

Oracles

Previous postings from the Wm. Thomas Sherman Info Page 2022.



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## TENETS

- \* Nothing is, or is as it is, unless someone says and judges it to be so. Who then is (or who is it we say is) the judge, including the final judge?
- \* If we ever experienced a problem anywhere, it came about, in some degree, due to certain wrong assumptions, either co-present with, or just prior to the given problem's actually taking place.
- \* Unless you believe in God, the One, and or the infinite, every assumption is contingent.
- \* PROCESS (or if you prefer spirit, or activity) PRECEDES IMAGE. Image may, to some extent, (and sometimes almost perfectly) represent process. But process is always superior to and always more real than image. If process precedes image this might suggest also that mind precedes matter and energy.
- \* Everything we believe, or say we know, is based on a *factual* or *value* judgment. Both kinds of judgment always entail the other to some extent, and nothing can be known or exists for us without them.
- \* No fact or purported fact is true or false without someone to assert and believe it to be such. If an assertion or claim is deemed true or false then, and we are thorough, we should ask who is it that says so (or has said so), and what criteria are (were) they using? There is no such thing as "faceless" truth or reality -- at least none we are capable of knowing.
- \* You can't escape reason. If you aren't rational yourself, someone else will be rational for you; nor do their intentions toward you need to be friendly or benevolent.
- \* *Every* point of view and opinion has its truth to it -- even the most abhorrent and unacceptable to us. This said, we are naturally inclined to assume that some opinions have much greater truth to them than others. Even so, what little truth there is in any point of view must, at least at some juncture, and certainly with respect to issues of heated controversy, be justly and reasonably respected. Why? Because we would not be honest (and therefore not truthful) if we didn't.
- \* *Ultimately*, and when all is said and done, thought without heart is nothing.
- \* Most, if not all, of society's very worst problems arise from (certain) spirit people and those who listen to them -- whether the former comes in the shape of "God," angel, devil or what have you. It is these people who are most the source and cause of real unhappiness. If then you chance to have contact with such, while having (one assumes) overcome their lures, deceptions, and pretenses of benevolence and higher knowledge, I recommend that this (i.e., "unhappiness" or "unhappiness itself") is what you call them. Blame *them* for (most) everything wrong; for it is *they* who have been and are the ruin of everyone and everything (that is, if anyone is or could be said to be so.)

### Mottos:

*"When you can face me, I'll consider taking you seriously."*

*"Millions for defense; not one cent for tribute!"*

*"The whole of the city is at the mercy of a gang of criminals, led by a man who calls himself the Kid. And I'm the only one who can find him for you."*

*Note.* The "oracles" are given, top to the bottom of the text, in order from the most recent to the very earliest entry (just as originally presented at [gunjones.com](http://gunjones.com)); the very first you see below then is the last entered at the website, while the very first entered for the year is given as the last item in this text.

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...And so greatly did the name and authority of the truth prevail with them [men of learning], that they proclaimed that the reward of the greatest good was contained in it. But they did not obtain the object of their wish, and at the same time lost their labour and industry; because the truth, that is the secret of the Most High God, who created all things, cannot be attained by our own ability and perceptions. Otherwise there would be no difference between God and man, if human thought could reach to the counsels and arrangements of that eternal majesty. And because it was impossible that the divine method of procedure should become known to man by his own efforts, God did not suffer man any longer to err in search of the light of wisdom, and to wander through inextricable darkness without any result of his labour, but at length opened his eyes, and made the investigation of the truth His own gift, so that He might show the nothingness of human wisdom, and point out to man wandering in error the way of obtaining immortality.  
~ Lactantius (c. 250–c. 325), [Divine Institutes \(Book I, preface\)](#)

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OEDIPUS [addressing Theseus, king of Athens]:

Dearest son of Aegeus, only gods
are never troubled by old age and death.
All other things are finally destroyed
by all-conquering Time. The power of Earth
passes away, the body's strength withers, [610]
loyalty perishes, distrust appears,
and between one city and another,
just as between good friends, relationships
never remain the same. Sooner or later
pleasant concord turns to bitter hatred
and then hatred, once again, to friendship.
So if today between yourself and Thebes
the sun is shining bright and all is well,
the endless passage of infinite Time
engenders innumerable days and nights,
and in that time some trivial reason
will persuade them to shatter with their spears [620]
whatever treaties you now have between you...
~ Sophocles [5th century B.C.], from "Oedipus at Colonus," translated by Ian Johnston.

for the full text in .pdf, see:
<http://johnstoniatexts.x10host.com/sophocles/oedipusatcolonuspdf.pdf>

