

Audience Buzz

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1.1 Quote of the Month

'To believe your own thought, to believe that what is true for you in your private heart is true for all men-that is genius.'

~ Ralph Waldo Emerson

Read more about Ralph Waldo Emerson's life and works at <http://www.online-literature.com/emerson/>

1.2 From the Editor

Hello and welcome to the premier issue of WA's monthly newsletter! Today, we take a brief look at the birth of World Audience Publishers, the reason it appeared on the world's literary map, and the purpose it aims to serve.

The Arrival of World Audience on World's Literary Scene

World Audience Inc. (WA) was conceived a few years ago in the mind of Mike Stefan Strozier, now the company's CEO. Mike had already gained an appreciable level of experience as a playwright and poet. The idea of founding a publishing company was

sparked by his interaction with writers from diverse cultural, educational, and ideological backgrounds, who all shared one core quality: passion for literature. With the Internet serving as the cross-boundary medium of interaction, Mike knew it was time to provide another platform for lovers of literature to share their views and exhibit their writing talent in the best possible way. After doing his homework on the publishing enterprise, he launched World Audience Inc. in New York in June 2006.

There seems nothing extraordinary in WA's history. Well, there is no such big, flighty claim here. But the company's birth is far from insignificance. One is tempted to ask, 'why WA?' and the answer contains the whole point of WA's landing on the literary track: 'we are here because we bring quality literature from around the world to one single point.' America is our contemporary world's heart of publishing and opening up a literary den of high quality literature from around the globe in New York, the heart of America, WA has ensured the ideal opportunity for promoting literary ventures.

Since June 2006, WA has grown rapidly despite a small initial budget. The company has many books in various literary genres: poetry, fiction, short fiction, drama, non-fiction, humor, and essays. Authors from all corners of the world are welcome to submit their book proposals. The works are judged by the company's editors solely on the base of their literary quality. WA does not charge its authors a dime for publishing. Unlike the 8% to 10% author royalty offered by most publishers, it offers a 25 % author royalty out of the net profits from a book's sales. Authors are expected to promote the sales of their books while WA also aggressively markets its products through different media: electronic and print.

WA also publishes two quarterly journals, *Audience* and *Audience Review*, which are distributed in both electronic and print formats. *Audience* is an anthology of poems, short fiction, essays, articles, and creative nonfiction from writers across the globe. *Audience Review* is a quarterly publication featuring reviews of literary titles and interviews with authors. Reviews and author interviews, published in *Audience Review*, are mostly contributed by WA's own editorial staff.

Today, WA is rapidly growing and holds a bright future in prospect. The success of WA Publishers does not solely owe to the literary talent of the authors but also to the fact that quality literature is still cherished by avid readers. We are growing because our audience is nurturing us. And our audience is global!

Ernest Dempsey

Visit www.worldaudience.org to know more about *World Audience Publishers* online. Browse *World Audience Publications* at <http://www.worldaudience.org/pubs.html>.

1.3 World Audience News

- ✓ World Audience just reached its first year of publishing operations. During this time, it has published over 60 titles. This phenomenal rate of growth is the direct result of WA's so talented and hard-working members. Besides producing book titles, WA also publishes a literary journal *Audience*, and a review publication *The Audience Review*. Click <http://www.worldaudience.org/members.html> to view WA's members. To browse book titles and volumes of WA's journals, visit <http://www.worldaudience.org/pubs.html>
- ✓ The 7th issue of *Audience* is out now, featuring work from excellent writers around the world. If you are a writer, whether established or a new voice, we would love to receive submissions from you. Send us your work at submissions@worldaudience.org. Scroll down the pages to read World Audience Submission Guidelines.
- ✓ World Audience's award-winning poet Magdalena Ball has stepped in the world of literary fiction with her debut novel *Sleep Before Evening* (BeWrite Books, 2007). The novel is a brilliantly written, insightful story of a teenage girl who falls into delinquency after a family trauma. Magdalena Ball is now working on her new poetry book. More about her novel is available online at <http://www.compulsivereader.com/html/images/SleepBeforeEvening.htm>.
- ✓ Matthew Ward, editor of *Skive Magazine*, has just finished editing and formatting WA's newest published book *Escaping the Rat Race - Freedom in Paradise*. This excellent book is loaded with beautiful pictures of the land, and original artwork, and the real-life stories of people in Belize. Book details for *Escaping the Rat Race* are available online at http://www.worldaudience.org/pubs_bks/pubs_bks_Peham_EtRR.html
- ✓ *World Audience* has just released a collection of essays in book form dealing with political opinion of writers on the issue of impeaching George W. Bush. The book is titled *Impeaching George W. Bush and Members of His Administration; Essay by Different Writers*. It is generally being regarded as a collection of outrage, very well-written. See http://www.worldaudience.org/pubs_bks/pubs_bks_Various_Bush.html for book details and ordering information.

