

# SUNFLOWER SEEDS



September 2019, Volume – 47, Issue # 9  
Kansas Sunflower Mensa Newsletter





*Some small towns in Kansas refuse to simply decay and fade away. This is the theater in the near ghost town of Atlanta, located on a county black-top in Northern Cowley county. A handful of dedicated citizens are now restoring this once proud building. See video on YouTube, search for Wilderness explorer Atlanta Kansas.*

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Editor: R. Klaus Trenary, contact me at:  
[editor@kansassunflower.us.mensa.org](mailto:editor@kansassunflower.us.mensa.org)

## Officers for 2019:

**LocSec:** Larry Paarmann, 316-209-3752,  
[locsec@kansassunflower.us.mensa.org](mailto:locsec@kansassunflower.us.mensa.org)

**Asst. LocSec:** Bill Barnett, 316-214-3330,  
[asstlocsec@kansassunflower.us.mensa.org](mailto:asstlocsec@kansassunflower.us.mensa.org)

**Treasurer:** Diane Powell, 316-617-8423,  
[treasurer@kansassunflower.us.mensa.org](mailto:treasurer@kansassunflower.us.mensa.org)

**Program Chair:** Bill Barnett, 316-214-3330,  
[programchair@kansassunflower.us.mensa.org](mailto:programchair@kansassunflower.us.mensa.org)

**Publications: POSITION OPEN -**  
[publications@kansassunflower.us.mensa.org](mailto:publications@kansassunflower.us.mensa.org)

**Editor, Seeds:** R. Klaus Trenary, 316-648-6536,  
[editor@kansassunflower.us.mensa.org](mailto:editor@kansassunflower.us.mensa.org)

**Recruit & Test:** Dan Gollub, 316-322-3087,  
[testing@kansassunflower.us.mensa.org](mailto:testing@kansassunflower.us.mensa.org)

**Associate Proctor: POSITION OPEN -**

**Mem. at Large:** Ronnie Lee Ingle, 316-631-3514,  
[memberatlarge@kansassunflower.us.mensa.org](mailto:memberatlarge@kansassunflower.us.mensa.org)

**Ombudsman:** Mike Dickson, 316-651-4707,  
[ombudsman@kansassunflower.us.mensa.org](mailto:ombudsman@kansassunflower.us.mensa.org)

**Region – 7 VC:** Rich Olcott, 720-390-7889,  
[rolcott@mindspring.com](mailto:rolcott@mindspring.com)

**American Mensa Ltd.:**

1-888-294-8035

**Chapter's Official Web Sites:**

<https://www.kansassunflower.us.mensa.org>

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## September Group Activities:

Saturday 7th 12:45pm - MONTHLY PIG OUT  
A CHANCE TO DINE WITH MENSA FRIENDS.

LE MONDE

602 N WEST ST

[HTTP://ORDERLEMONDECAFE.COM](http://ORDERLEMONDECAFE.COM)

Saturday 14th 2:00pm - GUEST SPEAKER  
PRESENTATIONS OF INTEREST, STATED MEETING

FAIRMOUNT COFFEE, MEETING ROOM

3815 E 17<sup>TH</sup> ST

[HTTP://WWW.FAIRMOUNTCOFFEE.COM](http://WWW.FAIRMOUNTCOFFEE.COM)

Saturday 21st 11:00am – MONTHLY FIELD TRIP  
JOIN US FOR A FUN ROAD TRIP.

WATERMARK BOOKS, BASEMENT AREA

MEET AT: 4701 E DOUGLAS

Saturday 28th 7:00pm – BANTER AND BOOKS  
GOOD CAMARADERIE AND DISCUSSIONS.

BARNES & NOBLES, EATING AREA

1920 N ROCK RD

[HTTP://WWW.STORES.BARNESANDNOBLES.COM](http://WWW.STORES.BARNESANDNOBLES.COM)

## This Month's Guest Speaker:



Will be the 2018 Senate candidate James Thompson. He is a civil rights attorney and ran for the Kansas Congressional 4<sup>th</sup> district in the House as a Democrat. He was unfortunately defeated by Ron Estes the Republican candidate.

