

THE PLAGUE YEAR JOURNAL

A Fragment of an Endless Saga By Paul Encimer

Murder in Coho County

Winter is theater season in the WestBranch (of the south fork of the Eel) I have been visiting the coastal retreat of the Holy No Petrols since the seventies. This anti-petroleum cult has been boycotting all the derivatives of that ghastly chemical, living the simple life among a native culture of the West Branch of the South Fork of the Eel. In winter they have traditionally staged various of Plato's Dialogues - with suitable music. This year they have added plays of Camus - the Possessed, Caligula and the Just Assassins, done as puppet theatre with voices.

There is a legitimate California County that the Petrols fringe with its inland capital at Bunyana. My explorations of Coho County - if I am not hunkering down among the denizens of the Petrol Rancho, the International Settlement on the facing bluffs built around the Lolita Arms Motel and Trailer Park, or the infamous White House of the Marxist-Grouchoists - involves mostly meandering about on the upper reaches of the coast, visiting my sister's eyrie, her ex-boyfriend Conrad Lee, or my cousin Donnie who manages my sister's little horse ranch.

However on this day I wanted to check in first with my old buddy, Aloysius West Whitehead, the famous hippie detective. He is another writing hobby horse I ride occasionally for a story whenever I need one. Like a veritable Dr. Witless I have been collecting his casebooks for some time. This includes classics of the 60s (The death of Allard Lowenstein), or the 80s apprehension of the serial killer Jimmie Jansen, the murder of nuke activist Klaus Kirkendorf, or more modern cases like scandalous case of Nan Black (better known locally as the Petrol Napdam Madpan, and several Venice, California murder cases when he was just getting started.

Wishy, as family called him, was currently immersed in a complex set of local murders, a linkage of deaths rooted in genocide and slavery of the mid-19th century right up to a murder committed at the end of 2008.

"Maybe I'll be next," Wishy said to me as I settled down onto an uncomfortable metal folding chair across from his cluttered desk. His office was in the historic building that dominated downtown Coho, once the capital before the Bunyans insisted on Bunyana. An adjoining glass door led to a plusher office

inhabited by lawyer Albion MacMoon with whom he had a loose partnership.

MacMoon was a local celebrity, well known for his morning Wake Up show on his Aunt and Uncles radio station. MacMoon did his version of the news, took phone calls and played classic pop vocalists from Billie Holiday to Doris Day. He was doing a Peggy Lee special as I was driving over the hump to get here.

Memoir of a Bunyan Timber Beast

The narrative that has fallen into my hands has created a storm of emotion even before I have published it. There were many manuscript around - a large number to protect the innocent - me. perhaps. The family - if you can call the Bunyan wasp nest a family - has spawned various versions, some hastily created forgeries. The struggle for legitimacy is raging.

Leadership there is not. Bunyan's oldest two children - a son and daughter - are both long dead. The son was named Paul Bunyan the Sixth and should have ascended smoothly to control of the Empire. There are otherwise five known living Bunyan boys - the results of Paul the Fifth's "polygomistical habits" (his own term) that also netted him 11 daughters. The grandchildren were multiple - and plentiful. But of all this vast population - a veritable primate troop - there was not a single Paul the sixth. (There were however 2 unorthodox Paulas.)

Why was all this so important? Here is how the memoir of the 5th Paul Bunyan begins:

"It's been pretty important being me.

An Icon. Like the Phantom, Paul."

Bunyan is the ghost who walks and one who must always be ready in the wings to slip into the spandex tights and adjust the flannel shirt, pull over the bulging jeans and settle into the steel-toed **Stanleys**. There are faces out there waiting to be stepped on, loins to be thrust into, chests to be collapsed by pointed fingers.

"The Emperor, starring the ultimate male - me Paul Bunyan - is dead, Long live the Emperor."

"The Owner I mean. Immortal Owner with green money dressing. Almost a Nature Spirit, relentlessly destroying Nature. the wholly Scion of Mammon, above the law. Architect Ruark had nothing on me. He was a derivative modeled after my father - Paul the fourth."



