HEMINGWAY RESTORED TO THE ORIGINAL
by Bruce Strauch (The Citadel)

After Hemingway’s suicide, his fourth wife and his editor Harry Brague pulled together A Moveable Feast, and apparently made substantial changes in it. Now a new “restored edition” by Scribners and Sean Hemingway, a grandson, has brought back the original closer to what Hemingway intended. But who knows? Dead authors seldom leave instructions. Emily Dickinson left 2,000 unpublished poems and a variety of versions have been circulating for a century.

The new structure is nonchronological without the sense of finality of the 1964 version with his divorce from Hadley. It even reads more like fiction which is what he always insisted the book was.


THOSE THIRTY DC BUREAUCRATS
by Bruce Strauch (The Citadel)

With the deficit kissing the $2 trillion mark, the feds are into serious belt-tightening. The Justice Department is doing double-side photocopying. And all departments are emailing daily press clips instead of printing them out. The Treasury has discovered unused phone lines, and FEMA will sell its emergency trailers instead of throwing them out after use. So far, the combined effort has resulted in $102 million in savings. Which comes out to 0.006% of the federal deficit.

“Some of these cuts are so small they would be a rounding error of a rounding error in the federal budget,” said Brian Riedl, a federal budget expert.

And sure to warm the hearts of newspaper drudges at the dying big dailies, bureaucrats will start getting their news online for free and not renew subscriptions.


BOOMERS AGING BADLY
by Bruce Strauch (The Citadel)

In a review of Pamela Satran’s How Not to Act Old, we get the helpful tips: Don’t count out exact change, don’t yell into the cell phone and don’t dance to “Sexual Healing.” We explore multiple meanings of “hookup,” and are advised to learn to type with your thumbs.

And the best way to get a young person to return a call to your cell phone is to hang up without leaving a message.


GIZMO UPDATE
by Bruce Strauch (The Citadel)

My how time flies in the world of electronic gizmos. The iPod is so yesterday, and sales are falling. So what will the next generation look like? An iPhone without the phone. It will stream YouTube clips, browse the Web, and retrieve email. And it may have a video camera to compete with the Flip Video of Pure Digital. The mystery will be revealed in time for the “critical holiday season.”


BASEBALL BIZ BOOKS
by Bruce Strauch (The Citadel)


George Will’s classic Men at Work is not listed as it is about playing the game; not business.


PYNCHON GOES LOWBROW. OR DOES HE?
by Bruce Strauch (The Citadel)

In 1973, Thomas Pynchon found fame with the publication of Gravity’s Rainbow followed by Vineland, Mason & Dixon and Against the Day. He is famous for “sprawling, layered plots and intricate, brainteaser-like sentences.” And great length. Against the Day ran 1,085 pages.

Now the paltry 384-page Inherent Vice, is being called “a novella” by literary bloggers. It’s a noir-like detective thriller set in late 1960s Los Angeles. Some call it lightweight while others say it has the expected Pynchon complexity.


THE SOPORIFIC HORROR OF POWERPOINT
by Bruce Strauch (The Citadel)

You can’t move without running up against PowerPoint. Microsoft estimates 500 million users world-wide. But there are those who thoroughly hate the thing with good reason.

SourPointer José Bowen of SMU urges professors to “teach naked.” He says PowerPoint is a crutch that puts students to sleep. Retired Marine Colonel T.X. Hammes says it “is actively hostile to thoughtful decision-making.” Bullet points are vague and over-simplified, and the PowerPoint pace leaves little time for thought.

Design guru Edward Tufte calls it “a prankish conspiracy against evidence and thought,” and has the destruction of the brand as a personal goal. After the 2003 Columbia space-shuttle disaster, he fingered PowerPoint as the cause. Vital life-threatening info had been shoved to the bottom of a cluttered PowerPoint slide.


Future Dates for Charleston Conferences

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