## Chapter Field Trip for September:

We are going to try something a little different this month. It was suggested that since the weather was still nice this time of year, maybe a cookout at an area park would be fun.

The exact details were not solidified by the time of this posting, but you can contact Bill or Klaus for more info, or just simply show up on Saturday.

Chisolm Park has free shelters, several kilometers of beautiful hiking trails which wind through prairie, woodland and wetland areas. Paved trails and an interesting Nature Center on-site make this a good choice.

Will probably be a simple but tasty fare of beef and turkey burgers and hot dogs along with chips and such.

## This Month's Pig Out:

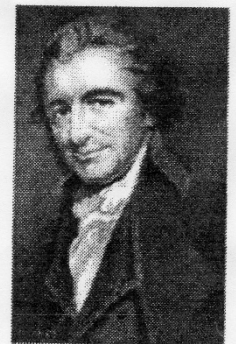


"With a setting much like that of a European Café, Le Monde features delicious French, Italian and Mediterranean cuisine that is authentic yet affordable. Every dish is made from

scratch using the freshest ingredients – the melt-in-your mouth biscuits are local favorites. Come try one of our pasta dishes such as the Linguine Marinara, Salmon Fettucine or Diablo Rigate Pasta. Find us on West Street near the Central intersection!"

All national institutions of churches, whether Jewish, Christian or Turkish, appear to me no other than human inventions, set up to terrify and enslave mankind, and monopolize power and profit.

- Thomas Paine  
(1737 – 1809)





Thoughts during a 2,000-mile road trip from Denver to the FoRGe North Regional Gathering in Grand Forks ND

- Time runs different when you travel across zones. Dinner comes earlier eastbound.
  - Google-Maps routings should be taken with a grain of salt. Google puts a line on the map but it doesn't say how good the line is. Case in point – trying to follow their zig-zag shortcut diagonally across Nebraska I drove up to what was going to be a 30-mile stretch of roadway. There was actually a sign by the turn-in that said, "Caution – cracked pavement ahead." My car is less than a year old. Guided by my hardcopy road atlas I scampered back to the Interstate.
  - I just can't get over how a high-class Interstate highway can have official interchange ramps that let out onto unpaved dirt roads.
  - There's some strange topography in far northeastern Nebraska. Surrounded by flatland there are high hills that just don't make sense right next to the Missouri River.
  - Cattle and alfalfa to the west, beans to the east, and corn everywhere. North Dakota even mows and bales up the grass and/or alfalfa growing by the roadside.
  - Crossed the Bakken oil formation expecting to see lots of derricks and pump jacks. Not a one until I got back to Colorado. However, there were wind-power farms and lots of trucks toting huge turbine blades along the highways.
  - South Dakota doesn't play nomenclatural favorites. It has two towns, of equal size and 60 miles apart, named Bison and Buffalo.
  - Recent rains in Wyoming have brought out the wildflowers – entire landscapes robed in brilliant yellows and greens.
  - A bit south of Wyoming's Devil's Tower there's a very similar tall red-rock formation jutting up right next to US85 that could be its little brother. I'd like to call it Devil's Tourette.
- Rich

A letter from Randy C. Hamilton to the Mensa Bulletin:

Ms. Oliver's letter published in the February issue reminds me of a quote from Susan B. Anthony 1820-1906: "I distrust those people who know so well what God wants them to do because I notice that it always coincides with their own desires." I and many, many others including Anthony, Sagan, etc. have observed that.

How can Ms. Oliver "know" her purpose? And anyone know the "intent of God for our (my) (her) life"? Did her god send her a letter?

