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Dual Loyalty

As writers and bloggers are so fond of saying; you couldn't make it up...

• [Jozef Imrich, Survivor of the Iron Curtain Crossing](#)

Links

Google News

A Stab at Immortality

AMAZON RIVER

Defector

Dragon Tails

First Palm Digital

Edition

Kollector of PDF

Formats

Ms of Too Human

Overnight Failure takes 20 something years

Women: Sanctuaries of Human Reviews



Sole survivors might often be thought of as anonymous, but we never want to be voiceless.

Each Age Calls forth its own Olympic Voice :-)

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NY Times Magazine

Sunday, February 29, 2004

USA Today's study of 2003 releases found that movie critics' grades had a significant relationship to the money the movies grossed. In general, the better the reviews, the higher the box office. [Even a half-star meant millions of dollars more](#) for a movie's total take. How pretentious is that?

• [You're a Chorible\(sic\) Man, Aren't You? One Star in Jozef's closet: A literary houdini.](#)

Why do guys like Anschutz, Wasserstein get into publishing?

For fun (and ideological reasons for some). Jack Shafer writes: They usually join the game because they're already bulging at the seams with profitable investments and are bored with their yachts, airplanes, mansions, sports franchises, race horses, and priceless works of art, and they view publications (correctly) as exciting diversions from their conventional holdings.

• [How to attract the opposite sex: Hopelessly utopian. Desperately needed](#) [link first seen at [Tim Porter](#)]

My mother called me Silver. I was born part precious metal, part pirate.

• See Also [A rebel goes to water: It's all right for you; we are locked in situations X, Y and Z . . . a great feeling of powerlessness](#)

• See Also [Oprah: UK](#)

• See Also [Richard & Judy's book club](#)

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 1:40 PM

Google's Troika:
Turning a Wishlist
into Virtual Reality
TechnoRATi,
Klick-and-Dare
Dusting Daily News

Love's Labour's Linked

Arty Bloggers
Blog Father
Bookslut
Daily Czech
Gianna
How Appealing
Media Bias
Media Dragon
Opinions
Saloon
Taxing Times
Technorati
Tim Dunlop
The Webdairy
Zuzu Literary

Book Reviews

Atlantic Books
BBC Books
Book Magazine
Books & Culture
Bookforum
Boston Globe Books
Chicago Trib Books
Claremont Review
Common Review
Complete Review
CS Monitor Books
Globe & Mail Books
Guardian Lit News
Guardian Books
Hyde Park Review
Independent Books
January Magazine
Kirkus Reviews
London Review
London Times Books
LA Times Books
Melbourne Age
New Republic Books

Saturday, February 28, 2004

Definitions are boundaries, and boundaries are anathema to Webloggers. Moreover, the best Weblogs are always shifting and evolving, always on their way to being something else.

- Julia Keller of the Chicago Tribune

Blogging For Fun

- [Blogbinders.com turns your blog into a bound book \]](#)
- [Big and Bad: Cars have to meet stringent fuel-efficiency regulations. Trucks don't](#)
- [Everyone loves internet quizzes. But so few of them offer the satisfaction of giving the quiz-taker a truly unique identity: BookQuiz](#)
- [Food Quiz](#)

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 4:28 PM

Friday, February 27, 2004

The local critic didn't like the piece, which poses the question: does one write for the public, or for the critics? Three thousand people applaud enthusiastically and one journalist makes uncharitable remarks. Which is more important? And how do critics feel able to make a definite judgment after one hearing? As a composer, I would never presume to do such a thing. When my pupils brought their music to me I always made them play it twice, something I learned from Honegger. There is too much of the unexpected in a first hearing; after a second hearing things begin to fall into place.

[Miklós Rózsa, Double Life](#)

No degrees of separation: A magnet for Survival Bloggers

The American publishing business today is in a tremendous state of confusion between its two classic functions: the higher-minded and more vocally trumpeted mission civilisatrice to instruct and edify and uplift the reading public and the less loudly advertised but, in the nature of things, more consistently compelling [mission commerciale](#) to

New York Review
 NY Times Books
 Newsday Books
 Newsweek Arts
 Philly Inquirer Books
 Salon Books
 SF Chronicle Books
 Spectator Books
 Telegraph Books
 The TLS
 Village Voice
 Washington Post
 Washington Times
 Wilson Quarterly
 Yale Book Review

Library blog

Catalogablog
 Caveat Lector
 Ex Libris
 Handheld Librarian
 Library Geek
 Librarian.net
 LibraryPlanet
 Library Stuff
 Library Techlog
 Library Underground
 LIS Feeds
 NewBreed Librarian
 Peter Scott
 Research Buzz
 Rogue Librarian
 The Shifted
 Librarian
 TechnoBiblio
 Virtual Acquisitions
 Shelf

E-books and all that

Electronic Book
 Web
 KnowBetter.com
 Project Gutenberg
 Distributed
 Proofreaders
 eBookWorm
 netcast
 e-books.org

separate the consumer from his cash. Happy the publisher (and happy the author) who can manage to make a single book fulfill both functions! The real art of publishing consists not in reconciling what are, in a capitalist system, quite simply irreconcilable imperatives but in orchestrating the built-in tensions in a harmonious fashion. However, the two-way road in publishing from the bottom line to Mount Olympus travels right across a fault line, and that is where the serious editor lives and plies his trade.

- [Plies of trade](#) [courtesy of [Saloon](#)]
- See Also [A Great Revision Descends to Self-parody](#)
- See Also [Cold Phwoar 2004 AD](#)

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 7:40 AM

A Publishing Best-seller Miracle Rick Warren's The Purpose-Driven Life: What on Earth Am I Here For? sold 11.3 million copies in 2003, making it one of the biggest best-sellers of all time

The Plug Fest: literary episode of Scooby Doo

Last week it was revealed how easy it is for authors to praise their own books anonymously in online reviews

- [Price we pay for the freedom of expression which the internet offers us](#) [link first seen at [Quest for the fool's gold of turnover](#)]

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 6:59 AM

Thursday, February 26, 2004

Any Aussie Analogies: The Post is often more scrappy with surprising exclusives, but its coverage can be exhausting rather than exhaustive. The Times is still best for its ability to frame issues and candidates with smart coverage and fine writing...(read on the train, but source lost)

Mangan's Newsroom Blogging Vision

PJNet Today (Public Journalism Network) has a great [interview](#) with Tom Mangan, proprietor of the [Prints the](#)

Literary Reflections

A Saloon
 Book Review sites
 Literary Weblogs
 General Literary sites
 (Inter)national
 Literary sites
 Publishers

archives

04/01/2003 -
 04/30/2003
 06/01/2003 -
 06/30/2003
 07/01/2003 -
 07/31/2003
 08/01/2003 -
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 05/31/2004
 Current Posts

Chaff weblog and a features copy editor at the San Jose Mercury News. Mangan makes the case for blogging by news organizations, and for editing of news blogs. There's some good stuff in this interview.

