

The
Shepherd Chronicles
July 2006
from
William Shepherd



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What People Do All Day

Posted: 2005-12-24

Have you ever wondered what people do all day?

Well-meaning people often ask me what I do? Sometimes my response is: 'I will tell you what I did yesterday.'

Another is: 'I work for myself. Some days I do what I want. Some days I do what is necessary. Some days I do something important. Some days I get nothing useful done.'

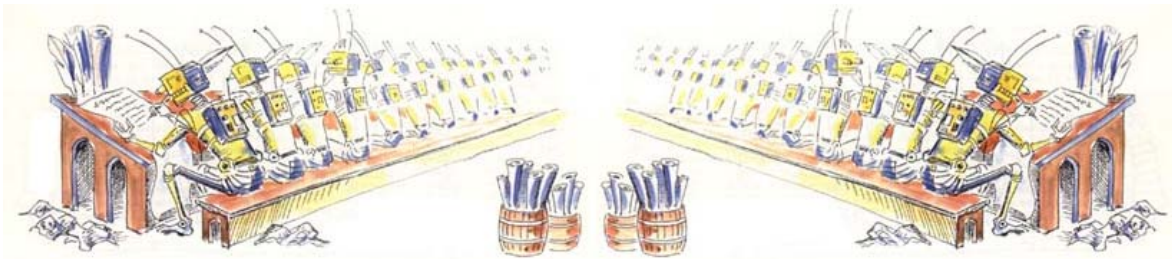


I wake up in the morning and ask myself what I am going to do today. Before going to sleep in the evening I ask myself what I did all day. I make value judgements ranging from 'not a lot' and 'nothing harmful' to 'some good work.'

I like the idea of '*A Good Day's Work for A Good Day's Pay.*' But pulling this off is not easy...and the definition of pay, work and good are not as obvious as you might think.

A third response is to put myself in a box. 'I am an economist, a publisher, a journalist...' I can wear many hats. But hats and labels just sidestep the question and conceal more than they reveal. Do you know what an economist does all day?

When in mischievous mood I might respond: 'I am retired. My retirement started a quarter of a century ago when I was 35.' Do you know what a retired person does? Do they just watch the wheels going round and round? How many categories of idlers are there? The idle rich...the idle old...the idle young...the idle poor... what do idlers and loafers and scroungers really do all day?



And what of the busy people? Is being busy their business? Who are they being busy for? What does your high street bank manager do? Who is she handing out money to? I think it's time to ask the question.

So let's all be whistleblowers. I will go first. Your turn next.

bill shepherd weblog one hundred and eighty two

<http://williamshepherd.blog.co.uk>

Saturday 1st July 2006

Posted: 2006-07-01

60-years ago my mother was heavily pregnant...and just 16-days away from the birth of her second child. It turned out to be a boy which was the first time...though not the last...that I disappointed her. It was a double disappointment too because the betting was that I would pop out on her 31st birthday on the 15th...but I was a couple of days late, though once I had decided to venture forth I did so at quite a rate so my mother only just made it to the *War Memorial Hospital* on *Shooter's Hill* on time. T'was the name wot done it...shooters indeed!

Anyway it is midday here in the *Departure Lounge* at *Stanstead Airport*. I am required to proceed through *Gate 45* to board *Ryanair Flight FR 054* to *Stockholm Skavsta Airport* in an hour's time. This should deliver me into the centre of *Stockholm*...after a 90-minute bus journey...at 1900 *Swedish* time. From there it is the *Hjulsta Blue Line* to *Sundbybergscentrum T-bana* followed by a half a mile to my destination on *Trädgårdsgatan* opposite *Albyskola* on *Hamngatan*...not much you cannot find out on the *Internet* if you know where to look.

It is costing me £60 to get to *Stockholm*. But I did some arithmetic on the way here and was pleasantly surprised to find that I have £500 in my pocket, £650 of receivables due in this month and only £150 of essential payables...I am netting out the *Cultura* situation. So this means a thousand pounds...13 500 kronor available to spend in Sweden.



Today went according to plan...for me...but not for Sven-Göran Eriksson's *England* team. It is eight o'clock here at Nicholas John's computer in *Stockholm*. *England's* quarter-final match started at four and I have been picking up progress reports along the way. I just picked up the final one from *BBC's Sports Online*. There will be much weeping and gnashing of teeth in the *Scott-Cracknell* household in *Rye* and *Belfast* (above) and the *Melo-Dale* household in *Mexico City* and *Bogotá* (below) because *England* are out of the *World Cup*...victim of their failure to win a penalty shoot-out...which is rapidly becoming a *European* and *World Cup* tradition. There was no score after extra time and then 3-1 to Portugal on penalties. *Germany*, *Italy*, *Portugal* and *France* will battle it out in the semi-finals.



I set the alarm for 0600 this morning intending to take the 0650 train but woke up with the light at 0445 and took the first train out of *Rye* at 0550 instead. This was better as it stopped at *London Bridge*. I prefer walking or taking the 48 bus across the bridge up to *Liverpool Street* to taking the *Circle line* from *Embankment* which is what you do if you take the train through to *Charing Cross*.

It was another warm sunny day for my first trip on a *London* bendy bus...introduced into *Stockholm* ten years ago but unfamiliar to the *English*. From *Liverpool Street* it is a 45-minute run on the *Stanstead Express* to the airport the other side of *Bishop Stortford* on the *Essex-Hertfordshire* border. We will proclaim a *Good's Day's Work*.

bill shepherd weblog one hundred and eighty three

<http://williamshepherd.blog.co.uk>

Sunday 2nd July 2006

Posted: 2006-07-03

This is the next to last posting to the [Shepherd on Climate](#) blogsite...and Climate Posting Number 32 comes in two parts...with Part II on Sunday 9th July 2006 as the final climate blog diversion for this year on the [William Shepherd](#) blogsite. What I had to say about Global Warming has been said...advertising-driven mass media take note.

The old *Southern Baptist Preachers* used to teach their acolytes that after telling their flock what they were about to tell 'em they should tell it to 'em straight and then go through it a third time...just like *St. Peter the Apostle* in the *Garden of Gethsemane* the night *Our Good Lord* died for *Your Sins*...and tell 'em what yer told 'em.

The modern way is to Blog 'n Web the message so I spent my first couple of days in Stockholm...where unlimited digital power is at my fingertips for the first time in five months...immersed in *Macromedia's Dreamweaver*. Out of my devotions has come a [Shepherd on Climate](#) website. It looks like this...done without the support of *JAK* or *Gates*.



My intra-net links were labelled [Energy Wars](#) | [Politics](#) | [Money](#) | [Land](#) | and [Life](#) ... and my inter-blog links as [William Shepherd](#) | [William Franklin](#) | [Climate](#) | [History of Usury](#) | [Magna Carta II](#).

Here is a listing of my 32 climate blogs. [Energy Makeover](#) | [Politics of Wind Farming](#) | [Blue Moonwaves](#) | [Cosmic Warning](#) | [Earth Temperature](#) | [Six Million Years](#) | [Global Baloney](#) | [State of Fear](#) | [Think Global Act Local](#) | [Global Electricity Grid](#) | [Carbon Emissions](#) | [Local Energy Power](#) | [Arctic Photo Opportunity](#) | [State of Ignorance](#) | [PLM Complex](#) | [Orthodoxy & Heresy](#) | [Who? Whom?](#) | [Changing Climate Change](#) | [Global Warming](#) | [Per's Peer Review](#) | [Majority Against Orthodoxy](#) | [Carbon Emissions Trading](#) | [Useful Idiots](#) | [Story of Global Warming](#) | [New Ice Age](#) | [Unnatural Disasters](#) | [Hubris & Nemesis](#) | [Limits to Models](#) | [Greenhouse Effects](#) | [Cloud Cuckoo Land](#) | [Sunken Knowledge](#) | [Right Science and Blog 'n Web](#).

Aficionados of [St. Bill of Omaha](#) will notice the scroll bar to the right of the image. I took eight snippets from my story lines and put them up there on the home page to razzle-dazzle the millions of good folks flocking to the [Climate Website](#) over the next few weeks. Word gets around. And besides it's the best mousetrap in town. Now I'm off to *SIPRI* to claim political asylum and watch *Bill Gate's* reverse takeover of the *United Nations Organisation*.

bill shepherd weblog one hundred and eighty four

<http://williamshepherd.blog.co.uk>

Monday 3rd July 2006

Posted: 2006-07-04

The best book about *Swedish Politics* was written in 1989 and is entitled *The Rise & Fall of the Swedish Green Party (1982-1997)*. It is the first published work by the *English* poet and political essayist [William Shepherd](#) and was published for a teenage audience in *China* by *Academic Inn Books* with a *Swedish* teenager as *Production Editor*.

The first edition of 500 copies was printed in *Glastonbury* and this is the only title by the author listed in *Books in Print* although a recent *Google* search turned up several hundred essays on a number of websites including thirty articles published between 1989 and 2006 by the *London*-based political journal *Fourth World Review*.

A recent phone call to the publisher confirmed that stocks of 225 books are in the firm's warehouse and that none of the 300 books distributed had turned up on *eBay* or in used bookshops. There are no plans for a sequel but in anticipation of a sharp rise in demand with the release of several William Shepherd manuscripts in book form by *Academic Inn Books* and as *e-books* by the Brittany-based e-publisher *cesc publications* the price is now £19.95. The transcript of a conversation with the author in September 1990 entitled [Tavern Talk](#) is available on the internet.



Every year the *Swedish* political class gathers on the *Island of Gotland* during the long summer recess from midsummer into September for [Almedalsveckan](#)...a very *Swedish Glastonbury Festival*. In election year each party's top performer...formerly known as party leaders...sets out their stall and pulls rabbits out of a hat.

The winner this week was the *Swedish Prime Minister* Göran Persson who brought along [Ségolène Royal](#) the *French Left's* main presidential candidate, mother of four and sixth sexiest woman in the world according to a survey for the *French* edition of the sleazy *For Men Magazine*...well ahead of Jennifer Lopez (34th) and Elizabeth Hurley (41st). Who needs policies when you can associate yourself with such high-class *French Socialists*? On the other hand one look at the motley coalition of *Tories*, *Centrepartists*, *Christian Democrats* and *Liberals* opposing the *Social Democrats* and their *Green* and *Red* allies and it is hard to see how the *Government* can lose in September.

William Shepherd revealed recently that his original plan was for four editions...for Christmas 1989, 1992, 1995 and 1998...taking up on average one month a year of his time. Every third year he would base himself in *Sweden* from midsummer until the end of September. By 1998 this plan had been scaled back to two editions with research for the 1998 edition happening to coincide with the reconnaissance trip for the [Limmaeus Gotland Journeys Project](#).

Vemara duly arrived in *Visby Harbour* during the first week of June 1998 after seven weeks at sea and set sail for *England* on 30th September with William and Helena Shepherd as crew. William Shepherd jumped ship to return to *Stockholm* once *Vemara* was through the *Kiel Canal* and Malcolm Wallace replaced him to *Zeebrugge*.

For the final leg Connie and Helena were sailing alone and can claim to be the first all women crew to bring a boat into *Rye*. The woman skipper of the gaff-cutter in *Retrieved from the Future* published in 1996 owes a lot to the author [John Seymour's](#) trip up the *East Coast* in *Vemara* in 1995 selling and promoting their [Seymour's Seemarks](#).

bill shepherd weblog one hundred and eighty five

<http://williamshepherd.blog.co.uk>

Tuesday 4th July 2006

Posted: 2006-07-04

One beautiful barmy spring evening eight years ago David Attenborough was inaugurated into the company of the oldest scientific society in *England* and elected a *Fellow of the Linnean Society of London* with the right to put the initials *FLS* after his name. There was just one other person elected that evening...a botanical illustrator by the name of Connie Lindqvist. I know because I was there drinking tea beforehand at the society's library in *Piccadilly*.

I was both proud and pleased for 'My Connie'...but I had to drag her kicking and screaming to London and she couldn't get away quickly enough. 'I just draw flowers and paint tiles. They can post me the certificate. And there's no way I'm going to use those initials. Everyone will know *FLS* really means ****ing Lazy Sod!'. But a 'just' with Connie's talents is an impossible dream to millions of us lesser mortals. Here are two of Connie's popular downloads.



After that it seemed a shame not to exploit Connie's talents as a *Botanical Illustrator*...and a *Skilled Mariner*. Connie was brought up in the small town of *Moinio* in *Finnish Lapland*...a day's journey away from the borders with *Sweden*, *Norway* and *Russia*. Choose which way to point your skies when you set off in the morning. *Moinio* is up above the *Arctic Circle* and a long way from *Helsinki* in the south of the country. *Father Christmas' Grotto* is close by...big business for a few weeks every year. I missed her when I passed through en route to *Moskva's Red Square* in the summer of '67. It then took 25 years for us to meet up. She must have been indoors when I drove by.

Carl von Linné's international reputation started with his *Lapland Journey*. In a sense he never looked back and the rest of his life was a series of new *Lapland Journeys*...amidst much political work. *Science* has always been deeply political. The official party line of a fellowship of independent scientists sharing their knowledge in one big happy international community is utter nonsense. That particular dream of Francis Bacon disappeared into the coffers of corporations and down military cannon barrels within weeks of his *Idea of Science* entering the *Public Domain*.

Big Science is one of the biggest threats to the adventure of civilisation on the planet and the pursuit of happiness for its citizens...6,527 million by [today's count](#). The theology is political theatre...and 95% propaganda. But there is promise of a *Sane Humane Ecological Future* in that tiny five percent remaining. Today I sent out some thoughts on *Science Wars* and a strategic response by the *Human Scale Movement* that might eliminate *Giant Wars*...why not?

Carl Linnaeus invited friends, colleagues, visitors and local residents to accompany him on regular Saturday morning *Public Botanical Walks*. His students meanwhile were sent to foreign lands thousands of miles away to bring specimens back to *Uppsala*. Cook never set sail on his voyages of discovery without a *Linnaeus* man alongside him.

So I hatched a fiendish plan to follow in the footsteps of *Linnaeus* starting with a repeat of the *Great Man's* visit to *Gotland* in the summer of 1741. Once a pattern had been set Connie and I would take *Vemara* up the *Swedish* coast, repeat his *Lapland Journey* and get married in *Moinio Church*...although I regret not mentioning that bit to Connie.

One of the first things we discovered was that *Linnaeus* was on horseback. As we were travelling on foot there was no simple way to match his progress. And this was important because plants are seasonal and part of the project agenda was to compare 1998 with 1741 with the thought of setting up a system for measuring species diversity and its drift. Fortunately our project design included the idea of approaching *Gotland* the way Captain James Cook's ship *Endeavour* approached new lands in the *South Seas* on his round-the-world voyages. We took *Vemara* into twelve *Gotland* harbours and picked up *Linnaeus's* trail afresh each time. By the end of our *Gotland Journey* in '98 I was convinced we had a workable concept. My plan was to return in two or three years time with a film crew onboard.

bill shepherd weblog one hundred and eighty six

<http://williamshepherd.blog.co.uk>

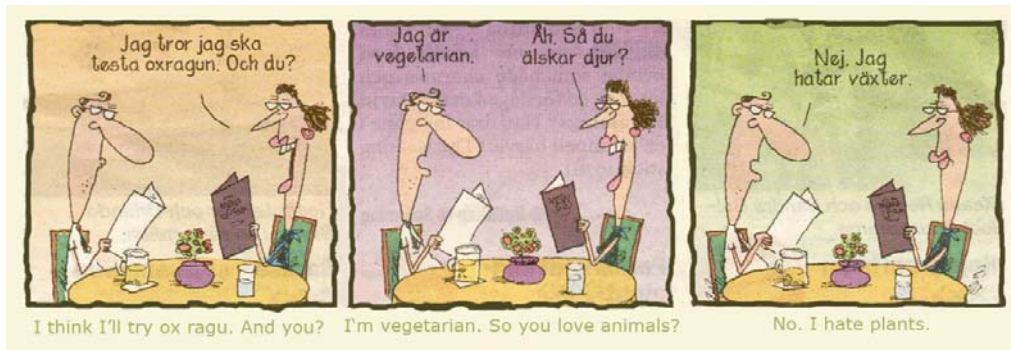
Wednesday 5th July 2006

Posted: 2006-07-08

Any language is difficult to talk and write well. But you only need to do it well if you use it professionally. One of the ways I have made my living over the past 15-years has been with my skills as a wordsmith. I write very good *English* and this skill is in demand. Another skill that is in demand is talking well in *English*...and as a result my colleague Alan's voice is in demand from an *International Voiceover Brokering Service* that trades in *mp3 files*. There is little money in translating. The market is crowded and web-based brokering has forced down wage rates.

Cultura has moved into *Global Translation Brokering* after income plunged 60% in 2003 and 2004 so our business now has two distinct *Strategic Business Units*...*English Voiceovers for Swedish Filmmakers* and *Voice and Text Outsourcing for Swedish-based TNCs*...trans-national corporations. We also did some speech writing in 2005 for *Telia Sonera* but it was a one-off...though very well received. We value our time at *Web Designer* not *Translator* rates...and seek out profitable niches in a crowded and competitive market so we can command comparable rates.

When I came to *Sweden* in '68 it was *Swedish Government* policy for immigrants to learn *Swedish*. It was also an entry requirement for university. There was a debate at the time about *halvspråkighet* or *dubbelspråkighet*...this was relevant later when considering how to bring up our two young children linguistically...but it was not particularly relevant to me at the time as I was allowed to take university exams in *English*...and this I have always done so as it seemed slightly perverse not to. The purpose of exams is to pass so why penalise yourself unnecessarily? However lectures were usually given in *Swedish* and course readings were about 50:50 *Swedish* and *English*...although in the late '60s students were expected to take *Danish* and *Norwegian* in their stride as well. *German* and *French* were out.



