

Audience Buzz

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"A 21st century publishing corporation, owned by its writers"



Masthead

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In This Issue

1.1 Quote of the month

1.2 From the Editor

1.3 World Audience News

1.4 Book Corner: *Storm Over Morocco: Finding God in the Midst of Fanatics*, by Frank Romano

1.5 Author Interview: Diane Cantrell on Grief Management in Children

1.6 Feature Poem: *Existentialism and Power* by Ronnie Lee

1.7 Opinion

1.8 World Audience Videos on Youtube

1.9 World Audience Submission Guidelines

1.10 Literary Links

1.1 Quote of the Month

‘Unless we achieve authentic myths, our society will fill the vacuum with pseudo-myths and beliefs in magic.’

~ *The Cry for Myth* by Rollo May

Read a review of Rollo May’s *The Cry for Myth* at http://www.existential-therapy.com/Book_Reviews/The_Cry_for_Myth.htm

1.2 From the Editor

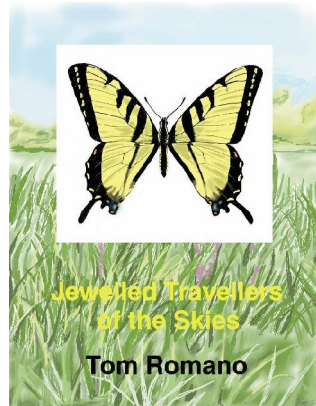
Hello and welcome to the 5th issue of *Audience Buzz*! As we approach the end of the first decade of our 21st century, a fierce revival of skepticism regarding established and strengthening icons is taking over the new age’s zeitgeist. Religious dogmas have been under attack for quite some time. Now the doubt of skepticism is doing away with the historical veracity of theological icons; e.g. Burton H. Wolfe’s *The Case Against Jesus* and Ibn Warraq’s *The Quest for the Historical Mahammad*. Such books challenge what has been presented to billions to followers through centuries of preaching. Then there are books in circulation which undermine the mainstream scientific and cultural trends: Rodger Murphree’s *Heart Disease*, Niall MacLaren’s *Humanizing Madness*, Michael Gilbert’s *The Disposable Male*, and so on. Earth scientists at the Leicester University have already put forth the suggestion to name assign the current age Anthropocene, a new epoch characterized by excessive environmental influence and economic development caused by humans. In brief, we are living in a time of awesome change. Every belief, every ideal, every value is being questioned. Where does literature stand in this torrent of skeptic flux? In a very safe place, I suppose – the human mind, whence all the doubt comes.

The standards of excellence and judgmental criteria of literary texts may, and do, change from time to time. But the need to create and appreciate something different (or ‘new’ as they commonly put it) remains an inseparable and virtually indestructible mate of the human center of creativity: the dynamic mind. The most fascinating aspect of literature’s relationship to change is that it becomes very medium of bringing about the change in the first place. Literature is the unsurpassed means of transmitting ideas to a wide number of people. Every book, article, or news story that sparks a conversation takes a philosophical or quasi-philosophical view of an issue, presenting arguments in favor of and/or against the issue in question, and presenting a case for change. To those who are convinced by the logic speaking for or against a particular matter, change becomes an immediate reality. The Minds that doubt the strength of the logic are incubated with the germs of change and the matter is presented in a different (or new) light. In all cases, literature floats ceaselessly on the ever-shifting surface of human thinking.

Ernest Dempsey

Visit http://www.worldaudience.org/pubs_bks/pubs_bks_Dempsey_Illusion.html to take a look at Ernest Dempsey’s poetry book *Islands of Illusion*.