Who does she call God" Zeus, Jesus? If Jesus, then someone please explain to me several quotes of his: Matt 10:34 "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword." I'll bet her preacher never preached about that verse. Nor the one where Jesus wants to "bum" people. Found at John 15:6 "If a man not abideth in me... cast them into the fire, and they are burned." As well as Luke 19:27 which the "church" and a guy named Hitler turned into the Spanish Inquisition and gas chambers (he was a Catholic doing, as he was quoted, " what the church has done for 1500 years.") JC: "But those mine enemies, which would not that I reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me." Sounds like a school bully to me.

If she wants to go to heaven she had better stop being nice to people because Luke 14:26 says "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and bretheren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." If no hate, then no being a disciple. Bummer.

I have always hoped that Mensans would think for themselves and as Descarte and Thomas Jefferson wished for people that they would "question everything."

Descartes, "Dubito ergo cogito, cogito ergo sum."







'I believe with the advent of acid. We discovered new ways to think and it has to do with piecing together new thoughts of mind. Why is it that people are so afraid of it? What is it about it that scares people so deeply? Because they are afraid

that there is more to reality than they have ever confronted. That there are doors that they are afraid to go in and they don't want us to go in there either because if we go in, there we might learn something that they don't know. And that makes us a little out of their control.'

**Ken Kesey**

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## In Pursuit of Truth By: Larry D. Paarman

In the August 20, 2019, issue of Mensa's *Weekly Brainwave*, the top story, "Our brains tell stories so we can live," an article by Robert A. Burton is linked. The article appeared in the online magazine *Nautilus*, and is dated August 8, 2019. Its title is "Our Brains Tell Stories So We Can Live: Without inner narratives we would be lost in a chaotic world." Burton is a medical doctor, a neurologist, and a novelist. He is the author of *On Being Certain: Believing You Are Right Even When You're Not*, St. Martin's Griffin, 2008, which is a book about epistemology (how do we know what we know), and *A Skeptic's Guide to the Mind: What Neuroscience Can and Cannot Tell Us About Ourselves*, St. Martin's Griffin, 2013.



In the opening paragraph of the article, Burton notes that "At the level of the study of purely physical phenomena, science is the only reliable method for establishing the facts of the world." But in paragraph two he somewhat qualifies his above statement with the following: "There are no naked facts that completely explain why animals sacrifice themselves for the good of their kin, why we fall in love, the meaning and purpose of existence, or why we kill each other." In the third paragraph he notes that "despite the verities of science, many of our most important questions compel us to tell stories that venture beyond the facts. For all of the sophisticated methodologies in science, we have not moved beyond the story as the primary way that we make sense of our lives." The major theme of the article, as the title suggests, is about stories and story-telling. While I

agree with the overall idea, it seems to me to be rather pessimistic about the pursuit of truth. He seems to imply that "establishing facts of the world" is the domain of physical science alone and that everything else is but made up stories.

During the Enlightenment period, the period of Modernism, which began in the late 17th century and continues today, but is increasingly being overtaken by Post-Modernism, the accomplishments of the physical sciences have been impressive. But there has also been an accompanying overreach of impressive proportions. This overreach is such that some think that materialistic science and materialistic science alone can yield anything we might call knowledge or facts. The lack of humility of scientists and their grandiose claims, e.g., "The Cosmos is all that is or was or ever will be" (a very philosophical, even religious statement that clearly is not scientific) is part of the reason for the reactive growth of Post-Modernism. Other fields of study that do not easily fit within the domain of the natural sciences, such philosophy, religion, history, etc., have been marginalized, to the loss of society and, if I might say so, knowledge. Without disparaging the author, the result is the sentiment expressed in this article: science on one hand, stories on the other. Philosophy has always been about the pursuit of truth, and properly understood should be able to greatly improve one's abilities with critical thinking, and without it opens one up to non-critical thinking and gullibility.