1.4 Book Corner

The feature book of this issue is *Impeaching George W. Bush and His Administration; Essays by Different Writers*, published by the World Audience Inc. (August, 2007). The book includes essays by opinionated writers from around the world on the issue of impeaching American President George W. Bush over Iraq War and the problems it

created for the US and the world. Following is part of a comprehensive review of the book written by writer and vocal artists Lo Galluccio.

Impeaching George W. Bush and His Administration; Essays by Different Writers

The basic idea behind impeachment is that it would show the world that America is willing to investigate a corrupt government and try to save our Democracy against internal abuses of power and the misguided policy which has caused the ravages of war in Iraq because of an American occupation.

In his essay “We, the People” Editor M. Stefan Strozier states:

“Right now, America is facing a lot of trouble. This has been the case ever since President Bush took office. In life, there are different kinds of troubles. The trouble America faces right now is potentially irrevocable. President Bush has 18 months left in office –the perfect amount of time to impeach him. President Bush is leading us down a path from which we might not emerge. The only way to stop this from happening is to impeach President Bush, and soon.”

Essentially Strozier states that “a general is not a president”; but, the hitch is that he is, in times of war, the Commander in Chief. The issue it seems to me is that this war was started under false premises, declared won under false premises and continues to be fought without any regard to the clear evidence that it cannot be won. And the cost in human life, over 3,000 American soldiers killed and up to 100’s of thousands of Iraqi’s killed, aside from the financial cost of over \$530 billion in government funds spent, is more than criminal waste. There may be just and unjust wars. This one, it seems to me, cannot be classified as a just one. And that is good enough reason to go along with an impeachment proceeding.

These are vastly different cases of Impeachment and so it needs to be noted that impeaching a President really means putting him on trial, it does not mean automatically having him/her thrown out of office.

In “The Finger and the Moon” by Tom Frozart, he lists three reasons for impeaching George W. Bush:

- Serial lying; bogus claims about special power, WMD;
- Conducting an illegal war; facilitation of crimes as described in Nuremburg Charter and Geneva Convention on POW;
- Committing/inducing his administration to commit a sizable number of federal crimes against civil liberties.

Particularly impressive is a 10 part imagistic expose by a NY based psychologist and singer/songwriter named Dr. Mel Waldman who in a montage of styles describes the horrors of the war. It is poetic, and declarative, psychological and metaphorical.

In his introduction he writes:

“This war is a labyrinth and we are trying to find our way out. But for now, we are lost in a dark dreamscape of unspeakable violence and death, a black hole of despair that is vast and incomprehensible...”

Other parts are titled: 1. THE INVISIBLE SOLDIER, 2. WAR IS EVIL – SOMETIMES NECESSARY / THE STREETS OF PLANET EARTH, 3. WAR IS INSANE 4. WAR IS FREUDIAN: A REPETITION COMPULSION 5. THE IRAQ WAR SEEMED JUSTIFIED 6. PRESIDENT BUSH SEEMED ENCHANTED BY LADY VICTORY 7. OUR SAFETY IS QUESTIONABLE. 8. ADAAM HUSSEIN’S HANGING SEEMED INFLAMMATORY 9. THE WAR IS LITERARY 10. WAR IS TRAUMATIC

As far as I know, Presidential candidate Barack Obama is mounting the strongest drive to impeach President Bush and end the War in Iraq. There will be numerous demonstrations in Washington this month against the war though it is interesting that they are not getting the kind of prime-time coverage one would have thought they deserved. In almost every poll the majority of American voters want the war to end but the Senate and Congress still seem gridlocked about how to ease out of the situation gracefully. Bush, it seems, is just trying to save face.