1.3 World Audience News

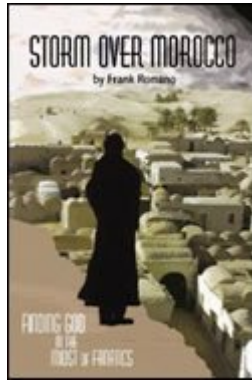


- ✓ The second collection of plays by Louis Phillips is now in print, *Gertrude Stein in Dayton and Other Plays* (World Audience Inc). These plays embody the richest elements of dialogue and dramatic mood: poignant and humorous, powerful and articulate. The book is available from *Amazon* and *Barnes & Noble* besides WA's bookstore at http://www.worldaudience.org/pubs_bks/Phillips_GS.html.
- ✓ WA has released a sparkling new title *Get Into The Zone In Just One Minute: 21 Simple Techniques To Improve Your Performance* by Dr. Jay Granat-psychotherapist, hypnotherapist, author, lecturer, coach of Champions, and founder of *StayInTheZone.com*. Dr. Granat's book unlocks the door to success for every profession, from acting to sports to white-collar professionals. http://worldaudience.powweb.com/pubs_bks/DrGranat.html.
- ✓ WA is finalizing the release of several new titles including: *The Collected Poetry of Hugh Fox*, *Jewelled Travellers of the Skies* by Tom Romano, *A Genealogy of Greatness: The Ethnic Shaping of Industrial America* by Quentin R. Skrabec Jr., *The Sounds of Music: Early Recording Artists* by Charles Marowitz, and *Biblical Revisions and Para-Biblical Visions* by Mordecai Roshwald, *Italian New York: A Guide to Italian Culture in New York* by Anthony Rubino, Jr. and M. Stefan Strozier. http://www.worldaudience.org/pubs_bks/pubs_bks_index.html.
- ✓ As the publications of World Audience enjoy greater demand and more exposure, WA is growing on the web. We have launched two new web sites that we are marketing towards the United Kingdom (see www.worldaudience.co.uk), and to cell phones (see www.worldaudience.mobi).
- ✓ At <http://community.livejournal.com/worldaudience/>, WA has started its blog for posting and critique of literary works by members. The purpose of the blog is to create an online community of amateur artists, particularly writers of literary style works that will be selectively featured in an e-zine. All writers/artists are encouraged to visit the site and join our community of writers.

1.4 Book Corner

This issue presents a review of Frank Romano's *Storm Over Morocco* (World Audience Inc, New York, 2007), a grasping autobiographical account of his encounter with a group of fundamentalist Muslims in Morocco. The review included here was contributed by Mary Ann Witt, a retired university professor.

Storm Over Morocco: Finding God in the Midst of Fanatics, by Frank Romano



Frank Romano's autobiographical memoir is in a sense many books in one: an account of the intellectual, emotional, and spiritual development of a young Californian in Paris, a travel narrative that takes the reader from France into parts of Morocco unknown to Westerners, a religious meditation on meaning to be found in the Qur'an and the teachings of Islam, and an exciting adventure story of a traveler's imprisonment in and escape from a mosque ruled by fanatics. On every level, it holds the reader's attention, indeed fascination.

Romano begins his story in Paris, where he studied philosophy in the 70's, with flashbacks to his earlier life in rural California and in a ghetto in Northern California. Sensing the limits of his philosophical studies, he meets a group of young Moroccans who impress him with the deep joy they find in their Islamic faith. He then decides to embark on a quest for a possible universal religion, believing that the study of Islamic beliefs will help him in this endeavor. The quest takes him on a long and adventurous trip to Casablanca, where he first describes poverty and despair never encountered before, and finally meets a family who offers him the renowned Arab/Berber hospitality as well as solace and advice. In spite of the family's premonitions, he decides to enter a mosque as a kind of novice monk in order to study the Qur'an and Arabic, and to undergo spiritual discipline and practice meditation. What first seems to be an experience in spiritual growth, even though accompanied by severe fatigue, illness, and general physical deprivation through fasting, soon turns into a nightmare of confinement and brain washing.

