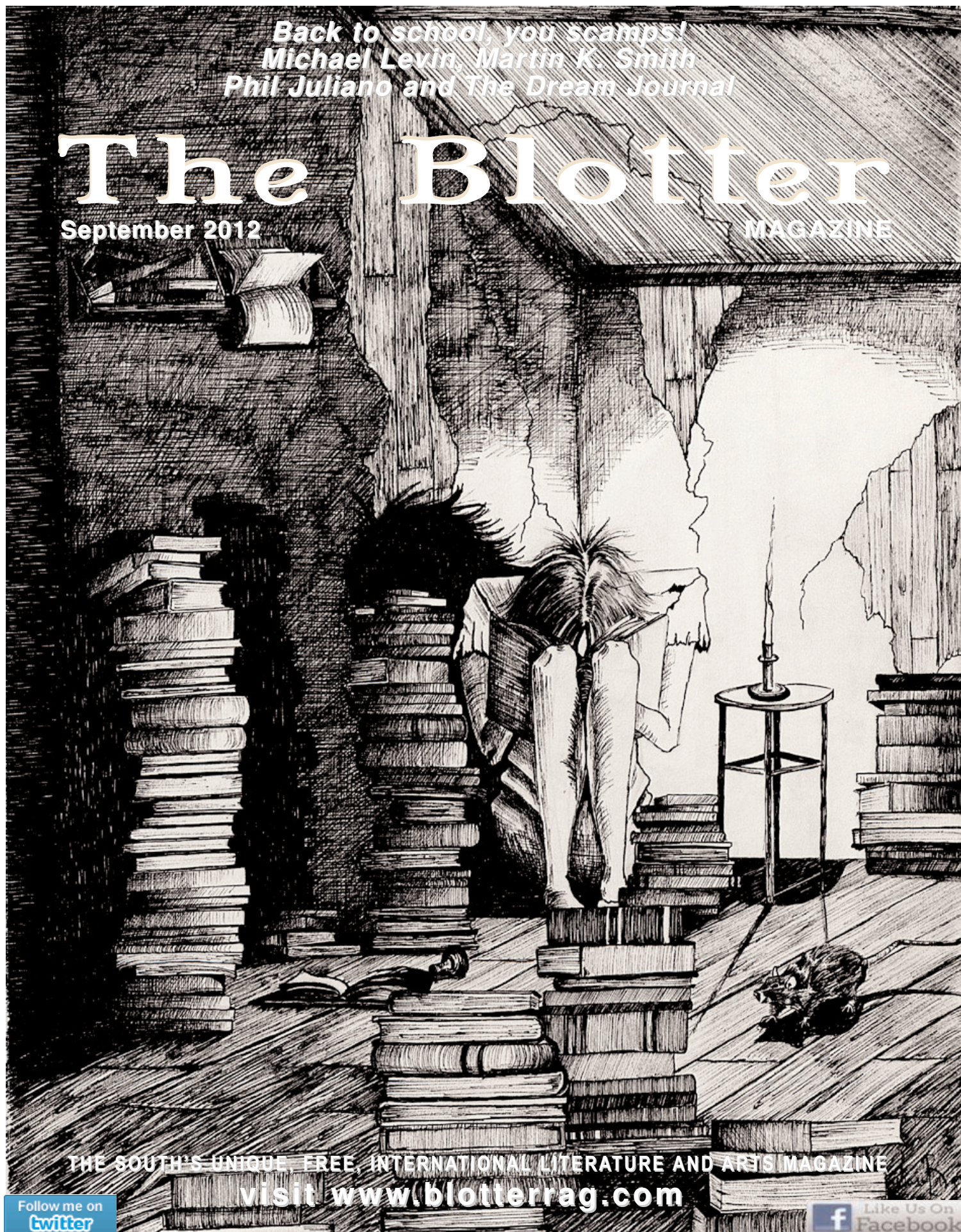


*Back to school, you scamps!*  
Michael Levin, Martin K. Smith  
Phil Juliano and The Dream Journal

# The Blotter

September 2012

MAGAZINE



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## "Sleeping In"

Sleeping in on a Sunday morning one doesn't expect to be able to travel back to Dreamland. That's asking too much. Just a little peace and quiet, the sound of summertime rain on the deck outside, the room still dark with curtains pulled, and nothing out there on the horizon that desperately needs doing. Head still hurts a little from last night – nothing worth telling here – and I'm thinking about nothing in particular that will lead me to a pre-determined place and time. Mouth gummed up, must have been snoring, and that little debate one has that discusses the finer points of getting up and keeping one's eyes closed while shuffling to the toilet to take the edge off of the bladder, or just staying here for a little while longer, no emergency, no accident waiting to happen.

