

HOROSCOPE

BY SOUP
CAN SAMSTAFF
PSYCHIC

Gemini (May 22-June 22) Cover more territory when you walk. And continue walking into the night shift.

Cancer (June 23-July 23) Good things come over the course of time. Develop your soul and so forth.

Leo (July 24-Aug. 23) There are places you can find friends, there are places you can find some sun. Discover where the riches are.

Virgo (Aug. 24-Sept. 23) If you understand your mission in life and the contents of your personality, your path will become easy.

Libra (Sept. 24-Oct. 23) Say hello, open doors. When someone asks a question, speak what you know, not what you think.

Scorpio (Oct. 24-Nov. 22) If you want to make a whole lot of money in a short amount of time get lots of sleep the night before.

Sagittarius (Nov. 23-Dec. 22) Good organization and good management allows you to meet good people where you least expect it.

Capricorn (Dec. 23-Jan. 19) All work and no play makes it tough to get with the opposite sex. Which is something you, Cappy, need bad right now.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 19) You're reaching your seasonal apex, with an eye toward fall. This year, promise to bask in the sun a few minutes longer, listen to the birds a little more closely, and stop hitting the bottle before 3.

Pisces (Feb. 20-March 20) When you're moons stop spinning and your house is in order, that's when the love of your life will drop by and perhaps then, you'll realize that there was more to life all along. Let go of the infatuation.

Aries (March 21-April 19) Cool your jets. You don't have a monopoly on judgment, you just enjoy it more than others. Meditation will do you good this month.

Taurus (April 20-May 21) The path less traveled is always a popular choice, but a new set of eyes on common ground can extract just as much truth for world. Look upon every path with new eyes this month.

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BOOK REVIEW

Three templates for 21st century warfare

BY JAY THIEMEYER
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

At the same time the new president of General Motors is in Cairo making overtures to the Muslim world and attempting to move us away from the OK Corral approach of his predecessor, the Taliban is feeding growing anger among Pakistanis and Afghans resulting from U.S. drone-directed bombing of civilians.

On May 4, U.S. drones directed an aerial attack on suspected militants in a village north of Kandahar. The estimates vary but dozens died. The militants had fled.

Drone warfare is an industrious development similar in its suddenness to the emergence of incorporated mercenaries during the Bush regime. They are the critical ingredient in a remote-control war orchestrated in Arizona and already infamous for devastating civilian concentrations in search of "suspected militants." Drones are part of the machinery that would be overseen by Lt. Gen. Stanley McCrystal. Currently undergoing Senate review, his notoriety in unrelenting special ops and interrogations that followed Donald Rumsfeld's infamous memo without disagreement, are what he's famed for.

His nomination by our peace-loving president comes with contradictions: some of which were addressed by the senators. Notably, the May 4 slaughter, when oversight provisions for drones were not followed. And those dozens of invisible people whom we as taxpayers and citizens who fund the war machine will never know and for the vast bulk of us will never even be aware of, that is, if we only read the corporate-inspired diversion which constitutes our news these days.

We have clearly entered a new era of conducting war. How soon before the next step of sci-fi becomes the norm, which Arthur C. Clarke described in "Dial F for Frankenstein," when our A.I. creations turn on us and shuck us like a nagging foot fungus?

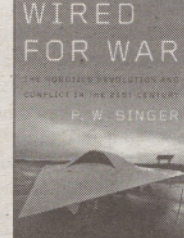
What is worrisome is how McCrystal answered the concerns about collateral damage voiced by the senators. It was all about damage control. Trying to put the best face on it. Maintain the military's "credibility."

Collateral damage, he said, was unavoidable and regrettable and we will do better in the future. And there will be many, many future ops under McCrystal. He embodies the Rumsfeld approach. Theirs die, ours don't. Keep it simple, stupid.

So, the fat, dumb and happy citizens playing their games online won't protest funding our war machine. And the YouTube war advances on schedule.

Because McCrystal is a warrior's warrior, his focus, which is acute and fixed, is on imposing the most horrific damage on the enemy as his resources can provide. And if the suspected militants are hiding among civilians, that's regrettable but the price you

pay to win. Last one standing, and that.



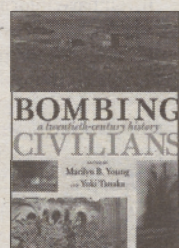
"Wired for War: The Robotics Revolution and Conflict in the 21st Century" by PW Singer, Penguin, 2009, \$29.95

conservative, he's a fellow at Brookings, but he's well worth reading. Templates to study the problems of our times.

Once again he sets the stage for the next quantum leap in war-making. Unmanned Predators and Reapers can call down hell for the stranger. No mercy, no fear...no humans from our side die, and the ones atomized, we'll never know.

Gen. McCrystal is important for how he fits into this new concentrated war. So much for hearts and minds. Much easier to demonize and dehumanize: what was the common take on Iraqis? The one promoted to make killing them a matter of automatic response? That they wipe their asses with their hands...they aren't even human.

They deserve what they get. And if civilians are in the way...



"Bombing Civilians" by Marilyn Young & Yuki Tanaka, The New Press, 2009, \$30.00

But this is an old story. "Bombing Civilians" by Marilyn Young and Yuki Tanaka traces the evolution from the first incendiaries dropped from hot-air balloons in the 18th century to drones. They don't address drones but they provide a great lead-up.

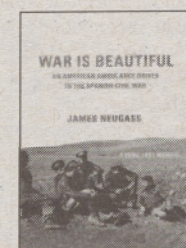
This is a collection of articles on critical but little-publicized points of recent wars.

The experience of the German Heimat at the hands of unrelenting U.S. and British carpet-bombing during World War II, for instance, British "humane" bombing in Iraq between Desert Storm and Iraqi Freedom. Or, as one article asks: "Were the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki justified?" And with like salience, several concluding articles look at the current legal framework to address war crimes and the ongoing refinement of what constitutes a "just war."

When you hone in on it, what qualifies an act of war as criminal? It gets somewhat abstruse, as one would expect, but only rarely. And the arguments and clarifications are worth following. How can the Israelis justify what they did in Gaza? How can we justify 700 civilian casualties in targeting 14

"militants" in AfPak? Generally these case studies are easy to follow and compelling.

Just a note about an interesting book in its own right. The long-lost memoir of the poet/ambulance driver James Neugass, about the Franco war of the 1930s. His memoir is the real thing. He kept a diary during his time in Spain, recording everything at the moment it happened. Included are items like his take on that other ambulance driver, Ernest Hemingway, who passed Neugass and crew in his



"War is Beautiful: An Ambulance Driver in the Spanish Civil War" by James Neugass, edited by Peter N Carroll and Peter Glazer, with the Abraham Lincoln Brigade Archives. The New Press, 2009, \$26.95

sedan, while they were getting their vehicle out of the mud. Nice take, that.

There is nothing remote about Neugass's record.

These three books provide good perspective; and as I say, templates for all that will come after.

So what will the robots bring us? What Richard Brautigan described as "machines of loving grace?" Or singularian A.I., robots who are self-aware, can decide on their own inspiration and eventually will decide to slough their creators? Their gods must die? The robots will have lost any use for us?

That is, if the decisions made inside the Beltway and the Pentagon don't find a more expeditious way to exterminate us.



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