However, Burton does not attribute story-telling to nonscientific pursuits alone, but also to science itself: "Science is in the business of making up stories called hypotheses and testing them, then trying its best to make up better ones. Thought-experiments can be compared to storytelling exercises using well-known characters." Yes, but I think there is some slight-of-hand going on here. Sherlock Holmes, who our author refers to in the same paragraph, was not making up a story in the pursuit of truth, as far as the names, places, and events are concerned, but may well have been in pursuit of truth as to psychological states, etc. A scientific hypothesis is not in the same category but is an idea that the scientist thinks is true in and of itself, but still needs experiments and data to validate. There are some similarities, but the details are highly relevant to the scientist, but not so to the novelist. The author seems to think that we make up stories, even highly relevant stories about the nature of reality, simply because we need a dopamine reward: "the brain, hungry for its pattern-matching dopamine reward, overlooks contradictory or conflicting information whenever possible." This is where philosophy and critical thinking might come in handy.

Part of the reason Burton wrote this article was to alert us to the possibility that what passes for science may really only be a story and may not ultimately measure up to

serious enquiry. This is an important idea for which we should thank him. He notes that “As members of the public, we need to ensure that any science we accept as truth has passed through the peer-review process. We should also understand that even peer-reviewed data is not always accurate. In 2011, *Nature* reported that published retractions had increased by a factor of 10 over the last 10 years, while the number of papers published rose only 44 percent. Also, in *Nature*, scientists C. Glenn Begley and Lee M. Ellis wrote that their colleagues at the biotechnology firm Amgen could reproduce only six of 53 landmark hematology and oncology studies from the scientific literature. Similarly, scientists from Bayer reported in 2011 that they could not consistently reproduce about two-thirds of oncology studies relevant to their work.”

While I may take issue with Burton’s use of the word “stories,” in general I think this to be an excellent article. Who knows, based on this article, maybe I’ll purchase one or more of his books, to get more detail on the material.

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## Threat Assessment and Response

By: Diane Powell

Two mass shootings in early August of this year have prompted increased interest in developing a better response system to such threats. The apparent unpredictability of these attacks, which have often been suicidal in nature, makes them especially disturbing. Preparing to respond to such attacks is especially difficult since they are so unexpected and so contrary to the norm. Two key areas of research will be considered for their possible application to this problem of public safety.

Lieutenant Colonel Dave Grossman [<https://www.killology.com/>] has some important things to say about this subject. In his book *Stop Teaching Our Kids to Kill* [1999], Grossman sounds an alarm – a call to action – against the widespread use by our youth of increasingly violent video games. Grossman blames such games for exerting a “priming effect” on young minds and hearts, that is, overcoming the natural reluctance to take a human life.

He argues for a code of responsibility by those who create media violence, asserting that it should not be glamorized and that the emotional weight of taking a human life should be clearly and convincingly presented. I have seen such an attitude in my favorite drama, *N.C.I.S.*, where the realistic emotional cost of having taken a life is very clearly depicted. There is also evidence that such suicidal attackers are inspired by the media coverage of various shootings, as noted by Jillian Peterson, a criminologist at Hamline University in Minnesota

[<https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2019/08/06/748767807/mass-shootings-can-be-contagious-research-shows>].

Over a year ago Texas Governor Abbott responded to an attack in his state by establishing a procedure for threat assessment for the Texas schools. These recommendations are part of an ongoing process to refine and apply them. [<https://www.kut.org/post/here-are-22-ideas-gov-abbott-shared-stopping-school-shootings>]

There are also legitimate concerns regarding the association of violence with P.S.T.D. :

[<https://slate.com/technology/2014/04/ptsd-and-violence-by-veterans-increased-murder-rates-related-to-war-experience.html>]

Also relevant is an increasing escalation of suicide by veterans. A New York Times article focused on failures in the Department of Veteran Affairs to implement monies available for treatment- pointing to a failure of leadership.