The turning point of the journey comes gradually, as the narrator begins to realize that his quest for the universal religion through Islam will never be accepted in the conditions in which he finds himself. What is expected is, instead, conversion and unconditional

allegiance to Islam. Gradually he understands that he is not free to come and go but will rather be held hostage until the conversion is complete. Perhaps the most harrowing part of the narrative is the sequence of chapters that take place in the desert in southern Morocco where Frank Romano (now named Muhammad Abdelaziz) has traveled with his fellow monks on a kind of missionary journey. There he meets the man who is to be his spiritual guide, a certain Hanify, who seems intelligent and cultivated, speaking perfect French as well as Arabic. But Hanify shows his double nature almost immediately. On the one hand he holds out the hope of Allah's guiding light and the promise of paradise; on the other, he is certain of the consequences of apostasy. "But be careful—you will be persecuted until the ends of the earth. . .and rejection after becoming a Moslem is also punished by death and eternal suffering in Hell" (p. 177). It gradually becomes clear that Hanify is in control of Frank's life and that he will not allow his disciple to leave the brotherhood, even after their return to Casablanca. The tale of Frank's escape and his struggle to avoid being recaptured is in itself a gripping story.

Although the book does ultimately portray a potentially dark side of Islam, it should not be interpreted as being anti-Islamic. On the contrary, it demonstrates a fervent admiration for Islamic learning and spirituality, as well as for the many individuals who live their faith with decency, compassion, and tolerance. It is also in part a hymn to the beauty of Morocco and the generosity and strong character of Moroccans. Both its understanding and its warning make this story of the 1970's extremely relevant to the first decade of the twenty-first century.

Reviewed by Mary Ann Witt

Learn more about *Storm Over Morocco* and order a copy at
http://www.worldaudience.org/pubs_bks/pubs_bks_Romano_Storm.html

1.5 Author Interview

Diane Cantrell is a Licensed Professional Counselor and the author of the recent children's book *Good-bye, Baby Max*. Beautifully illustrated by Heather Castles, this short book tells the story of school children who feel the sorrow of losing a pet chick 'Baby Max' to death. Their teacher encourages them to use their imagination and creativity in order to say the final goodbye to Baby Max. Diane's book is different from many other children books in that it is not simply amusing but teaches a very important lesson about helping children manage grief when they come to face it in their lives. Here is a brief conversation with Diane Cantrell.

[An Interview with Diane Cantrell, author of *Good-bye, Baby Max*](#)



Ernest: Diane, you work as a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC). What exactly does an LPC do?

Diane: Licensed Professional Counselor, or LPC, is a licensure for professionals in mental health. The exact job titles vary in different areas. In the US, an LPC occurs at the state level and generally requires a Masters degree in counseling or related field. Also, an LPC needs to have supervised clinical experience and they must pass a state licensing exam. To become a licensed professional counselor I received a Master of Art's degree in mental health counseling. An LPC can provide mental health care services, counseling and psychotherapy to a wide range of clientele in agencies and private practice settings.

Ernest: How long and wide is your experience of working with kids, especially those under age 10?

Diane: I began working with young children about 38 years ago when I was in high school, volunteering to teach classes of a religious nature to indigent children. While earning my degree in elementary education and kindergarten, I worked as a daycare provider. Later I taught pre-k and kindergarten for approximately 6 years. For another 4-5 years I worked with pregnant and parenting teens, assuring that their emotional, physical and intellectual needs were being met so that they could provide for their children before and after birth. I have worked with parents and children in private practice settings for a total of 12 years. Presently I work with a developmental behavioral pediatrician in providing counseling services and play therapy, as well as parent training.

Ernest: How does loss by the death of a loved one affect a child?

Diane: Children have emotions just like adults. They may feel extreme feeling of sadness, anger and fear around the loss of a loved one. One of the primary differences in how children grieve is in how they express their feelings of loss. Children haven't developed the language to express their feelings verbally. As a result, they often act out their feelings of anger, fear and sadness through misbehavior. For example, a young

child that is angry because of the death of a loved one may exhibit increased hostility toward their siblings and peers, refuse to do school work and oppose adult authority.

Much of how a child outwardly responds to death is dependant on their developmental level. For example, until the age of 5 or 6 a child doesn't understand the permanence of death. They may continue to ask when their loved one will return or when they will get better. The young child believes that a wrong doing on their part caused the death and therefore must be reassured that they are not to blame for the loss of the loved one.