A flurry of colors and images rattling around behind my eyelids, what a luxury it is to not move, not be startled into full-blown awake. No alarm, like every other day of the week, every other day of the year. No oboe lessons, like when I was ten and eleven years of age. No roommate (years eighteen through twenty one of my life. No neighbors with radio blasting car-washing habits (years twenty five and twenty six.) No revenge of the gardener with a leaf blower (thirty-one through thirty-three). No diapers to change (bright and early every morning from forty one through forty six).

Of course, later on today, I'll be called on to assist with any as yet-undone work around the house. That's to be expected. But right now, right here, somehow, my entire family understands that occasionally I need a small, inexpensive break. *This is living, this is style; this is elegance by the mile*, to quote pith-helmeted Lionel Jeffries.

But I really can't make myself ignore the laundry-list of tasks before me on this day of rest. I can force my eyes to remain closed, but the list flashes itself on my lids like I'm sitting at a business meeting – where someone has turned off the lights and placed a foil on the projector (talk about old-school, you crusty bastard).

Inside: there are dirty socks on the floor where I dropped them prior to climbing into bed. Not nasty dirty, not fraternity-house brother stinking moldy dirty, but yesterday's socks. Without getting up, I don't know how much actual laundry is on my virtual laundry list, but assume a load, maybe two. Dishes sit in the sink where I placed them before bedtime: my coffee mug, a small plate that lately held my peanut-butter sandwich. The floor could use a vacuuming. The bathroom sink has toothpaste adorning it. While I'm at it the bathtub and toilet might as well get scrubbed. That very attitude of "oh, well, wash the bathroom" earns me no points with K. She suspects that the bathroom would never be cleaned if I wasn't forced to at spearpoint. But this isn't true. I believe in paying people very well to wash bathrooms. There's nothing like a stint in Basic Training to turn a fellow off regarding push-ups, standing in line, and washing porcelain.

Outside: the chickens have already been let out of their hutch and into the run, but need feeding. I should run to the store and get a bag of feed and some cracked corn. I wish that I could let them out to scratch for a living, but there are nefarious things afoot and awing. Raccoons. Red-shoulder

hawks with wingspans like Zekes diving on the Arizona. My little flock would be, well...flocked in no time. The lawn needs mowing. I don't know if I'm up for that. I stepped on a stone that hopped up into my flip-flops in the irritating way that little stones do in flip-flops making them the most impractical footwear imaginable. Anyhow, if I mow today, I can throw the clippings in with the chickens, they like to nibble them and pick out any seeds or critters that cling to them, and as the clippings dry they sweeten the litter on the floor of the run. Next spring, I can shovel out the top inch or two of the run and put it in K's vegetable garden. I read somewhere that I must do this a month or so before she sows, so it has time to settle and not burn the seeds or plants. I don't know if this is actually a botanical issue, but it sounds right. Maybe I dreamed I read it somewhere. I need to fix the deer-netting around the vegetable garden. The deer don't like the potato plants, but they come by and take a bite anyway out of curiosity. Then they turn to their mates and say in deer-jargon, "Oye! Come 'ave a nosh on this. S'truth! You ken live on it but it tastes loike shite!" And all the other deer have a polite bite – what else can they do? - and before you know it, there's no potatoes. And I need to get to work on the gutters – the last few thunderstorms have blown a lot of *chazerei* and they don't flow. No, those are not little maple trees growing in the fertile soil of the gutters. Those are tulip poplars. Yeah, these need cleaning.

It is so quiet.

I wonder if the Cardinals are playing this afternoon or tonight? Maybe it's not too late to try a little fishing. I could dig some worms. Or catch a few crickets. I could buy some bait, while I'm on the way to get chicken feed. That's a good idea. The trunk of the car is so full that if I go to get chicken feed, I'll have to put it in the back seat. As long as I'm dumping stuff into the shed, that shenanigan needs to be cleaned out or burned down, and I'll give you even odds on which.

So where is everyone else? Have they gone to church? Did they eat breakfast? I am a bit peckish myself. What did they have? I wonder if there is any left? Can it be reheated? Should I get up and see, maybe do the dishes? Run a load of laundry? My face is badly in need of a razor, and a shower wouldn't hurt anyone at all.

Please, just five more minutes.

Garry - [chief@blotterrag.com](mailto:chief@blotterrag.com)



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CAUTION

*We don't have the time for psychological romance. No romance, no romance, no romance for me...*

# "Why Publishers Will Tell You Anything But The Truth"

by Michael Levin

As the publishing industry gathers in New York for its annual trade show, BookExpo America, they're discussing everything except the one piece of information authors crave: how many books they actually sell.

There is no equivalent of gold records in the book publishing industry. That's because sales numbers are almost impossible to come by, and the numbers you can track down simply cannot be verified.

Publishers are loath to provide accurate sales figures, for two reasons. One is that they don't want authors to know how many copies they sold, so that they don't have to pay all the royalties due the authors. Second, they're embarrassed by how few copies most books sell.