*The part that had me nodding my head is when Mangan points out the importance of a newsroom establishing a blog immediately when a major local story breaks. He says: **If we have a blog up and running within minutes of a big story breaking, we cut Google and the bloggers out of the equation. If we make it interactive, we make our site the go-to location for breaking news. We will open ourselves up to the problem of people entering comments that later prove untrue, but readers will learn to distinguish between the feedback -- half of which is nonsense -- and the work of the pros, which, hopefully, will have a much smaller nonsense factor. In other words, combine the best of blogging with the best practices of the professional news organization.***

Bloggers Toys Grow Up to Be News Tools: Nowhere to hide B:=)

How many bloggers would like to use a helicopter to take a picture of Bohemian Streets they are reporting on? My latest venture DraganFly.com recently introduced a consumer level [Predator Spy Plane](#) with wireless video broadcast.

• [courtesy of [A group weblog by the sharpest minds in online media/journalism/publishing](#)]

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 7:46 AM

Everybody loves Gianna and her double... Virtual separation appears to be less than three degrees!

What A Wonderful World of Communal Blogging & Librarianship :=)

Partially overdue blogger just ducking out to hospital first thing this morning to see if they can't somehow persuade this baby make an appearance, as he's now a week overdue....

• [Double Fines: Creative Revenue Raising Overdue Giannas](#)
 • See Also [Blogs by women](#)
 • See Also [Posing as a mother returning to work from maternity leave](#)

- See Also [Blogs: Double Dragon](#)
- [Blogging left](#)

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 7:41 AM

Tuesday, February 24, 2004

Everybody's had a few
Now they're talking about who knows who...
My brother knows where the best bars are
Let's see how these blues'll do
in the town where the good times stay
Tu le ton temps that's all we say
We used to dance the night away
Me and my sister me and my brother
We used to walk down by the river
[A song where everything's still the same](#)

A Small Victory: The King

If I had tried to write with those things in mind, I believe I would have sold my birthright for a plot of message, as the old pun has it. Either way, Tabby and I would still be living in a trailer or an equivalent, a boat. My wife knows the importance of this award isn't the recognition of being a great writer or even a good writer but the recognition of being an honest writer.

Frank Norris, the author of *McTeague*, said something like this: **What should I care if they, i.e., the critics, single me out for sneers and laughter? I never truckled, I never lied. I told the truth.**

And that's always been the bottom line for me. The story and the people in it may be make believe but I need to ask myself over and over if I've told the truth about the way real people would behave in a similar situation.

If I happen to be the writer of such a death bed scene, I'd choose "Son of a bitch" over "Marry her, Jake" every time. We understand that fiction is a lie to begin with. To ignore the truth inside the lie is to sin against the craft, in general, and one's own work in particular.

But the storyteller cannot afford to forget and must always be ready to hold himself or herself to account. He or she needs to remember that the truth lends verisimilitude to the

lies that surround it. If you tell your reader:
Sometimes chickens will pick out the weakest one in the flock
and peck it to death.

The people [who speak out, speak out because they are passionate about the book](#), about the word, about the page
and, in that sense, we're all brothers and sisters. Give
yourself a hand.

• [Agents of Literature](#)

• [Making Light](#)

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 12:31 AM

Monday, February 23, 2004

In the Grub Street of the twenty-first century, books are
traded on less and less material, and almost never on
complete manuscripts. First novels are sold on sample
chapters; translations snapped up on hearsay (...) The
synopsis has become the curse of the business in so many
other ways. You don't have to be Roland Barthes to see that
such puffery has little, or nothing, to do with real writing.

• See Also [Robert McCrum: The curse of the synopsis](#)

Publishing turns page with print on demand

*A burgeoning number of authors are putting out books on
their own as digital technology improves and small press runs
become less expensive*

InstaBook's Smaller POD Solution

*This Chicago Tribune article about self-publishing covers
most of the traditional bases. The interesting part comes
towards the end; it's one of a number of stories picking up on
the POD product line from Florida's InstaBook Corp. They are
the first to provide one-at-a-time book manufacturing and
binding through machines that are about the size of a
photocopier. The company has targeted libraries, retailers,
and government markets.*

*Digital technology is dramatically changing how books are
printed--and by whom.*

*The growing use of print-on-demand services is creating a
new generation of self-published authors. It also is changing
how traditional publishers bring books to the market.*

Doug Cummings, a reporter for WGN-AM 720, is one aspiring

novelist who turned to self-publishing after two literary agents failed to find a publishing house for his mystery novel, "Deader by the Lake." (WGN is owned by Tribune Co., which also owns the Chicago Tribune.)

Through iUniverse, a self-publishing service that helps authors design, print, distribute and promote books, Cummings has sold 1,250 copies since December. He recently sold about 70 books at a Barnes & Noble book signing.

"I'd like to have a hand in erasing the stigma of self-publishing. I was never pleased by the regular publishing process, since they basically own you once they buy your book," he said. "And many authors are abandoned after the book is released."

More self-published books have started to show up on the racks at major booksellers for several reasons.

One is that self-published authors, like Cummings, spend a lot of time promoting their work.

Another reason, and perhaps more important, is that the books are becoming indistinguishable from those printed by traditional publishers. That has become a key selling point for services like iUniverse and Xlibris.

"The early days of self-publishing and [print on demand] suffered from a lack of reliability and quality but have since evolved to a point where traditional publishers now look at us," said Susan Driscoll, iUniverse's chief executive.

Furthermore, new digital printing technology allows these services to offer aspiring authors full-color covers in hardback and paperback editions as well as the option of full-color pages inside. Each book includes a bar code and an international standard book number.

But the key advantage to print-on-demand publishing is that books are produced as needed. That has gotten the attention of mainstream publishers seeking to avoid the biggest publishing headache: remainder copies.

Publishers usually take a significant loss on unsold books unloaded to wholesalers, who, in turn, sell the books to clearance resellers.

Now, for first-run titles where sales success is in question, small publishers are turning to print on demand to avoid the expense of a large print run.

Also, publishers of technical books, including John Wiley & Sons Inc., use print on demand to lower costs. They are willing to trade lower overall printing costs, but higher costs per book, for a smaller profit.

"Publishing is an industry that has always had tight margins. It's not expanding; it's not improving. Any technology that's going to save is going to be adopted," said Thad McLeroy, a publishing consultant and analyst.

For Lightning Source Inc., a print-on-demand publisher based in Tennessee, the short-run book market is pretty big.

The company prints as many as 500,000 books a month with a round-the-clock printing operation. Some of those orders are single copies, which the company says it profits from, even though margins are small.

Orders also come from traditional publishers that want to keep backlisted titles--older books that have small but regular demand--in circulation.

Until recently, it was not practical for publishers to print fewer than 5,000 books on an offset press. But offset printing--a process that uses metal plates and ink--is losing ground to digital printing.

"The quality difference between offset and digital presses would not be noticed by 99 percent of the population," said Kirby Best, Lightning Source's CEO.

"The cost difference between digital and offset printing is rapidly shrinking," added publishing analyst George Alexander. Eventually, he said, digital printing's improving quality will make it a viable choice for bigger runs.

For some authors, self-publishing has opened doors at big publishing houses.

Laurie Notaro, a former humor columnist for The Arizona Republic, had little luck peddling her essays to publishers. Although her collection included a few of her newspaper columns, most of it was edgy, personal work. She was rejected 70 times before turning to self-publishing at iUniverse.

"It was only \$99 to start, and I got one book," said Notaro.

"But I kept buying more. I think I had 500 to 1,000, roughly. And I submitted my own cover."

Today, the iUniverse basic setup fee is \$459, which includes five books.