Ernest: Your book Good-bye, Baby Max is themed on the feelings of loss resulting from the death of a pet. Are pets loved by kids so deeply that their death needs to be managed in a proper way in the family?

Diane: The degree in which a child grieves the loss of a family pet is dependant on the degree of bonding that has transpired between the animal and the child. The child's feelings of loss need to be taken very seriously by parents, as well as other adults, and be treated with a great degree of respect. The loss of a pet, whether it is a gold fish or a dog, is often the first experience a child has with death. How these events are handled teaches the child much about how we as a family or culture value feelings, relationships and life.

Unfortunately, we have become a "throw away" society. Everything is replaceable. When our electrical appliances break we no longer have them repaired but replace them. When clothing is out of style we toss them and buy new ones. When relationships don't serve our needs we all too often toss them as well. In acknowledging children's feelings of loss and sadness, as well as providing them with rituals around saying good-bye to their family pet, we teach children the importance of relationships, honoring their feelings, and provide numerous opportunities for obtaining coping skills in preparation of the many losses they will face in their lifetime.

Ernest: What should parents and elders in a family do in order to help a child manage grief?

Diane: You may say this goes in steps. First of all, listen, validate and reassure. Be patient in answering repeated questions and assure children that it is okay and normal for them to feel mad, sad, afraid or tearful. If your child expresses worry or sadness, you can provide validation by telling them that you feel sad as well. While acknowledging feelings, be sure to let the child know that even though the feelings may be overwhelming they can handle them.

Secondly, observe. After a loss, play close attention to your child's play, artwork and behavior for these are the blueprints to your child's feelings and concerns. Remember, children ages 4 to 6 don't have the language to express complex emotions but do so through their play and behavior. Notice any themes that may emerge in your child's play and artwork. Also be aware of behavior changes such as increased aggressiveness, anger or withdrawal. These are signs that your child is having a difficult time with the loss.

Thirdly, engage. It is so important to provide opportunities to engage your child in conversation about the loss. Reading fictional picture books that address grief and loss can serve as valuable springboards for discussion. Having your child tell about their artwork can also lead to meaningful interactions. Assist the child in planning a special good-bye for their pet. It may be a traditional funeral or a memorial in which the child draws pictures for their pets and or takes a special walk in the pet's honor. Children have many good ideas about how they wish to say good-bye to their special family friend. Be sure to ask, listen and assist them in the implementation of their ideas.

Ernest: You have also worked as a kindergarten teacher. How can a teacher help kids in dealing with grief?

Diane: Teachers are extremely powerful influences in a child's life. In my opinion, their role in assisting a child through grief is similar to that of the parent's. It is important for teachers to be sensitive to and acknowledge the student's feelings. Knowledge of the various reactions a child may have to death depending on their stage of development assists the teacher in understanding unexpected behaviors. Teachers can read stories to children addressing loss and feelings as well as offer opportunities for self-expression through art and writing.

Ernest: What importance do you place on children's stories in dealing with loss and bereavement?

Diane: Story telling has been an intricate component in the evolution of man. For centuries men and women have passed down their beliefs, morals, values and cultural nuances through stories. We continue to do so today. Some of our greatest literature and films send profound messages and provoke thought. Children's literature does the same. A good children's story engages the child while teaching powerful lessons.

In *Good-bye, Baby Max*, much can be learned about saying good-bye. Words are introduced to children that are very much a part of our culture's tradition in saying the final good-bye to loved ones through death. Vocabulary words that are introduced are funeral, memorial service and memorial plaque or (tombstone). The book can serve as a springboard for discussion in preparing children for their first funeral, memorial service or graveside service. More importantly, it prepares children for emotions that will be felt and ways to cope with them.

Ernest: Thank you Diane! We hope to see more helpful work from you in the future.

Visit <http://goodbyebabymax.com/> for more info about Diane Cantrell's *Good-bye, Baby Max*.