Publishers control sales data the way the former Soviet Union

controlled data regarding the sale of wheat, with about as little honesty and transparency. So what's an author to do?

First, they can go to BookScan, a service of the A.C. Nielsen survey company. Bookscan is the primary means by which publishers get sales data, which they use when considering whether to buy a new book from a previously published author. Amazon makes Bookscan data available to individual authors for their own books through its Author Central program. Sounds great, but BookScan isn't perfect.

Bookscan measures sales for only about 75 percent of the book vendors in the United States, including Amazon and brick-and-mortar Barnes & Noble stores. So the numbers point toward the success level of a given book, but don't provide precise sales data. On top of that, most small, independent book pub-

lishers don't report their sales to BookScan, so if your book was sold out of a garage, whether it's your garage or someone else's, you won't find those numbers on BookScan. And BookScan also doesn't count sales of ebooks or books sold for the Kindle, Nook, or other devices.

Amazon knows how many books it sells, but it won't tell anyone, not even authors. Amazon does offer a sales ranking, updated hourly, of each book it sells, but those are relative and not absolute figures. In other words, the book ranked 100th on the list may outsell the 101st book by a factor of 10, but you'd never know it.

Every book published in the United States that's offered for sale through bookstores or Amazon must carry an ISBN number and bar code. You'd think you could track sales in real time by punching in those num-



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bers, the same way you can track delivery of a FedEx package. Wrong again. Sales data is in the hands of the publishers and booksellers, and they certainly aren't turning over critical information like that to anyone.

You can always call your publisher and ask how many copies were sold, but that presumes you can get through their automated phone answering system. Unfortunately, you can't.

An author is welcome to demand an audit from a publisher, but good luck. It's expensive and time-consuming, it brands the author as a hothead, and even audited numbers aren't necessarily worth the paper they're printed

on. If the publishers control the data, how do you know that this time they're telling you the truth? Another area in which publishers dupe authors is in sales of rights to other entities – foreign publishers, translation rights, or book club sales. Major publishers may or may not sprinkle a little Book Of The Month Club money in your account, but you have no way of knowing how much you really deserve. Same thing is true if they sell copies in bulk sales. Their attitude is that their business is none of your business.

In short, there's really no way to know how many copies you've sold.

From a publisher's standpoint, a perfect world would be one where there are no authors at all – no one whose hand needs holding, no one whose royalties need to be paid, no one who calls demanding more action on the marketing of their books. Since writers remain a necessary evil to publishers, their strategy has been to commoditize writing and thus drive down the cost of getting a book written. If a publisher has to build up an author as a brand, the publisher is actually increasing the amount of money that author needs to be paid for his or her next book. But if writing becomes fungible, there will always be a plethora of

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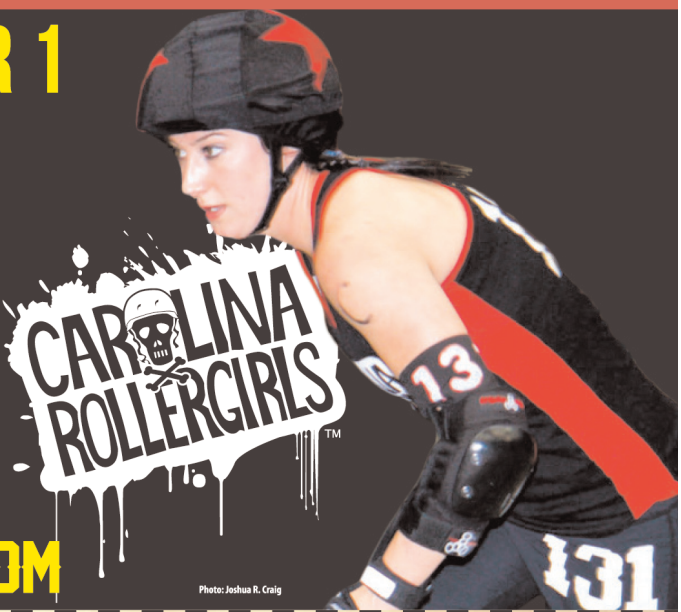


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scriveners suffering from low self-esteem willing and happy to write any book on any subject for a few thousand dollars. Or even for no advance at all.

You can only cheat authors for so long before they decide to fight back. Fighting back doesn't mean creating a tent city called "Occupy BookExpo." It means that authors are increasingly abandoning New York and instead publishing their books themselves, via Kindle Direct, Lulu, Smashwords, print-on-demand companies, and other means. It's never been easier to target niche markets via Google AdWords, Pinterest, and Facebook. The stigma of self-publishing is rapidly disappear-

ing. Authors now go directly to their readerships without the intervention or disingenuousness of the New York publishers.

Business professors call this phenomenon "disintermediation," the elimination of the middleman. Publishers have no regard for authors, as demonstrated by their mushroom strategy when it comes to providing accurate sales data, and by the decline in the fees they pay authors to write books.