[<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/18/us/veterans-suicide-prevention.html> ]

A major problem is how to identify these individuals before they begin an attack. Especially relevant to this problem is a book by investigative journalist Dan Korem titled: *The Random Actor* [2005]. In his earlier book *Suburban Gangs* [1995] Korem describes how he was able to create a preventative strategy to combat gang recruitment. He has since extended this expertise to the problem of the random suicide attacker. Korem devised a three-point intervention strategy which has been credited with reducing the incidence of bomb threats in most schools where it has been applied. Korem has found that most suicide attackers have his Random Actor [RA] profile. When applied this profile has been successfully used to thwart such catastrophes in various settings.

Korem's team [[www.KoremAssociates.com](http://www.KoremAssociates.com)] has trained over 15,000 educators in this technique which consists of a behavioral profile which has been associated with such suicidal attackers. It is not a criminal profile and is not based on ethnicity or gender but on proven identifiers such as a history of; broken homes, absent fathers, childhood trauma such as bullying, and other disappointments in relationships, educational and career opportunities. Typically, these actors reach a “crisis point” perhaps a lost job or romantic rejection. What follows is a period of preparation before the attack begins.

In an effort to deal with this problem a number of states have enacted “Red Flag” legislation which typically requires a parent or educator, for example, to secure an “Extreme Risk Protection Order” [ERPO]. The BBC reports regarding the recent El Paso incident that the suspect's mother had called

the police several weeks prior to the attack with concerns about the gun her son had access to. A lawyer for the family later stipulated that her concern did not reach the level of “alarm.” Meanwhile the suspect in this shooting drove 10 hours from a Dallas suburb to an El Paso Walmart before commencing to shoot and kill 22 people.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-49275721> ]

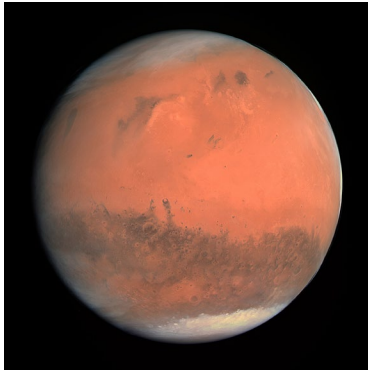
The question remains, what type of behavior does it take to qualify as a “red flag”? Clearly, parents and others in a position to know the prospective shooter need to be educated about what to look for and how to respond before it is too late.

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## Mars Beta Base

By: Bill Barnett

August 18, 2019



The private transport from Earth landed with the assistant planetary VP of media. Peter Smith, the media man, ordered an all hands meeting for the morning. Everyone was there. Peter told them that Beta Base would continue and was not part of the downsizing. Everything would continue as normal. The managers

sighed with relief. They had been sweating bullets. The rumors had been flying and people were asking questions. Questions that they did not have answers for. It made no sense to be reducing the colony development. This was a dream project. Another world for humans to live on and everything was going perfectly. There was a backlog of buyers for every habitat. The agriculture buildings were progressing with most of the structure done. The atmospheric plant was almost complete. The tiny atmospheric plant they had worked for the construction crew and scientists but was not big enough for settlers. There were more meetings later in the day for the managers and everyone was back at work.

None of this set well with the contractors. They had seen this before and did not believe anything. The scientists were skeptical, but they were too busy studying geologic features to worry. Everything on Earth had changed. After the big merger there was a big downsizing. There were layoffs everywhere and nowhere to go for millions as the three corporations controlled 99% of all the business. Police had to stop riots. Some people were offered new positions at a mere fraction of the trade credits they had before. The news media everywhere promised a bright new future with prosperity for everyone. They explained how the changes would bring wealth that would flow down to everyone.

In the staff meeting the next morning the managers gave the good news. Mars Beta Base was one of the top projects

for the new corporate future. They said it is fully funded and everything would continue. In a few years, settlers would be landing, and it would become a permanent colony. There was nothing to the rumors. Just like most rumors they had nothing to do with reality. The manager glowed with happiness as he went through the routine reports and sent everyone back to work. The scientists were even more uneasy, but too occupied with collecting data. There was so much to do. Everything in the construction plan was nominal, but there were many new variables and so much to do. The contractors just looked at each other. They knew they were doomed. They had seen this before and were wondering how to escape when worse came to worse. They never had been stuck on another planet without transportation.