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I myself got an especial thrill and enjoyment when, in elementary school, I first read Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. However, like so many things, once the novelty and surprise has been experienced, the second time around trying to relive the same is rarely or never quite the same. Although, for whatever reason one might ascribe, "Classics Illustrated" had versions of the novels *Frankenstein*, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, and *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, they did not have one for *Dracula*. However, in 1976, Marvel Comics put out an excellent and reasonably authentic rendering that makes a nice substitute for reading the 350+ page original (in fine print), but which is unfortunately rare and not so easy to get a hold of. For any then who might be interested, here it is (zipped) in .cbr format:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1w5J5E199sj3xeP7iahdWpEfNcwfS5gGu/view?usp=share\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1w5J5E199sj3xeP7iahdWpEfNcwfS5gGu/view?usp=share_link)

If you need a free .cbr reader, one to go with is: [CDisplay](#)

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[Posted on Face Book]

Ah yes, here, I found it...
The secret behind the success of "YouTube Kids"...
the [Paul] Allen Institute for Brain Science

See: <https://alleninstitute.org/>

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[Posted on Face Book]

Now THAT"S more like it...

See: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PZ4sgNkbLoA>

["THE CIRCUS GIRL - musical comedy selections (1896) Ivan Caryll & Lionel Monckton"]

Originally featuring Mabelle Gillman. :)



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Is there anything MORE scary than "YouTube Kids?" (This is about the best version of the Muffin Man song I could find there.)

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

["Do You Know The Muffin Man Song Lyrics - Sing Along for Kids"]

Personally, I like the old "Dan Fast Muffler Man" ad version:

"If your car sounds like an old tin can,
Take it to the Muffler Man,
Then you'll know the Muffler Man,
Dan Fast...is his name."

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11. Lastly, if the gods drive away sorrow and grief, if they bestow joy and pleasure, how are there in the world so many and so wretched men, whence come so many unhappy ones, who lead a life of tears in the meanest condition? Why are not those free from calamity who every moment, every instant, load and heap up the altars with sacrifices? Do we not see that some of them, say the learned, are the seats of diseases, the light of their eyes quenched, and their ears stopped, that they cannot move with their feet, that they live mere trunks without the use of their hands, that they are swallowed up, overwhelmed, and destroyed by conflagrations, shipwrecks, and disasters; that, having been stripped of immense fortunes, they support themselves by labouring for hire, and beg for alms at last; treat they are exiled, proscribed, always in the midst of sorrow, overcome by the loss of children, and harassed by other misfortunes, the kinds and forms of which no enumeration can comprehend? But assuredly this would not occur if the gods, who had been laid under obligation, were able to ward off, to turn aside, those evils from those who merited this favour. But now, because in these mishaps there is no room for the interference of the gods, but all things are brought about by inevitable necessity, the appointed course of events goes on and accomplishes that which has been once determined.

~ Arnobius (c.284-c.305), [\*Against the Heathen \(Book VII\)\*](#)

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[In response to:]

"Humanity May Reach Singularity Within Just 7 Years, Trend Shows"

<https://www.yahoo.com/lifestyle/humanity-may-reach-singularity-within-222900100.html>

For many years now, going at least as far back as "2001: A Space Odyssey," you get this touting from less than rational persons that AI, or artificial intelligence, is on its way to taking over the world. The idea ostensibly being one of "Get scared everybody! There's more fear to come!"

While there is no denying the extraordinary ability of some AI to outdo ordinary human intelligence, say for example in a game of chess, the idea that AI can or will take over the human race is patently and irretrievably false and ridiculous. The reason for this is that no statement and assertion can be made without a HUMAN value judgment (i.e., that which is designated "good" or desirable, versus "not good" or not desirable) being first assumed, or, in the case of a machine, planted into it. Machines of themselves cannot independently assign such values; therefore AI overriding human intelligence is only possible in the case of herd animals and or very dumb and stupid people; that is to say those who cannot think independently of others' semi-rational, dogmatical and authoritarian say-so in the first place.

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[Posted on Face Book]

(no video here; audio only.)

See: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zML8Hi5tSp8>

["Lost is my Quiet" - Purcell duet with Rebecca Beasley and David Grogan, from an SAI benefit concert at UT Arlington in 2011.]

And another nice version (while we're at it.)

See: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xo3xQKIndT0>

["Matthew & Katie ~ Lost is My Quiet Forever"]

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[Posted at the Lee's Legion page on Face Book]

We usually think of historical personages in their hey-day, but, like everyone else, if they didn't happen to die young, some grew to be old; not infrequently even long outliving that era in which they were most famous or near famous. Such, for instance, was the case with Knickerbocker author, magazine editor and poet Charles Fenno Hoffman (1806-1884).

