



Claims Department

How ya doin' 'ever'body>

Me? I'm OK. After my trip to the hospital last week, things are looking up. I'm not 100%, and if it's just some weird gas-thing, that beats the alternative, but certainly not feelin' bad!

Work has me doing a lot of layout. So, I've got experience layin' out books now! I like that.

I'm still waiting on word from various things I've applied for, and there's one place that wants me to apply, though it's part-time, though a curatorship.

OK, on with it!





True Crime News

Paul Bernardo is being moved.

To most of you, that might not mean much, but to our Canadian readers, and True Crime nerds, that might be scary. It's actually less scary than you'd think, but it does show some of the differences between the US and Canadian criminal justice system.

Paul Bernardo, also known as the Scarborough Rapist, is a piece of human garbage. He was responsible for more than a dozen rapes, and that was before he met his main accomplice—Karla Holmolka. The pair of them murdered three girls before they were caught. They became known as the Ken and Barbie Killers, but there was nothing cute about what they did. They first

paired up in raping and murdering Karla's sister Tammy. Karla got her sister to take the drugs that knocked her out, and she watched while Paul had his way with her body, though she may have been dead at the time.

That is how sick these two were—Karla had wanted to give Tammy's virginity to Paul as a Christmas gift. Tammy was 15.

The pair then kidnapped a fourteen year old, Leslie Mahaffy, bound and assaulted her, video taping the process. The pair dismembered Mahaffey's body.

Kristen French was next. Karla got French's attention, allowing Paul to grab her. They taped themselves again assaulting French, and then they murdered her.

Karla copped a plea; the cops thought she was an innocent victim of Paul's mind-control. This was flat-out wrong, but when the tapes came to light, it was too late and Holmolka was granted a sentence of twelve years for two counts of manslaughter. This, sometimes called *The Deal with the Devil*, meant she only did twelve years, getting out in 2005.

Paul is in there for pretty-much ever.

Paul was held in Maximum security prisons for thirty years. That's incredibly rare, as the way Canadian prison systems are set-up aren't the same as the US. In the US, Bernardo would be held in Super-Max for the length of his sentence. In Canada, you're usually only held in Maximum until you can be moved to Medium Security for the main length of your term. Eventually, the goal is to move a prisoner to Minimum Security in preparation for release.

Recently, the Canadian Prison system moved Bernardo from Maximum Security to Medium Security.

Now, this is strange to Americans, who see Paul Bernardo as the dangerous criminal that he certainly is, but the Canadian Prison System sees that Medium security is the place for long-term holding, even for significantly dangerous criminals. The reason Paul was held in Maximum Security for so long, more than 30 years, is that he was seen as likely to be the target of attack by other inmates. That makes sense, and he'll likely be in solitary, as he has been for his time in MaxSec, because other inmates really wanna kill him. While this wouldn't be a great loss, it would be wrong to set him in a scenario where that could likely happen.

The thing is, without him becoming a near-complete invalid, he's never getting placed into Minimum security. Minimum Security is meant to be the transitional phase before release, and that's never going to happen for Bernardo, even though by law he has to be given a parole hearing every other year.

He's gonna die in prison. That's a good thing from where I sit. He's dangerous, and as much as we want to believe that people can be reformed, I don't believe it's true for those that go so far beyond the pale into true, unquestionable evil.

Holmolka, on the other hand, got off too easy, and has been in the spotlight ever since. Her argument has always been that she was an unwilling participant. The videos say otherwise, though as far as we can tell, she's been good ever since. Part of the reason for that has been that she's been scrutinized pretty much since her release, and that's meant she has had to toe the line. This is a case where shaming works really well!





There may be exotic materials on the bottom of the ocean.

This one is interesting on a couple of levels. Avi Loeb has said that he may be in possession of Alien tech that he found a few spherical pieces, one of which he claims looks like a representation of the Earth, that came from when he dredged up using magnets from a meteorite landing site on the bottom off the coast of Papua New Guinea.

The small sphericals were gathered with the magnets, and apparently the thing was tougher than almost all the materials found on Earth, and those are incredibly rare to find falling from the sky. The sphericals are distinct from the rest of the meteorite, which is

interesting because it would be an indicator, potentially, of alien tech.

Now, there are some questions.

Loeb has been a big proponent of the Oumuamua item. It was an object that was observed a few years back and seemed to be accelerating and decelerating, and perhaps even maneuvering! There are explanations for that, including that it's got stuff inside, trapped gases or other matter, and as it warms it's expanding and that leads to excelleration. An interesting theory. The weirder thing is that it's entered and left our solar system twice.