M. Stefan M. Strozier has put together a mighty collection of pieces – many of which I couldn’t include, of short letters to the Editor and poems also, about why impeaching Bush could lead to an end to the War and a return to a sense that America is willing to hold its highest leader accountable for his worst mistakes.

Lo Galluccio,
September 2007.

To read the complete review, click on
<http://dougholder.blogspot.com/2007/09/impeaching-george-w-bush-world-audience.html>.

Book details of *George W. Bush and His Administration; Essays by Different Writers*, are there at
http://www.worldaudience.org/pubs_bks/pubs_bks_Various_Bush.html.

To download a free sampler of the book, follow the link
http://www.worldaudience.org/pdfs_samplers/Impeaching_Bush/Sampler_Bush.pdf.

1.5 Author Interview

This month, *Audience Buzz* is going to present my interview with Parisian author and activist Frank Romano who published his true, non-fiction story *Storm Over Morocco: Finding God in the Midst of Fanatics* (World Audience Inc., 2007) about his experience with a bunch of fundamentalist Muslims. Frank’s visit to Morocco was part of his quest

for finding a universal spiritual reality but his encounter with orthodox religionists made him feel the need to make efforts for interfaith dialogues among different ideologies.

An Interview with Frank Romano, the author of *Storm Over Morocco: Finding God in the Midst of Fanatics*

Ernest: Frank, would you please tell us a little about your academia and earlier life, the life before writing?

Frank: I don't think there was ever a life before writing as I had many works indelibly printed in my mind long before any of them were engraved on paper.

With respect to academia, since I had worked as a live-in counselor for delinquents in Sonoma County, California, I initially went to UC Davis to eventually become a criminal lawyer to help them. During and after law school, I was intent on helping all victims, including foreigners, who, persecuted in their home countries, sought political asylum in the United States.

My years at UC Davis also opened up a world of languages and international relations which inspired me to work for world peace and to engage in brokering international transactions. That, in turn, inspired me, after I had opened my law firm and practiced a while in California, to study in France which I will discuss more later.

Ernest: What motivated you to go for a PhD in Law?

Frank: I returned to the University of Paris in 1993 on a fellowship program during which I obtained an LLM in international law. After completing the program, the Director, Mr. Lesguillons, a professor, French lawyer and specialist in antitrust law, hired me to work for him in his law firm. That experience eventually inspired me to obtain my PhD in International Law focusing on international antitrust.

Ernest: When did you start writing and from what inspiration?

Frank: In the spring of 1970, while studying at California State University, San Francisco, one of my works of prose was selected as the theme for a Creative Arts Festival. I guess you could say that my writing career began then.

Ernest: Wasn't it a crazy idea to set out for Morocco?

Frank: After many prayer/meditation sessions, I believed that I was called to somehow contribute to peace in the Middle East. I intuited that I should travel by land from Paris to Morocco; from Morocco, I was to cross Northern Africa and settle down at my destination, Israel and Palestine, where I would share what I learned as well as continue growing spiritually. It turned out that I stayed in Morocco during the first phase of my voyage in 1978. However, I was to wait 27 years to commence the second, sharing, stage of my voyage, in 2005, when I first traveled to the Near East to participate in interfaith

events and then recently when *Storm Over Morocco* was published in February of this year.

Ernest: What exactly did religion mean to you after stepping inside the boundaries of Morocco?

Frank: I believe that the light of the spirit and the force of the cosmic spirit, the force of love are within us and beyond and can only be called upon by our inner faith, by our reaching out and stimulating the loving spirit into the unity of our love, our faith. Almost in proportion to our strength and devotion, can universal light shine upon the World. As such, I learned that divine intervention comes essentially from within us.