It was two weeks later when the regular cargo transport landed. It was empty. A squad of mercs got off the transport and headed to the fuel depot. The fuel was the most valuable thing on the planet. A second squad of mercs went to the secure storage area. This was where the energy processing supplies were stored. They had the master key and codes and opened the door. It was empty. Everything had been moved out. There was nothing left but a few pieces of trash. They went to inventory control to find where the supplies had been transferred. The Sargent was pissed. It was supposed to be an easy job.

“Who is the leak?” he demanded, cursing and swearing at the top of his breath. “Who said we were coming?” “When you find him, kill him!” he ordered. The mercs began looking for colony members, ready to interview the entire colony if necessary.

The first sergeant took another group to the fuel depot. A merc technician used the master key and code to access the fuel. He set the valves and pumps to unload the fuel into the ship. Nothing happened. He hit the buttons and tried three times. Nothing. After crawling through the maze of plumbing he saw what was wrong. The valves were reversed. And welded shut. Both the input and output could only receive fuel from a ship, not load a ship. The first sergeant was cursing and swearing and threatening death to god and everyone. If he did not return with the fuel it would be his ass. His dead ass. Certain death for disobeying an order.

Before landing, the transport ship’s Captain called ahead and ordered an immediate all hands meeting. It was mandatory attendance. Everyone was there except a few contractors and a couple of women were missing, but no one noticed their absence. “The project is canceled.” stated the Captain, “You will be notified when there is another assignment.”

“Are you taking us back?” pleaded one of the managers. “Is another ship coming?” “No. You will have to get your own transportation.” said the captain. “No one can afford that.” pleaded a manager. “We were all promised two-way transportation when we came here.”

“That was the previous owners.” barked the captain. “We have no responsibility for that.”

The crowd gasped in shock. They were being left to die. There was a contractor sitting near the fuel depot. When he saw the mercs coming he said: “I bet you want to know where the spare valves are?” to the sergeant. “You’re damn right I want to know. Tell me now. And I’ll kill anyone who gets in my way.” growled the Sargent.

“They hid them in the first agriculture building in the tool storage area.” said the contractor. “And where is it?” demanded the sergeant. “Go down hallway C turn right at the first corner and go to the airlock. It is a hundred meters past the airlock. There are pressure suits in the airlock.”

“Thanks.” said the sergeant a bit puzzled that the man was so helpful. And off the mercs ran down the hall and into the airlock. They did not want anyone to have time to steal the valves. They had to load the fuel quickly and be off. As they were putting on the pressure suits there a loud BANG. They looked up and the airlock door was shut. The contractor was helping them. Maybe he thought they would give him a ride. They all laughed. A ride, not going to happen. Then there was an explosion. The latch on the exterior door blew up. Before they knew it a blast of air blew them onto the surface of the planet. After tumbling on the ground, they looked at each other in amazement. And then tried to gasp for breath and couldn’t. The world around them slowly turned black.

Back in inventory control a contractor was reviewing data on the computer. The mercs arrived and demanded to know who he was and where the secure inventory was.

“I am Oliver, an auditor sent by the corporate board. There are inconsistencies in the inventory. And 51.725 missing credits. I have to account for every decimal of every credit. The council will not tolerate anything missing.” he said. “And the inventory? Where is it?” shouted the first sergeant. “We had to move it to the second storage area. It is more secure. People were taking computer supplies without authorization and it was not possible to track the inventory.” said the contractor.

“Where is the second storage area?” asked the first sergeant. “Go down hall A, take a left at the second corner and into the airlock. The building is just outside the airlock. The construction crew has not yet finished the hall there. There are pressure suits in the airlock.” “Thanks.” said the first sergeant feeling puzzled. “That was too easy.” he thought.