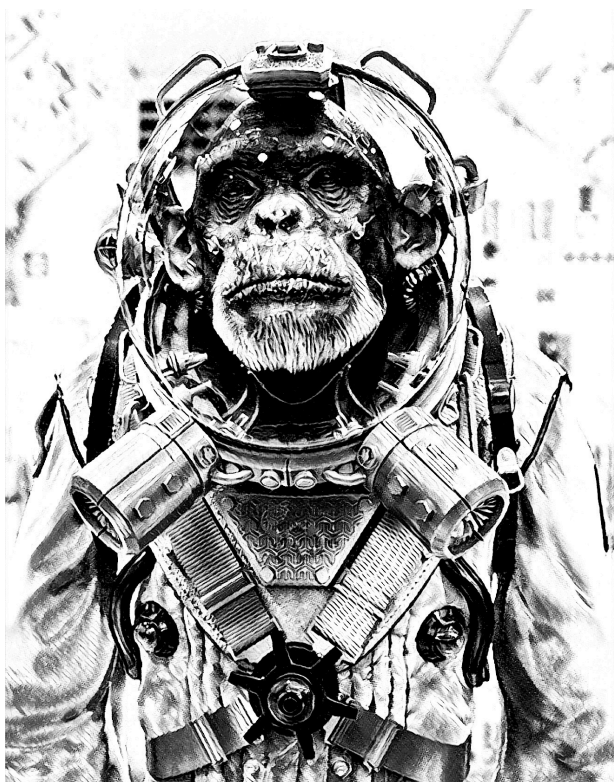
"Here's my first claim to fame -I took sloppy seconds after my father fucked Ayn Rand who was slavishly devoted to him and gave me a piece here and again for which my father always paid handsomely to my Sexual Tutor in chief - Auntie Ayn. In other words the second turned into minutes and the minutes turned into whores."

"I fucked everything that moved in those days, and more than a few that, like my teacher Ayn, didn't. (She was not the only one who shouted instructions in my ear but she did so with the authority of a Russian Lotte Lenya)"

"With jutting jaw and biceps like foothills, I'm an Adonis. 6 foot 4 and haven't weighted less than 200 lbs since I was 16."

"All American in four college sports for three straight years while I was at Princeton. Summers I was a Rodeo Performer. My specialty was throwing a smallish Brahma Bull, a friend of mine named Filly. The Rodeo belonged to my father of course and made a ton of money for Buncorp."

Plague Year Continued next page



RIDING A MONKEYS COAT TAILS

I don't know what all the fuss is about, watching a bald-headed douche bag, in a ten gallon hat, accept a medal for being shot, like a bullet into the sky, while strapped into a comfortable chair.

Was he channeling Slim Pickens in "How I Learned to Love the Bomb," as he hurtled to earth, riding an ICBM missile? or was it Bruce Willis, saving the world from an approaching asteroid? Ronald Reagan? dunno.

It should be worthy to note that before this great man achieved this feat, he was preceded by bull frogs, tortoises, spiders, fish brine shrimp and crickets, none of whom received the slightest accolade for their troubles. The first primate shot into space in 1947, a full 75 years before Bezos, the first mouse in space was 1950 and the first dog, Laika, a Russian mongrel orbited the planet in 1957. The first chimp, Sam, blasted into outer space in 1961 and the first cat in 1963. The first great ape went to the moon and orbited before coming home in 1968. So what's so great about a wealthy imbecile doing this,? dunno. He did thank the peons who labored ceaselessly for this magic moment, he might have done better to have done a retrospective, thanking all the primates, that preceded his space shot, by acknowledging he stood on the shoulders of chimpanzees to achieve this lofty goal.

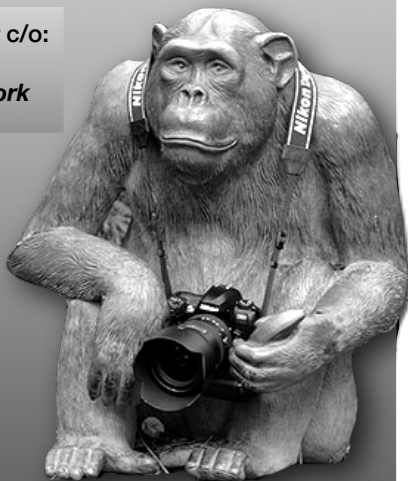
GREAT MOMENTS IN AMERICAN CONSUMERISM (Short List)

1. Selling people worn out and ripped jeans for triple the money they cost new.
2. Convincing people to pay to buy clothes that have corporate advertising on them.
3. Making it essential to buy a 1,000 horsepower four wheel drive, 5 mpg truck, with gas costing 5 bucks a gallon, for 70,000 dollars.
4. Voting against labeling ingredients in the food you eat.
5. Passing laws to facilitate the rise of an infectious virus, through the population, by making it illegal to wear a mask in public.
6. No longer be required to post prices on consumer goods, like cab rides, convenience store wares and airport restaurants and lounges, calling it dynamic or surge pricing to maximize profits from consumer anxiety and not experience a massive backlash.
7. Listening to spokes-animals

MuirWalker

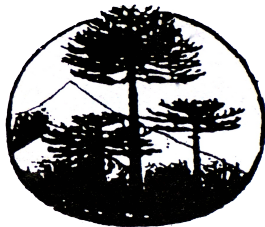
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