To read a review of *Good-bye, Baby Max*, click on <http://citychickmag.com/blog/?p=97> or visit <http://goodbyebabymax.com/>.

1.6 Feature Poem

The feature poem is Ronnie Lee's *Existentialism and Power*, published in his book of poetry *The Meaning of Life: Existentialism, the Universe, and Social Problems*:

Existentialism and Power

Nothingness is immovable,
Thus existence is movable.

If nothingness is immovable,
And any part of existence is movable,
Nothing has total power,
And everything has its place,
In a hierarchy.

If any part of existence is movable,
Then no thing in existence,
Has total control,
And infinite power,
Is not possible.

So power is divided,
To make a hierarchy and organization,
That allows to perform this natural law,
That every part of existence,
Is movable,
And thus it means movable,
By itself,
Or by any other part.

Thus no thing has total power,
And can be moved by others.

That is the equality and justice,
That the universe allows,
So that there is some level of democracy,
And safety in the universe.

About Ronnie Lee: Ronnie Ka Ching Lee is a Chinese poet and philosopher, educated from England and living in Hong Kong. He is the author of three books: *The Book of Life*, *The Philosophy of Life*, and *The Meaning of Life*. To read more about Lee and his book *The Meaning of Life*, visit <http://www.outskirtspress.com/webpage.php?isbn=1432706756>.

1.7 Opinion

Read what some of the book lovers are saying about the world of literature.

- ❖ I have read Burton H. Wolfe's book, *The Case Against 'Jesus'* and highly recommend it to readers, especially those still uncertain as to whether or not Jesus of the gospels may have actually existed. This book is the most complete historical and archaeological examination of the "Jesus" character that I have ever read.

Once you have read *The Case Against 'Jesus,'* you will be convinced beyond all doubt that the Jesus of the gospels is a totally contrived, imagined character whose existence is comparable to Humpty Dumpty, the Wizard of Oz, Superman, and numerous other imaginary, mythic characters.

My personal opinion is that once this book is in the public domain, it will have a stupendous effect within the freethought, atheist, and humanist community, while at the same time as word of its publication becomes known it will so aggravate, upset and perturb the Christian establishment that any member of their esteemed representatives will spend endless hours in vain attempts to refute the author's infallible and factual conclusions concerning the non-existence of the New Testament Jesus.

This is a book that belongs on the shelf of every freethinker, atheist, agnostic, and humanist, and, if at all possible, on the shelf of every member of the Christian clergy and theologian who has been indoctrinated into believing in the fairy tale of a realistic Jesus.

Leland W. Ruble

Visit <http://members.tripod.com/~AtheistEvangelist666/read1.html> to read about Leland W. Ruble and his quarterly newsletter *Freethought Perspective*.

- ❖ *Last Call*, the debut collection by Colorado writer Blair Oliver, reads like an extended meditation in response to this attitude. Things may not have been that much better in the old days, Oliver suggests. Besides, we still have to live now. Oliver's men share two key traits: a fear of failure and the primal knowledge that all their failures have consequences. The narrator in "Blackbird," slowly drifting away from his wife, is compelled to save his children "from all of us." In "Snow Globe," a man takes his son with him as he tries to purchase absolution for old sins, only to learn, bluntly, that absolution is neither cheap nor easy. "I'm not a man you can bribe," says one intended recipient of his guilt-driven generosity.

Peter Soliunas (*New West, Next West*)

Read Peter Soliunas's review of *Last Call*, published in High Country News, online at http://www.hcn.org/servlets/hcn.Article?article_id=17464#. *High Country News* is an independent biweekly news magazine that reports on the West's natural resources, public lands, and changing communities. *High Country News* is updated online at <http://www.hcn.org/>.

Submit Your Comments

Your comments on any literary work that has either inspired you or happened to you as exceptionally meaningful/well-written are welcome for our opinion section. Please limit your comment to 100 words or less and tell us why you liked the work. A two sentence bio including a link (if any) will be included with the comment posted in the Opinion section of *Audience Buzz*. Send your comment pasted in the body of the email (no attachments) to dempsey87@gmail.com.