His father was Josiah Ogden Hoffman (1766-1837), a prominent and highly respected New York city lawyer, and later judge; at whose offices Washington Irving for a time studied for the law (that is before and shortly afterward giving it up and becoming an author by profession.) By a first wife, Judge Hoffman had a daughter Matilda (1791-1809) and who became what is generally recognized as bachelor Irving's life-long love interest, but who died at the young age of 18 in 1809. Matilda's brother was Ogden Hoffman, and who became a United States Congressman.

Charles Fenno Hoffman was one of the offspring of Judge Hoffman's second wife. When a child, a leg of his had to be amputated as the result of a boating accident; thereafter he went through life wearing a replacement wooden one.

As an adult, he took up a literary career, became a magazine editor of several periodicals, wrote one novel and some American west travel books, but was most noted as a poet.

Sometime in 1849, he suffered a bout of insanity. He recovered, then briefly worked for the U.S. State department, before having a permanent relapse; when he was committed for the rest of his life to an asylum in Harrisburg, Penn.

Many years later, the following little piece appeared in *Harper's Weekly* for 10 March 1883:

"CHARLES FENNO HOFFMAN

"A reference in the Easy Chair of Harper's Magazine to Charles Fenno Hoffman, a charming literary figure of forty years ago in New York, and the founder of the old Knickerbocker Magazine, has drawn from a correspondent at Harrisburg in Pennsylvania, a touching glimpse of the author whose career was so early and sadly clouded, but who is living still:

"He has been for many years, and is now — or was very recently — in the State Lunatic Hospital near this city. I used to see him quite often there. His insanity is of a harmless kind, I believe, and consists in the illusion that the air is full of spirits in actual bodily existence, and that they approach him as if to hurt him. He is free to go where he likes at most times, I understand, and does go off without an attendant, always into the country, avoiding people and roads, and in all weather. He is fully of middle height; his hair is grizzled, and rather long and straggling; his face and form are spare; his eyes bright and keen, but wandering; his figure erect; and his physical health strong. He is a striking and bizarre figure, striding along, a fur cap on his head, and a stout stick in his hand, with which he continually makes passes into the air to ward off the spirits when they approach too near. His wooden leg — or rather stump — does not seem to hinder his going anywhere. He returns of himself at night, and seems perfectly content. He has intervals of comparative lucidity, and is then a most interesting talker.'

"Mr. Hoffman is now seventy-seven years old, and he is probably unknown to the new generation of readers. But the manliness of his character, the brightness of his mind, and his literary skill made him one of the most delightful writers of the Knickerbocker school."

While it has its moments and occasional strokes of genuine feeling and inspiration, most of Hoffman's poetry is frankly not all that catching or especially memorable. However, going through his collected poems, I did at least find two that, for me at any rate, "did the trick," and for and in his memory on this occasion I think worth reproducing.

THE STREAMLET

How silently yon streamlet slides
From out the twilight-shaded bowers!
How, soft as sleep, it onward glides
In sunshine through its dreaming flowers.

That tranquil wave, now turn'd to gold
Beneath the slowly westering sun,
It is the same, far on the wold,
Whose foam this morn we gazed upon.

The leaden sky, the barren waste,
The torrent we this morning knew,
How changed are all! as now we haste
To bid them, with the day, adieu!

Ah! thus should life and love at last
Grow bright and sweet when death is near:
May we, our course of trial pass'd,
Thus bathed in beauty glide from here!

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THE BLIGHTED HEART

When the flowers of Friendship or Love have decayed
In the heart that has trusted and once been betray'd,
No sunshine of kindness their bloom can restore.
For the verdure of feeling will quicken no more!

Hope, cheated too often when life's in its spring,
From the bosom that nursed it for ever takes wing;
And memory comes, as its promises fade,
To brood o'er the havoc that passion has made,—

As 'tis said that the swallow the tenement leaves
Where ruin endangers her nest in the eaves.
While the desolate owl takes her place on the wall,
And builds in the mansion that nods to its fall.