You have to wonder what they're talking about at BookExpo America. If they're smart, the publishers are talking about what industries they can find jobs in now that the traditional New York publishing model is on its last legs. But since they aren't

smart, they're having the usual panel discussions on how to rearrange deck chairs and keep the Titanic band playing on.

At the height of the economic collapse in 2008, Simon & Schuster editor Michael Korda said that the publishing industry had weathered difficult storms before, and it wouldn't be long before everyone – publishers and agents – would be back to having lunch again.

Wrong. If I were an editor attending BookExpo America, I wouldn't be making lunch reservations. Instead, I'd leave early and head to a Starbucks where I can work on my resume.





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# Five Minutes With: Michael Levin

*Ed Note: We sent intrepid and talented Laine Cunningham out to get the straight stuff from a real pro. This is what happens when two type-A writing personalities sit together for a moment:*

Laine Cunningham: Just what made you slightly crazy enough to want to be a writer?

Michael Levin: I have no other marketable skills.

Seriously, it was when my Dad read me either Ask Mr. Bear or Winnie the Pooh, when I was a little kid. And then in third or fourth grade, we saw a filmstrip on authors and galleys and so on, and I knew that's what I wanted to do with my life. And then when I was 17 I saw some posters in a London bookstore with sketches of famous authors, and I

thought, that's who I want to be when I grow up. It's the only thing I've ever really wanted to do.

LC: What has been your greatest a-ha moment?

ML: I published a one-sentence letter to the editor of Time Magazine back in 1973, when I was 15. The topic was Henry Kissinger's ascension to Secretary of State early in President Richard Nixon's second term. I can still recite it: "Mr. Kissinger lends a touch of class to a very unclassy Administration." Seeing my name in print, in something as mighty as Time Magazine, gave me a sense that I might just have a shot at living my dream of being a writer.

LC: Name one thing a character

of yours has done that you wish you had done in real life.

ML: A character in The Socratic Method had a relationship with a character based on a female college professor of mine, with whom I was deep in unrequited love.

LC: Will you ever get around to doing that one thing? Why or why not?

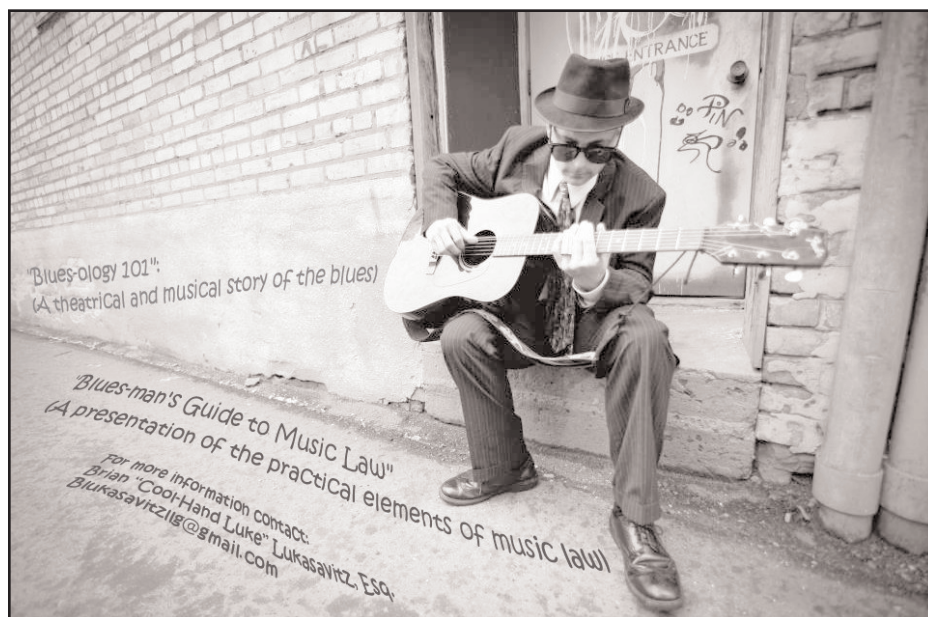
ML: I'm married.

LC: Favorite writing tool?

Used to be the pen. Now it's audio dictation device. Olympus OS-2400.

ML: Share one habit or personality quirk that, if you were not a writer, might have gotten you locked up long ago.

ML: Wow. Great question.



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Stealing Pampers from the 7-11, because since I have no other marketable skills, I would have had to get my babies disposable diapers somehow.

LC: Share five minutes of your writing day: Your first five minutes sharpening pencils and adjusting your notebooks; or the last five when you're feeling that flurry of creativity end with a flourish; or the five that are most notable to you.

ML: First five minutes: spent convincing myself that it really is worth trying to keep writing, that someone will like it, that someone will buy it, that someone will enjoy it, and thus ignore the negative voices in my head

that constantly remind me I will never amount to much, even though I already have amounted to, um, something.