When my son returned to *Sweden* from *Australia* in '94 he ran into a problem because, although he had attended *Uppsala Katedralskolan* the year prior to applying for university, he had been out of *Sweden* at [Nambour High School](#) near *Brisbane* in *Queensland* for the full academic year and then spent three months travelling. This took him over the stipulated limit so he was placed in the *Foreign Student* category. His university career began...like his father's...with the *Swedish* equivalent of *English as a Foreign Language*. He followed it up with a five-credit course in *Swahili* but that was to do with collecting credits to come high enough up the list for the course he wanted to read. The courses were a waste of his time and the *Swedish* taxpayers' money. My time and their money were better spent.

As a result of all this I have a fairly accurate measure of how language learning works after puberty. My rule of thumb is that you can understand normal *Swedish* talk after three months, hold a decent conversation in *Swedish* after six months and write *Swedish* after nine months. But I met *English* people who had been in the countries for decades and still hardly spoke a word of the language. They would claim...and many *Swedes* believe this to be true...that *Swedish* is a hard language to learn. They are right...but often for the wrong reason.

Sweden is a small country and *English* is the *lingua franca* of the world of the Onward & Upward Brigade. It might not survive a serious onslaught from *Spanish* and *Mandarin* but it is weathering well. *Swedes*...like the *Danes* *Norwegians*, *Finns* and the *Dutch*...speak excellent *English* and take every opportunity to practice it. This is the reason it's hard for the *English* to learn *Swedish*. They are not allowed the three months of torture...for the *Swede*...necessary to reach and cross over the threshold of understanding and the six months to enter conversations.

The *Swedish* language itself is a mix of *English* and *German* with a core of a few hundred small *Swedish* words. The things *Swedish* has going for it is that *Swedish* word order is *English* and not *German*, there are hardly any gender confusions with *Swedish* nouns as there are with *French*, *Spanish* and *German* ones, irregular verbs do not exist and *Swedish* pronunciation follows the rules unlike *English* where every other word is an exception and the classic *English* example is that *ghoti* spells fish...'gh' as in enough, 'o' as in women and 'ti' as in motion.

bill shepherd weblog one hundred and eighty seven

<http://williamshepherd.blog.co.uk>

Thursday 6th July 2006

Posted: 2006-07-12

Last Saturday on the flight to *Stockholm* I sat next to a *Finnish* lady in her mid-sixties. I never took her name but we chatted in *Swedish* for much of the two hour flight. She lives in *Nykvarn* a few miles west of *Södertälje*...I looked it up on arrival as I thought I knew *Stockholm County* but could not place *Nykvarn*. *Stockholm* has continued to expand since I was part of the building industry providing the physical infrastructure for this expansion in the early 1970s.

There has been no overall growth in the *Swedish* population...although the immigrant population has been steadily increasing to its present ten percent...but there has been a continual movement of the population into *Sweden's* three *City Regions* in the southern third of the country. This migration to the cities has happened since the 1930s despite massive and continuing public subsidies to the pine trees in the northern two-thirds of Sweden.

The largest of *Sweden's* three city regions is *Stockholm* in the east of the country protected from marauding *Russians* by an archipelago of hundreds of tiny islands that shelters *Stockholm* from the *Baltic* and makes it a paradise for yachts and motor cruisers. *Number Two* is *Göteborg* in the west...with the *Norwegian* capital *Oslo* a few *Swedish Miles* to the north and *Newcastle* 24-hours away at the western end of the *DFDS Water Trail* across the *North Sea*.

The third significant city region is the former *Danish* city of *Malmö* in *Skåne* six hours away from *Stockholm* to the south and connected by the longest bridge in *Europe* to the *Danish* capital of *Copenhagen*. The medieval university town of *Lund* is a 20 minutes train journey away from *Malmö* so *Malmö Centre* will be an accommodation option.

My temporary *Finnish* companion and her husband had spent their adult lives in *Sweden* and although she spoke fluent *Swedish* he had never learnt either *Swedish* or *English*. She was in *London* for a month to visit one of their two daughters...an interior designer and college lecturer who speaks fluent *English* howbeit with a hybrid *Swedish* and *London Home Counties* accent. But her grandson...like most *English* children...had *English* as his only language.

The teaching of languages in *English* schools is so appalling that only university studies in a language...to the exclusion of everything else...produces fluency from within the education system. This is in sharp contrast to other countries in *Europe* where fluency in *Foreign Languages* is regarded as a basic right by the teachers and a rite of passage to a better world by the teachees. And fluency to a *European* does not mean the ability to say *Manchester United* in a foreign accent...too often the *Englander's* interpretation of the idea of fluency in a language.

I picked up on my fellow traveller's *Finnish* dialect almost immediately...within a sentence or two. This facility with accents is unusual for a non-*Swedish* native speaker. I was familiar with the *Finnish* accent in *Swedish* having spent time in the *Baltic* with Connie on a couple of occasions. We spoke *English* together but Connie was fluent in *Swedish* and *Finnish* and *English*...and her *German* was excellent and her *French* on a par with mine. Her family came from the 10% of *Finns* in the *Swedish*-speaking coastal regions of *Finland*...formerly part of the *Old Swedish Empire*. *Sweden* has dialects and it is easy to place *Swedes* geographically but they are not as broad as *English* dialects. Foreigners can go around for weeks in parts of *England*...like *London*...and hardly understand anything they hear.

Swedes flatter me that my *Swedish* is fluent...and it is true that I understand them. But I am not bilingual like my daughter...which involves pronunciation too. My *Swedish* does not begin to compare with my *English* and my written and grammatical work would place me firmly in the bottom quartile of a *Swedish* high school class.

But also my *Swedish* cannot bear comparison with the *English* that Ingrid, Connie and Heidi have been taught and have learnt to speak and write. I never ceased to be amazed at the extent of their dexterity with the nuances of *English*...about which nineteen out of twenty *English* native-speakers are ignorant. And I would not be awarded good marks in any equivalent tests in *Swedish* to the *Cambridge University Certificate of Proficiency in English* in which they each distinguished themselves. Their exams were similar to the *Use of English* exams that replaced *Compulsory Latin* as a *Cambridge* entry requirement in the 1960s...taken by just a percent or two of *English* citizens.

The highest accolade for my *Swedish* came while waving farewell to a middle-age couple as they stepped off a train in *Växjö*. 'It was so nice,' they told me, 'to pass the time of day chatting with someone from *Norrland*.' *Stockholmers* roar with laughter when I tell them this story as it dovetails neatly with their stereotypes for both *Norrlandings* and *Smålandings*. But I was well chuffed...as they say in *Oldham*...because I had passed myself off as a *Swede*. I had broken out of my foreign ghetto and concealed my *engelsk brytning*...*Swedish* for an *English* accent.

Swedes call the *Hjulsta* line that I ride to *Sundbyberg* the *Orient Express*. The reason? It runs from the cafés in the *City Centre* beloved by *Iranians*, *Turks*, *Ethiopian*, *Somalis* and *Kurds*...and by me...to the main immigrant residential suburbs like *Kista* where Bill Gates has established his *Swedish* base camp...but more on my adventures on the *Orient Express* and my encounters with *Microsoft*...and the reasons for it...another day.

bill shepherd weblog one hundred and eighty eight

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Friday 7th July 2006

Posted: 2006-07-12

Stockholm has been more like *Hersonissos* on the Greek island of *Crete* or *Puerto de Morgan* on *Gran Canarias* for the past few days. The Swedish evening paper *Aftonbladet* refers to it as *grillvädret*...which is either a call for barbecues in *Djursholm* or a warning against making common cause with *Mad Dogs* and *Englishmen* by parading in the midday sun. Temperatures have been in the high twenties all week with no sign of abating...30° C is 86° F.

One of *Cultura's* clients works from a studio on *Trädgårdsgatan*...the street where my son bought an apartment. Yesterday Alan had some recording to do and I had some whisky, cognac and *Imperial Leather* soap to pass on so we met up for lunch in no-man's land...not the best of metaphors but distances are much the same. Lunch at 20 paces.

I came away from lunch with an invitation to visit the family seat *Svedudden* on the island of *Ljusterö* north of *Stockholm* up *Norrtälje* way for a couple of days over the weekend...Sunday to Tuesday. I am not the oldest friend of the family but as Alan's *Best Man* we go back some way...37 years to the wedding...and have watched our children gradually convince themselves that they have nothing to learn from their parents...as all children do...for a while.

Over the meatballs and rice Alan mentioned that his daughter lived close by. It was as well he did because I bumped into her this evening going through the next check-out. Had Alan not forewarned me I am not sure I would have accosted the beautiful young lady with the rather sad chat-up line: 'haven't we met somewhere before?' But Nikki recognised me upon the instant...unless she is in the habit of throwing her arms around strange men who make approaches to her at supermarket checkouts. In Boldness is Genius. We chatted for a while before going our separate ways. 'Hälsningar till Mamma och Pappa! Two days later I did...and was told it made her mother's day.

I was on my way home after parading up and down *Skeppsbro* in the midday sun like some demented *Englishman*. I was searching for the offices of the *Blidösundsbolaget* who ferry passengers out to *Östernå Färjeläge* at nine o'clock every Sunday morning. From here it would be a short 5-minute ferry ride to the southern end of *Ljusterö* and a waiting car...*compleat* with plain-clothes chauffeur. Two months in *India* and *Pakistan* in June of '74 taught me that in hot weather...without air conditioning...the trick is to move slowly. The advice served me well.

I found out that the *Östernå* boat is called *Sjöbris*...Sea Breeze...that it departs from the *Grand Hotel* at 0900 and that the single fare is just five pounds...65 kronor...which is very reasonable for a 90-minute voyage at peak season. Unfortunately it also transpired that tickets are sold onboard and not in advance so my polite questioning and everybody else's helpful directions were of no avail. But to give myself a sense of success before returning home on the *Orient Express* I dropped in at *Vette Katten* between *Centralstation* and *Hötorget*...an old journal-writing haunt.

I must wean myself off these nostalgia trips before I turn into a grumpy old man...you are there before me. It wasn't like it used to be...and for good reason. Just as hospitals no longer have the *Matrons* and *Ward Sisters* who once ran their world with military discipline, so the old-style *Konditori Madams* have disappeared...as a species. The modern style may give benefits to someone but none of them trickle down to the customer...but then trickle down never does.

I am 5-days into my 5-week sojourn in this *Venice of the North* so I am betwixt and between the hither and thither. A postcard is more fun on your mantelpiece than an e-greetings card from an inkjet printer so I acquired half a dozen postcards before settling down to my coffee. What joy and happiness I would unleash upon half a dozen households!

One postcard gave authority in my absence for Martin Hutchings to pour ladles-full of tender loving care upon *Vemara*...once his pride and joy. She needs to be pumped out now and again and there are no longer any decent batteries aboard. So instead she is set up for shore power to do the job at the flick of the pump switch. But the shore power needs connecting and disconnecting at the mains box up on the bank.

Then there is this year's maintenance job...*Vemara's* mast. Martin has been given authority to negotiate a deal with any passing crane. I was hoping for one before I left but he never came. I am thinking of taking *Vemara* out of the water over the winter. One reason Connie gave for not berthing *Vemara* in *Visby* over the winter of '98/'99 was her need to be pumped regularly. We could have rigged-up some sort of ball-cock system. But Connie had other worries.

Another recipient was a PO Box...not a household. *The Occupier* has received postcards from William Shepherd for years. 'Arrived here at the weekend. Wonderful having decent digital access again. Have really been going to town. Put up a climate website. Well on the way to organising a proper site for selling books. Few more days of webwork. Then over to creative writing. Best wishes. William Shepherd.' William Who? And why the telegrams?

One day these postcards will stop coming. Later they will provide reliable evidence of the activities of the *Green Pimpernel* at the turn of the century. They seek him here...they seek him there...but he moves beneath their radar everywhere. 2034 is set in the *Baltic* and on the edge of the *North Atlantic Ocean*. Who is William of Salisbury?

bill shepherd weblog one hundred and eighty nine

<http://williamshepherd.blog.co.uk>

Saturday 8th July 2006

Posted: 2006-07-13

England feels far away. A week after leaving Rye my thoughts are turning to the words of John Lennon's [Happy Christmas \(War is Over\)](#)...so this is Sweden/and what have I done/another week older/and a new one just begun. Well one thing I have done is to slip behind on my daily blogs...was 185 for Tuesday 4th July was posted to the blogsite only this morning. I thought I had it under control. Slippage was intentional.

Upon moving to Sweden I decided to take a *Here I am in a Foreign Land* approach. But I felt the need of a few days of settling in before writing my *Letter From Sweden*. To avoid falling behind I placed blogstuff for each day on file...*Here is One I Prepared Earlier* sort of thing. Not a good idea. First I canned Monday's blogstuff and wrote about *Almadalen* and *Ségolène Royal*. The next day I canned Tuesday's blogstuff to write about *Linné af Uppsala*...and it has gone on like that all week. But worse was to come. Blogstuff on file meant my *Post-it Pad Tracking System* was redundant. Right? Wrong. A *Digital Blog Diary* has now been inaugurated to keep my daily record. *Post-it Pads* are forthwith obsolete. Did [Alistair Cooke](#) have these problems?

Laurie Lee the author of *Cider with Rosie* used to write from ten in the morning to half past four in the afternoon without a break...and divide his time between *Slad* in *Gloucestershire* and *Chelsea* in *London*. J.B. Priestley, H.G. Wells, P.G. Wodehouse found the need to set rules and introduce discipline into their writing lives. Priestley liked regular meals and an afternoon walk when on the *Isle of Wight* for instance. Wells left *England* for several months each year to write a new book. Walking the dog was an important part of Wodehouse's daily routine in *Le Touquet*.

These writers also had women close to them who understood their *Mode of Production* and were content in their own lives. But I doubt this is a gender thing...more likely a writer's thing. Jane Austen, George Eliot, Virginia Woolf, Mary McCarthy, Ursula Le Guin, J.K. Rowling...the presence in the background of their daily working life of a sympathetic partner to acknowledge and nurture the writer and the writ was probably important for them too.

[Mary McCarthy](#) (1912-1989)...another good thing to come out of *Seattle*...made her fame with *The Group* before writing *The Company She Keeps*. Her second marriage was to a working writer...the *American* critic Edmund Wilson. Her reputation is on the up now men and women who write are being [judged](#) on their writing. A writer's needs are more complex than those implied by the image of the starving poet scribbling away in his frozen garret.

Those who have only ever written under duress or necessity rarely understand the writer's need to write. George Orwell's essay *Why I Write* is worth consulting...Colin Wilson's [Outsider](#) and Arthur's Koestler's [Act of Creation](#) are also attempts by writers to explain. The best writers may also be adaptable with an ability to produce their work under almost any circumstances. For Tom Paine and Alexander Solzhenitsyn it was hardly a life of Reilly never knowing if today was to be their last as they rotted away in the *Bastille* and the *Siberian Gulags* respectively. Solzhenitsyn is even quoted as saying 'a man is happy so long as he chooses to be happy and nothing can stop him'.

I move around more than most...although [Hans Christian Anderson](#) drifted between benefactors...so I prefer a minimum of six weeks in one place...and 12-18 weeks is ideal. After this I hit my 26-week ceiling and lose enthusiasm. I pencil in two weeks of work disruption with a 50% fall in productivity when I move. My first week is for tying up loose ends from whence I came and setting up the infrastructure for whither I am headed.

By the end of the second week I expect productivity to be back to normal. Organising a new bank card, setting up my Swedish online banking, getting a *Sundbyberg Library Card* and an *SL Season Ticket*...anywhere in *Stockholm County* for £1.50 per day...are all first week errands. Next week it is *Residence Permit Application* and an apartment in *Lund* or *Cambridge* for the winter but these are not part of the normal moving routines. By next Saturday I hope to be up to speed with blog backlog eliminated and remedial website work completed. This gives me a clear week for *William Franklin* and *IG-Index* and another clear week to immerse myself in the idea of *Fawcety Laptops*.

In 175 days my blogyear will be at an end. Nights are drawing in. So I will sign off this blog with the lyrics of *Happy Christmas (War is Over)*...ain't search engines wunderbarful? So this is Christmas/And what have you done/Another year over/And a new one just begun/And so this is Christmas/I hope you have fun/The near and the dear one/The old and the young/A very merry Christmas/And a happy New Year/Let's hope it's a good one/Without any fear/And so this is Christmas/For weak and for strong/For rich and the poor ones/The world is so wrong/And so happy Christmas/For black and for white/For yellow and red ones/Let's stop all the fight/A very merry Christmas/And a happy New Year/Let's hope it's a good one/Without any fear/And so this is Christmas/And what have we done/Another year over/And a new one just begun/And so this is Christmas/I hope you have fun/The near and the dear one/The old and the young/A very merry Christmas/And a happy New Year/Let's hope it's a good one/Without any fear/War is over/If you want it/War is over/Now...music & lyrics by [John Lennon](#) (1940-1980).

bill shepherd weblog one hundred and ninety

<http://williamshepherd.blog.co.uk>

Sunday 9th July 2006

Posted: 2006-07-10

My fourth *Swedish* journal entry was written aboard *m/s Sjöbris* this morning as it navigated the deeps and shallows of *Stockholm's Norra Skärgård* en route for *Östernå*. *Blidösundsbolaget* have managed to keep going with the help of a 3000-strong fan club and some shrewd wheeling and dealing in the *Skärgård Steamboat Market* dominated by [Vaxholmsbolaget](#)...and immortalised in song by the *Swedish Troubadour* [Evert Taube](#).