Supreme consciousness does not exist in a separate majestic palace in the sky, but in and beyond us and could be called by tapping into the stream of love. We are all capable of accessing it. After deep meditation, our inner soul will guide us in feeling the profound love connecting to the Supreme Being, connecting also to loved ones and to fellow human beings - to all living things on this planet and beyond.

That pure, unconditional love is manifested in our acts and feelings towards all (humans and non humans) and in spoken words and the feeling of deep love.

Some are not able to tap into this love stream because they either are not open to it or are not in an appropriate frame of mind, or the love vibrations are not harmonized.

Ernest: Did you use to question the basics of faith, like the existence of God or a spiritual super-being?

Frank: In spite of my belief in a supreme spirit as discussed earlier, I needed to verify its existence in my own way and after my own search without blindly relying on doctrine spoon-fed to me. I constantly pushed myself to question what others believed I should accept without question. However, I often became upset with myself for parroting doctrine that I neither questioned nor could identify its source. Thus, the voyage was for spiritual enlightenment and answers to my questions concerning the reality or not of a cosmic spirit, then to share the experience in the context of universal reality for all in the Middle East.

Ernest: How old were you when you experienced the events you wrote of in *Storm Over Morocco*?

Frank: About 27 years old.

Ernest: Hadn't you heard about narrow-minded religionists, like the Moroccan Muslims you lived with?

Frank: I was vaguely aware of some fundamentalist religions but I purposely did not study too closely the spiritual environment in Morocco and in the Middle East so that I

could discover my own spiritual essence and then freely come to my own conclusions. Perhaps this is risky but I truly had faith that it was the only way to find answers to my questions. I was in fact willing to risk everything to break down religious conditioning of my youth in order to find my own truth. Finally, I believed that if I were to somehow become involved with a potentially dangerous religious movement, my time hadn't come yet.

As I said in the prologue of my book, "there are many ways to conduct a spiritual search—I do not pretend to have the only roadmap. Everyone walks their own unique path to the conscious embodiment of universal love".

Indeed, another person may discover the same truth that I did without leaving the security of his or her living room.

Ernest: You also lived with some caring and unorthodox Muslims there. What was common to both the fundamentalists and the rest?

Frank: The common denominators among orthodox Muslims and unorthodox ones is a belief in the general principals of Islam, i.e., charity, hospitality, monotheism, the importance of prayer, etc.

Ernest: What was the most interesting thing about Islam which you came to know in Morocco?

Frank: The version taught was a way of life not just a spiritual movement.

Ernest: *Storm Over Morocco* gives quite a detailed account of your Moroccan experience. Did you start recording your experience soon after you returned to Paris?

Frank: I immediately memorialized in writing the sometimes painful events as I was adamant on not forgetting event the minutest detail.

Ernest: How do you judge the chasm between spirituality and ritualism in religion, especially in Islam?

Frank: I sometimes feel that we believe or are lead to believe that the church and/or rituals associated with a particular faith are synonymous with divinity, are manifestations of the Supreme Being. However, I share with the sage Ramakrishna the idea that the church itself, including but not limited to certain rituals and traditions are simply a conduit, a path, leading us all to supreme truth. As such, we should not confuse the church structure nor rituals with the cosmic truth, and should however consider that there are many paths that can take us there.

Ernest: So do you think the fundamentalist approach can somehow be countered or changed into a more tolerant one?

Frank: I believe that the fundamentalist approach can be tempered by a more understanding, open one. I try to eliminate the word tolerance in everything I do since the term “tolerate or tolerance” makes reference rather to the concept of “putting up with” something as opposed to engaging in true understanding from which acceptance and love naturally flows.

Ernest: You’ve been active in some conciliatory efforts to bring together Jews and Muslims, right?

Frank: I have been organizing and participating in interfaith events in Israel and Palestine in the past two years. I am also an active member group of an interfaith group in Paris dedicated to peace in the Middle East.

Ernest: What role can a universal religion play in bringing peace? And how do you make room for non-believers in this kind of ideological setup?