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When I first watched "Outcasts of Polker Flat" (1952) some two years ago, I was not all THAT taken by it. On the perhaps downside, it is an odd and quirky take-off on the Bret Harte original, and the script, or 3/4s of it anyway, is better suited for a stage play than a movie. But on a second viewing, I experienced something very different. For one thing, the 71 year old performances by Dale Robertson, Anne Baxter, and Cameron Mitchell are so intense and dynamic that the film has this distinctly eerie quality; as if it had been made just yesterday. In addition, the story has a subtle or hidden religious message, which IF BY CHANCE you have the time to view the film, see if you can spot the same. Hint: Oakhurst - the non violent hero, Cal - humanity or the person caught in the middle, Ryker - the very devil.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5b0a6CwB6ic&t=4s>  
["1952 The Outcasts of Poker Flat Dale Robertson; Anne Baxteer"]

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[The ox continues his address to Jupiter] "...Is it not one breath of life which sways both them [i.e., humans] and me? Do I not respire and see, and am I not affected by the other senses just as they are? They have livers, lungs, hearts, intestines, bellies; and do not I have as many members? They love their young, and come together to beget children; and do not I both take care to procure offspring, and delight in it when it has been begotten? But they have reason, and utter articulate sounds; and how do they know whether I do what I do for my own reasons, and whether that sound which I give forth is my kind of words, and is understood by us alone? Ask piety whether it is more just that I should be slain, that I should be killed, or that man should be pardoned and be safe from punishment for what he has done? Who formed iron into a sword? Was it not man? Who brought disaster upon races; who imposed slavery upon nations? Was it not man? Who mixed deadly draughts, and gave them to his parents, brothers, wives, friends? Was it not man? Who

found out or devised so many forms of wickedness, that they can hardly be related in ten thousand chronicles of years, or even of days? Was it not man? Is not this, then, cruel, monstrous, and savage? Does it not seem to you, O Jupiter, unjust and barbarous that I should be killed, that I should be slain, that you may be soothed, and the guilty find impunity? ”

~ Arnobius (c.284-c.305), [Against the Heathen \(Book VII\)](#)

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I am NOT kidding. There is a real person like this. (Indeed spirit person as well as regular person versions). He takes himself SO seriously, yet this sort of character is a TOTAL JOKE. When then will we ever finally get to read his biography, know who he is, where he comes from, and how it is he thought himself worthy of appropriating to himself such a role in our lives?



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Makes such a great idea and theme for a poem, don't you think? Unfortunately (however) someone already used it.



"Hold Until Relieved..."

James 1:12 Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him.

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9. So, if some ox, or any animal you please, which is slain to mitigate and appease the fury of the deities, were to take a man's voice and speak these words: "Is this, then, O Jupiter, or whatever god you are, humane or right, or should it be considered at all just, that when another has sinned I should be killed, and that you should allow satisfaction to be made to you with my blood, although I never did you wrong, never wittingly or unwittingly did violence to your divinity and majesty, being, as you know, a dumb creature, not departing from the simplicity of my nature, nor inclined to be fickle in my manners? Did I ever celebrate your games with too little reverence and care? Did I drag forward a dancer so that your deity was offended? Did I swear falsely by you? Did I sacrilegiously steal your property and plunder your temples? Did I uproot the most sacred groves, or pollute and profane some hallowed places by rounding private houses? What, then, is the reason that the crime of another is atoned for with my blood, and that my life and innocence are made to pay for wickedness with which I have nothing to do? Is it because I am a base creature, and am not possessed of reason and wisdom, as these declare who call themselves men, and by their ferocity make themselves beasts? Did not the same nature both beget and form me from the same beginnings?..."

~ Arnobius (c.284-c.305), [Against the Heathen \(Book VII\)](#)

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Dream productions circa 1983 (and pre-Freddie Kruger as well.)

See: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-qOBxkYaSHA>

["Brainstorm (1983) Psychotic Episode HD Natalie Wood, Christopher Walken, Louise Fletcher"]

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The TRUE story (of supernatural dealings) can NOW be told!

...as found in "Startling Terror" no. 13 from 1952, here re-produced in .pdf, see:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1cFYPF1VzUMidFnKDuseOVb2Me64w4Kw1/view?usp=share\\_link](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1cFYPF1VzUMidFnKDuseOVb2Me64w4Kw1/view?usp=share_link)

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From *Harper's Weekly*, Jan. 12, 1901.



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2. Who are the true gods? You say. To answer you in common and simple language, we do not know; for how can we know who those are whom we have never seen? We have been accustomed to hear from you that an infinite number are gods, and are reckoned among the deities; but if these exist anywhere, and are true gods, as Terentius believes, it follows as a consequence, that they correspond to their name; that is, that they are such as we all see that they should be, and that they are worthy to be called by this name; nay, more—to make an end without many words—that they are such as is the Lord of the universe, and the King omnipotent Himself, whom we have knowledge and understanding enough to speak of as the true God when we are led to mention His name. For one god differs from another in nothing as respects his divinity; nor can that which is one in kind be less or more in its parts while its own qualities remain unchanged. Now, as this is certain, it follows that they should never have been begotten, but should be immortal, seeking nothing from without, and not drawing any earthly pleasures from the resources of matter.

~ Arnobius (c.284-c.305), [Against the Heathen \(Book VII\)](#)

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