Once her book was published, Notaro advertised on Amazon.com. Her ad attracted a literary agent who was able to sell it to Villard Books, a division of Random House Inc.

"The Idiot Girls' Action-Adventure Club" reached No. 10 on The New York Times' best-seller list and prompted a six-figure advance for a follow-up book, "Autobiography of a Fat Bride."

A third book, "True Tales of a Loudmouth Girl," is expected this year.

"I'd been doing it for so long and had met with so much rejection," Notaro said. "But when the right person sees you at the right time, that's when it comes together."

Paul Glen, a technology management consultant, used self-publishing to promote his services. But he found print on demand to be too expensive and opted to do his own legwork.

"I figured I could do it myself and save money," Glen said. He contacted printers directly and wrote and designed the book using Microsoft Word. The only thing he contracted out was the four-color cover design.

Glen regularly sends copies of his self-published book to potential clients, and he brings copies when he gives speeches. He puts it alongside his newest book, "Leading Geeks," which was recently published by Jossey-Bass, a San Francisco-based business publisher.

Although Glen hasn't made any money from his first book, he insists that was never the intention. Still, he intends to self-publish more titles, as well as write for Jossey-Bass, a unit of John Wiley.

"Each book has its own purpose," Glen said

-

Printer offers hint of future

Digital technology may be revolutionizing publishing, but digital printers like Hewlett-Packard's Indigo and Xerox's iGen3 still fill entire rooms. And neither printer will do what the InstaBook Maker can do in five minutes: paginate, print and bind a softcover book while you wait. It also can print artwork on the inside pages.

About the size of a large office copier, the InstaBook Maker aspires to achieve the print-on-demand ideal of total automation.

Customers can choose to print a book from a large online catalog or can print their own work. The rest is handled by the machine.

It's the fastest way to get published, though the quality falls short of what print-on-demand publishers offer.

Florida-based InstaBook Corp. plans to penetrate the library, retail bookseller and government markets with its all-in-one product.

But products like the InstaBook Maker could have limited potential in the retail market.

Studies show that most book purchases are made on a whim," said publishing analyst Thad McLeroy:

- [People like to thumb through books they find interesting](#)

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 10:13 PM

And Now a Word from...MEdia Dragon!:

The greatest fear for people is the oldest fear of humanity: fear of the technological monsters we can create ...

How To Network With Blogger

*In 1973 a guy named Mark Granovetter wrote an article called *The Strength of Weak Ties*. The thing was lousy with brilliance and included the idea that you're more likely to get a job through a friend of a friend than a close friend. I think he even had pie charts backing him up. Very scientific, but it's not the seventies any more.*

- [The Strength of Weak Ties](#) [Okay, kickin' it up a notch:

[How To Date and Blog: a potential minefield of disaster](#)]

The Columbia Journalism Review has a useful website for presidential campaign media junkies - those interested in how the media reports the media reporting the campaign - accessible at www.cjr.org/blog/archives/cat-spin-buster.asp

[Nobody's immune from the dreaded blog \(Must Pay\)](#)

[Democracy and the 'Information Age'](#)

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 7:53 AM

[Google](#) has bolstered their efforts to develop the beta feature Google Print into a major repository of online book text with the hiring of **Tom Turvey**, who started this week. In his three years as vp of business development at ebrary, Turvey helped spearhead the company's content relationships with publishers. Prior to that, he was director of e-books at BarnesandNoble.com.

In their standard shy fashion, Google has not responded to queries about Turvey's hiring and his job title and responsibilities.

Bezos Lightened Amazon Stake

An SEC filing from last Friday indicated that Amazon CEO Jeff

Bezos reduced his stake in the company from 28 percent to 26 percent in 2003, shedding approximately 4 million shares.

Cooldest Thing in a Long Time

Paul Auster was 15 years old when he found the book that made him decide to become a writer:

I was a sophomore in high school when I read Dostoevsky's Crime and Punishment. And I was so overwhelmed by the book, I said to myself:

If this is what a novel can be -- then I want to do it, too.

• [Paul Auster: From Poetry to Novels With a Side Trip Out to Sea](#)

• [Coldest Thing in a Long Time](#)

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 7:46 AM

Sunday, February 22, 2004

Censorshipssss

There are basically two kinds of censorship, but most people only notice the harmless kind that involves trying to hide naughty words or pictures once they're already out there in plain sight. This kind of censorship is what brought down the Soviets. It just doesn't work, and ain't worth the trouble of trying. It just ends up as a joke.

The other sort of censorship is harder to spot and much more cruel....

When a culture really wants to censor the horrible truth, it takes these stories and puts them together into an 'inspirational' movie. And that movie is called Forrest Gump.

• [Poet Hugh MacDiarmid famously and foolishly said he would kill a million men for one glorious lyric](#) [link first seen at [Ken McLeod](#)]

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 1:09 PM

The really simple future of the web

E-mails coming out of your ears? No time to stop and read your favourite websites? Is the luxury of being able to "surf the web" just a distant memory?

An old idea, which could have ended up on the dot.com rubbish tip, might be just what is needed to help solve your problems.

- [Tense, nervous headache? Try a new way to surf](#)
 - [Linking NYTimes](#)
- [via [We Wanted Answers, And Google Really Clicked](#)]
- [Whistleblowers warned: Soldiers battling faulty kit gagged](#)
- [link first seen at [www.mil-kit-review .com](http://www.mil-kit-review.com)]

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 11:33 AM

Saturday, February 21, 2004

Some journalists may dream about asking friends and relatives to send in glowing letters to the newspaper where they work, praising their efforts ("Give that amazingly talented journalist a raise"). They might imagine writing those letters themselves. But anyone who knows how most "Letters to the Editor" columns work wouldn't risk it.

- [Amazon: Weeding out phony praise](#)
- [Tentacles everywhere: whether we like it or not](#)
- [It's not the internet or pay TV but datacasting provides yet another way to get information](#)

[A bit of Rich [I am Rich used to mean wealth, status and power. Now they're a dime a dozen](#)

- [Bus tycoon siphoned millions: King Saga](#)

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 5:26 PM

The NSA told GCHQ that the particular targets of an eavesdropping "surge" were the delegates from Angola, Cameroon, Chile, Bulgaria, Guinea and Pakistan - the six crucial "swing votes" on the security council.

Gun of Dirty Tricks

The Katherine Gun case should be a BIG story in the U.S. If for no other reason than that it appears to be getting quite a bit of play in China.

- [China was presumably a target of U.S. spy plans because Gun was fluent in Chinese](#)

Gannett NJ papers win '04 Ring Award for Profiting

series

Gannett New Jersey newspapers have won the 2004 Selden Ring Award for Investigative Reporting for their [Profiting from Public Service](#) series. Two other projects -- the Toledo Blade's [Buried Secrets, Brutal Truths](#) and the Wall Street Journal's "The American Hospital System" -- were Ring Award finalists.