Off they ran down the hall and found the airlock when they turned left. The man had it right. As they were putting on the pressure suits, they heard a loud BANG. They looked up and the airlock door was shut. Then there was an explosion. The latch on the exterior door blew up. Before they knew it a blast of air blew them onto the surface of the planet. After tumbling on the ground, they looked at each other in amazement. And then tried to gasp for breath and couldn’t. The world around them slowly turned black.

“Two down and one to go.” said Bill, the lead contractor. He had been shanghaied and deserted on projects before. He knew the routine. But never in a place with no transportation and soon no atmosphere. The mercs were too predictable. It was a game. A high-stakes game. Life was always a high stakes game for contractors, but never this high before. The job shopper plan was to learn the new job before they figured out you did not know it. Bill was quick and it always worked. Do that and anyone could shop any job. The managers knew it and did not care if the job got done. But secretly they hated the job shoppers. It was jealousy. They had to brown nose everything, but the job shoppers never did and were arrogant about it.

The managers were begging the transport Captain for transportation and getting nowhere. The Captain, Lieutenant, and their two body-guards were collecting computer memory cards to take back with them. When they heard what happened

to the other mercs they had everyone at gunpoint. “Where is the other computer card? Give it to us now or else.” said the Lieutenant.

“It is in the other office.” said Nancy the office assistant. Normally she lorded over everything in the main office. Being a femi-nazi from her teens she always took control. The whole office staff was scared of her. But today she seems like a sweet little kitten. The only people she got along with were the contractors. She and they had been abused as youth and always had a plan to survive. “Let me help you.”

The office staff was confused. Nancy was always ordering people and telling them what not to do. And now she was helping someone. That was weird. “Follow me.” said Nancy in a sweet voice as she started toward the second office. She went through the second office and said: “This way.”

The Captain and his men followed her guns drawn and wary. They were looking behind and beside and watching everything like hawks. “Down this hall.” she said as she turned into a corridor. It was a connection between buildings. She stopped and there were two loud clanks. Pressure doors closed before and behind them. “Let’s make a deal.” “Ha Ha Ha!!!!” laughed the Captain. “Never. Show me the memory card or you are a dead man.” “I am not a man. I am a woman. How dare you insult me like that. I would never stoop, to being a man.”

The Captain and his men roared with laughter. She was entertaining. “Give me the card now.” There was a loud hissing noise followed by a second hissing noise. “Hear that!” shouted Nancy. “In a few seconds you will not have an atmosphere and be dead. Let’s make a deal.” “No!” shouted the captain. “You will be dead too. Never.”

“You heard two hissing sounds.” said Nancy. The first is air leaving. The second is CO2 coming in. We will all be unconscious and alive. They will throw you out and put me in with the air.” “Go to hell!!!” said the Captain as he was losing consciousness.

Everyone woke up a little woozy. The Captain and Lieutenant looked around for their body-guards. After Nancy pointed at the window, they saw them laying outside on the ground. The Lieutenant was trembling, and the Captain was furious. “Throw her out!” the Captain shouted at the Lieutenant. It was not possible. The latch was locked shut, and even if they could have opened it they would be in the vacuum too. “Let’s make a deal.” said Nancy. “Go to hell!!!” said the Captain.

There were two more hissing noises and soon they were all three unconscious. Nancy and the Lieutenant woke up feeling sick. As they recovered enough to get up and look around, they saw the Captain outside laying on the ground in the vacuum beside the body-guards. “Let’s make a deal.” said Nancy. “Please don’t kill me pleaded the Lieutenant. “Then let’s make a deal.” said Nancy. “Ok.” said the Lieutenant. “Anything you want.”

“Give me the all the keys and codes you have. Get in the ship and go back to Earth and tell them everything you saw.” “I will.” promised the Lieutenant. He handed her the key cards and downloaded the codes onto her phone. “Promise you will not kill me.” “I won’t kill you. Promise me you will tell them everything you saw. Everything.” “Yes ma’am. I will” promised the Lieutenant.