LC: What one question have you always wished someone would ask you?

ML: Would you be willing to relocate to Shangri-La, be our new leader, live forever, and be married to the 27-year-old Jane Wyatt?

LC: What would your answer be?

ML: I've been waiting for you.



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# Paper Cuts: Books You Might Not Have Read

by Martin K. Smith

## *Mightier Than the Sword: A Kyokushin Karate Coming of Age Story* (Nathan Ligo, Ligo Ink, 2011)

Every once in a while you meet someone whose character is so superhumanly large that it leaves you plain dumbfounded. These peoples' all-around drive, discipline and accomplishments are so incredulous-making that, holding yourself to comparison, you want to just say *well, screw it, I can't ever match this. I might as well have myself stuffed and mounted in the Natural History Museum, in a glass case with the Cro-Magnons and all the other hominids who got left in the dust by Evolution.* Nathan Ligo once carried a barbell on his shoulders all the way up Grandfather Mountain, to raise charity money. He'd recently spent two years in one of the toughest karate schools on the planet. "A first-year student's morning training session [was] a fast six-kilometer run followed by three sets each of rope-jumping, jump-

ing squats, knuckle push-ups and sit-ups...I knew thirty consecutive one-minute rounds of full-contact, bare-knuckle *kumite*" [practice fighting]. A photo in this book shows him at a karate demonstration: he has leapt into the air and kicked his legs out, each one straight, a few degrees above horizontal. There is at least six feet between him and the floor. At the time, he wasn't even drinking age yet. If you've ever wondered what goes on inside the mind of one of these human supernovas, this book is a good guide.

He is the son of Davidson College professors. He went to a private preschool that they and several colleagues ran, where the focus enhanced his innate love to learn and to connect, intellectually and emotionally, with his elders.

*"We were taught artistic creativity,*

*freedom of expression and freedom of emotion... We were given no religious instruction, and we were not taught to see the world as anyone else told us it was meant to be seen. Instead, our innocent assertions became objects of the greatest praise whenever it became clear that we were looking at the world with our own two eyes, and searching for our own understanding of why things were the way that they were...My instinct was to trust and become close to my teachers...I was naturally inclined to anticipate what my teachers wanted and give it to them before they asked for it, and I was innocent of any inhibitions against doing so."*

When he hit public school, though, that kind of behavior didn't go over too well with the other kids (can you say "teacher's pet?") Nor did the fact that he was a little guy, a late grower, with "a rosy-cheeked baby face and feminine deep brown eyes." Divorce, remarriage and re-remarriage added to the stress. He alternated school years between the two towns where his parents now lived, so each fall he was always "the new guy" in class. His father grew ever more absorbed by Wife #3 and their new set of kids, turning away from Ligo as if from evidence of an embarrassing past mistake



## The Blotter

(very possibly encouraged in this by Wife #3 / Stepmom #2, who seems to have treated Ligo the way salt treats a slug.)

In the meantime, he'd become interested in karate; and, looking for classes in his early teens, found the Chapel Hill dojo of Seong Soo Choi, who taught a form known as "Kyokushin." It is an intense and powerful style, meant for full-body-contact combat. (When you see videos of people breaking boards and bricks with a single chop, that's Kyokushin, or Kyokushin-inspired.) The training is rigorous to beyond exhaustion. The philosophy has a strong monastic bent, equal parts monk and warrior, demanding spiritual as well as physical discipline. Ligo loved it. He threw himself headlong into training under Choi, with the dream of someday becoming a student of Choi's uncle Mas Oyama, the man who'd developed Kyokushin some decades earlier.

Mas Oyama was a first-rank celebrity in the martial-arts

world, with an entire subgenre of books, movies and *manga* celebrating his career. The ninjas in the Bond film *You Only Live Twice* were all trained by him; Dolph Lundgren had been one of his students. To become one of his personally selected *uchi deshi*, or "live-in disciples," to stay in the Young Lions Dormitory attached to his Tokyo dojo, and go through the 1000-day training program under his direct teaching, was a tough goal to attain. (Surviving the full thousand days was even tougher. Ligo relates many cases of bruised ribs, blacked eyes and knockout blows. "I'd been punched by Yamakage, at least in the body, and it's a none too pleasant experience. He's got a malformed fist from a previous injury so that his first knuckle protrudes an easy centimeter beyond the second one, and when you get punched by him, you get hit by just that one knuckle, and it smashes into you like a ball-peen hammer.") At nineteen, with six years of Master Choi's training behind

him, and a recommendation letter from Choi preceding him, he flew to Japan and started in on the program.