- [The top winner receives \\$35,000.](#)
- [It's really hard for me to talk about the First Amendment without getting extremely emotional](#)
- [Looking down throat of media columns: \[Sex\] has as much of a place on the opinion page as a column about spying and Bob](#)
- [...](#)
- [Nobody covered Sex like Veronica](#)

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 3:22 PM

I hear you laugh at me for being happy in the country, and upon this I have a few words to say. In the first place whether one lives or dies I hold and always have held to be of infinitely less moment than is generally supposed; but if life is the choice then it is common sense to amuse yourself with the best you can find where you happen to be placed. I am not leading precisely the life I should chuse, but that which (all things considered, as well as I could consider them) appeared to be the most eligible. I am resolved therefore to like it and to reconcile myself to it; which is more manly than to feign myself above it, and to send up complaints by the post, of being thrown away, and being desolate and such like trash. I am prepared therefore either way. If the chances of life ever enable me to emerge, I will shew you that I have not been wholly occupied by small and sordid pursuits. If (as the greater probability is) I am come to the end of my career, I give myself quietly up to horticulture, and the annual augmentation of my family. In short, if my lot be to crawl, I will crawl contentedly; if to fly, I will fly with alacrity; but as long as I can possibly avoid it I will never be unhappy.

Sydney Smith, letter to Lady Holland, September 9, 1809
 Use the log-in **freethepresses** and password **freethepresses** on many news sites that require registration. For those sites that require an e-mail address instead of just a user name, use **freethepresses@example.com**

- [A Trick to Avoid News Website Registration](#)

Paradox (not the person) sucks, so does paradise.

*I am proud of some of things I've done since I began blogging -- the Tangled Web collection of quotes being one of them. I thought it was a nice real-world example of something the film Galadriel told the movie Frodo in The Fellowship of the Ring: **Even the smallest person can change the course of the future.** But I'm glad I'm not the one who had to decide whether it was better or worse than the other outstanding progressive posts nominated this year -- much less all the excellent posts that didn't get the nominations they deserved, because they fell outside the charmed circle of the popular blogs.*

- [Winners Losers: Everyone's a Winner](#)
- [Many Freds get nervous when their staffers start blogging](#) [See Also [Teen Google's his name, learns he was abducted 14 years ago](#)]
- [Sourcing hard stats, not search-engine evidence, to bolster their stories](#)
- [At the bottom are bloody knives and rosary beads, wedding rings and baseball cards. At the top are "meaning" words like 'freedom' and 'literacy.' Beware of the middle, where bureaucracy and public policy live. There teachers are refered to as "instructional units.](#)

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 3:10 PM

Friday, February 20, 2004

Reading As Key to Freedom?

Among those steady readers were at least a couple of Sing Sing inmates. USA Today reports, Last week, New York police arrested seven people, including two inmates and a guard, at Sing Sing state prison and accused them of planning an elaborate escape. What makes this a literary story is that prosecutors say the plot involved assigned reading: Newjack, Ted Conover's acclaimed book about life as a correctional officer at Sing Sing. Conover says he had indeed come up with a pretty good plan" for how to escape the prison while working there, "But I didn't put it in the book.

- [Library Blogs: Useful or Useless?](#) [via [Library Bloggers](#)]

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 7:56 AM

Thursday, February 19, 2004

Nothing is so beautiful and wonderful, nothing is so continually fresh and surprising, so full of sweet and perpetual ecstasy, as the good. No desert is so dreary, monotonous, and boring as evil. This is the truth about authentic good and evil. With fictional good and evil it is the other way around. Fictional good is boring and flat, while fictional evil is varied and intriguing, attractive, profound, full of charm.

Simone Weil

Powerhouse Aussie Lit

Time was that Australian literature was considered lesser than the English variety. But in the last 50 years, Australian literature has become a force to be reckoned with; now it is the motherland's turn to feel insecure. Australian novelists are outwriting us, they tweak the Booker prize out of our hands (Peter Carey has won it twice, Thomas Keneally once, Tim Winton has been shortlisted twice and 2003's winner, DBC Pierre, is Australian by birth). And there is a flotilla of younger Antipodean writers coming on stream.

• [Double Prospect 02/04](#) [courtesy of [Double Dragon](#)]

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 7:45 AM

Wednesday, February 18, 2004

Booksellers with kiosks have found the axiom made famous in W.P. Kinsella's *Shoeless Joe* on target: Build it, and they will come.

Double Dragons Take Flight

*Passengers on American Airlines flights during the month of February who pick up the airline's publication, *American Way*, will discover a feature article by Chris Tucker entitled "Book Tour -- The conventional wisdom is wrong:*

• [Real bookstores are not dead](#)

Ingram Product Will Allow Booksellers to Order Direct From Publishers

Ingram Book Group unveiled "pubsource," a new enhancement to its "ipage" Web site that provides booksellers with the ability to check availability and purchase book products directly from three participating publishers: Random House, Holtzbrinck Publishers Group, and HarperCollins.

[See Also [Pubsource](#)]

Kiosks Bring BookSense.com In-Store

Rather than hope customers will use and/or buy from their Web sites when they can't get to the bookstore, some booksellers have decided to bring their BookSense.com Web sites to customers by creating Web kiosks in their stores. Booksellers with kiosks have found the axiom made famous in W.P. Kinsella's Shoeless Joe on target: Build it, and they will come.

- [Build it, and they will come](#)

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 7:42 AM

Tuesday, February 17, 2004

Cory Doctorow's conference speech (in .txt format) includes the following insights:

Ebooks compliment paper books

Ebooks demand a different attention span (but not a shorter one)

More people are reading more words off more screens every day [Ebooks are a better deal for writers ...](#)

Publicity: An Author's Gotta Have It

Publicity is the key to making you and your work known to the world. Without publicity, you might as well be dogpaddling up Niagara Falls. Columnist Kathy Sanborn tells how an author can get the word out about his or her new book, and land that long-awaited book deal.

- [eGalleys; Book Deal: Big Deal](#) [link first seen at [eBookweb](#)]
- [Digital and Printal](#)
- [Distribution: A Wide Net Reels in Book Sales](#)
- [The only difference is the way we have a climbed the mountains of challenge that has been placed in front of us](#)
- [eBooks Alive](#)

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 8:21 AM

An article in the Guardian about authors writing glowing anonymous reviews for their own books at Amazon.com. This only further confirms my feeling one shouldn't evaluate books on reader reviews alone. First of all, we have Harriet Klausner who typically rates books no less than [One Star Reviews :=\)](#) Just one star thrills Jozef Imrich [His Star, Lucy, is a diamond in the sky](#)

Apparently I'm only a second-rate cynic. How about you? [A cynic is someone who habitually questions the motives of others, believing them to be selfish by nature.](#)

The law of diminishing monopoly: Amazon reviewers brought to book

The five-star review on Amazon, one of the world's biggest online booksellers, was attributed only to 'a reader from Chicago'.

- [Star Wars](#) [link first seen at [Google](#)]
- [Another long look at life in the age of Google.](#)

Shorter Washington Post editorial page

Senate Democrats are bad people who have strategies and constituencies and stuff, but the Republicans shouldn't have stolen a really lot of their files like that (just a few would have been OK), although the people the bad thief lawyer guy worked for clearly knew nothing about it at the time and really the Republicans are the heroes of this story for not stonewalling after they were publicly busted by the Sergeant at Arms.

[via [Thief Memo](#)]

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 8:04 AM

Monday, February 16, 2004

Inflating circulation figures to support higher ad rates...