Back in the 80s & 90s Alan Pryke would research, produce and present his own music programmes for [Radio Sweden International](#). One week he had the legendary *Stockholm Blues Man* [Roffe Wikström](#) on his scripting board. Rolf still turns out several times a year for *Blidösund's* programme of [Music Cruises](#). Alan's *RSI Wikstrom Show* has vanished into the cellars of *Radiohuset* along with his [Benny Anderson](#), [Björn Ulvaeus](#) and [Robert Wells](#) shows.

Sweden is a small country with a population of between nine and ten million. But outside of *Sweden*...in *Finland* and *Minnesota* for instance...there are as many *Swedish-speakers*. Beyond this linguistic enclave there is an *English-Speaking Swedish Diaspora* of several times this size gathered in the great world cities like *Sydney*, *Johannesburg*, *New York* and *Los Angeles*. These are the direct descendents of [Swedish Settlers](#) who emigrated under great hardship in the 19th century and then by choice in the 20th to make a better life for their children. But this is not the whole story.

Sweden punches well above her weight on the global stage...and has done so for many decades. The success of [The Swedish Model](#) is part of the story. But *Sweden's Neutrality Diplomacy* and her *Human Rights Agenda* in *Foreign Affairs*...long before the failure of the *British Labour Party* dissident socialist Robin Cook to implant the heresy amidst the imperial culture of the *British Foreign Office*...have also earned *Sweden* many international admirers.

Sweden's World Broadcasting Service has only ever had a tiny fraction of the resources of the *BBC World Service*. But *Sweden's* influence as an *English Language World Broadcaster* during the 50-years of the *Cold War* was out of all proportion to its size. Most *World Listeners* regarded world services as *Lord Haw-Haw* style propaganda exercises...with suspicions about *BBC* bias steadily mounting since the [Fall of the Berlin Wall](#) in November 1989. But *Sweden* has always been trusted. Indeed this *non-bias* ran so deep that even *Swedish* politicians rarely intervened.

Small budgets allowed producers at *Radio Sweden International* to introduce innovations in style, substance and format that might take decades to permeate through the top-heavy hierarchies of the *BBC*. Alan Pryke invented the *Music Documentary* with his [ABBA](#) programmes in the 1980s two decades before the *BBC* starting commissioning *Outside Production Companies* to prepare this ear food for evening listening at peak time on *BBC Radio Two*.

Programme formats like Andrew Marr's *Start of the Week*, Libby Purves' *Midweek* and Melvyn Bragg's *In Our Time* were features of *Radio Sweden's* short-wave broadcasts...spliced into home-spun imitations of Alistair Cooke's *Letter From America* or Roy Plomley's *Desert Islands Discs*. Indeed 20 years before John Peel took his microphone out of the studio for the *BBC's Home Truths* Alan Pryke was doing *Home Truths* for *Radio Sweden International*.

Unnoticed too has been Alan Pryke's political interviews. In an age of the *Rottweiler Interview* of a Brian Redhead, John Humphries, Jeremy Paxman or Jonathan Ross and the *Talk Show Approach* of a David Frost, Jimmy Young, Michael Parkinson or *Channel Four's* Richard & Judy, Alan Pryke's interviews with up-and-coming politicians like [Anna Lindh](#) have a style that blends respect with curiosity and tempers scepticism with affection for the values that the *Swedish* politician bring to public life...consensus, cooperation, fairness, equality, decency and common courtesy.

From 1984 to 1990 Anna headed up *Sweden's Young Social Democrats* and from 1991 to 1994 she chaired the board of *Stockholm City Theatre* and was *Stockholm City Commissioner for Culture and Leisure*. She was a close friend of three powerful *Social Democrat Women*...Birgitta Dahl, [Margot Wahlström](#), and Mona Sahlin. Today you will find her body in *Stockholm's Katarina Kyrka*...*Catharine's Church*. Nearby lies the body of an inheritor of [Carl-Michael Bellman's](#) mantle [Cornelius Vreeswijk](#) who died in 1987 at the young age of 50. Anna Lindh was assassinated on the second anniversary of [9-11](#) at the age of 46. Her real killers have not been brought to justice...nor have [Petra Kelly's](#).

bill shepherd weblog one hundred and ninety one

<http://williamshepherd.blog.co.uk>

Monday 10th July 2006

Posted: 2006-07-14

Yesterday *Italy* won the 2006 *World Cup* in *Berlin*. Next week the whole team will be up for sale as *Juventus & Co.* are relegated after the match-fixing scandal engulfs *Italy's* top clubs. You couldn't make it up. The *Penalty Shoot-Out* was the best ever. Not one of the penalty takers failed to beat the goalkeeper...including the *French* player who failed to score. A millimetre lower and it would have been a *Geoff Hurst Special*...in off the underside of the bar.



The sensation of the five-week tournament was not the football but Zinedine Zidane retaliating to a wind-up from Marco Materazzi at the end of last night's final with a full-on head-butt. Your mother and sister are whores seemed to be the gist of it...although *The Guardian* succeeded in persuading the world's press that the offending word was *terrorist*. Oooh! Zidane was sent off of course. But it will be interesting to see what happens to Materazzi.

Wayne Rooney's celebrity wife got herself sent home in disgrace for snorting cocaine...which is enough to make anyone stamp on their opponent's private parts. So he got himself sent off too. In medieval times battles always began with an exchange of insults. John Cleese gives a good imitation of how it was done in *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*. The *Australian* cricketers are the best at this game...but nowadays it is seen as *Best Practice* in all sports. What matters is to win not lose...not how you play the game. The *Aussies* have toned it down a bit since microphones were installed in the stumps and pick up every word. Perhaps that is why they lost the *Ashes* in *England* last year.

We drove across the island to friends...and all agreed that the *French* deserved to win. How the two girls managed to talk the whole time without ever missing the important plays baffled the males of the species men...multi-tasking in action. Anyway a fun evening...with cheese and wine to help it along. It was a cracker of a game too. And all praise to the *German* organisers and the *Argentinean* referee. I must do it again in four year's time...when I'm 64...almost.

Yesterday morning I was up at crack 'o dawn putting the final touches to the *Shepherd on Climate* project by posting [Right Science](#) and [Blog 'n Web](#). A hurried breakfast then the *Orient Express* to the *Grand Hotel* and my water taxi to *Lusterö*. As a final bold flourish my *Climate Blog* opens with the words: 'I have now said everything I have to say about *Global Warming* for the time being. Address to send information about *Climate Weaponry Programs* is P.O. Box 36, Rye, Sussex TN31 7WP England. The modern way is to *Blog 'n Web* the message. So here is the *Shepherd on Climate* website and the blog's *Declaration of Independence*. The *Hathaway Great Hedge of India Fund* and the *US Bill Gateway Project for Privatising the United Nations Organisation* are not funding this *Blog 'n Web*.'

Alan had a form-filling errand to attend to at the offices of the *Swedish Tax Authorities* so we took ourselves off to *Norrtilje* for the afternoon. We were braced for a long hot frustrating afternoon but found the place completely empty. Alan did his errand. So I did one too returning to *Svedudden* with a print-out from the *Swedish Government* computers telling *All and Sundry* that I was registered in *Matteusförsamling* in *Stockholmskommun* in *Stockholmslän*, was married on 2/8-69 and divorced on 28/1-85, lived in Sweden from 27/9-68 to 17/9-73 and returned for another *Cultural Massage* on 16/1-98 before departing for 48 Regent Street in *Cambridge* on 4/1-02. My whole life flashes before me as if through a glass darkly...and I thought I signed in at [Bromma Kyrka](#) where I was wed.

This *Personbevis* of mine...duly stamped and signed...is the first stage in my *Residence Permit Application Process*. The next step is more daunting. I must present myself and stand in line at the *Migration Office* on *Pyramidvägen*... 10-minutes walk from *Solna Centrum*. [Worthy Oriental Gentlemen](#) seeking admittance to the *UK* can guess what lies before me. How fortunate to have been denied the pleasure of visiting *Her Majesty's Immigration Office* in *Croydon*.

bill shepherd weblog one hundred and ninety two

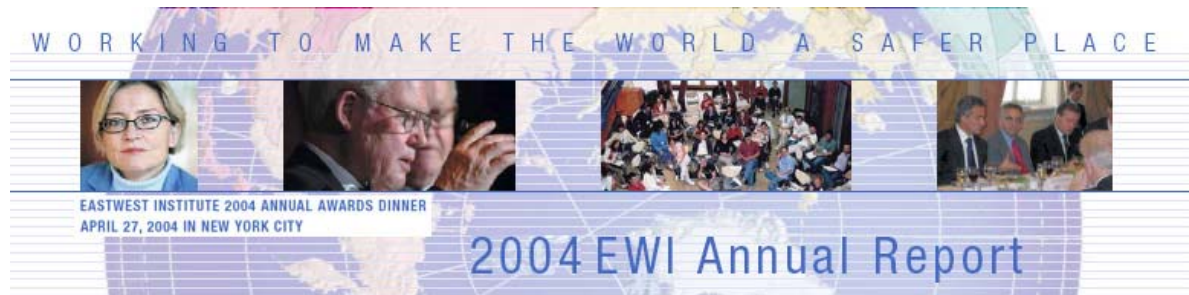
<http://williamshepherd.blog.co.uk>

Tuesday 11th July 2006

Posted: 2006-07-12

I woke up with the heavens open...and Alan scurrying around pulling plugs out of the wall...phone, computer, electricity...you name it...out it came. On *Vemara* my concern is figuring out where the rain plans to come in next so I can keep my computers, books and files one step ahead of the deluge. Exploding modems and burnt property are not my principal concern. Nowadays I disconnect the computer and all its ancillary pieces from the power supply when I turn it off and pull the plug out from the shore supply up on the bank when I go to town.

In *England* we start to count when we see a lightning flash...and then wait for the thunder. This tells us if the storm is coming closer or going away. Knowing gives us a spurious sense of control. The rule of thumb is 5-seconds per mile as lightning really shifts compared to the 775 miles per hour that sound takes to rumble across the heavens...at [70°F](#).



Rules are meant to be broken. This particular *Baltic Storm* decided to sit over *Ljusterö* and not budge for an hour while discharging itself at any earthly target...like Jennie's cat...that took its fancy. How *sweet* to be a [cloud](#) floating in the blue...particularly an incredible [Little Cloud](#) from which a gold string is dangling...*psst...cue for a song*.

More often than not *Rye Lightning* comes wrapped in a howling gale so counting seconds makes sense as the storm clouds have direction as well as attitude. At sea with your mast erect and ready to greet the storm the fine art of spotting a squall before it hits you is something you get quite good at...after a knockdown or two.

At night Connie and I would reef the main sail unless we were becalmed...when you need to catch all the breeze you can get. And this happens. In 2001 returning from *Morlaix* on the *North Brittany Coast* with Dmitri *Le Pêcheur* Pinschof as cabin boy bound for his cousin's wedding...and an engine out of commission...we managed it for three days in mid Channel on the [Autumn Equinox](#). This feat has been rivalled just once in the *Annals of Rye Nautical History*...when Connie and Helena drifted with the tide in the shipping lanes in mid-channel in September 1998.

On our way back into town in the afternoon we called in on *Sundviks Trädgård* for [Ekologiskt Odlade Grönsaker](#) and a few dozen organic free range eggs. It is quite hard not to eat properly in *Sweden*. In *England* it is a struggle to avoid poisoning yourself with processed junk. I was dropped at a bus stop somewhere in *Stockholm*'s northern suburbs and told to jump on the *Number 177* bus. No problem. But where to jump off again? The juxtaposition of *Solna*, *Vretten* and *Uhsunda*...where the bus went...to *Sundbyberg*...where I wanted to get off...was not immediately apparent. So I opted for caution and nostalgia and stayed aboard until we arrived at *Brommaplan* and familiar territory.

My ex-father-in-law Erik Lundell ran an *Ironmonger Shop* at *Brommaplan* for many years...he had a second one at *Nockebytorget* and a third somewhere else close by. He eventually sold out to *Svenska Handelsbanken* in the 1960s and bought a couple of apartment buildings on *Byggmästarvägen* in *Abrahamsberg* a ten minute walk away from the family home on *Gurlitavägen*. Interesting that both my parents and Ingrid's parents were *Homecomers* and not *Onward and Upwarders*. After the war they wanted nothing more than to stay in a place they knew and had learnt to love. None of this roaming the world for pastures new...over the hill...or beyond the ocean blue.

From *Brommaplan* I went by *Tunnelbana* to *Fredhemsplan* to escalator myself down a hundred feet to the *Orient Express*. But not before another nostalgia stopover at one of my old haunts...the *Konditori* on *St Eriksgatan* just round the corner from Alan's old apartment at *Fleminggatan 111* where I spent many happy hours back in the '90s. Imagine my amazement to discover that the konditori was exactly the same as I left it. Even the [Art Deco](#) statue of the young girl with her bare breasts was still in place. In *England* the *Womenslibbers*...pronounce *slibbers*...and the *Paedopolice* would have had her locked up long ago. In fact little seems to have changed in the area as a whole.

The *Socialist Bookshop* on the corner has gone...replaced by a *Hair Stylist* and a *Finger-Nail Boutique*. But as signs of the time go this is modesty indeed. With *Thoughts on Being Sixty* on my blogging agenda there will be more to say on this and the imbalance creeping into our *Rates of Life*.

bill shepherd weblog one hundred and ninety three

<http://williamshepherd.blog.co.uk>

Wednesday 12th July 2006

Posted: 2006-07-12

[Three months ago](#) I wrote about the idea of a *Center for Conspiracy Studies*. Such an institute would interest itself in assassinations and develop a danger rating system...one to five, colours of the rainbow, that sort of thing. I had in mind an *Assassination Risk Index* and league tables. I was not planning to go as far as John Marlan Poindexter...80 next month...and set up a [Futures Market](#) in *ARIs*. But as with the *Theoretical Physicist's Thought Experiments*, the methodology...how and who to aggregate, criteria to adopt, measurement and analysis of data...would be interesting.

After an assassination...Olof Palme, John Lennon, Princess Diana...or a failed assassination attempt...President Reagan, Pope John Paul II...investigations veer off in two directions...the *WhoDunnit* and the *WhyDunnit*. The police, charged with finding the killer and the evidence to have him convicted, interest themselves in motive if it helps get their man. Once they have him they turn to gathering the evidence the prosecutors need to get a conviction. Here the *Swedish* system of calibrating arrest warrants with the *Quality of Suspicion* is a good one.

In the Anna Lindh case for instance Per-Olof Svensson was apprehended on Tuesday 16th September 2003...five days after the murder...and detained as a suspect on *justifiable grounds*...the lowest degree of suspicion. Then on Wednesday 24th September 2003...two weeks after the attack that killed the *Swedish Foreign Minister*...Mijailo Mijailović was apprehended on the higher level of suspicion of *probable cause*. And Per-Olof Svensson was released.

This seems to be the right way to proceed. My sympathies are with the police. They need to be cautious. They may not be sure they have the right man but they are reluctant to let him go if there is a chance they have got it right. Of course an innocent man should not be deprived of his freedom just as a guilty man should be charged with his crime. But nobody has any problems with these cases. It is the grey areas that are difficult when the police are not sure they have the right man. In practice there may be conflicting views within the police or they may be worried about having insufficient evidence to win a conviction so they hope something will come up if they hold the man in custody.

But this is a problem for police and prosecutors. The ordinary [Agatha Christie](#) reading middle classes are more interested in the *WhyDunnit* than the *WhoDunnit*...as are *Public Authorities* responsible for protecting law-abiding citizens. They do not cry over spilt milk. They learn what they can and move on. Their job is to prevent new killings. Prosecutors are also interested in the motive. Magistrates and Jurors need convincing. Arguments of defending counsel need deflecting. Victims too have an interest in a murderer being apprehended and punished...and *Islamic Law* deals with this better than our own legal systems.

But the *Search for Motive* has fallen between too many stools as it gets parcelled out between *Investigating Journalists*, *Police Detectives*, *Crown Prosecutors* and in high profile cases...the killing of [Dr David Kelly](#) for instance...a shadowy *Fourth Estate* which the press delight in referring to as the *Intelligence Services*. Singly none of these groups are up to the job...and each looks over his shoulder and locks his desk at night. Their theoretical framework is inadequate...and will remain so until there is a paradigm shift in the definition of *Killing* and *Killingry*.

Mr & Mrs Public may be for or against capital punishment or think 20-years incarceration is too much or too little...and the broadcast media and the tabloid press can always whip up a debate. But while *Joe Public* might express an opinion if you ask him he is indifferent to the fate of the murderer...as likely to feel pity as fury. *Jennie Public* feels she understands the *WhyDunnit* with crimes of passion because she has been there...and stepped back from the brink. She understands how others might not be able to. Senseless killings too can be explained in terms of the lottery of life...the victim was in the wrong place at the wrong time and there are evil people out there.

Even *Killing for a Cause* is understandable if you get into the mind of the *Suicide Bomber*. It was the planes and not the fighter pilots and [Bomber Crews](#) that were in short supply in the early years of the *Hitler War*. Men went off to certain death in response to patriotic fervour and social pressure...particularly from women. Moreover dying is glamorous. [Beowulf's](#) purpose was to die gloriously so future generations would honour his memory in song.