Ligo lets readers know up front that these memoirs' structure is not linear. He describes them as "a corkscrew tightening in on a series of revelations." I describe them as kaleidoscopic. Each chapter touches down at a different point in time, causing everything that's gone before to refract into a different pattern. You're reading along about Topic A; then in the next chapter you're tossed back a year or so and learn that while A was going on, Affair B was also happening. Then you land in the middle of A and B and start hearing about how Issue C was affecting both of them; and so on. I'm a linear kind of guy, maybe from all the murder mysteries I read as a youth, and I found this act a little hard to follow. I still kept reading though, because I kept wanting to find out what happened next, regardless of whatever odd spot that "next" might land. He left the dojo 400 days short of the thousand, but retained Mas Oyama's trust and respect – how did that happen? The business with the barbell and Grandfather Mountain – how did that come to pass? How would the magazine he dreamed of starting, *Budo Karate Illustrated*, turn out? Would he graduate from Davidson; would his romance work; would things shake out between him and his dad (and



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nasty Stepmom #2?) The personal honesty in his writing makes inquiring minds, and hearts, want to know.

He's passionate about everything, not just Kyokushin, and his passion shimmers from the writing like heat mirages. Poems of the Romantic era, Shelley and Wordsworth and Poe, resonate deeply for him, and get plenty of quote time. He capitalizes phrases like Conscience and Convention in the 19<sup>th</sup>-century Romantic style, because for him they're actual metaphysical entities and not mere concepts. There are long passages of self-analysis, internal monologues of self-discovery (which personally I think could've been slimmed down some by a more assertive editor.) Sometimes he repeats himself: the phrase "power pooled like primordial soup" turns up twice. He dreams dreams and sees visions:

*"Under gray winter skies cut by the silhouettes of college buildings and the naked twigs of Davidson's oaks, I ground my teeth as energy like white-hot lava rolled down my spine and off my fingertips and melt the soil behind me into smoldering trenches of volcanic glass...I was the only college student on campus to congratulate himself for his ability to walk across campus without drawing attention to himself even though on the inside he was staggering through the knee-deep sludge of the melted planet around him... The hundred steps of my vision were born in the fiery hot*

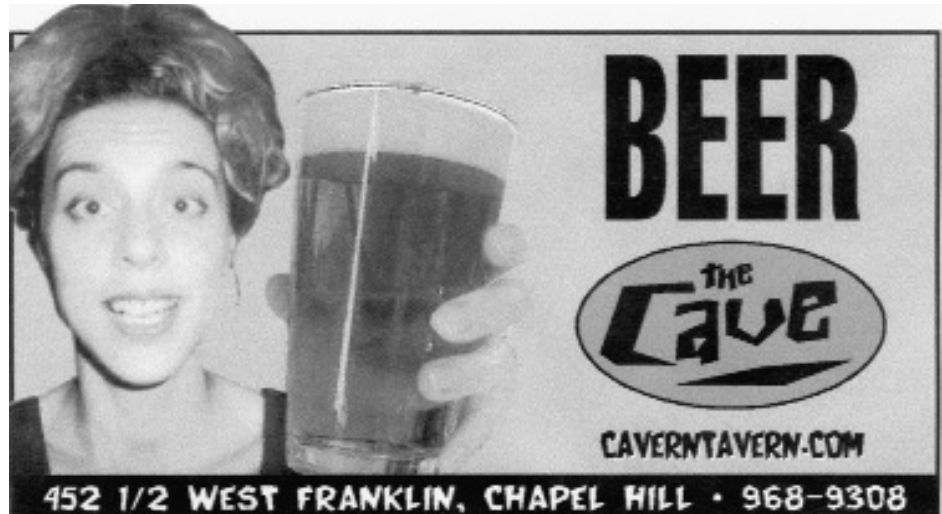
*plasma that spilled outward to fill my world..."*

Prose like this – and there's plenty of it – may make ironic hipsters to snicker; but all the way through I got the sense he wasn't blowing fancy smoke; that this was him speaking his truth. (And irony grows wearisome with overuse, and anyway at age 52 I'm too old to pass as a hipster.)

There are interesting incidental details, such as the workings of the dojo hierarchy, and the highly formal nature of Japanese conversation, more proprietous and deportmental even than the servants at Downton Abbey. (Like that story of the Eskimos' hundreds of words for snow, Japanese has, for instance, several varied phrases for "thank you," each one calibrated to a different social situation. He footnotes that English speakers who spend time in Japan miss this range of options when they return to English.) There are plenty of Japanese terms, of course, almost too many for me to keep up with.

There are characters like Jacques Sandulescu, mentor to him and early student of Mas Oyama's: kidnapped by the Nazis from his native Romania as a teen, for slave labor in a coal mine, where a cave-in crushed his legs; rather than let them be amputated, he bound them up with wire and cloth from a stolen mattress and escaped aboard a coal car, then by incredible efforts made his way to safety behind Allied lines. There are some pointed remarks on the state of American karate:

*"I couldn't understand how any self-respecting [karate] magazine could run pictures on its covers of out-of-shape-looking guys in blatantly staged action poses...A Japanese Kyokushin magazine might show a fighter getting knocked out, and it would be clear that the blow delivered was a real one, thanks to the sweat, and the blur, and that impossible-to-fake look on someone's impact-distorted face at the moment the lights go out. Black Belt was accustomed to showing fat guys posing in multi-colored karate uniforms, one*



## The Blotter

*snarling with his fist touching the other guy's face, and the other imitating the facial expression of someone getting punched. For me, having been there in the heart of it all, Black Belt's content was a laughable symptom of the fantasy-based American martial arts establishment."*

(Hmm – now why did I think of Steven Seagal all of a sudden?)