The Truth About the Fact: Everything changes. Nothing changes

Apply the Hutchins Commission quote to your local

newspaper. Do its stories about the city or school district budget go beyond a recitation of numbers and a comparison to them being greater or lesser than the year before? Does it seem as if the reporter who wrote the story understands financial principles? Did he or she even get the math right? How is this reporter supposed to write an informative story on a company's earnings if he can't read a balance sheet? How can he have a substantive interview with a CEO, or even a city manager about a local budget.

- [Journalism](#) [via [First Draft](#)]
- [No one gets rich writing book reviews, but the psychic rewards are immense](#)
- [Ann Marie Lipinski](#)
- [I'm probably trying harder to get items than get laid at the moment](#)
- [New blog-like political feature](#)
- [Six reasons why sources should see stories before publication](#)
- [Writer spanks Missouri j-school for secrecy surrounding gift](#)
- [Vanity Fair's catty Fuller profile breaks the mean-o-meter](#) [courtesy of [Romenesko](#)]

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 7:56 AM

Search Beyond Google

It's very easy to move from one search engine to a better one [Google's Director of Technology Craig Silverstein] says.

Google pays hundreds of researchers and software developers, including more than 60 PhDs, to man the front lines in this technology war, explains Silverstein, who is himself on extended leave from his doctoral studies in computer science at Stanford University. But he acknowledges that's no guarantee of victory. We hope the next breakthrough comes from Google, but who knows.

When Google first launched, they had some new tricks that nobody else had thought about before," says Doug Cutting, an independent software consultant who wrote some of the core technology behind search engine Excite and has designed search tools for Apple Macintosh computers. Other search engines now offer intriguing alternatives to Google techniques:

[The Anatomy of a Large-Scale Hypertextual Web Search](#)

[Engine" paper.](#)

For example, there's [Teoma](#), which ranks results according to their standing among recognized authorities on a topic, and Australian startup [Mooter](#), which studies the behavior of users to better intuit exactly what they're looking for.

• [Source: Technology Review \(Registration Required, Free\)](#) [courtesy of [BusinessWire](#)]

[Librarians](#)

• [TechReview Index](#)

• [dipsie](#) [link first seen at [Blogrolling](#)]

•

[Agencies' information technology plans neglect performance measurements](#)

• [eBay Searches](#)

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 7:46 AM

Teenaged Blogger

She Was a Teenaged Blogger NRO looks at the movement behind Cecile DuBois, and since we've posted on Glenn Reynolds once today, [how the Blogfather can make or break a blogger](#)

My 14-year-old blogger daughter got Instalanced last week, after she wrote about how her English teacher had ridiculed her in front of the class for writing an un-p.c. paper. I've heard what happens when the mighty Instapundit's Glenn Reynolds links you but never seen it up close, and it really is amazing: From 100 hits a day (typical for a teenager's blog) to 100 an hour, with links to dozens of other blogs and almost 200 posted comments from Prague to Sydney.

• [She Was a Teenaged Blogger](#)

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 7:44 AM

Sunday, February 15, 2004

Sunday Is Back: Some call it a Cold War

The killings are good for business because in any criminal enterprise there has to be that element of extreme fear in order to give that criminal enterprise its claws and teeth.

This "claws and all" portrait of Melbourne's underworld is the ultimate inside story

• [Ultimate inside story: Jana](#)

Like *All the President's Men*, to which it's inevitably been compared, *Shattered Glass* has been enthusiastically received by its own constituency – which is perhaps not so surprising. Journalists are only human and they enjoy the spotlight as much as anyone.

[Film: Shattered Glass... A free press is one of the hallowed pillars of democracy and yet, in the real world, the media often fall short of our expectations](#)

*It's not exactly Oprah's Book Club, but the German ZDF-show *Lesen !*, hosted by Elke Heidenreich, seems to be an influential book-show.*

• [Lessen: German Oprah](#)

Is your sofa new enough? Are your teeth white enough? Is there enough fat in your arse to inflate your head in case of emergency? And are you spending enough? Because if you're only spending what you've got, that's not enough - you need to be IN DEBT. Not just a little bit overdrawn, I mean proper, wake up screaming, selling your underwear, Russian roulette in Soho basements to win back your kidneys debt.

[View [Debt](#)]

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 11:13 AM

Unmasked: Hilarious story in the NY Times today reporting that anonymous reviewers of books at Amazon were temporarily unmasked...

Amazon Glitch Unmasks War of Reviewers

MEdia Dragons and close observers of [Amazon.com](#) noticed something peculiar this week: the company's Canadian site had suddenly revealed the identities of thousands of people who had anonymously posted book reviews on the United States site under signatures like "a reader from New York." The weeklong glitch, which Amazon fixed after outed reviewers complained, provided a rare glimpse at how

writers and readers are wielding the online reviews as a tool to promote or pan a book – when they think no one is watching.

John Rechy, author of the best-selling 1963 novel "City of Night" and winner of the PEN-USA West lifetime achievement award, is one of several prominent authors who have apparently pseudonymously written themselves five-star reviews, Amazon's highest rating. Mr. Rechy, who laughed about it when approached, sees it as a means to survival when online stars mean sales.

- [Incestous, catty, galaxy of book reviewing](#) [courtesy of [One Star Review](#)]
- [Happy V Day: Speaking of The Kama Sutra: The joy of pagelets e-book angles](#)

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 10:59 AM

Saturday, February 14, 2004

What does the love of your life want for Valentine's Day?
[Poetry beats roses in Valentine](#) top 10. [World's Most-Borrowed Poet...](#)

Romeo and Juliet: Software listens for Love Detector

Does she love me? Does she even care? Voice-analysis software based on Israeli counterterrorism technology professes to tell you in an instant [whether that special someone is interested](#). And just in time for Valentine's Day!

- [ST Valentine's Day Pulls at Heart Strings and Purse Strings Alike, ...](#) [via [Hollywood at home: Apple's iMovie application changed the world for ordinary people with digital video cameras](#)]
- [Vulnerabilities in the popular Checkpoint firewall](#)

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 4:30 PM

Testing the workshop waters

Blogs for me are trial balloons, even the ones that pretend to be something else, and snark is part of the fun if also sometimes part of the trial.

- [Blogs: Balloons](#)
- [Got you by the Google](#)
- [How blogging can dramatically boost your health](#)

Just by chance, I have discovered a bunch of your mad little emails in my junk folder. You truly are a pig-ignorant, foul-mouthed, drivelling half-wit. I imagine that you drool saliva when you write . . . that your knuckles drag on the ground when you walk. You are a moron, a nerd, a sour and toxic polyp on the anus of society. You are a mental pimple. They have programs for people like you, though. One is called the Alan Jones Show. It's on 2GB 873, same time as mine. Go listen.

[via [Radio Voices](#)]

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 4:27 PM

Plato remarks in *The Republic* that bad characters are volatile and interesting, whereas good characters are dull and always the same. This certainly indicates a literary problem. It is difficult in life to be good, and difficult in art to portray goodness.

MEdia Dragons

Popular Media Dragon can and does tell us a lot about ourselves as a culture. A good reviewer could easily find tropes of masculinity, or articulations of conservatism, in Tom Clancy, just as Anne Rice's oeuvre has a lot to say about shifting attitudes towards gender and eroticism. Mysteries and thrillers reflect social attitudes about crime and punishment; George Pelecanos uses the genre as an effective instrument to talk about race relations as well.