Neither Olof Palme nor Anna Lindh died *Glorious Deaths*. Nor do I accept for one moment that their deaths were from *Indiscriminate Slaughter*. They were murdered. Orders were given. Instructions were carried out that should have been ignored. Just as the *Vocation and Toil* of the *Medieval World* have disappeared and been replaced by something Ivan Illich calls *Shadow Work*. So *Glorious Death* and *Indiscriminate Slaughter* are being replaced by *Shadow Death*...Stalin Purges, Nazi Holocausts, Genocide in Darfur, Srebrenica and Rwanda, Starvation by World Trade Terrorism, Killing for Profits, Annihilation by Debt...and the *Political Assassination* is returning.

Shadow Killing may be *Impersonal* and *Killingry* may be *Depersonalised* but the *Human Race* must strive to move beyond *Contract Killings* and the *Nuremberg Defence* as the way to settle differences...just as our forefathers moved beyond [Slavery](#) as an organising principle for society. An *Assassination Risk Index* is one place to start.

bill shepherd weblog one hundred and ninety four

<http://williamshepherd.blog.co.uk>

Thursday 13th July 2006

Posted: 2006-07-14

Last month at the annual *Grosvenor House Arts & Antiques Fair* a portrait was auctioned off at a reserve price of £800 000. The portrait had been around since 1932 when it was sold at an auction for £54...£2500 in today's prices...and shows Queen Elizabeth twelve years before she ascended the throne in 1558 and started her long 44 year reign which ended with her natural death in 1603. Here are the big four portraits of *Good Queen Bess*.



The new portrait is by an unknown artist and a copy of one in the *Royal Collection*. Elizabeth moved in circles where portraiture was taken seriously and authorised only a few to be painted during her reign. This latest portrait shows Elizabeth as a young teenager and was thought to have been painted in the 18th or 19th century until a specialist in historical portraits bought it at auction from a private *Spanish* vendor suspecting that there was a painting hidden beneath. Over the past 300 years artists had brightened the face and added side panels to expand Elizabeth's sleeves. But parts of the portrait had not been over painted and contained colours consistent with 16th-century pigments.

I was tempted to use the word allegedly about this fortunate find because the art market is awash with forgeries and there are plenty of nervous insurance companies uncertain who to believe. At this level the whole art market is pretty suspect with price fixing, bogus sales, insurance jobs and tax evasion alongside good old run-of-the mill hubris. Indeed art markets can be looked upon as financial devices to ensure the rich stay rich while the poor get poorer.

But there are no grounds for doubting [Philip Mould's](#) version of events. He knows his stuff, did his research, took a gamble and won big. His suspicions were confirmed when tests on the wooden panel also came up with the right date...1546...for the felling of the tree used to make the panel....you look at the space between the grain and match it to weather records with larger spaces between the lines signifying a hotter year. Better than working for your living.

[Philippa Gregory](#) is a novelist so she lies to reveal the truth...there is more to love and power than historians unearth in court records. An earlier novel *The Virgin's Lover* is about the young Elizabeth while her latest novel *The Constant Princess* tells the story of *Katherine of Aragon*...daughter of a warrior queen brought up in the *Alhambra*...who married for love only to be rejected when *King Henry VIII* fell in love with [Ann Boleyn](#)...Elizabeth's mother. *The Boleyn Inheritance* comes out in November. Here is Philippa's take on the portrait of the young princess.

She is her mother's daughter...from the rich vanity of the rings on her fingers to the pearl choker necklace at her throat. Typical too of the stylish Boleyn fashion sense is the French hood pushed daringly back on the head to show off the crimson brocade. That is how Ann Boleyn wore her hood...to the very steps of the scaffold. And what an enchanting young woman she is. She has the long Boleyn face with that slightly horsey nose which the [Tudors](#) found so beautiful and well-shaped eyebrows set in a high forehead.

This is the girl who became the beauty poets adored and who was courted by every bachelor in *Christendom*. Her small mouth looks ready to laugh and the round chin has the set of a determined woman who will become a formidable plotter and a powerful politician. Within months of her coronation she was fighting for her life using a combination of female wiles, a brilliant spy service and a whole new definition of a nation and national interest.

I can also see in this portrait the tough indomitable woman she will become and yet also the shades of the frightened child who lost her mother when she was little more than a toddler and learned only when her maids started calling her Lady Elizabeth that she was no longer royal. This is the Elizabeth who schemed unceasingly for the throne, who could face the greatest sea power the world had ever seen and yet could take to her bed to avoid a decision genuinely sick with fear. Here we have a unique glimpse of a girl who had tasted the glamour of royal favour and the shame of royal disdain. She had been declared sole heir to the throne and then proclaimed a bastard and disinherited.

bill shepherd weblog one hundred and ninety five

<http://williamshepherd.blog.co.uk>

Friday 14th July 2006

Posted: 2006-07-16

In the summer of 1797 Samuel Taylor Coleridge...poet, essayist and sage...retired to a lonely farm-house between *Porlock* and *Linton* 'on the *Exmoor* confines of *Somerset* and *Devonshire*'. The editor of the 1816 edition takes up the tale. 'In consequence of a slight indisposition an anodyne was prescribed from the effects of which he fell asleep in his chair at the moment that he was reading in *Purchas's Pilgrimage*: Here the Khan Kubla commanded a palace to be built, and a stately garden thereunto. And thus ten miles of fertile ground were inclosed with a wall.'



Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772 - 1834)

Coleridge 'continued for about three hours in a profound sleep...at least of the external senses...during which time he has the most vivid confidence that he could not have composed less than from two to three hundred lines; if that indeed can be called composition in which all the images rose up before him as things with a parallel production of the correspondent expressions without any sensation or consciousness of effort.'

'On awakening he appeared to himself to have a distinct recollection of the whole, and taking his pen, ink, and paper, instantly and eagerly wrote down the lines that are here preserved. 'A person on business from Porlock' interrupted him and he was never able to recapture more than 'some eight or ten scattered lines and images.'

To cut a long story short around this time I was prompted to take up the Poet's mantle to show that [Christ's Hospital](#) could still produce poets. Coleridge's poem begins like this: 'In Xanadu did Kubla Khan / A stately pleasure-dome decree / Where Alph, the sacred river, ran / Through caverns measureless to man / Down to a sunless sea.'

The poem ends like this...with the rap on the door knocker breaking the connection with the *Muse* just as you reach the word: His flashing eyes, / his floating hair! / Weave a circle round him thrice, / And close your eyes with holy dread, / For he on honey-dew hath fed, / And drunk the milk of Paradise. I make that 54 lines rather than 'eight or ten scattered lines and images' but perhaps editors have felt the need to stretch it out and make a little go a long way.

There is [more](#) but these opening few stanzas gave me the rhythm for my poem...part of an epic yet to be written...called [Ode For The Common Man](#). It goes like this: In Xanadu did Kubla Khan / A stately pleasure dome decree / But lofty thoughts were led astray / By withered minds too blind to see. / Now comes the ancient mariner / With grim tales yet untold / Of troubadours and knights of yore / Cast on a cross of gold. / Their trust they place in graven words / Their sophists speak to lie / But those whom force of law can make / Can law of force defy. / In England's green and pleasant land / Man thinking heard that Grecian sound / And he allowed that hearth and home / Should n'er be harmed by clerk or gnome. / In truth and justice will we live / With hope and honour in our breast / Out out damn mystics let us be / Farms for people towns for free.

By the end of the 1980s I had figured out that a writer needed to have a book published and had chanced across a short book by Karl Marx about *French Politics* in the 1840s...two decades before *Das Capital*. It was a short readable tract that ordinary people could take in a couple of sittings and gave the broad sweep of his *Magnus Opus*. Others have tried to summarise Marx' take on the world. But the best job was done by Marx himself before devoting 20 years of his life proving that he had been thinking along the right lines. As there was a chance my scholarly life would tread a similar path I told the gods to dream away to their hearts content...and use me as their scribe.

The initial outline took just a couple of sittings. But for two weeks *Swedish* politics refused to disentangle itself from two other manuscripts. With hindsight these can be said to have a similar provenance to my *Swedish* politics book as all three started life as a single manuscript before going their separate ways. One was eventually entitled *Maps Mapping & Modelling* and the other *Green Houses or Blue Moonwaves*. My interest in models and climate goes back 15 years and was always mixed up with my interest in the deep politics behind our political parties.

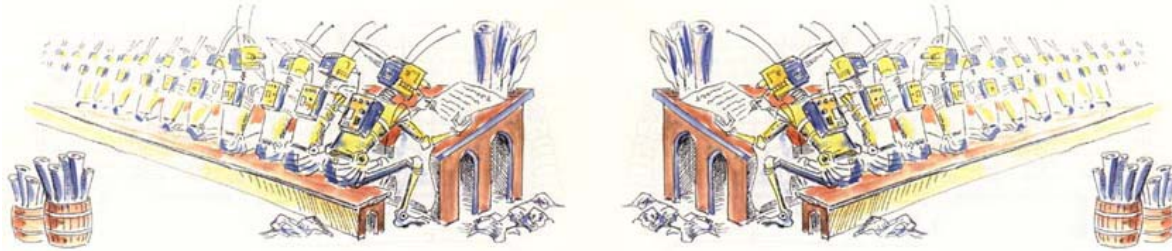
bill shepherd weblog one hundred and ninety six

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Saturday 15th July 2006

Posted: 2006-07-17

Some time in the 1980s I decided to become a writer. But I did not become one until the 1990s. And not until the mid-2000s...twenty years after my career change...did I start calling myself a writer. However my first ever published piece was *The Practicability of a Fixed Channel Link* that was published in 1966 in the *Journal of the Cambridge University Engineering Society* after I had won that year's *Cambridge Engineering Essay Prize*.



This gave me my first taste of creative writing on non-fictional subjects...although the first glimpse I had of my potential as a writer came when I won the *History Prize* in my *Greater Erasmus* year at *Christ's Hospital Bluecoat School* ahead of half a dozen future *Oxford History Scholars*...including the Latin American scholar [Alan Knight](#). My *Channel Tunnel Essay* was actually pretty close to being plagiarism but as I had used two sources and not just one I am told it was research. Besides after a few drafts there is not much left of the original source material.

After that nothing entered the public domain until the 1980s...although I was writing plenty of private reports. From 1972 to 1974 three reports found their way to the *World Bank*...*Oman Regional Roads Development Programme*, *Central Rift Valley Water Development Programme* and the *City of Blantyre Water Development Programme*. And between 1975 and 1980 my private report became the property of *Norton Company* of *Worcester Massachusetts* so nowadays they are among the copyrighted assets of the French multinational giant [Compagnie de Saint-Gobain](#).

It would take me nearly two decades to escape from the *Natural Sciences* to which boys who were clever at arithmetic were condemned even if they were really *Generalists* who could turn their brain to most things. My route seems with hindsight to have been particularly tortuous involving slipping out of *Natural Sciences* into *Mechanical Sciences* between school and university and then manoeuvring from *Mechanical Sciences* to *Business Economics* and from there to *National Economics* before a sideways lurch to the soft scientific domain of *Economic History*.

In the literary record that I put together in 1998 my work for *Fourth World Review* in the mid-1980s marks the start of my career as a writer. I separate my published work into articles, book reviews and published correspondence. Under *Articles* there is an essay *Towards a Society of the Free* in 1982 in the short-lived *Fourth World News* (1982 fwn26) which was published under my editorship so could be regarded as *Vanity Publishing*. At the time we were experimenting with a rotating editorship which worked well until Liz Nathaniels slipped in too many *Resurgence* sentiments for John Papworth's liking. John was sixty in 1982 so perhaps he was flirting with retirement when he thought up the rotation plan and later thought better of it? Besides he needs to be his own editor as well as publisher.

My first contribution to *Fourth World Review* was published in 1982 and was called *The Fourth Way* (1982 fwr20). My next piece was not until four years later when I wrote a *Letter from America* in the form of a book review entitled *Cities, Tribes & Empowerment* (1986 fwr29). In 1987 a piece of published correspondence with the title *Tutorial on Work* (1987 fwr22) was published followed by two articles in 1988...*The Future of The Home* (1988 fwr27) and *Moneyquakes* (1988 fwr28). I rounded off my published works for the 1980s with two articles...*A Nation of Gardeners* (1989 fwr31) and a published correspondence piece on *Money & Debt* (1989 fwr34).

These eight published pieces set the agenda for my political research over the next two decades. In my 1998 *Literary Record* my unpublished work was divided up into *Radioscripts* and *Manuscripts*. *Proverbial Talks* (1987) was the only radioscript I showed to anyone. Later it was incorporated into a course given at [Färnebo Folkhögskola](#) and is well-suited for an *Advanced English Course for Chinese students*...a sequel to the *Swedish politics* book.

There were three other radioscripts in my 1980s listing...*Report from a Swedish Village* (1988); *Ribbons, Robbers & Robins* (1988) and a comedy sketch *The Karlsson Affair* (1989)...and six manuscripts. These were *Education for a Virtuous Society* (1983)...from my time in *Early Childhood Education in Boston*; [Birmingham as Number One](#) (1986); *The Jewish Question* (1987); *Let The People Sing* (1988); *Maps Mapping & Modelling* (1989) and *Green Houses or Blue Moonwaves* (1989).

bill shepherd weblog one hundred and ninety seven

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Sunday 16th July 2006

Posted: 2006-07-18

I never met Anna Lindh...the *Swedish Foreign Minister* who was assassinated three years ago. There was a time in the early 90s when I thought it inevitable that our paths would cross. But that was before her star shot high into the political stratosphere...while mine crashed to earth with the *UK Referendum Party's* failure to enter parliament in 1997. From 1991 to 1994 Anna was in charge of *Culture and Leisure* in *Stockholm* while I was involved with *Green Party* affairs in *Sweden* and was friends with Elisabet Spens who worked with Anna on women and green issues.

Whenever I was in *Stockholm* Elisabet would suggest some gathering where Anna would be present so she could make an introduction. Elisabet's real strength was as a networker and I should have trusted her judgement...in the 18th century she would have been running a salon in *Gamla Stan*. But I am not a natural politician...though I can switch on the charm when I am in the mood. D'Arcy is my second name...seeking an *English Miss Bennett*. My first question is to ask why it is necessary, what is the agenda and what do we have to talk about...not the right questions.

It was Sabine Kurjo McNeill who put me in touch with Elisabet. 'You must promise me you will call her the moment you get to *Sweden!*' I have only met Sabine once in person...at the 1981 *Fourth World Assembly*...but we hold a watching brief on each other's activities and regularly copy emails to one another. Some day this might burst into active collaboration on some project or other but has yet to do so. Sabine may be the most intelligent woman I have ever met. A few months ago I tried to get my head round her research into [financial markets](#) but eventually gave up.

I would meet Elisabet at one of the *Vete Kattens* in *Stockholm*...*Östermalm* or *Kungsgatan*...as we were connoisseurs of this particular *Coffee House Genre*. Elisabet once took me to meet someone living in August Strindberg's old rooms on *Drottninggatan*...opposite the *Holographic Museum* near the old university campus at *Odenplan*. I had a brief flurry with holograms after buying a supply of pendants and watches in *Canterbury* imported from *Hong Kong*. On my return to *Old England* I got the idea of *Det Holografiska Bolaget*...but have yet to make it happen. I still have £1500 of stock in store...worth either £100 or £10000 today...if I can find a buyer.

Fourth World Review published four of my articles during the early 90s...*Real Questions on Land* (1990 fwr 38); *The Luddites* (1991 fwr 43); *Not Guilty* (1991 fwr 48) and *Peaceful Anarchy* (1995 fwr 69). Then there was *The Rise & Fall of the Swedish Green Party (1982-1997)* and my translation of Lena Rainer's book *For Sweden Carl XVI Gustav In Keeping With The Times* published for the 50th birthday of the [King of Sweden](#) on 30th April 1996. This is enough to put me in the *Monarchists Camp* if another *English Civil War* breaks out...and it is not out of the question.

In *Sweden's* equivalent of *Books In Print*...the library data base...I pop up as the translator of this book...put out in *English* for the *Minnesotan* branch of the *Swedish Diaspora*. At the time I was more interested in the forty thousand kronor I got for my work. I gave a copy of the book to Alan's wife Magdalena for her 50th Birthday. As she rather likes the king's wife my dedication was: 'to Magdalena as the closest I will ever come to [Drottning Sylvia](#). Best wishes on your 50th birthday from William Shepherd by appointment *Court Translator* to King Carl XVI Gustav.'

When I started writing the *Swedish* politics book I was a poor penniless poet living on £40 a week of *Enterprise Allowance* and commuting between a *Bed & Breakfast* establishment in *St John's Court* in *Canterbury* and a small room at the top of my old college friend Peter Mechlin Thompson's house on *Church Road* in *Watford*. My daughter was 16 years old at the time and had been asking all sorts of questions about politics and economics so I wrote it for her and her generation...and conceived it as a book that would one day be used for *English* language teaching in *China*. I dedicated it to those who lost their lives in *Tiananmen Square* in the year of its birth...1989.

I had no inclination to tout my wares around the publishing houses suspecting...quite rightly it turns out with the hindsight of 15 years in the game...that my book would end up on the slush pile with a few hundred other unsolicited manuscripts. Publishers occasionally take on an unknown fiction writer but non-fiction is always commissioned. I started up my own publishing company...and called it *Academic Inn Books* in memory of *Professor Leopold Kohr*.