Ligo lives around here nowadays, with teaching dojos in Durham and Chapel Hill. I see him sometimes at Bean Traders' Coffeehouse on 9<sup>th</sup> Street, the one with the big blue awning. He is huge. "Broad-shouldered" in his case is an understatement: he looks like he could easily moonlight as a railroad-bridge abutment. He carries himself with an ease of great power comfortably controlled, a bulldozer guided by velvet gloves; and his conversations, when I've overheard them, are always in a voice

of calm and deference. I don't doubt he still has that drive, though. He credits Kyokushin with saving his life as a youth; and he has a vision of how it might could even help repair our national spirit: introducing other youngsters into its discipline of self-sacrifice and self-knowledge might raise up generations who'd get serious about protecting Mother Earth, respecting her peoples, and actively practicing the principles of Democracy (capital "D," of course).

Reading *Mightier*, I don't think he would ever mean to intimidate or belittle us sofa-spud types by his passion. He's a better man than that. With people like him, their drive is first and foremost focused on themselves. They'll always be their own fiercest coaches, feeling that they have to work ten times as hard because they have ten times as much to overcome. "I was fighting up

from the bottom again, and I wondered if that wasn't where I was at my best: beaten to the ground, fighting to clamber to my feet, and refusing to be defeated." Other people can look for sharks to jump. Nathan Ligo will always look for a new barbell and a new mountain to carry it up.



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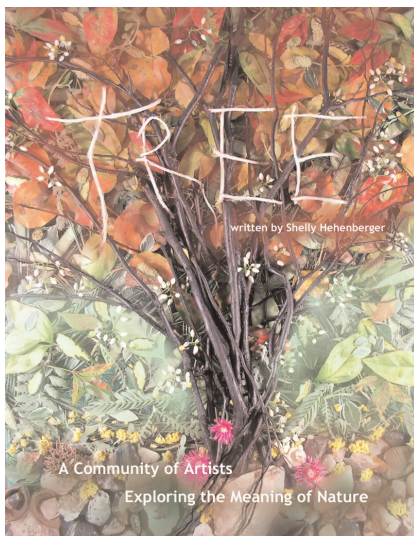
## The Blotter Magazine's

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# The Dream Journal

real dreams, real weird

Please send excerpts from your own dream journals. If nothing else, we'd love to read them. We won't publish your whole name.

[mermaid@blotterrag.com](mailto:mermaid@blotterrag.com)

*Sitting on the Dock of the Bay* must be hardwired into many of us so that if we need it, if the circumstances are right, it can play *in toto* as score to a dream. Mine is in an old diner, one of the moms down the street from my childhood is the waitress, she brings a Sprite and a paper straw but the paper is soon soggy and I ask for a plastic bendy-straw to replace it. There are other boys on the stools next to mine: sipping, playing "expanding snake" with their straw wrappers, listening to the juke. "I can't do what ten people tell me to do," and the boy next to me says "me neither," and the others giggle as if it's the first time they ever heard such a thing.

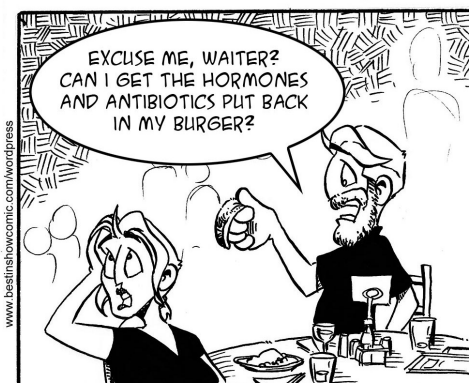
The waitress brings my fries. They're steaming hot, thick wedges of potato as long as ten-penny nails, so I don't dig right in. Looking left and right, I see no red plastic squirt-bottle of cooling catsup, and the waitress has retired to the kitchen so I can't ask her. Maybe the song is affecting her, too. Another of the boys pipes up, "...anyone with half a brain knows it's about a girl. It's always about a girl." And it is, too, always about a girl or a boy, everything of use to our emotions, everything of value. Now Otis pines for Georgia, and I can imagine that he has walked so far out on the dock that it looks like a pier now, only there are no fishermen or horizon-gazers or people who throw breadcrumbs to seagulls out their with him. He is at the far end, placing him as distant from San Francisco as he can be without actually jumping in the bay proper. When you want to feel sorry for yourself - because you are lonely - you do that kind of thing.