[continued next month]



# THE QUESTION OF SLAVERY?



By: Gordon Bakken

To begin a discussion of slavery, we must first define what it means. The definition we will use is: “Total servitude.” That means a person is a slave who totally must do what another commands. To start with we will divide slavery into two categories. The categories are:

1. **FORCED SLAVERY** - Servitude that was forced on the slave and was never agreed to by the enslaved.

2. **VOLUNTARY SLAVERY** - Servitude that was willingly agreed to by the enslaved.

Here are examples of forced slavery:

A. Chattel (traditional) slavery. This is what most people think of when they think of slavery. Capturing a person and forcing him to work is how this usually starts (though some are born into slavery). This was the type of slavery that Blacks experienced in the old South. It was quite universal in the world prior to about 1800, is but uncommon now. Israel, of the Old Testament, for example, had this type of slave.

B. Military draftee. This not practiced in the United States at the present time but was common in the past. Both sides practiced it in the Civil War. It was the source of most of America’s soldiers in WWI, WWII, Korea, and Vietnam. A drafted soldier is a slave because he must do as told. Indeed, a soldier has very little that he can do without permission.

C. Taxpayer. A taxpayer is a slave. He works to earn money, and then that money is taken away from him and used by the government. Thus, in the end, the taxpayer worked for someone else’s benefit. He had no choice.

D. Robbery victim. Like a taxpayer, the individual worked to benefit himself, but the thief took what he had earned. Thus, like the taxpayer, he ended up working for someone else’s benefit, without his consent.

E. Convicted criminal. This type of slavery is actually specifically allowed by the Thirteenth Amendment, which outlawed traditional slavery. Convicted criminals can be forced to work.

F. Captured war prisoner. It is generally agreed by all nations that it is acceptable to require captured soldiers to do forced labor. The Geneva Convention supports this.

The second category consists of individuals who voluntarily sold themselves into slavery. It then becomes “involuntary” in the sense that a person must live up to his contract. However, it is no more involuntary than a person’s obligation to live up to any contract.

A. Serf. Much of Europe’s laborers were serfs from about the 1100s to the 1800s. Most originally volunteered to become serfs to escape poverty and to get military protection. However, once a person became a serf, he became part of the land and was passed along with the land to a new owner. They had some freedom but were required to work for the lord when he asked. Most were allowed to leave, if they desired.

B. Indentured servant. Roughly half of all Europeans who came to America before the Revolutionary War came this way. Typically, an individual agreed to work for a person for a period of time, usually five years, in return for the cost of his passage from Europe. Even though it was voluntary, once in America he could not become free until the time was up.

C. Military volunteer. In the United States, a volunteer soldier becomes a slave once he enlists. Even though it was voluntary, he cannot quit until the agreed time is up, nor does he have any more freedom while there that the draftee does.

D. Any employee. Any employee is required to do what his employer instructs while he is at work. The contract may be broken (some notice may have to be given) but in the meantime he is a slave. The fact that he has some free time, such as during lunch and on weekends, or gets paid, does not change that fact. (Traditional slaves also had a few free moments, and had benefits, such as housing, clothing and food.)

E. Any contract signer. Any person who signs a contract is obligated to fulfill the terms of the contract, regardless whether he wishes to or not. Thus, he becomes a partial slave for a time. A renter who signs a lease is an example. He may have to pay rent even though he no longer lives in the apartment.

In summary, slavery is not all bad. Most of us are happy to have a job, though we may feel like a slave at times. Most of us also occasionally sign a contract, such as a home loan or a credit card purchase. To an extent, the other party then owns us. In short, slavery is a fine thing, as long as it is voluntary. Thus, the Black slavery of the old south was a bad thing – not because it was slavery, but because it was forced slavery. The slaves had no choice as to being part of it. Similarly, property transfer may be good or bad. I may give you a car or sell it to you. It was mine and now it is yours. That is fine if I agreed to it, but it is wrong if you stole from me. Similarly, most of us consider taxes acceptable if most of the population agrees to them.



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