But it was not all smooth sailing. Just as I was gearing up to write the book my daughter ran away from Mummy in *Uppsala* and turned up on her Daddy's doorstep declaring that she wanted a job in *England* and had done with *Sweden*. It was wonderful having her around but my living conditions were not conducive to taking in lodgers. So I appealed to my elder brother John...and he agreed to let me have the use of his house at *Regent Square* in *Rye* for six weeks...bless him...long enough to help my daughter settle and his young brother fulfil his writing ambitions.

In the beginning the book did not come easy because it got itself entangled with two other manuscripts. But once I realised this and split it off from a manuscripts on *Nuclear Power Politics* and some remarks about *Maps* and *Models* things fell into place. By the time I embarked on *Tor Anglia* for a few months on *Kungsholmen* the book was with the typesetters in *Glastonbury* and Helena was in a rented room in *Canterbury*...waiting at tables in the evening.

bill shepherd weblog one hundred and ninety eight

<http://williamshepherd.blog.co.uk>

Monday 17th July 2006

Posted: 2006-07-17

Yesterday I returned to a place that may one day be immortalised by the radiocscript *Report from a Swedish Village*. The village is *Kungsholmen* and my old haunt was *Mälarpaviljongen* built out over the water on *Mälärstrand*. It was here that I wrote the afterword of *The Return of the Ancient Mariner* 15-years ago in the form of an introduction to the book by my son Nicholas John...after William Shepherd had disappeared while on a trip to *Colombia*. Here is yesterday's journal entry...my seventh from *Sweden* this summer...written at *Mälärstrand Konditori*.



I have almost come to terms intellectually with the idea that I am 60 and entering the final third or quarter of my life on earth. [Life](#) is the damndest thing...you come from nothing, you're going back to nothing, what have you lost? Nothing. I can get my head round the [Priestley Metaphysical Option](#)...the individual is everything in life and nothing beyond life. The transfer of life through the species is the meaning of life...a variation on the [Selfish Gene](#) approach. Nonetheless I have not yet given up on the individual and his *Is That All There Is* question.

The little individual has two roads to immortality...passing on himself or passing on his acts...as in *Acts of the Apostles*...thinking not only of art, books and memes but also of attitudes, values and ways of going about things. This thought dovetails with [Buckminster Fuller's](#) idea that the universe somehow manages to give more individual brownie points for work that is done for all people and all time than...at the other extreme...for instant gratification of the little individual's own needs...with a sliding scale in between. However the arithmetic is crucial.

To produce something for everyone and everytime...Lao Tzu's [Tao-Te](#) and Albert Einstein's $e=mc^2$ get close...is so infinitesimally improbable for the little individual that the expectation of doing so is a kind of madness. You can improve the odds during the course of a lifetime. But it is still wildly improbable. However the odds start to improve when instead of everyone everywhere and everytime you go for one family half a dozen generations hence. With luck the *Fuller* curve may even be non-linear with a *Cosmic Pareto's Principle* that gives you 80% of the brownie points for breaking 20% of the bonds of *Kierkegaard's Paradox*...living in time with society and in eternity with yourself.

When I dwelt upon such weighty matters a few years ago for my *Last Will and Testament* I stipulated that my journals...forty one and rising...should remain in the family for at least 200 years. I gave this a little more thought yesterday on *Mälärstrand* and decided to stick with it. Here is the other...preceding...part of yesterday's entry.

Another of my old *Stockholm* haunts turns out to be quite unchanged. There is something a little eerie about returning to a place two decades later and finding that everything looks and feels the same...while knowing that all the people are either new or have shed their complete collection of trillions of cells six or seven times during those twenty years. It is the same uneasiness I get with the idea of a *Neutron Bomb* that destroys people leaving property unscathed.

Our governing structures give me similar feelings. They remain unchanged while the actors are swapped around, die off or get replaced. Similar thoughts arose riding the *Orient Express* to *Rådhuset* and listening to two *Kenyan* couples chatting and laughing in *Swahili* and *English* across from me. How incredible were the odds against just those particular individuals being there at all. However there is another side to the coin which is just as spooky.

Over a longer time span...take 200 years as I was watching the *BBC* version of *Pride and Prejudice* last night that Helena sent in my *60th Birthday Package*...almost the whole of the physical infrastructure is completely replaced. People are the same as they have always been...but only in their bodies; not on their bodies or in their heads.

Taken together these *Rates of Renewal* represents a delicate mechanism that we meddle with at our peril. The [Kovaanisqatsi](#) that the *Hopi* speak of has been thrown out of balance not by *Modern Man* but by the structures constructed to adjust these rates. One of these is the [Rule of Five](#) unleashed by the *Mechanism of Central Banking*. *Life Rates* are where it is at...metaphysically. And [Political Economy](#) is not good with *Time*...theoretically.

bill shepherd weblog one hundred and ninety nine

<http://williamshepherd.blog.co.uk>

Tuesday 18th July 2006

Posted: 2006-07-19

Wise men approach life with a sense of mystery and wonder. Tom Lethbridge's discoveries with his [long pendulum](#) of a timeless zone beyond death may eventually turn out to be the best theological argument for being mindful with your life. But for the moment life remains the damndest thing. Toni Pinschof once told me that the best neighbours a peasant farmer can have are [Jehovah Witnesses](#). They believe that the *Day of Judgement* might come at any moment. So they act accordingly and are on red alert in anticipation of his arrival. This, Tony explained, is good for the neighbouring farmers because whenever they need to borrow anything they find it in immaculate condition.



Sixty years ago it would have been impossible to predict that I would be spending my 60th birthday on the island of *Ljusterö* in the *Stockholm Archipelago*. Even a month ago I would not have bet on it...although my daughter asked me to thank Alan and Magdalena for taking the pressure off her. You can reasonably expect to know where you will be tomorrow...but ten years from now...twenty five years? The [Arrow of Time](#) is strange too. It puzzles physicists.

Time should be symmetrical according to their equations. There should not be an arrow at all. If you know your birthday you should know your deathday. But in practice all you know is that you are one day closer each morning. The present is everything or nothing. The future has yet to come and the past has vanished. The priests try to cut the [Gordian Knot](#) by reference to higher authority...a sacred book or a divine being. Take no heed for the morrow, sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof is their best shot...heed our words and your reward will be in the hereafter.

The main argument against suicide is never knowing what the next day brings...which is why suicides increase in the spring. You despair in the winter...but hope for better things. Come spring nothing changes...so hope vanishes. Such macabre concerns were abandoned yesterday afternoon as *m/s Waxholm I* picked her way between the [Hallberg-Rassys](#)...and the restaurant on *Skeppsbron* that sunk last night...to take me to my birthday party on *Ljusterö*.

Over to port lay *Skeppsholmen* where the [Af Chapman](#) is moored...the best situated youth hostel in the world. On the far side of the island is [Benny Anderson's](#) studio...unbeknown to the *Aussie* backpackers. An hour out we docked at *Vaxholm*...capital of the *Stockholm Skärgård*. It took two and a half hours from *Grand Hotel* to *Grundvik* on *Ljusterö* as we made our way round the islands stopping at a dozen small jetties for passengers to disembark and be greeted and welcomed to the country homes of friends or family. More than half of *Stockholmers* have a place in the country.

We were nine to dinner and seven to sing the traditional *Swedish* birthday song '*Jäg mår han lever...*' which wishes the *Birthday Boy* or *Girl* 'many happy returns of the day' but means literally 'may you live...' It is sung three times before ending the sentence with '...for a hundred years'. It could stop there with the traditional three cheers but there is another verse. '*Och då ska han skjutas...*' three times...before '*...i en skottkära fram.*'

Swedes find this uproariously funny. Much *Swedish* humour is [Situation Comedy](#)...a good example of this is *Fawlty Towers* where John Cleese is forever thwarted in his neurotic attempts to control, stay organised and organise others. We have that here with a firing squad and the indignity of it all. But there is also a witty play on words. *Skjuta* means 'to shoot' and 'to push'...with *skjutas* the passive 'to be shot'. Adding the final line changes the meaning from 'then he'll be shot' to 'then he'll be pushed...forward in a wheelbarrow'. Our *Happy Birthday* is tame by comparison.

There were only seven singers because the *Birthday Boy* does not sing his own praises and 5-week old boys are excused...although Andrew and Elisabet's son Jonathon joined in anyway. Jennie and Jeremias' 3-year old daughter Alva would have us singing all evening. But I was volunteered to sing to her at the piano the next day instead. And so I did. [Mor's Lilla Ulla](#)...and a brown björn she befriends in the forest much to the alarm of her mother.

By mid morning a work party was in full flow painting the house so Alan and I persuaded ourselves of the necessity of driving to the building merchants for vital supplies...and the price of scaffolding. On the way back we called in at the local store for worms and [snus](#)...a 200-year old tradition introduced by a *French Queen*. Snus is placed between lip and gum...unlike the worms...which are placed on a hook and fed to passing pike. Allegedly Jeremias caught an 18-inch [gädda](#) but ate it before I could verify the fact. So I am unable to vouch for the truth of this fisherman's tale.

bill shepherd weblog two hundred

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Wednesday 19th July 2006

Posted: 2006-07-21

On my 60th birthday and on the stroke of midday...and there were clocks striking all around me...I strode into the [Grand Hotel](#) in *Stockholm* and ordered myself a pot of coffee to drink in the foyer while awaiting the departure of *Waxholm I* for *Ljusterö* at 1300 hours. The coffee was much too strong and I take care to avoid attending concerts or walking around town with a full bladder so I drank just two of the four cups in my silver coffee pot before paying thirty one crowns...exchange rate 13.4 to the pound...and strolling across the street at 1250 hours to my waiting *Water Taxi*. I left no bank notes in my wake to gladden the hearts of swooping waiters. It did not escape my notice that the *Grand Hotel* has a policy of waiters and not waitresses in their foyer. I wonder why?

[Two months ago](#) I congratulated the [China Chapter](#) of *International PEN* on their campaign to stop the persecution of bloggers in *China*. A little notice in an inside page of the *Financial Times* mentioned rejoicing after Hao Wu, the *Chinese* filmmaker and author of the [Beijing or Bust](#) blog went free after being held in jail for 140 days without charge. Rebecca MacKinnon of [Harvard's Global Voice](#) blog has been campaigning for his release. Good on Ya Becky! The media should keep their distance. Here is a [Beijing or Bust](#) blogpost from earlier this year.

'Recently I had a huge argument with my mother. The unreasonable requests from her were so obviously morally wrong and I shouldn't even have to explain my stand. Instead I kept on calling her back apologizing for my behavior and comforting her. What could I have done? She's my mother. This made me think about censorship in *China*. The comments from *Chinese* readers to my previous post *Do I Have to Take A Stand?* mainly expressed annoyance and incomprehension at the *West's* criticism of *China*. So did most of the *Chinese* bloggers I've read thus far.

I sensed the existence of a defensive argument from my compatriots - This is our family business; leave us alone! That's the same argument I used with my ex...an *American* advocating *Tibetan* rights and preaching all the other liberal media's criticisms of *China*. I explained that the *Chinese* are very defensive about these criticisms because in our modern history we'd been repeatedly humiliated by *Western Colonial Powers*; in addition, we *Chinese* believe in *A son doesn't complain about his mother's plain looks, and a mother doesn't pick on a son's destitution*.

My own advice to *American Bleeding Hearts* in *Nepal* would be to stop imposing yourselves upon the *Tibetans* just because it's fun hanging out in *Tibet*...and feels good saving victims to boost your own low self-esteem. Your energy and concern is desperately needed back home in the *United States of America*. In terms of civil liberties and freedom of thought the *USA* is higher up on Noam Chomsky's list of [Failed States](#) than *China*. But those ignorant of their own ignorance are hard work. A wise man can learn from a fool but not the other way about.

It is hard to know how to deal with tipping at the best of times. There are those of my acquaintance who avoid the better establishments because of their fear of the withering glance and the dismissive shrug. Not even [Basil Fawltz](#) can cure them of their fear of posh places. I explain that they will never set eyes on these people again and that the glancee is worth quite a few of the glancers. But to no avail. However I have had the occasional success with my policy approach which is what gives me the confidence to be qualm-free in such situations.

One can have a policy for anything. Indeed if you are wise you will have policies for most things. A policy is a set of general rules to apply to particular circumstances. Its value is enormous. Instead of working out what to do you make a straight choice whether to apply the policy or not. It can cut down the energy and anguish by ninety percent. My *Drinking Policy* is not to until the sun goes beneath the yardarm. My *Tipping Policy* is not before seven in the evening and a carefully calculated ten percent from then on. I waive the policy for exceptional service...good or bad...and when I wish to avoid talking about it and prefer to do the done thing whatever that might happen to be.

Charity is the job of the rich. *Solidarity* is the way of the poor. Today I am poor. Tomorrow I will be rich. Of course waiters are poor and depend on tips to make a living wage. Let them rely upon the largesse from their rich clientele. My drop in the ocean will not improve their prospects. Besides unless you know a hotel's *Waging and Tipping Policy* you cannot take an informed position. But this title of mine does not necessarily get spent inside the establishment. It is as likely to go to the lad selling the [Big Issue](#) ten yards down the street.

Anyway it was my *Best Deal Policy* and not my *Tipping Policy* that was in force at the *Grand Hotel*...after application of my *Selecting Appropriate Policy* policy. My reason for taking coffee at the *Grand Hotel* was because it is the cheapest place when *Operant Conditions* are taken into account. The better class of *Hotels* and *Coffee Houses* provide customers with copies of the *Daily Newspaper*. The very best take a pride in their piles of crisp unopened copies of [New York's Herald Tribune](#) and [London's Financial Times](#). Either of these would set me back the price of a pot of coffee. But in fifty minutes I can make my way through both publications and even walk away with a copy or clip out an article with no one batting an eyelid.

bill shepherd weblog two hundred and one

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Thursday 20th July 2006

Posted: 2006-07-21

In the days before Ronald Reagan, *Academics* developed concepts like *Domino Theory* to justify the use of force in faraway places like *South-East Asia*. Most of the ideas were variations on the theme of defending the world against *The Communist Menace*. But the *Reagan People* improved on the rhetoric with the notion of an *Evil Empire* to describe the *Soviet Union*...and the idea of a *Terrorist State*. But it was Bill Clinton's speechwriters who first coined the phrase *Rogue State*...with *Failed States* coming later. *Rogue States*...like *Iraq*...threatened *US Security* while *Failed States*...like *Haiti*...required *US Intervention* to save them. Shame about the [Mess](#) that got left behind.

Most *Americans* manage to overlook the fact that under *US Law* their country fits the category of *Terrorist* and *Rogue State* better than most. In *American* academic circles it has long been accepted that the rest of the world regards the *USA* as the leading rogue state and a threat to their existence. *Foreign Affairs Specialists* write it as a fact. But Noam Chomsky is now going round the studios telling *Americans* that they are also one of the best [Failed States](#) as well...and suggesting there might be a connection between the two facts. On this the *American People* do not need much persuading. The overwhelming majority of *Americans* take the view that their country has a *Democratic Deficit*...a gap between public policy and public opinion...although being well to the right of the *People*, the political parties are unwilling to accept this. And [Democratic Deficiency](#) is a key measure of the *Failed State*.



This brings me to *Sweden*. Not too big. Not too small. Just the right size...but bottom of the *Rogue State* and *Failed State* leagues...alongside *New Zealand* and *Switzerland*. To be Small or Not To Be Democratic At All? If *State Research* were conducted along similar lines to *Medical Research* millions of research dollars would have poured into statistical analyses of these league tables. Particular attention would have been directed to states that altered their size and shape by acquisition or dismemberment. The statistical findings would have been incontrovertible. Size matters...and a population of a few million is great news for the State's inhabitants...and the neighbouring states too.

Then our *State Researchers* would have moved on to *Confederations* and...the coming thing...*Diasporas*. *Business Researchers* have discovered by studying the data that *Financial Portfolios* suffer from *Diminishing Returns* and the more items they include the worse they get. The *Optimum Portfolio Size* is six to ten...which might be true of confederations too.

If I lived in *Vermont* I would like to know if it were better for my family to live in a *Province* of a *Large Failed Rogue State* or as part of a *Confederation of Successful Small States* at the foot of the *Rogue State League*. It is good to see this question is now on [Vermont's Agenda](#). One day we may be grateful for the academics who invented the concepts of *Rogue* and *Failed States*. So much research to do...so little being done. To conclude here are two extracts from *Speculations Past* in [The Rise & Fall of the Swedish Green Party \(1982-1997\)](#).

After allowing the *Norwegians* to secede peacefully and create a new country on their *Atlantic Seaboard* at the beginning of the century, the remaining eight million *Swedes* continued their virtuoso display of war avoidance diplomacy - a skill acquired during the early years of the 19th century when Napoleon's troops were establishing military bases along the estuaries of the rivers running out of *Central Europe* into the *Baltic Lakes*.

By the time the governments of the *European* colonizing companies embarked upon *The Great Folly* of employing their young men as cannon fodder in 1914 *Little Sweden* was well rehearsed in the [Art of Non-Alignment](#). It knew all there was to know about weaving and bobbing and keeping your head down, and had learned how to avoid slaughtering its youngest, strongest, best and brightest men. It had become a small sensible *Nation-State* that remembered its imperial pretensions of bygone days and understood that nothing awaits warring empires...be they hailed as *Victors of the War* or *Winners of the Peace*...except their exhaustion, their division and their subsequent brief but glorious *Golden Age*...echoes of Leopold Kohr in [The Philosophies of Misery](#)...perchance even *Plagiarism*.

bill shepherd weblog two hundred and two

<http://williamshepherd.blog.co.uk>

Friday 21st July 2006

Posted: 2006-07-21

There are 35 million blogs in the world...and rising...at the rate of 75000 a day. I have eleven of them...perhaps even 97 depending on how they are counted. I have made 250 postings during the first half of this year...204 to this daily William Shepherd blog, 33 to [Shepherd on Climate](#), seven to my [Magna Carta II](#) blog, five to my [Market Trader](#) blog, one to a [Family Research](#) blog...although this is a little misleading as the one posting contains a couple of dozen entries...and two others awaiting my attention...one on the [History of Usury](#) and the other one set up in support of the September 2006 [Radical Consultation](#).