Frank: Before I visited Morocco and the Middle East, I thought that the creation of a universal religion may be one way to bring the warring parties together under one spiritual roof. Since then, I believe rather that there is a need for dialogue and sharing through meditation, song, even dance and for just bringing Muslims, Jews, Christians and members of other faiths together for sharing ideas. During these events, the participants do all those things; in particular, they meditate together but normally do not pray together. As such, this encourages each individual to worship according to his or her chosen religion or faith.

Ernest: What religion are you comparatively more fond of and why?

Frank: I do not privilege nor am I comparatively fond of any particular religion.

Ernest: Some spiritualists, nowadays, are giving notions of rebirth of noble souls like Moses, Jesus etc. Do you agree with such idea?

Frank: I understand neither the origin of these notions nor the context in which they are discussed. I wonder sometimes however if it is more because of a spiritual vacuum and lack of effective spiritual leadership existing today that motivate some to look upon past leadership for guidance than the result of a true belief in a rebirth of such noble souls. I hope that caring and enlightened leaders will emerge to help lead the people to the loving light.

Visit http://www.worldaudience.org/pubs_bks/pubs_bks_Romano_Storm.html to learn more about *Storm Over Morocco*.

1.6 Feature Poem

The feature poem of this issue is Magdalena Ball's *Green*, from her book *Quark Soup* that was published by Picaro Press (2006).

Green

dying in her shoebox
she asked for a poem
something sweet and pretty
birds and trees and expanses of green
to break up the long stretches of grey pain
alternating between bed and toilet
throwing up the medicine
which wasn't curing her

i couldn't think of a thing.
outside
the birds weren't singing
the trees looked bare
in the sunless winter cold

my fingers worked independent
from intent
tracing the landscape of her arched back
as she bent over her porcelain taskmaster
begging the drugs which she couldn't swallow
to kill the disease
indistinguishable from her own cells

i saw beauty in her hungry face
every stretched line writ
with the spring of her waning life
and the pallor of her skin
became a forest where birds sang
a song as sweet as death was ugly
a permanent hymn to that hard place
Cancer can't touch
which fills me now
with a longing as tender
as any green day

About Magdalena Ball: Magdalena Ball is the author of three books: *The Art of Assessment* (Mountain Mist Productions, 2004), *Quark Soup* (Picaro Press, 2006), and *Sleep Before Evening* (BeWrite Books, 2007). Her stories, poetry, reviews and articles have appeared in many printed anthologies and journals, and have won several awards. She runs the famous review site *The Compulsive Reader* at <http://www.compulsivereader.com/html>.

1.7 Opinion

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

- ❖ ‘It is rare to find a book that weaves time travel into a plot centered on romance. That’s what makes *The Time Traveler’s Wife* special. Author Audrey Niffenegger takes readers on an arduous journey that spans the lifetime of an involuntary time traveler as his seemingly impossible relationship with the love of his life unfolds. It would be easy to get lost in time while reading this book, but the author’s use of subtitles to chronicle character ages helps keep the story in perspective. The book crosses genres, is deep, and holds interest. It is highly recommended.’

Ida R. Baker

Ida R. Baker, pen name Ida-Rose Mead, is the author of *Mindful of Madness*, a satire, and *In Bloody Vincible*, an Australian crime novel. Visit www.outskirtspress.com/idarosemead to know about Ida-Rose Mead and her books.

- ❖ At the center of award-winning and best-selling author Jane Kirkpatrick's "A Clearing in the Wild," the first book in her Change and cherish Historical Series, rests a question. "Where does authority lie?" –in both the sense of placement of authority and its truth. Kirkpatrick show us varying answers to the source of authority: gender, family head, communal consensus, spiritual leader, nature, and God. Further, the novel's story demonstrates the fault lines in having too fixed a source of authority, as characters come to realize that authority shifts with situation. Indeed, the subtext of the series could be easily be: "Change or perish."

Janet Grace Riehl

Visit Janet's blog "Riehl Life: Village Wisdom for the 21st Century" at <http://www.riehlife.com> for connections through the arts, across cultures and generations.