- [Mysteries](#)

I am about to spoil the ending—in which the hero uncovers a vast conspiracy at the highest levels of government, resists the advances of a slinky assassin, faces down a gun-toting Supreme Court judge, and ends up getting promoted. The Emperor of Ocean Park is, in other words, an "airplane book," as opposed to a "beach read": it's trash, but it's Business Class trash,

- [See Also [Huffing Along](#)]
- [While many newspapers are shrinking every story to the length and mental level of a movie blurb \('best ever!'\)...](#)

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 4:22 PM

Thursday, February 12, 2004

Yachting?

I have never been yachting
or on a boat
but
I imagine it
a passionate bath
with an older brother
gentle then turning
competitive
as he studies
for the bar

[Jeff Tweedy \(Bezos\) Amazon growth burst puts brake on global warming](#)

BBC & JI

What makes the [interview worth reading are its non-fiction qualities](#). These interviews are as warm and hospitable as High Tatra Mountain Chalets.

- [Writers](#)
- [Players](#)
- [Poets](#) [courtesy of [BBC](#)]

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 10:30 AM

Wednesday, February 11, 2004

Without any doubt Crowds and Power is one of the most powerful stories I have ever read! To boot, you can borrow a copy via inter library loans via NSW Parliamentary Library... Dr Cope is guilty of acquiring a copy if this monograph which is rather dangerous in the hands of thoughtful readers. Wisdom of my Canetti more memorable than Shakespeare...even Kerrie Packer!

Never think yourself better than anybody else; Always think of yourself as just as good

Elias Canetti was a remarkable writer, but he was recently vilified for his treatment of his former lover Iris Murdoch. Now, his newly published diaries may restore his reputation.

• [Powerless](#) [See Also [Literary Wogs](#)]

reputation.

• [Granta 84: Over There: How Amerika Sees the World](#)

• [Writers' Trust of Canada announced the finalists for the third annual Great Literary Awards](#)

• [Lambda Literary Awards](#) [courtesy of [Saloon](#)]

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 2:39 AM

But beyond the sheer entertainment value of a dust-up among the literati, these gatherings take the form of literary carnivals, luring eager and paying students with tales of The Da Vinci Code, The Christmas Box or The Horse Whisperer, suggesting that publishing is a crapshoot, rather than a craft that demands talent and work.

Damned Mob of Scribbling Women: Making Love & Books

Every generation has its writers who rail about the collapse of literature.

By giving the public what it supposedly wants, has the modern-day publisher jettisoned literature, abandoning a commitment to transcendent works in favor of celebrity memoirs, celebrity novels and celebrity children's books, most of them ghost-written in the first place? And given the needs of these corporations, whose often-foreign overseers demand high returns-on-investment to pay off loans, has the the editor been superseded by the marketing manager and the publicist, desperate to place an author on "Oprah" or "The Today Show" to ensure a book's mass success?

If Maxwell Perkins, the most venerated editor of the 20th century, were to appear from the dead, he would fail to recognize an industry that once allowed him to sign up budding geniuses such as F. Scott Fitzgerald, Ernest Hemingway, Thomas Wolfe and the young Henry Roth. A large advance, at least six figures, is required for a book to

be taken seriously.

As publishers increasingly prefer to pay big advances to an anointed few, editors quickly learn that the only way that their books will command attention is through large advances.

· [Indeed, a trend has emerged in which proposals are "gussied up" -- repolished and rewritten -- often by people other than the actual author](#)

Admit it. You haven't picked up a book for weeks or even months. With work, children, parties, sport, who's got time? But perhaps you can be wooed back with a bargain.

· [Bookshops' loss leaders tempt lost readers](#) [link first seen at [Books Alive: Delivering characters that I hope will live in your heart. That way I leave a piece of me and my drowned friends with each of you....](#)]

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 2:35 AM

As we moved along in the police wagon, I had the slightly unclean feeling of the man who keeps company with those much younger than himself.

Jack Richardson's Memoir of a Gambler

Something to remember, 40 is the old age of youth. 50 is the youth of old age.

Mixed Metaphors Notwithstanding

Johnny Depp leads the I-hate-Hollywood pack but he still steals the cinematic moment - and maybe, this year, the Oscar

· [I'm not swimming in the soup bowl. I'm not getting overcooked in that stewpot](#)

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 2:30 AM

Monday, February 09, 2004

The great thing about Chicago is that by the time advanced ideas get here, they're worn so thin you can see right through

them.

Saul Bellow

Middle of Life

There may be those that say we are an uncivilized people, that humanity tinkers on the brink of something just awful -- but those people don't get good Thai food by delivery often enough. Good Thai food delivery even in Cronulla, Sydney. That is civilization.

Trust me on this; It is not possible to be unhappy while reading about lakes:

The earth hangs down
to the lake, full of yellow
pears and wild roses.
Lovely swans, drunk with
kisses you dip your heads
into the holy, sobering waters.

But when winter comes,
where will I find
the flowers, the sunshine,
the shadows of the earth?

The walls stand
speechless and cold,
the weathervanes
rattle in the wind.

Friedrich Hölderlin, "The Middle of Life" (trans. James Mitchell)

· [Little-known poem: And from this nothing seen, tells news of devils, Which but expressions be of inward evils](#) [via [Civilization](#)]

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 7:42 AM

Sunday, February 08, 2004

Politicians and celebrities rarely make good bloggers.

[They're not interested enough in what other people are thinking](#) The blogosphere is a pure market—but one in which no money changes hands. If you can afford the bandwidth and your ego is strong enough, it doesn't matter whether anybody wants to read what you have to say. [Why Oh Why Can't We Have a Better Politicians & Press Corps?](#)

Get Me Rewrite!

Right now Amerika is going through an Orwellian moment. On both the foreign policy and the fiscal fronts, the Bush administration is trying to rewrite history, to explain away its current embarrassments.

- [One of Krugman's best and most hard-hitting columns](#)

It's a cardinal rule of journalism: do not disclose the identity of someone who gives you information in confidence. As a staunch believer in this rule for decades, I have surprised myself lately by concluding that journalists' proud absolutism on this issue – particularly in a case involving the syndicated columnist Robert Novak – is neither as wise nor as ethical as it has seemed.

[courtesy of [Never burn a source: The Journalist and the Whistle-Blower](#)]

- [Participatory journalism](#) [courtesy of [About Last Night](#)]
- [GWB MBA](#)
- [WMD](#)
- [Australia's most respected real estate writer's kidnap cover-up: Sunday Tele's editor, Jeni Cooper](#)
- [I had no outlet for the hate and venom that consumed me. Now I am able to spew to a national audience](#)

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 9:09 PM

Saturday, February 07, 2004

Small esoteric note that probably isn't worth reading:
The thing that tears people apart is money. The reason they are unhappy is money. [The boss is so important in people's lives. He's more important than your spouse because he's the one who provides your PayCzech.](#) Compared to that, love is just about procreation... How can you complain about things when you know that the life span in Botswana is 32 years old? Life can be really hard, and almost anyone's life in America is pretty easy.

The End of Happy Endings: Cold Reality

Happy endings are presumed to belong to the realm of fantasy. In real life, after all, even a thumping electoral victory is generally more a first act than a last; what ensues,

much too often, is disappointment, broken promises and even murmurs of a recall. When the believer, in any faith, tells us that the reward for bloody sacrifice is eternal joy, the nonbeliever is often tempted to think that the believer is merely trying to justify the ways of God to man. On earth at least, the end of life is death.