My blog hosts work out of *Berlin* and have sold me 100 blogspaces with 7% currently in use...which is why blogspots are on offer to *Chinese Dissidents* if they can get their material out of China...*Solzhenitsyn's Gulag Problem*. It was nice to get 100 blogs but removing adverts from my blogs was why I bought the package. I have a few other blogs dotted around...a couple at Rupert Murdoch's [My Space](#) and two with a [Swedish bloghost](#) where 13% of the bloggers are in love, 18% are miserable, 10% are angry and a splendid 59% are happy with their lives.

Were I a typical member of the blogging fraternity you could divide that 35 million by ten and get 3.5 million bloggers in the world...or 350 000 of us worldwide. But I am not typical. Another approach would assume *Pareto's Law* applies with 20% of the blogs getting 80% of the traffic. This would then suggest a hard core of five million *Real Blogs* and one million *Real Bloggers*...people like China's Hao Wu of [Beijing or Bust](#), America's Rebecca MacKinnon of [Harvard's Global Voices](#), Sweden's Karolina Lassbo of [Glamour Princess' Diary](#) and me.

Anything with millions attracts the attention of the *PLM...the Politico-Legal-Media Complex*...and in particular the advertising end of *M*. The advertisers' first question is always if their money is well-spent. They know that half of it is wasted but do not know which half. *Television Media Companies* get paid by the number of eye-pairs they deliver to the advertiser...viewers with *Face Furniture* count double. But are they looking and will they buy?

To the embarrassment of the advertising industry the answer to the second question appears to be no. A film maker recently placed a camera on top of a few dozen television sets...facing the sofas...and edited the raw footage they produced into a documentary film. People with the family television on do not actually watch it. In fact they will do almost anything to avoid watching it. Whoops. And we thought they just went to the kitchen to make tea at half-time.

For each *Tuned In, Turned Off* and *Shopped Out* question there are sub-questions like who is watching and who is spending whose money. But do Watchers Buy? The answer is sought in anecdote and statistics. With anecdote the game is to find a success story and ignore the fact that every success breeds a thousand failures. And *Direct Mail* is an example of statistics. It's a percentage game. Send out a million pieces of junk, get a few hundred responses with a few hundred percent mark up on the crap you bought at a distress sale...plus some other tricks you can pull...pay your expenses and you turn a profit. If not take a loss and offset it against taxes. In the worst case file for company bankruptcy...before paying expenses...except up front ones. Ain't Capitalism wonderful?

The advertising business runs on *Hype 'n Hope*...the old *Wing & A Prayer* formula. The next *Great Hope Hype* are the *Bloggers*...and one of them comes in pink. Karolina Lassbo is doing her *Law Finals* at *Uppsala University*. But between classes she is a *Design Guru* for the *Pretty in Pink* teenage set. Her blogsite gets 30000 visitors a week.

Karolina's global audience is thirty times the size of mine. My blogscore is 2500 page views this year on this blog and 750 on the *Climate* and the *Franklin* blogs with on average 2-page views per visitor...me and search engines among them. *Glamour Princess' Diary* runs a few campaigns which are typically short-lived but lucrative...bringing in a few kronor per click. But most of her income comes from [Tradedoubler](#)...a *European* webcommerce provider similar to the US-based [MeCommerce](#) from [Goodstorm](#)...motto *Capitalism Done Right*...that *eBay* has her eyes on.

These webfirms provide bloggers with a list of advertisers to choose from, tracks their trading and pays a percentage of retail on each online trade...50% in the case of *MeCommerce*. The idea of visitors buying stuff from a blogger they trust and want to support is nice. I had plans to back up my recent remark that 'my [Drinking Policy](#) is not to until the sun goes beneath the yardarm' by doing the rounds of the neighbourhood alcohol division...the pub...of our friendly global drug pushers and offering to shift to mid-afternoon...or repeat myself in mid-winter...for a slice of the action and a shilling in the pound to Leopold Kohr's [Academic Inn](#). But it makes more sense to sell from the 'vast catalogue of books, DVD's, CD's, and video games' at *MeCommerce*...were it not for one little cloud on the horizon.

[Annica](#) is a friend of Karolina. Her blog tells me...and a few thousand others in the blogosphere...that she was moving her blog to her own domain 'to get rid of that pesky blogspot ad'. Hmm! Annica recommends you listen to *Qu'est Ce Que J'ai Fait* by [Tony Head](#) and read [Blood on the Moon](#) by James Ellroy. Why not buy them through me?

bill shepherd weblog two hundred and three

<http://williamshepherd.blog.co.uk>

Saturday 22nd July 2006

Posted: 2006-07-22

I worked on my blogs from seven until midday. Indeed I have been working on nothing else all week. I say all week but it has actually been half a week as I returned from *Ljusterö* late on Tuesday night on the 1935 *Vaxholmsbologaet* boat from *Väsbystrand* on the north of the island. In fact I got ahead of myself with draft content in place all the way through next weekend. Last time I did this I threw most of it away but perhaps my luck will be better second time around. My problem was to find an elegant...and seemingly casual...way to integrate *Anna Lindh Dossier* material.

Swedes appreciate the benefits of paying taxes more than most. It helps to have an efficient *Public Sector* and a *Neutrality Policy* so not much is squandered on the military. Most discussions about taxes pass through the *Smoke and Mirrors* department. Margaret Thatcher's failed attempt to dismantle the public sector had more to do with destroying *Trade Union Power* than reducing taxes. But the dead hand of government rhetoric went down well with the tax-paying middle classes. The poor have no money and the rich pay to avoid taxes. The *Thatcher Legacy* is *Chronic Centralisation* and *Administrative Directives* instead of *Local Democracy*. I wonder if she realises.

In *England* in the 1920s *C. H. Douglas*...and when will the *Social Creditors* airbrush out the moustache and drop the *major* from his name...would patiently explain to anyone willing to listen that the conventional wisdom about *Banks & Taxes* was incorrect. The state does not pay its bills from taxes and there is neither rhyme nor reason for so convoluted a financial system...though the myths serve certain interests extremely well. But I will leave *Social Credit* and the *Two Acres and A Pig Policy* of the *Distributists* for another day.

I returned to *England* from *America* at record speed on 19th October 1987 riding on the coat-tails of the *Great Storm*. It cut an hour off my 7-hour flight across the *North Atlantic* from *Boston's Logan Airport*. In *Kent* and *Sussex* trees were scattered like matchsticks. In *Castle Woods* and *Oxleas Woods* behind *Crookston Road* where my mother lived 200-year old oak trees were ripped from the ground. And here is an eye witness account from the *West Country*.

'I remember waking up in the middle of the night and calling my mum because I thought there were burglars in the roof. She told me that there was a bit of a storm and that's what I could hear. It turned out that so many roof-tiles had been ripped off in the storm that it was my old tricycle rolling up and down the loft in the wind. Our neighbour's car was lying under a tree outside our front door. Mum and dad watched the back garden fence and gate fly around and trap the cat. They couldn't get to rescue her with the wind blowing so a rescue effort was launched in the morning!'

Once the dust had settled and the country got back to normal the *City of London* started flogging off *State Enterprises* to the *People*. Mixed in among the telephones and water was the *Channel Tunnel*. As this megaproject was all my fault...for bringing it to the attention of all those *Cambridge Engineers* in high places...I thought the least I could do was to buy some shares and get myself free trips to *Paris*. So I sent off for the six-inch high stack of documents and spent two days wading through them. My conclusion was that the *French* had it right and the *Thatcher Government* was selling a very expensive *Pig-in-the-Poke* to the *English*...and I once prepared these dossiers myself for the scrutiny of such big-hitters as the *ODA* and the *IBRD* so I speak with a smidgeon of authority.

As I had determined to be a writer here was my opportunity so I sharpened my quill and set to work. In my view the proposed financial structure was nonsense...and a rip-off. Ordinary people would lose their shirts. It was a very dodgy dossier. I slaved away for a week and ended up with a 15000 word essay in my journal. Unfortunately at this point in the proceedings the dreaded person on business from *Porlock* rapped on the door and I took it no further.

This is a great shame as there is no end to this folly...*railways*, water, electricity, schools, *hospitals*...all have fallen victim to the stupidity of private equity when common wealth is the answer. Perhaps *John Edmonds* would have given me the funding to denounce this theft of our *Common Wealth* in a 75000 word book. We worked wonderfully well opening the batting for the *Old Blues*. None of this is nuclear physics. Paying for public works from the public purse is often a good thing. Paying up front for something that gives free benefits from then on can make a lot of sense. At least I can run my personal life this way. The 600 kronor I spent for a travel pass when I arrived was money well spent. It makes me wonderfully happy to jump onboard a bus or train anywhere anytime without paying a penny.

So between 1200 and 1500 I rode the buses and trains around *Stockholm* visiting my old haunts in *Vasastan*. My coffee house on *Odenplan* is now a *Houston Steak House* but little else has changed. The *Lord Byron* at the end of *Dannemoragatan* is just the same and so are my 7-11's. And the *Konditori* on *Odengatan* is still the same as it was in 1968 down to the very last detail of the chairs and the layout...though coffee is now 23 kronor. But I made a mistake in my report from *Kungsholmen*. The unchanging façade fooled me. Behind it an enormous great retail complex has been created at the junction of *St Eriksgatan* and *Fleminggatan*. I stumbled across it coming off the subway. This is the freakiest thing of all...a complete makeover behind an unchanging façade. Spooky as *Dame Edna* might say.

bill shepherd weblog two hundred and four

http://williamshepherd.blog.co.uk/2006/07/23/sunday_23rd_july~981260

Sunday 23rd July 2006

Posted: 2006-07-23

In the summer of 1982 my girlfriend Rachel Kowalczyk wheedled \$300 out of [Marilyn Ferguson](#) for me to spend three weeks working at her *Los Angeles* office in a rather undefined capacity. Goodness knows how she swung that one...charity perhaps. This was the office that published *Brain Mind Bulletin* and *Leading Edge* every three weeks and it was during my time at Marilyn Ferguson's office that I bumped into [Tom Robbins](#)...author of *Another Roadside Attraction* (1971), *Even Cowgirls Get the Blues* (1976), *Still-Life with Woodpecker* (1980), *Jitterbug Perfume* (1984) and *Skinny Legs and All* (1990).

My weak memory of the great Seattle writer is of a scruffy individual...a slimmed-down better-kept version of [Michael Moore](#) with standard issue baseball cap before they became standard issue...wandering around behind a huge smile picking up anything and fascinated in the particulars of everything...something his writing reflects. I would be curious to know what he was writing during the spring and summer of 1982.

In my literary record under *Articles* is *Bioelectricity* (1982 bmb-la) and under *Book Reviews* is *The Soviet Military* (1982 le-la)...a review of three books on the *Soviet Military Machine* that came out in an issue of *Leading Edge* that praised the *EastWest Institute* and its non-governmental *People to People* bridging across the *Iron Curtain*. The pieces on *Bioelectricity* went into a special issue of *Brain-Mind Bulletin* on the subject.

Another interesting thing Rachel organised before we went our separate ways after a whirlwind romance was one of ten free places she had persuaded [John Grinder](#)...co-author of *Frogs to Princes*...to provide to anti-nuclear activists on his \$2000 weekend *NLP Hypnosis* course in *Provincetown on Cape Cod*. Here I met [Daniel Ellsberg](#) of *Pentagon Papers* notoriety who was married to the sister of Rachel's friend Barbara Marx Hubbard. John Grinder was in private consulting but had spent much of his life with the *CIA*...and they are one of those firms you never leave.

The mind technology for doing people's heads in...one day this will be known as the [Mancurian Candidate Defence](#)...was already available in 1982...and it scared the living daylights out of Daniel Ellsberg and myself. There was no way to control it. Yet here were the *CIA* creating skilled practitioners. If it could be used for evil purposes then it would. The road to hell is paved with good intentions. This was madness. Being linguistically based I thought there might be limits to *Neuro-Linguistic Implanting*...but that was almost 25-years ago. What was going on here?

My *Anna Lindh Dossier* currently has several appendices. One has tributes and obituaries, another has the facts of the killing, while a third includes essays about plans for the *One World State* and others about the *neocons* partial version of Sir Halford Mackinder's geopolitical ideas...which includes *Heartlands vs Rimlands* but airbrushes out *Landsmen vs Seamen* and *Locality vs Interests*. This is the version of Mackinder that Bush & Blair have been sold by the *Deputy Defense Secretary* Paul Wolfowitz...[Chris Fettweis](#) at the *University of Maryland* is a much better guide.

Mackinder's [Heartland Theory](#) is taught at the *Pentagon*. Here is an extract from an article from 2000 in *Parameters the US Army War College Quarterly*: 'One of the reasons that Mackinder is being resurrected is because policy-makers are searching for ways to deal with the heart of his *Heartland - Central Asia* and the *Caspian Sea* - which is a region that has the potential to become a major source of great-power contention in the next century. Some analysts estimate that the fossil fuels in the region will transform it into a 'new Saudi Arabia' in the coming decades.'

Talk about tired old generals fighting the last war. Mackinder barely gave a thought to *America* or *China*. Nobody in *Europe* did back then. They were much too tied up in their own little provincial historical disputes. Buckminster Fuller's [One World Island](#) and the [Earth's Seven Oceans](#) is the geography for this century...and confederations of hundreds of thousands of village states will be needed to impose some sense on it over the next hundred years...not a *One World Government* bombing us all...including themselves...into the *Stone Age* from 30000 feet, releasing [Passover Bombs](#) at *Ground Zero* for the occasional bit of clinical genocide and deploying [Climate Weaponry](#) at 60000 feet...and blaming global warming and carbon emissions for the inevitable side effects.

Governments need to be dismantled and governance dealt with some other way. Imagine if Anna Lindh had been talking this way...suggesting that each *American State* should have a seat at the *United Nations* or that the hegemony of the global [Gun Running](#) cartel...the *UN Security Council*...must be disbanded. It would be Olof Palme, *Sweden* and *Vietnam* all over again. There are some people who wouldn't like that. And there are lots of very rich men in the world who can pick up the bill for surgical operations.

Yet it is a strange idea that puts assassinations into three categories: *Governments* who assassinate after democratic deliberations, *Rogue States* who sponsor terrorist groups to murder their enemies and *Private Mafias* who put out contracts and offer *Killingry Services*. Anyone with money can kill...not so much to order as to prejudice. The police seek the killer but his motive is only a means to conviction. It is not their job to look further. But someone should.

bill shepherd weblog two hundred and five

http://williamshepherd.blog.co.uk/2006/07/24/monday_24th_july-983423

Monday 24th July 2006

Posted: 2006-07-25

Computers are the most alarming creatures. Two weeks ago my fingers were flying across the keyboard keeping pace with my composition when all of a sudden the whole screen whipped through ninety degrees bringing proceedings to an astonished halt. I had never seen the like before. The *Help Menu* was of no assistance. Knowing what to ask is the key...and you never do. And it had to happen on a Friday evening in summer...so the *Microsoft Helpline* was no help until eight o'clock on Monday morning when it opened for business. I even made a concerted assault on one of the many [Microsoft Chat Groups](#)...a technical one...but to no avail. No one had encountered my problem before.

But I am not one to be defeated by a large dumb beast. So I turned my head sideways and finished what I was doing and then did something else with the monitor turned on its side. Perhaps that would shake the icons loose...or cause them all to fall to the bottom of the screen. Finally I gave up the struggle and took myself off to bed...perplexed.

But I do not give up easily. On Saturday morning I woke up at five o'clock determined to solve the mystery. Whatever else you may think of computers they have one very big thing going for them. Big dumb beasts they may be but they are big dumb logical beasts. Screens do not suddenly flip themselves sideways...contents and all...without a reason...or...forbid the thought...[viruses](#)...the very last thing I wished to contemplate.

I had been moving at high speed. I would retrace my fingersteps slowly and deliberately. Perhaps by a process of elimination...now let me assume that my flying fingers had brushed the *Control* key...something that has happened to me in the past with curious results. After trying every combination of *Control*+ another key...and discovering some interesting combinations...the screen remained resolutely sideways. I thought fondly of Tony Payne in *Rye*. Perhaps I should email him of my woes...he would be opening in six hours time. *Sweden* is one hour ahead of *England* and it was not yet six. But first one last go at cracking it. How about *Control+Alt+F1...or F2...or F3...?*

I felt like a safe breaker...which was not far from the truth. Suddenly the beast confounded me again. Now everything was upside down. My son would never believe this and would accuse me of having done all manner of foolish things with his computer. Then that [Light Bulb Moment](#). I had reached 'R' when the screen flipped. Just maybe in *windowspeak* R stands for rotate. I pressed *Control+Alt+R* again. Eureka! The screen flipped itself round another ninety degrees. Now I was bending my neck the other way...progress of sorts. But I knew I had it sussed. Computers are the most alarming creatures...but they are logical alarming creatures. One more *Control+Alt+R* did the trick and I was finally back where I started. I breathed a big sigh of relief as a wave of smugness washed over me.