1.8 World Audience Videos on Youtube

Youtube is enjoyed by millions of visitors from around the world. World Audience has its fun-to-watch videos on Youtube and links to some cool WA Videos are listed below:

o Blair Oliver's video relating his short fiction book *Last Call*:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MMPQwNLWxIY>

o Ernest Dempsey reads his poem 'A Promise' from his poetry book *Islands of*

Illusion: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M7UdbvDeufY>

o Mike Stefan Strozier reads his poem 'Charlie Rose' that is part of his poetry book

Schizophrenia Poetry: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XTZIMITGTpc>

o A glimpse of Burton H. Wolfe's challenging book *The Case Against Jesus*:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KN-CpB-KDY&>

[eurl=http://www.worldaudience.org/pubs_bks/pubs_bks_Wolfe_Jesus.html](http://www.worldaudience.org/pubs_bks/pubs_bks_Wolfe_Jesus.html)

1.9 World Audience Submission Guidelines

World Audience welcomes submissions of poetry, short fiction, and nonfiction from writers around the world. All submissions are required to be in English.

Audience Magazine

audience is a literary journal, published quarterly, of short stories, poetry, plays, interviews, essays, and more, from the best writers around the world. M. Stefan Strozier is the editor-in-chief of *audience*. Here are the ways to submit:

- Interact with writers on our [wiki database community](#) page;
- Post and review work [on our blog](#);
- Submit your work:
submissions@worldaudience.org.

Audience Review

The audience Review, a quarterly publication, features reviews of plays on Broadway, Off-Broadway, off-Off Broadway, and Regional Theater, reviews of literature and poetry, essays, interviews, and other informative critiques. The editor-in-chief is Ernest Dempsey. Note to theater producers: If you would like *The audience Review* to review your play or musical, please write us: theatre@worldaudience.org. To inquire about becoming a reviewer for *The audience Review*, please send your resume and a writing sample to: theatre@worldaudience.org. To purchase back orders, you may pay for the current issue with Paypal, and request specific copies by sending an email to: subscriptions@worldaudience.org.

Books

World Audience publishes books! If you are a writer, please send us a proposal. We publish collections of short stories, poetry, and plays, as well as novels, non-fiction, satire, wit, and books related to the theater, such as *The Audience Book of Theatre Quotations*, by Louis Phillips.

World Audience is seeking to publish a work of fiction or non-fiction (or a combination of the two) by a soldier who served in the Iraq War! Please contact: strozier@worldaudience.org for further information.

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World Audience Publishers is a rapidly-growing press. Our standards are very high and we seek to publish excellent books. In the current publishing environment, it is easy to get published, and many publishers even boast their lack of barriers. World Audience does not lower its standards and will only publish excellent books. We extensively edit our writers' books, and our writers are consistently grateful for the high-quality editing we provide. As for royalties, most publishers offer 10% or less to their authors; but rarely more than about 12%. World Audience, Inc. far exceeds that amount. If a writer's book is the correct fit for us, the writer enters into a partnership with us. We hope you consider us with your book proposal, or submit to our journal or review.

1.9 Literary Links

Skive Magazine

An Australian Quarterly magazine of select short stories, in different genres, from writers across the globe: <http://www.skivemagazine.com/>

The New York Quarterly

Quarterly magazine of literary excellence in poetry, published for over 35 years from New York: <http://www.nyquarterly.org/>

Riehl Life

Janet Grace Riehl's website featuring articles, reviews, and interview: <http://www.riehlife.com/>

Philosophy Now

A widely-read, bimonthly periodical covering all aspects of philosophy through essays, articles, reviews, interviews, and more: <http://www.philosophynow.org/>

The Dvorkins

Informative website of authors David and Leonore Dvorkin, containing articles and essays on different topics: <http://www.dvorkin.com/>

Litmocracy

An online trove of writings in various genres contributed by registered members and Open to all readers and writer from across the globe: <http://www.litmocracy.com>

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