*America, though, is [the spiritual home of new beginnings](#), which may be why it has always had a soft spot, a special gift, for happy endings. We speak brightly of "closure," as if the most difficult things in life could be wrapped up as neatly as a gift package; we speak of people "passing on," as if the end of life were just a passing phase. America, in fact, could almost be defined as the place that chose not to root itself in the tragic cycles of the Greeks and others from the Old World (even Shakespeare, after all, in his early comedy *Love's Labour's Lost*, ensures that we leave the theater with the memory of a sudden death uppermost in our minds, and the central courting couples failing to pair off as comic convention decrees).*

• [Love's Labour's Lost](#) [Cool Exile [Cold River](#)]

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 1:32 PM

Why your Movable Type blog must die

In the past, blogging was an interesting pastime. Now, with the advent of the ridiculously popular weblog package Movable Type, the Web is in risk of drowning under a tidal wave of morons who throttle search engines with writing that has no purpose and such PageRank-destroying features as TrackBack.

You are all pretentious twats:

Every last one of you. You're all latte-sipping, iMac-using, suburban-living tertiary-industry-working WASPs who offer absolutely no new insights on anything whatsoever apart from maybe one specialist field if we're lucky.

• [You are all pretentious twats](#)]

• [What Google Guide Teaches You](#)

• [Magic words that will allow spam to slip through Bayesian filters](#)

[via [Doktorov: Hot eBook](#)]

• [Jozef's a street-smart fish-out-of-water in a world he never made!](#)

· [I have an axe to grind and plenty of fury to turn the wheel](#)

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 12:59 PM

Friday, February 06, 2004

One thing I think I think about the coincidences in life: Geez, let's read it again:

My grandmother had a name for moments such as this. She called them *bashert*. Like most Yiddish expressions, *bashert* is a tough word to translate. It means intended, pre-ordained, destined. Things that happen for the best, good things, strange things that aren't supposed to happen but do, things that so easily might not have happened but did, these are *bashert*.

Rabbi Whiman

Always the Mob

JESUS emptied the devils of one man into forty hogs and the hogs took the edge of a high rock and dropped off and down into the sea: a mob.

The sheep on the hills of Australia, blundering fourfooted in the sunset mist to the dark, they go one way, they hunt one sleep, they find one pocket of grass for all.

Karnak? Pyramids? Sphinx paws tall as a coolie? Tombs kept for kings and sacred cows? A mob.

Young roast pigs and naked dancing girls of Belshazzar, the room where a thousand sat guzzling when a hand wrote:

Mene, mene, tekel, upharsin? A mob.

The honeycomb of green that won the sun as the Hanging Gardens of Nineveh, flew to its shape at the hands of a mob that followed the fingers of Nebuchadnezzar: a mob of one hand and one plan. 5

Stones of a circle of hills at Athens, staircases of a mountain in Peru, scattered clans of marble dragons in China: each a mob on the rim of a sunrise: hammers and wagons have them now.

Locks and gates of Panama? The Union Pacific crossing deserts and tunneling mountains? The Woolworth on land and the Titanic at sea? Lighthouses blinking a coast line from Labrador to Key West? Pigiron bars piled on a barge whistling in a fog off Sheboygan? A mob: hammers and wagons have

them to-morrow.

*The mob? A typhoon tearing loose an island from
thousand-year moorings and bastions, shooting a volcanic
ash with a fire tongue that licks up cities and peoples.*

*Layers of worms eating rocks and forming loam and valley
floors for potatoes, wheat, watermelons.*

*The mob? A jag of lightning, a geyser, a gravel mass
loosening...*

*The mob ... kills or builds ... the mob is Attila or Ghengis
Khan, the mob is Napoleon, Lincoln.*

*I am born in the mob—I die in the mob—the same goes for
you—I don't care who you are.*

*I cross the sheets of fire in No Man's land for you, my
brother—I slip a steel tooth into your throat, you my
brother—I die for you and I kill you—It is a twisted and
gnarled thing, a crimson wool:*

One more arch of stars,

In the night of our mist,

In the night of our tears.

• [I slip a steel tooth into your throat, you my brother](#)

• [Stones of a circle of hills at Athens, \[courtesy of Steel
Curtain: Hammers and wagons have them now \]](#)

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 1:52 AM

Thursday, February 05, 2004

Chilling stuff

*Remote-operated cameras hidden in hollowed-out logs,
school satchels and watering cans. Glass jars containing
personal-ID body swabs, to be used by groin-sniffer dogs.
Kombi-style Barkas B1000 prisoner transport vehicles with
net curtains over the windows. Letter-opening machines.
Wire-tapping devices. Bulky "microbugs". More hidden
cameras*

*All five floors of Ruschestrasse 103 are filled with spooky
surveillance equipment. Until 14 years ago, this austere,
archetypically modernist building, hidden among similar
anonymous boxes in the eastern suburb of Lichtenberg, was
one of the most feared in Berlin. Which is really saying
something.*

It was the headquarters of the Ministry for State Security,

otherwise known as the Stasi, the secret police force, which during its 40-year existence amassed files on some six million people, imprisoned more than 250,000 and arranged for the disappearance of countless others.

· [Ministry for State Security](#) [courtesy of [NicMoc: What remains true, as the region embarks on its present transition, is that it is still an endlessly fascinating place, caught bristling in its own tensions between the possibilities of the future and the shackles of the past](#)]

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 7:19 AM

3077 Amazon Ranking Reasons to Actually Read Virtual [COLD RIVER: Literature of Secrecy](#)

To Get Literary, Lay Low

The literary world is agog. Joanna Trollope has refused to do any press for her new novel, *Brother and Sister*. She wants the writing to speak for itself. Can this really be the same woman who posed upside down in a feather boa in the Daily Mail?

A guest columnist in the Sunday Observer says the new key to literary cache is laying low: "If you want to be taken seriously by the critics, secrecy is everything. Out goes Richard and Judy and Hay-on-Wye. In comes enforced literary purdah." A primary case in point is Joanna Trollope. "By taking a vow of silence, Trollope has elevated herself to the pantheon of authors who never do interviews. Welcome to the recluse club."

· [The recluse club](#)

The blogging community is terribly incestuous

This site exists to point out the hypocrisy of people taking out drama on the Internet and then whining when people notice:

Last night I cheated on my boyfriend, don't tell!

· [Randomly Ever After](#)

The threat to modern journalism is real, but it comes not just from without but also from within. It comes not just from the manipulations, favouritism and half-truths of the

discredited, and partially abandoned, Labour spin culture, but also from the media's disrespect for facts, the avoidable failure to be fair, the want of explanation and the persistent desire for melodrama that are spin's flip side!

- [We are paid to be cynical](#)

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 6:56 AM

Wednesday, February 04, 2004

The 101 Dumbest Moments in Business

Fourth annual review of the most shameful, dishonest, and just plain stupid moments of the past year. Richard the First In August, the board of the New York Stock Exchange decides to give CEO Dick Grasso his \$139.5 million pension up front, ostensibly to save the estimated \$10 million it would cost to deliver the payout at retirement.