Young...hmm...William was a very happy bunny. He took himself off to breakfast in full *Hubris* mode before reading the newspaper to keep *Nemesis* at bay...one of the salutary effects they have. However awful your situation out there things are much worse. And so it was...a normal day in Baghdad with another fifty killed...chaos in *Beirut* as the *Swedish Foreign Office* evacuates its citizens and leave the *Lebanese* behind to be massacred by *Israeli* forces massing on the border...the world continues to ignore the genocide in *Darfur*...a tsunami kills hundreds in Indonesia.

The next time I met up with Alan I suggested we try *Cntrl+Alt+R* on his *AppleMac* laptop. He was hesitant but eventually got into the swing of it...there is an excellent *Macshop* round the corner in *Sundbybergscentrum* if all else fails. Not a flicker of interest from the *G4 Powerbook*. So it is a Bill Gates...or Nicholas John...*Friday Night Special*. But don't take my word for it. Try it yourself...just for fun. But no law suits please when you wake up with a crick in your neck after spending the day with your head on its side and the screen refusing to return to the upright position.

In the spring of 1982 when Rachel Kowalczyk changed my life I was working on three *Anti-Nuclear Projects*. I often wonder whether the *FBI* has this fact on file. Just in case they do let me correct the record...the evidence of the [Stasi Files](#) left by the *Yanks* after the *Fall of the Berlin Wall* suggests they may need it. But goodness knows what use they make of these records...helps them to place my name on a list so they can turn me away when I show up at *New York's Kennedy Airport*? 'Hi. I'm William Shepherd...real name John Doe...may I come into your beautiful country please?' 'No! Have a nice day!' Next time I will fly into *Montreal* and cycle into *North Dakota* from *Manitoba*.

In 1982 elections were being contested for the *Cambridge City Council* and David Wiley was standing for re-election on an anti-nuclear platform that included shutting down *MIT's Draper Labs* and declaring a *Nuclear-Free Zone*. I was also busy lobbying for [Helen Caldicott](#)...the Australian doctor who had founded *Physicians for Social Responsibility*...to be awarded the *Alternative Nobel Prize*. I gave Jacob von Uexkull a private showing of *Eight Minutes to Midnight* at the *Second Fourth World Assembly* in *Berlin* later that year. The third project was with David Halprin...a devotee of the *DoJo* on *Massachusetts Avenue* where he practised [Aikido](#)...and one of two *Harvard Law School* graduates I became good friends with in *Cambridge*...Joe Schmidt from *Seattle* was the other. David's day job was as a *Massachusetts State Deputy District Attorney*. But more about this third project another day.

bill shepherd weblog two hundred and six

http://williamshepherd.blog.co.uk/2006/07/24/tuesday_25th_july~984976

Tuesday 25th July 2006

Posted: 2006-07-25

I have nearly used up three of the six birthday presents from [Crocodile Uppsala](#)...four presented and two to come which works out at one a decade. The best present I could have wished for and sufficient unto itself is Nicholas John himself. I am pleased at the way he has turned out and watch his life unfold with curiosity. The next item on my wish list is grandchildren. Andrea has travelled the world with him for seven years so my hopes are not misplaced.

How much credit I can take is a moot point. Any man can be a father but not every man can be a daddy. I made an inspired choice for his mother...although there is the thorny issue of who did the choosing. I am on my third viewing of the Jennifer Ehle and Colin Firth's courtship rituals in seeking to understand this. Mr d'Arcy proposed last night and was refused. *Marriage & Misunderstanding* would have served as well as *Pride & Prejudice*...but not as catchy.

Ayn Rand's *first-raters* have something of the Jane Austen about them. The two appear together in book lists but few feminist writers have had the courage to tackle a comparison of the Austen and Rand heroes and heroines. The pitfalls of the [political incorrectness](#) of both in gender matters is no doubt the reason...but there is common ground in the insistence of both Austen and Rand that the exchange of true value is the only basis for truth and love in marriage.

Before Nicholas John left home in 1994 to go to university...by way of [Nambour High School](#)...his mother took principal parenting responsibility while I took over during summer vacations...a long one in *America* and *Sweden* stretching through June to September...a mixed blessing for Ingrid as midsummer is a magic time for the *Swedes*.

Ingrid has all the photographs from our 15-years together and I dropped a subtle hint...as subtle as a sledge hammer as Connie was fond of saying...that a CD of these would make a rather nice present. I live in hope. The apartment is the fourth gift. He did not go to *Mozambique* to give me five weeks of glorious *Swedish* summer but not everybody makes their place available when they are not using it. Perhaps if they did house prices would plummet. *Housing Benefit* has a *Six-Week Rule* for the property-poor. Why not one for the property-rich? It's *Common Wealth*.

On my arrival here three weeks ago alongside the note of welcome was a *Svenska Filminstitut Presentkort* with 200 kronor on it...and enough money for three trips to *Ljusterö* and back. Yesterday I spent half my film ration on [Davy Jones' Locker](#). The film was much too noisy...the current *Hollywood* fashion...and needed editing and some pretty basic rescripting as the plot is too convoluted. Enjoyment comes from special effects...and Johnny Depp...not from the story line. But films are made for computer games and merchandising so closer acquaintance may solve this.

In 1982 when David Halprin and I were working on the [Center for Conspiracy Studies](#) project I used to spend the occasional afternoon relaxing at *Harvard Cinema* with its rolling two-film daily programmes. You could sit as long as you liked. Some of the pairings were pretty weird...like *Singing in the Rain* and *Yellow Submarine*.

[Susan May](#) and the children would accompany me. *Oscars Theatre* is reviving the Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers classic so I thought of Susan as I walked past the theatre after the film on my way to *Fridhemsplan*. *Phantom of the Opera* ran there for several years and made my niece Anna Lundell a minor celebrity...though not for the best of reasons. Anna was pencilled in to crew for *Vemara* in September 1998 but managed only [Visby to Klintehamn](#) after the weather delayed us and then Connie fell ill. Susan sent me a transcript of the talk she gave to the [Jackson Historical Society](#) in *New Hampshire* earlier this year about her uncle [Jake May](#)...and tells me she is on the mend.

It was around this time that I met up with a larger than life character [O. Richard Maeglin](#) from *Muscatine Iowa*...a 40-something [Huckleberry Finn](#) who had turned fence painting into a successful local enterprise and owned the local bank, the travel and insurance agencies and a warehousing business on the [Mississippi](#) which ran through the town. Dick was in *Cambridge* looking to put some matching funds into the *Anti-Nuclear Movement*.

David Halprin and Dick Maeglin had a mutual acquaintance at the *Tides Foundation* in *San Francisco* who turned out to be one of Rachel Kowalczyk's former boyfriends. This explains why I was drinking coffee in *Berkeley* wondering where the sixties had gone...and if there was any truth in claims made for it...while on my way to persuade the *Tides Foundation* to throw some funds at a rather under-researched project so Dick could match them.

The outcome of my *Californian* trip was some money from the *Tides Foundation* for David Halprin to carry on doing aikido, Dick Maeglin scuttling back to *Muscatine* to save his bank as his business empire started to implode in the wake of his imminent divorce...and me high 'n dry with no money, no wife and my romantic love affair on the ropes.

Dick...bless him...despite his dire finances still put his fingers in the till to take out the last few thousand dollars for my sorely depleted coffers which kept *American Express* at bay for a few more weeks. 'I promised it and I keep my promises!' 'But you didn't promise it and you need every cent you can lay your hands on.' 'I may not have promised it to you. But I had decided to do it. That's good enough for me!' Only John Galt and Mr d'Arcy would argue.

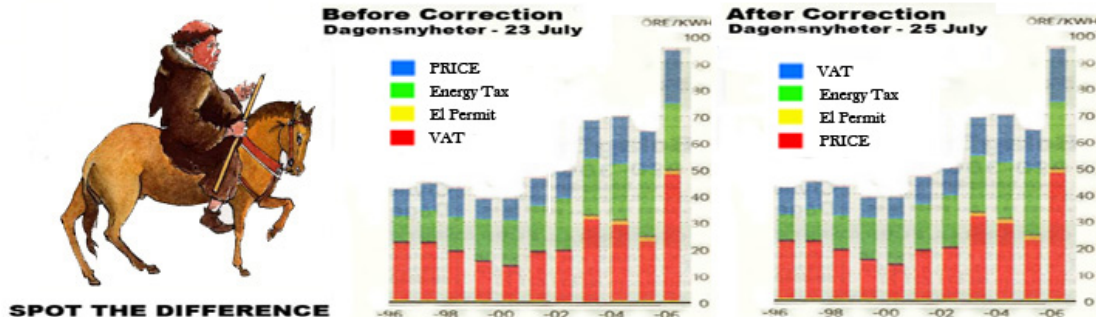
bill shepherd weblog two hundred and seven

<http://williamshepherd.blog.co.uk>

Wednesday 26th July 2006

Posted: 2006-07-26

Last Sunday *Sweden's* biggest national daily [Dagens Nyheter](#) ran a front page story headlined *Energy Expert Says Boycott Electricity Giants*. Roger Fredriksson is the expert and he has set up a [Switch](#) website where you swap between a few big purveyors of monopoly services...who fix prices and control the market...and a few dozen minnows in their wake. No great difference in price...three times as high today as six years ago...but fights over the small print. [Endowment Mortgages](#) spring to mind. The corporate and regulatory suits love switch websites. Evidence of competition they intone. Evidence of the gullibility of the public and the arrogance of the elites if you ask me.



In the *Swedish Media* the electricity industry...*Vattenfall, Eon* and *Fortum*...has been wringing its hands in its best [Uriah Heep](#) manner bemoaning the failure of snow to fall last winter. No snow. No mountain streams. No turning turbines. Sounds plausible? Perhaps. Tragic? Of course. *Sweden* has been forced to import expensive oil from the unstable *Middle East* and go cap in hand to the *Carbon Trading Floor* in Brussels for [Emission Permits](#). Groan!

Stuff and nonsense says Woger. The cost of electricity has hardly changed in six years. But *Government Taxes* and *Energy Company Profits* have skyrocketed...and here is a diagram to prove it. Whoops. It proved nothing of the sort. It showed that *Value Added Tax* on electricity has gone up threefold since 1999 and was now over 50%. Hmm!

So about a fifth of the money *Swedes* pay for electricity is for the cost of it and the rest is taxes. Is this to make *Nuclear Power* viable? Fat chance...without lying...currently the preferred option. Or is this what happens when *Green Parties* join *Government Coalitions* and start smacking the naughty energy consumers? Hmm! Hmm! Yet surely this cannot be right? You are right. It can't. And it isn't. On Tuesday *Dagens Nyheter* slipped in a correction on an inside page. *VAT* and *Price* had been inadvertently reversed in the diagram. Hmm! Hmm! Hmm!...and Hmmm!

Here is a different approach...in a two-policy package. *Government* sets the price of electricity to *Homeowners*...and keeps it constant for a long time...in purchasing power terms like rents in *Stockholm*...use a basket of commodities. Two kilowatt-hours for one *Swedish Krona* looks about right. And why not do a [Silvio Gesell](#) and sell electricity cheaper the less that is taken from the *National Grid*...the arguments for [Water Pricing](#) apply to electricity too.

For the second part of the package *Government* sets the price of energy based on cost of production...and the public desirability of the technology. The *Danes* are already going down this road. Nothing for nuclear power...even a *Minus Price* called a *Tax*...to set up a *Norwegian-style Fund for Future Generations*. Nothing for biofuels which are slaughtering millions of people all over the *Third World* as *Iowa* sells its corn to cars. It is doubtful whether this nonsense is energy-positive anyway when you count the energy costs of harvesting. Good way to make gin though.

And for those lovers of *Nuclear Energy*...ay there be power in them their neutrons...the mantra is: *Nuclear Fission Bad. Nuclear Fusion Good*. You can use the one in the sky 93 million miles away but for more give each boy a [Gyroscope](#) and a [Pendulum](#) for his seventh birthday with a big prize for anyone who gets energy from [Cold Fusion](#).

If *Real People* paint their roof black and rig up a few hundreds metres of copper piping then encourage them. And if you pay *Judicial Persons* watch them like a hawk...and don't trust a word they say. While you're about it put a few company directors before *Peace Crime Tribunals* in [Düsseldorf](#) and [Essen](#)...pour *décourager les autres*.

[Mikhail Gorbachev](#) is the cleverest man alive...this from his address at [Harvard University](#) on [11/11-2002](#)...for me not the best of times. 'I would like to quote someone, a person whom you may have heard of, Chou En-lai, the former *Prime Minister of China*. He was talking to a delegation from *France* and the delegation people asked him what he thought about the impact of the *French Revolution* on the world and also on *China*. And Chou En-lai I think responded very well. And he didn't take too much time to answer. He said, "You know, I think it's too early to tell.'

bill shepherd weblog two hundred and eight

<http://williamshepherd.blog.co.uk>

Thursday 27th July 2006

Posted: 2006-07-28

Shortly after four on the afternoon of Wednesday 10th September 2003 Anna Lindh was murdered while shopping in the ladies' department at the *Nordiska Kompaniet* department store in the centre of *Stockholm*. She was stabbed in the chest, stomach and arms. Her murderer escaped after the crime. According to eyewitness accounts his actions appeared deliberate and systematic. At the scene of the crime the police secured a handprint and outside the department store in the vicinity of a subway station they found a few items of clothing and a knife.



Anna Lindh was rushed to *Karolinska Hospital* where she underwent surgery for over nine hours receiving blood transfusions continually during the operation. She suffered internal bleeding and her liver was seriously damaged. At first she appeared to have improved after her surgery. But then an hour later complications set in and Anna Lindh was announced dead at 05:29 am local time on Thursday 11th September 2003.

Following the attack an anonymous phone line was set up and a massive manhunt launched in *Sweden*. Images from the surveillance cameras on a floor above the scene of the murder were released on Saturday 13th and Sunday 14th September. Per-Olof Svensson was apprehended on Tuesday 16th September and detained as a suspect on *justifiable grounds*...the lowest degree of suspicion. He was released six days later on Wednesday 24th September following the arrest of a second suspect Mijailo Mijailović on *probable cause*. On Thursday 25th September it was announced that the DNA-profile of Mijailovic matched that of hairs found on the baseball cap left near the scene of the crime and that he resembled the man filmed in the store where Anna Lindh was attacked. Mijailović denied all involvement.

On 6th January 2004 Mijailović confessed to the police that he killed Anna Lindh and gave a full account of the events on 10th September in an extra session of police questioning requested by his legal counsel Peter Althin...a *Member of Parliament* for the *Christian Democrats*. From 14th to 17th January 2004 a trial took place in *Stockholm* and Mijailović was found guilty. Sentencing was postponed pending a psychiatric evaluation which concluded on 9th March that Mijailović was not criminally insane. On 23rd March 2004 he was sentenced to life imprisonment.

On 8th July an *Appeals Court* overturned the sentence after tests concluded he was suffering from a mental illness at the time of the killing. He was then transferred from prison to a closed psychiatric ward. On 2nd December 2004 *Sweden's Supreme Court* overruled the *Court of Appeal* and the sentence of life imprisonment was re-instated.

Mijailo Mijailović was born on 6th December 1978 in *Stockholm* to *Serbian* immigrant parents and had dual citizenship in *Serbia & Montenegro* and *Sweden* at the time of Anna Lindh's murder. On 20th September 2004 his application to have his Swedish citizenship revoked was granted. Mijailovic's request to be transferred to a *Serbian* prison was refused.

Swedish newspapers report that Mijailović was released from a mental institution five days before the killing of Anna Lindh, had serious mental problems and had previously been convicted of violent crimes. Mijailović is said to have been greatly angered by Anna Lindh's staunch support for the *US-led* military campaign against *Serbia*.

[Anna Lindh](#) was born on 19th June 1957 and was married to the *Governor of Södermanland* Bo Holmberg and had two sons David & Filip. She was born in *Enskede*, a south-eastern suburb of *Stockholm*, but grew up outside *Enköping*. In 1969 she joined the local branch of the *Swedish Social Democratic Youth League*, with protesting against the *Vietnam War* one of her top priorities. Here are the highlights of her high-flying *Swedish* political career.

Chair of the National Council of Swedish Youth Organisations (1981-1983); Member of the [Swedish Parliament](#) and member of the Parliamentary Committee on Taxation (1982-1985); Chair of the Swedish Social Democratic Youth League (1984-1990); Member of the Executive Committee of the [Social Democratic Party](#) (1991-2003); Stockholm City Commissioner for Culture and Leisure, Chair of Stockholm City Theatre (1991-1994); Minister and Head of the Ministry of the Environment (1994-1998); Minister and Head of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs (1998-2003).

bill shepherd weblog two hundred and nine

http://williamshepherd.blog.co.uk/2006/07/28/friday_28th_july~994633

Friday 28th July 2006

Posted: 2006-07-29

It was February 1982 and I had just returned to *Boston* from two weeks in *Philadelphia* on a 10-day *Buckminster Fuller Marathon* when I met Rachel Koralczyk and fell head over heels in love with her. Three months earlier I had run the [Rhode Island Marathon](#) in 3 hours 37 minutes so was looking pretty good. Rachel lived with Marilyn Ferguson's *Production Editor* Connie Zweig on *Tennessee* in *Los Angeles*. Rachel liked me...and may even have loved me...but the relationship was based on a misunderstanding from the start as she believed me to have connections that I did not have...very *Pride and Prejudice* though perhaps the affair was more Mr Wickham than Mr D'Arcy. But it had significant consequences for myself and for those around me...which ripple on to this day.