- ❖ A short review of *Interpreter of Maladies*, by Jhumpa Lahiri (Houghton Mifflin Company, 1999, \$12.00 US). It's amazing that these nine polished stories make up a debut collection by this Indian/Anglo/American author. Even while one is stunned at the depth of the psychological insights, one is transported by the beauty and originality of Ms. Lahiri's prose. Interestingly, some of the stories are written from the woman's point of view and some from the man's. All are equally convincing. Almost every story here is heartbreakingly sad. "A Temporary Matter" details a marriage that is first nibbled away at and then destroyed by a family tragedy. Two of the stories deal with the intense yet cautious affection and caring that children can feel for adults not related to them. The title story tells of an aborted cross-cultural flirtation, absurd in its conception yet tragic in its end.

"Sexy", which recounts in a mere nine pages the entire run of an adulterous affair between a philandering Indian and his young American mistress, offers enough psychological material for an entire novel, as well as a portrait of the saddest, most complex child in the entire book. "The Third and Final Continent", the last story and one of several in the collection to deal with the immigrant experience, is the only one that is happy and hopeful. But it is hard for me to imagine that any reader of these astonishingly crafted, evocative tales could not hope for more from Ms. Lahiri.

Leonore H. Dvorkin

Leonore H. Dvorkin is the author of *Why I'm Glad I Had Breast Cancer* (health/nonfiction) and *Apart from You* (novel). She lives in Denver with her husband David (also a writer) and the happy couple regularly writes articles and essays for their website www.dvorkin.com.

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 e-mail (no attachments) to dempsey87@yahoo.com.

1.8 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. Ways to submit: 1) interact with other writers on our wikipedia 'community' page; 2) post and review work on our [blog](#); 3) submit your your work: submissions@worldaudience.org. Our books are printed by [Lightning Source](#) and shipped by UPS in hard cardboard anywhere in the world. Our titles are distributed through companies such as Ingram, Barnes & Noble (online), and many other online retailers and e-bookstores. Our printed titles are sold in select bookstores. Upon receipt of your payment, we will send the order to Lightning Source, who will print your copies (one or many) and ship them to you.

Audience Review

Audience Review, a quarterly publication, features reviews of plays on Broadway, off-Broadway, off-off Broadway, and regional theater, reviews of literature and poetry, and other informative critiques. *The Review* also contains author interviews, essays, and occasionally even short stories and plays. The goal of the critics who write for *The Review* is to find themes in their subjects, so a critique can prove to be quite expansive in its breadth.

Note to theater producers: If you would like *The Review* to review your play or musical, please write us: theatre@worldaudience.org. Our review of your production will appear in our printed book; however, we will send you a PDF version of our review 2-3 business days after seeing your production. *The Review* is also published as an e-book, and sold at many e-bookstores.

To enquire about becoming a reviewer for *The Review*, please send your resume and a writing sample to: theatre@worldaudience.org. As a reviewer, you are entitled to join our organization as a stock-holder.

Books

World Audience publishes books! If you are a writer, please send us a proposal. We publish collections of short stories, poems, and plays, as well as novels, satire, wit, and books related to the theater, such as our upcoming *The Audience Book of Theatre Quotations*, by Louis Phillips. Note: We are open to any proposals and are not rigid about only publishing certain genres. We are interested in publishing certain "how-to" titles and non-fiction. We also post audio samples of our authors' work on this site, and we publish audio books of our titles (with unique ISBNs). Finally, some of our titles, such as collections of plays, are captured on video/DVD and sold in tandem with the book.

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/>

Frigg Magazine

A magazine of literary short fiction and poetry: <http://www.friggmagazine.com/>

News Blaze

The mega site for daily news stories, views and opinion, reviews, interviews, and more:
<http://www.newsblaze.com/>

Aesthetica Magazine

UK's cultural arts publication that provides a current up-to-date 21st century perspective on British arts and culture: <http://www.aestheticamagazine.com/>

Riehl Life

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

Book Pleasures

The ultimate source of book reviews in all genres and author interviews:
<http://www.bookpleasures.com>

More links at <http://www.worldaudience.org/links.html>

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/>

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