- [Richards II](#) [See Also [It seems many people, including myself, have an irrational fear of Bloggers](#)]

Pop star Janet Jackson -- who is almost as pretty as Pats MVP quarterback Tom Brady -- finished a typically bombastic halftime extravaganza by popping out of her top. It was gratifying, in a way, to note plastic surgery has been good to at least one member of the Jackson family.

Miami Herald writer Greg Cote.

- [Janet Jackson: The elements are there to cover \(pardon the pun\) the story in unique ways.](#)
- [Buying AdWords keywords can be smart. It avoids hoping that Google ranks your coverage high enough that it's seen by Google searchers](#) [link first seen at [Scooter clone takes on the Segway](#)]

[via [Scooterlife](#)]

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 1:06 AM

Tuesday, February 03, 2004

Was I wrong about the Hi Tech Yes, I was.

High Tech, Low Think

I suspect the problem is that political editors are former

political reporters who don't really trust their reporters to be as good as they imagine they used to be, so they match their reporters' work against everybody else's to judge how well their folks are 'covering' the story.

- [Digitization of the political press corps](#) [See Also [Acting Locally](#)]
- [Why should society reward the kind of work that I do with status and certain privileges?](#)
- [The Third Wave of Online Journalism](#)

Underlying these three phases are the two driving laws of infomatics: Moore's Law, the doubling of transistors on an integrated circuit roughly every couple of years; and Metcalf's Law, the power or value of a network increasing in proportion to the square of the number of nodes on the network.

From the earliest days, librarians have been tasked with storing, indexing and making available information to users and readers. In this context librarians are not simply mechanics, for they are responsible for ensuring the quality of the information that is ultimately retrieved. [courtesy of [Librarians](#)]

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 8:38 AM

Monday, February 02, 2004

I think every American journalist, with the possible exception of Bob Woodward, secretly envied Eddie Clontz. I know I did. Here was a man who simply refused, as a matter of principle, to allow truth to get in the way of a great story. Journalists and their confidential sources have a special relationship, as inviolate as doctor and patient or priest and penitent. Woodward, for example, says he will wait for Deep Throat to die before disclosing his identity. Well, Eddie's death liberates me to reveal the time Dave Barry and I leaked a big story to Weekly World News.

- [ELVIS DEAD AT 58](#)

For some, there was the whisper of another question: Were the authors, brought here by a program called Arts and Culture in Davos, merely acting as a diversion as big business schmoozed with big government in this temple of economic

globalization? In these uncertain times, when the forum even devoted a session to debating conspiracy theories, who can tell?

[See Also [Token Davos](#)] [via [Mildly Malevolent](#)]

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 8:01 AM

The Coming Search Wars

JOHN MARKOFF

AT the World Economic Forum in Switzerland last week, Microsoft, the software heavyweight, and Google, the scrappy Internet search company, eyed each other like wary prizefighters entering the ring.

- [I Dream, Therefore I Am: Google is My Dream Engine](#)
- [Charming eBay underworld of misspellers](#)

[Casanova, you're my type](#)

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 7:57 AM

Sunday, February 01, 2004



BBC Chairman Gavyn Davies has resigned, as has BBC Director General Greg Dyke. Rest assured that this won't be enough for some people. As hard as it may be to believe, there are already people calling for the complete dismantling of the British Broadcasting Corporation because Lord Hutton has ruled that one aspect of it was flawed in one instance.

The man who is sure to lead the angry mob will be the media magnate Rupert Murdoch. He has made no secret of his hatred for the BBC, and his plans for the void its absence, under-funding or effective castration would create should be obvious.

Through his newspaper The Times and 'news' paper The Sun, Murdoch's minions will no doubt reach millions with a barrage of negative messages intended to bring about the under-funding, over-regulation or complete destruction of a

the most vital public institution in this country. The BBC not only serves to inform us, educate us and entertain us; by its very existence it also serves to protect us from a level of commercial saturation that would destroy much of what we currently take for granted. If you've ever watched television anywhere else in the world, you'll know what I'm talking about...

In the face of what is sure to be a bitter and concerted attack (no doubt including claims of bias from people with a very clear agenda of their own), I'm proposing a simple show of solidarity and support that is also meant to spread valuable information to those who may not know exactly who is behind this attack and what their motives are.

To show your support:

• [Simply copy and paste the code from Bloggerheads site to show this button on your website or weblog](#)

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 3:26 PM

2004 Australian Blog Awards - The winners are...

*The winner in the categories of - **Best Overall Australian Blog***
[LoobyLu](#)



Best NSW, Sydney Blog

[She Sells Sanctuary](#)

Once again, [Tim Blair](#) is forced to play the bridesmaid thanks to is poor showing in the distribution of preferences.

Well done Gianna and best of luck with the baby.

Best Victorian Blog

[LoobyLu](#)

This time denying [John Howard Blog](#) the award.

Best Tasmanian Blog

[Dolebludger](#)

Best Queensland Blog

[85 George Street](#)

Best West Australian Blog

[Yobbo's View](#)

Best South Australian Blog

[Ubersportingpundit](#)

Best Northern Territory Blog

[Troppo Armadillo](#)

Best Australian Capital Territory Blog

[The spin starts here darl](#)

Now to the travellers and expats... The winner in the categories of-

Best Overseas Australian Blog

[Road To Surfdom](#) AND [Anthony Hicks](#)

Best Humourous Australian Blog

[The spin starts here darl](#)

Best Australian Personal Blog

[The spin starts here darl](#); [Paperback Writer](#)

Best Australian Political Blog

Some may argue that there is no winner here. Others will argue a case for one or the other... personally, while I have a view, I'm just going to put it in the "too hard" basket, publish the results and let you argue amongst yourselves as to who the winner should be. So, what is the situation we have?

[Tim Blair](#); [The spin starts here darl](#); [Road to Surfdom](#)

Best Australian Tech Blog

[Anthony Hicks](#)

· [Vlado of New Fatherhood Fame & Kekoc Blogosphere](#)

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 12:46 PM

Backbencher's Political Weblog Awards

Many interesting media dragons didn't make it on to the shortlist, [but deserve at least a link and a mention...\(czech them out\)](#)

1. [Bloggerheads](#)
 2. [Conservative Commentary](#)
 3. [Councillor Stuart Bruce](#)
 4. [The Gay Vote](#)
 5. [Harry's Place](#)
 6. [Karmalised](#)
 7. [Lynne's GLA and Haringey diary](#)
 8. [Talking Points Memo](#)
 9. [Tom Watson - Labour MP](#)
 10. [VoxPolitics](#)
 11. [What You Can Get Away With](#)
 12. [The Yorkshire Ranter](#)
- [Guardian, Virtual](#)

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 12:33 PM

When asked about the genesis of *The Name of the Rose*, Umberto Eco famously remarked, **I desired to poison a monk.**

My Love Affair With Sydney: Machiavelli meets schadenfreude

Moving to a new place, whether it's to the next town or a whole ocean away, is like starting a new romance. At first everything is wonderful. You only notice the best things about the other person and everyone is on their best behavior. Sure, there are some little quirks about them, but you consider them charming...

*It's all there in Dostoyevsky's little novel *The Gambler*: the guy isn't fully alive until he's on the verge of falling into the abyss. I was acting out my grief in a way that made me feel alive.*

• [It brought me out of my cave](#)

posted by Jozef Imrich, Esq. @ 8:28 AM