Rachel was in *Boston* ending a relationship...on the rebound in other words...not the best time to meet up. My son Nicholas John was six coming on seven and his two best friends at *Cambridge Friends School* were Jim Sumrall's son Mischa and Zach Wiesner's son Elisha...linguistic daddy bonding. I had an exchange going at the time with Elisha's mother which meant child minding the boys every Wednesday afternoon when the school had its half day. I was very happy with this arrangement. When together boys of this age look after themselves particularly when they love the [Children's Museum](#) and the [Museum of Science](#) in *Boston*, enjoy hanging out with me when I have *MIT* errands...and are convinced that riding the *Boston* subway and escalators is what people do in heaven.

On this particular Wednesday it had been arranged...through the services of the mutual friend Rachel was staying with in *Cambridge*...that we would meet at a restaurant on *Huron Avenue* after I had picked up the boys from school at midday. Rachel had cold feet at the last minute and had to be kicked out the door so turned up half an hour late by which time my *Young Arabs* were starting to wreck the place. I was getting up to leave when Rachel finally put in her appearance...in my memory a vision of loveliness silhouetted in the doorway with the sunlight behind her.

We hit it off at once...Buckminster Fuller and the *Anti-Nuclear Movement* being our connecting points. An affair was the last thing on my mind as I was happily married. Indeed Ingrid and I were regarded as the perfect couple...the only biological parents of any children in my daughter's class still together. It was one of those whirlwind romances you read about in novels...something you catch like the flu. But such are the ways of fate that I chanced to be on full-time parenting duties at the time as Ingrid had flown to the *Caribbean* for two weeks to be with her brother Torsten who had sailed across the *North Atlantic*. This complicated the logistics of the affair but also made an affair possible.

The trouble was that Rachel saw me together with Elisha...the grandson of J.F. Kennedy's former *Scientific Adviser* and the *President of MIT*...[Jerome Wiesner](#). Being at heart a small town girl of *Polish Jewish* immigrant stock from *St Louis Missouri* she thought she had made it big in the world of science...her first love...with the *European Aristocracy* opening before her. Nor did it go amiss that Zach Wiesner had grown up on *Martha's Vineyard* with [Carly Simon](#) and got royalties for some songs he had written with [James Taylor](#). But this was nothing to do with me. It was by association thrice removed. That's a rather unfair summary but you get the drift...not easy living up to this.

Rachel was and no doubt still is a remarkable woman though I have had no contact with her since the summer of '82...dazzlingly intelligent, knock-you-down social personality...bundled together with some insecurity and flawed self-esteem into an irresistible brew. But eventually the calls on my time and emotional energy meant that my work started to suffer. Enough was enough so I gritted my teeth and jetted back to the *East Coast*...alone. Mary McCartney's [The Company I Keep](#) describes a variation of the type well...one you can't live with or without. So *Real Men* eventually give up trying and take the 2-weeks of hell necessary to break the emotional and psychic bonds.

By one of those quirky coincidences-cum-synchronicities my investigation into the killing of Anna Lindh has brought me face to face with the *Tides Foundation* once again. In 2004 and 2005 they gave \$150 million in grants to 6000 organisations. But when I knew them back in 1982 it was as much as they could do to raise the \$40 000 a year to support one activist and his family...at least that was what they told me. *Tides* and *Stewart Mott* get on well together.

The *Stewart Mott Foundation* was to *Californian 1980s Reformistas* what the *Rowntree Foundation* is to *English 2000 Reformistas* with everyone around Rachel collecting money from *Stewart Mott* whenever they passed GO. But nowadays the *Tides Foundation* and the [Charles Stewart Mott Foundation](#) inter-fund each other in a strangely incestuous manner while pouring enormous amounts of money into the [EastWest Institute](#)...since at least 1993.

In 2004 the *East-West Institute* awarded Anna Lindh their *Statesman of the Year Award* and in 2005 gave a *Statesman of the Decade Award* to the strangely funded Right Honourable Tony Blair. This is odd coming from an institute created by John Edwin Mroz...a *Council for Foreign Relations* member who [recently](#) received the *Order of the White Double-Cross* (2nd level) from Slovak President Ivan Gašparovič for his work on *NATO* integration. Eugene Pinschof may believe the *Austro-Hungarian Empire* to be rather a [Good Thing](#)...but not everybody does.

bill shepherd weblog two hundred and ten

<http://williamshepherd.blog.co.uk>

Saturday 29th July 2006

Posted: 2006-07-30

Sweden has her own [Fear Factories](#) and has no need to import fears from the *Politico-Legal-Media (PLM) Complex*. Last week *Swedes* were being encouraged to dive into ditches whenever a storm was brewing. It took me back to the [Duck & Cover Campaigns](#) of the early *Cold War Years*. Lightning can strike you down at any time. Be Prepared!

Ever since reading Ann McCaffrey's books about [Life on Pern](#) I have had a rather benevolent attitude to rain. I really like it. On *Pern* every few generations *threads* fall from the sky destroying all life on the planet if they are not prevented from reaching the ground. It is a brilliant piece of invention...*Harry Potter* standard...and enables Ann McCaffrey to introduce thread-devouring dragons that need bonding when first emerging from the egg and harnessing by elite teams of *Dragon Riders* to create aerial assault squadrons to attack the threads when they are big.



Even Nils Palmgren...editor of *Dagens Nyheter*...could not resist adding his *two-öre* by advising readers that ditches, cars and homes were the safest places to be in a thunder storm. The worst place is under a lone tree, aboard a yacht or on top of a high mountain. The irony is that what prompted the hysteria was the bizarre and tragic death of a knight on horseback at a medieval tournament in *Mariefred* near *Stockholm*. He took a direct hit on his helmet and died instantly...with a smile on his lips. Just make sure the car has a metal chassis...and that nobody is on the phone when shepherding your flock to the safety of the family villa. *Sweden* gets struck by lightning 100 000 times a year.

At 0952 every day this week I have walked to *Sundbyberg Library* for use of their printer and scanner. You have doubtless noticed my skills at gluing images together with *Adobe Photoshop*. My one-hour session ends at eleven...but normally I do not arrive home until four in the afternoon. I go out around town gallivanting on my free travel pass. Nicholas and Mischa used to do this when they were nine so my regression back to childhood is beginning. The two things about the *Boston* subway that appealed to the boys were the escalators and the fares.

Michael Dukakis ran against George Bush for the [US Presidency](#) in 1988 and lost. Before this he was *Governor of Massachusetts* so he did the honours when the *Porter Square MBTA Station* opened. It was just two minutes walk from *Forest Street* so I went along. Dukakis was a short man but like many famous [Short People](#)...Robert Redford, Tom Cruise, Pierre Trudeau, Dolly Parton...above the waist he was the size of a bigger man so he worked on TV.

The Dukakis dedication went like this. 'I hereby declare this station open...and hope to hell you have enough maintenance engineers for the escalators.' This showed great foresight. 20 years later the [Open Guide to Boston](#) website would say: 'Porter Square is one of the deeper stations in the *MBTA* subway system. To exit one must ride either 2 or 3 escalators and typically at least one is out of order being repaired or worked on.' The fare was a [Franklin Half Dollar](#)...so once the boys were through the turnstiles they stayed. *Mozambique* is just another subway ride.

[Ode to the Common Man](#) was my first poem but I have another one entitled *Ode on Man Thinking*. Before the beginning/There was living/And the transmitting of life/For that God made woman/And woman gave to man leisure./From this leisure arose conviviality/Which the women filled/With the good life/Both for themselves/And for their men./From amidst the good life/Some few men emerged/Preferring honied indolence/Over love or ambition or poesy/Or the pursuit of triviality./These few men were as gods/And in their conviviality/Their minds found words/And they made conversation/And their hearts were animated./Conversation gave birth to the idea/And the idea was spoken/And being spoken/Was tried and tested/Back and forth./And the idea was heard in disproportion/And was stripped of the trivial/And adorned with value/From whence in juxtaposition/Wisdom recognised humour./

And the men laughed/And joined with one another in earnest debate/The idea was argued/With reckless bias/For and against./Until from those few men gathered together/From the conviviality that gave rise to conversation/And from the conversation that gave rise to humour/And from the humour that gave rise to debate/There came truth./ And the soul of Man/Determined that it was good.' *John Keats* wrote his [Ode on Indolence](#) in the spring of 1819.

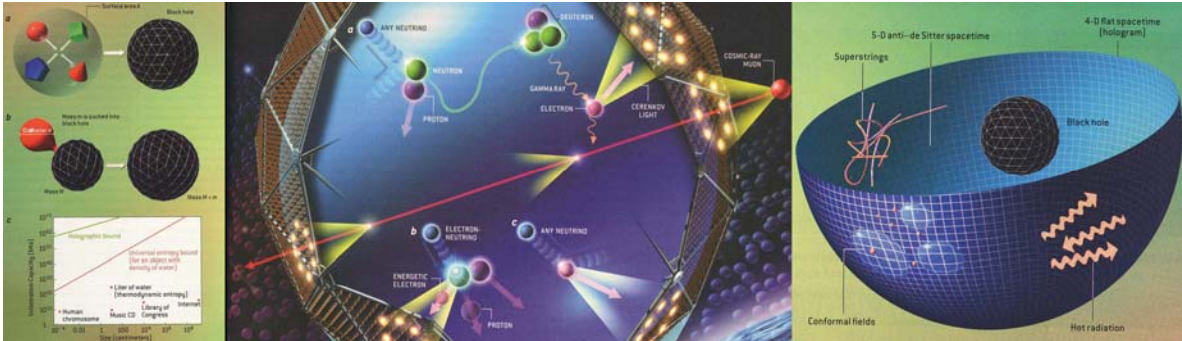
bill shepherd weblog two hundred and eleven

http://williamshepherd.blog.co.uk/2006/07/29/sunday_30th_july~997933

Sunday 30th July 2006

Posted: 2006-07-30

Do you remember those halcyon days when we all lived in a [Steady State](#) universe? Then Edwin Hubble spoiled it all by inventing the cosmos and providing evidence for the *Big Bang* theory with its birth and evolution and far-distant edges of our universe skipping away into the oblivion beyond. Hubble had the audacity to collect light in his telescope millions of light years after it had set off for our little neck of the galactic woods.



Over the edge of the universe and before the big bang are questions that make me a little queasy...opium is a mild narcotic by comparison. But as our telescopes go further out and our microscopes go further in, understanding is further away than ever. Now there are even suspicions that the universe might be a gigantic [Hologram](#)...Plato's metaphor about caves and candles and shadows on the wall may not be so silly after all.

Of course the hologram is still tied up with [Superstring](#) and will probably disappear into a [Black Hole](#). But quantum nothingness might yet save the day. One of the problems is stuff. I thought we all had too much stuff. But this is not the view of our theoretical physicists. It seems that as far as the cosmos is concerned an awful lot of stuff is missing. We are not talking Pareto's 80% here but 96%. *Light Matter* we know about...allegedly...but unfortunately it only accounts for 4% of the mass of our universe...the rest is 21% [Dark Matter](#) and 75% [Dark Energy](#). It was Douglas Adams who pointed out that if anyone ever manages to understand the universe, it will immediately be replaced by something even more strange...some say this has already happened.

Once upon a time Sabine Kurjo McNeill worked with the boys and their mathematical gadgets at [CERN](#). But she got out before going under...figuring there is more to life than cloud chambers and bubble baths. So I emailed her my frustration at living in a 4D-system operating on a 3D-boundary in [Space-Time](#)...and confessed my inability to cope with [Heidegger's Sein und Zeit \(Being and Time, 1927\)](#). I was hoping for enlightenment to be strewn across my path.

Sabine tells me that her framework is metro-logical and based on a theory of measurement that is independent of scale...so it works in the micro and macro worlds. Unlike the theoretical physicists who are content to range between the two extreme Sabine's focus is on the *Competent Perceiver*...the little individual...in the middle straddling the two extremities and living in the real world. But our conceptual heavens may be closer together than we realise.

In 1999 while my daughter was wintering in *India* I lived in her apartment on *Dannemoragatan* in *Stockholm's Vasastan*. I signed up for courses at three different faculties at *Stockholm University* and by the spring I had collected 25-Credits towards my [fil.kand](#) by completing two of the three. My unfinished symphony was a 10-Credit thesis at *Stockholm Business School* where I got as far as handing in an [Intermediate Report](#) before returning to *England*.

The report begins with the story of a noisy pipe to illustrate transaction costs and then continues: 'In the *Information Technology Sector* the knack of keeping down transaction costs may turn out to be critical. The best firms will be hard wired into the country's technical high schools. Ten years hence the value of this study may be a dramatic reduction in transaction costs in the allocation of public and private investment capital in *Sweden*...The foundations of the study are three hunches and a gamble. The assumptions are that two sets of four variables can be discovered or invented; that these can be measured and a model designed that relates these eight variables to some measure of success for the firm as a whole. The gamble is that some form of [tag](#) or [cookie](#) can be developed that allows these eight *value* to be embedded in a firm's web site in such a way that they can be *fetch*ed by [search engine robots](#) and used for company and share analysis. The way to do this has probably not been invented yet.'

Compare that with Sabine talking about '[meta-technologies](#) for web-based sciences and a new framework for analysing, understanding and learning'. She ended her e-mail like this: 'Once I have my various software tools I will be able to demonstrate my understanding and make it accessible by making user options clickable.' Hmm.

bill shepherd weblog two hundred and twelve

<http://williamshepherd.blog.co.uk>

Monday 31st July 2006

Posted: 2006-08-01

My [30-day Travel Pass](#) ran out yesterday...so this week each trip costs twenty kronor. Apart from the psychological benefits of free trips you break-even on the 30-day card if you average a one-way trip a day...I probably averaged around a dozen a week so was quids in. Today however I had to get to *Norrköping* an hour north of *Stockholm* for a business meeting with Alan at eleven. I was expecting it to cost me an arm and a leg but I did it for three pounds.



The twenty kronor tickets are valid for an hour but unlike the *London* system they only need to be presented to the system once...on entry...like the *Boston MBTA*. The out trip was no problem as it only takes ten minutes to get to *Fredhemsplan* and the *Number Four Bendy Bus* is waiting at the kerb outside to take you to the *Norrköping Bus* waiting on *Valhallavägen* outside *Tekniska Högskolan*. But returning is more of a problem because it is touch and go whether you can get back into the subway system within the hour after your 676 bus ride into *Stockholm* from *Norrköping*.

Clive Ogden tells me I have an angle on everything...angle by name angel by nature...so I jumped off the bus at *Mörby Centrum*...half an hour north of *Stockholm* on the red line...and entered the [Stockholm Tunnelbana](#) system here. I was tempted to jump off at *Universitet*...on the *Mörby-Östermalm* line but resisted the urge and changed to the *Orient Express* at *T-Centralen*. The thought of losing my £3 return fare weighed heavily in the balance.

Nicholas and Andrea reclaim their apartment tomorrow. Neither of them have the disposition to lounge around the place so I will be lucky to exchange a few words in the hallway. As a precaution two months ago I reserved one of our three evenings together for holiday snaps...as in *Crocodile Uppsala*. Yesterday I used up the final part of my [Birthday Present](#) and spent the 100 kronor left on my *SF-kort*. It was a straight choice between the opening night of *Superman* or *She's the Man*. *Superman* lost. I enjoy *American High School* movies and find superheroes boring. This one had a reverse *Princess Ida* twist with some *Gender-Bending* to go with the [Bend It Like Beckham](#) theme...and viewed as anthropology to explaining *Americans* I could hardly have chosen better. The audience loved it.

Either side of the film I worked on the *Conference Website*...a 13-hour working day from 0600 to 1500 and again from 1900 to 2300. At 2200 a *Progress Report* careened off into cyberspace as evidence that the webmaster was alive and kicking. Work on the website has been going on sporadically in *Stockholm* ever since my arrival. My e-memo offered colleagues their first glimpse of the web-bits that are in the public domain...but screened from view. It was recommended that they log onto the *cesc homepage* to view new web-pages like [Village Democracy](#), [Leopold Kohr Downloads](#), [radcon III Who's Who](#) and [Conference Bookshop](#)...just one-click away from the *cesc homepage*.

Posterity can take a look too...hello posterity. But webmasters move files around so links that were fit and well on Sunday 30th July 2006 may have lost their position and angular momentum by the summer of 2206 making everything very uncertain. My e-memo encouraged colleagues to follow the action by [logging in](#) from time to time.

The e-memo included a *Proclamation of Intent* to post the *homepage* within 7-10 days. The web-domain structure is in place...conference, people, books, manuscripts and notices...and there is a sketch in my journal of what is intended. The *Real Nations* and *Real Communities Forums* are each to get their own blogs for instance in which each forum paper will be treated as a new posting ...to permit comments like on the [Magna Carta II blog](#).

At present the [Radcon Bookweb](#) has sixteen entries from eight authors...John Seymour (4), John Papworth (3), Kirkpatrick Sale (2), Chris Wright (2) and one each for Leopold Kohr, Edward Goldsmith, Tom Greco, Aidan Rankin and William Shepherd. *Cesc publications* have also got in on the act with four *e-books*...William Shepherd's [Politics of the English Pound](#) and [England's Landed Property](#), [Common Sense](#) from [radcon I](#) and Anton Pinschof's *French translation of Thomas H. Greco book on New Money for Healthy Communities...Monnaies Locales*. The basic building blocks of the *cesc bookweb* will be *Wordsmiths* and *Imagicians* rather than publishers or booksellers. This is the way to go when niche marketing on the internet but also puts the *Men & Women of Letters* back on centre stage.