Alvin - cyberspace

## Best In Show



by Phil Julian



### Found Poetry: Stuffed in a drawer, an exercise in doggerel, in somewhat slack-jawed awe of the style of Sir William Schwenck Gilbert

Indeed, you are the model of a modern English Major,  
all the reading and the studying are actually quite dangerous.  
A paper cut can be so deep that it can get infected  
so you croak before the proper doctor's tests have quite detected it.

Squinting your eyes in light no brighter than a cocktail reading lamp.  
Stumbling inadvertently down the handicap folks' access ramp.  
You while away the hours tripping inky roads and lanes and such  
rather than strapping up your boots, walking without a paper crutch.

Those *Nortons* are so large your shoulders get an awful cramp in them.  
You sit in carrels reading, reading, reading – seem to camp in them –  
and when you do go out you've nothing much to say to anyone.  
Just knowing that you're erudite is not the same as having fun.

You keep a journal by your side but never write a thing in it.  
Your novel is unfinished and your poetry is full of shit.  
You've taken on your characters quite creepy personalities  
"There's nothing fine," she said leaving, "with your peculiarities."

Now who you gonna talk to when you're old and kind of crusty-like?  
No one will want to hear *about* the poems you read at open-mic.  
The volumes bought throughout the years sit buried in a coat of dust.  
And aint it just a tad pathetic living off your grandma's trust?

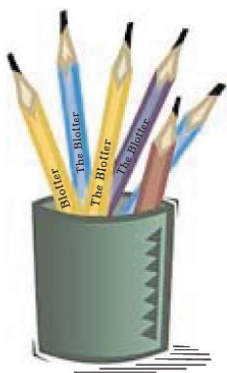
You worry how that the literary world is going down the pot,  
but all your quoting Chaucer isn't helping; no, it's really not.  
A Milton lecture makes a normal person want to kill himself.  
For fools like you this seems a corner of a rather special hell.

## CONTRIBUTORS:

New York Times best-selling author **Michael Levin** runs BusinessGhost.com and blogs at <http://deathofpublishing.blogspot.com>. He has written with Baseball Hall of Famer Dave Winfield, football broadcasting legend Pat Summerall, FBI undercover agent Joaquin Garcia, and E-Myth creator Michael Gerber. He has written for the *New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *CBS News*, the *Boston Globe*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and many other top outlets. You can 'like' him on Facebook here...[www.facebook.com/BusinessGhost](http://www.facebook.com/BusinessGhost)

**Ed. Note:** *OK, this one's not really "found poetry" except in that sense that we actually found it after having lost it. Only we didn't really lose it. I mean, it wasn't like it was a treasure that we put away and forgot and then wondered desperately where it was so that we could, oh, I don't know, take it on Antiques Roadshow, make a mint and retire to the Hamptons. It did, however, strike us as something that it would be interesting to illustrate, so we found artist and Blotterfriend **Jacquelyn Briggs** of Cary, NC, and she was up to the task to create something a little "Punch"-like. So look at the picture, read the poem, look at the picture some more, and have a smile.*

**Phil Juliano** is a pretty nice boy, but he doesn't have a lot to say. Phil Juliano is a pretty nice boy, but he changes from day to day...



Hey, Sporto!

You bet we'll work for food. Writing stories like you've never seen before. Poetry to make you claw out your heart, put it in a box and post it to your lovelorn gal. Shoes and ships and sealing wax. Artwork better than we philistines deserve. Every month like clockwork. You have to ask yourself. Why aren't you reading it?

### The Blotter

*It's Free But It Aint Cheap*

**Final Tidbits:** I'm tired of thunderstorms, attack ads, leftovers, couponing, reality shows about people who are famous because they've been on reality shows, mildewy towels at the pool, celebrity novels, and tests of the emergency broadcast system. Don't they understand that when the power goes out, all the tests in the world aren't going to get their important information to me? Oh, well. Stop grumping around and buy a copy of *Tree*, published by PencilPoint Mountain

([www.pencilpointmountain.com](http://www.pencilpointmountain.com)), an imprint of The Blotter Magazine, Inc. What is an imprint? It's what you find on the still, cold chests of suburban Seattlites who take a weekend jaunt up into the mountains to search for Sasquatch. Need karma-reparations? Make a donation to The Blotter ([www.blotterrag.com](http://www.blotterrag.com).) Buy a Blotter t-shirt while you're there, we're almost out and want to place another merch order. Visit your local independent bookstore, kind and gentle people that they are.

Stop asking, "What is the capital of Peru and what is that insect buzzing near my ear?" Open a book, turn on the local jazz station, have a frosty Pop-Ice, call your Sister - she's the one who's going to change your nasty diaper when you're eighty-seven, and give someone you like a kiss, they deserve it, and if they don't, well, you do, don't you? Got it? Good!

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