uncomfortable. She pronounced them lying swine. We waited for the results.

Her call came in on a Wednesday a week later. She didn’t notice the voicemail until the following Saturday. The nurse’s tone should have told us everything we needed to know, but we wallowed in her words. They could be summarized succinctly as *No problems*.

Happy dance. Say it again. ***Happy dance***.