If these things are alien tech, then there's a new problem: what exactly is the tech meant to do. One theory is that they're markers, like the reflectors we have on the moon. They allow for location of the Earth at any given time, even as we travel through space. Something that is forgotten is that we're never in the same place twice, as the sun is not a static item in the universe either. If aliens wanted to visit, they would need some form of marker to keep track of our location.





Yeah, things are hard around here.

We're losing our insurance, though we've got a few months to figure something out. We had MediCal, but since we didn't have to reapply during COVID, and I was given MediCal during the brief period I was unemployed for the first time, we only now had to submit our paystubs and are no longer eligible.

That REALLY sucks for us.

We're scraping by (so buy my book!) but adding whatever it's gonna cost us to get insurance through the exchange, PLUS the cost of my four prescriptions and Vanessa's seven, will likely lead to us having to make some really hard choices.

I live pretty close to the bone already. Other than gas and food, I don't spend much. We went to Maui on my Mom's dime, and we went to all the cons this year for various generous offers, but those are basically our little escapes. Even WrestleMania weekend was nearly completely gifted!

The problem we have is we make the 300% the national poverty rate, and when you adjust for local costs, we're at about 90% of Bay Area cost of living. That makes a lot of programs out of reach to us.

Still, the kids are gonna be covered because 1) they were born more than 30 days pre-mature, and 2) JP's cerebral palsy means he's covered more-or-less for life.

We did get into a program called Healthy Plates that allows us to get fifteen bucks of free produce from the local Farmer's Market, and every little bit helps. I also happen to know that the Farmer's Market has some of the best mushrooms, garlic, and artichokes in the area!





Leslie Van Houten is free.

This has been a long-time coming for the former Manson girl, and it's one that will always be argued. She was on death row for a while, but her sentence was commuted when all death sentences were commuted in the 1970s. She was considered one of the least dangerous of the Manson girls, though none are seen as major threats today (and I've heard that of the other Mansonites in prison, Patricia Krenwinkel, Tex Watson, Bobby Beausoleil, and Bruce Davis, only Watson is seen as still dangerous, partly due to his joining up with White Nationalists) and Krenwinkel was paroled last year as well, though still behind bars.

This is a tough one.

The LaBianca murders are often over-looked in favor of the Tate-Seybring-Folger-Frykowski-Parent murders on Cielo Drive. They were grocers, and not a part of the Hollywood scene. They were murdered by Watson, Krenwinkle, and Van Houten then murdered Rosemary and Leno LaBianca, with Van Houten stabbing Rosemary a dozen times while Krenwinkle held her down. Watson apparently delivered the killing blow, and there was a cadre of others who went to the house with them and left—Clem Grogan (who was released in 1985 and I'm still not sure why), Susan Atkins, Linda Kasabian (who died in prison this year) and Manson himself were there and left. They were all convicted.

OK, enough tap-dancing; should she have been released?

On this one, I'm of two minds, and one of them is that yes, she should be freed. She was under the spell of Manson, and even years after her imprisonment, she was still. A lot of work with her fellow Manson girls and social workers broke her free, and she's been a model prisoner for decades. She's clearly no longer a threat to public safety, she's old and apparently frail with long-term health issues (likely exacerbated because of prison conditions) and the world will not be more dangerous with her on the outside.

On the other hand, she participated in the murder of a woman, clearly.

If she had simply walked into the house and murdered Rosemary LaBianca, I would 100% be for leaving her in prison until the day she died, but she was brainwashed, no other way to put it, and though some Manson family members showed clear reluctance (Linda Kasabian at the Cielo Drive murders, for example) Van Houten really didn't. She did what she was told. When she was de-

conditioned, she expressed extreme remorse and came to understand her role, but also that she wasn't in her right mind.

She also made powerful friends.

One of whom was John Waters, who write often advocating for her release. He brought attention to the idea that there is a timeframe when the punishment is enough, and though I don't know if I believe that in all cases, here I pretty much do. I almost see it as the person who committed those crimes died, killed by years of therapy, and while Van Houten still had to pay for the crimes, she did so over 50 years. This is an edge case, but it's one that I think has turned out fairly, even if the Tates, the most visible of the victims' families, are furious at the decision. I do wish it was instead of full parole, it had been release to a monitored living situation, Half-way houses, situational release (such as allowing for work or study outside of prison) or other sort of re-introduction programs should be used, not only for public safety, but to more gradually re-introduce the former prisoner into the world today.

Because the one she left was incredibly different.







Listening to Karlheinz Stockhausen is sometimes a chore.

There's something there, though, that is almost magical. The first piece of his I ever heard, *Wasserman*, was actually delightfully strange, and it reminded me of the 1960s Disneyland music. It's actually got a little more to it, and I love re-listening to it and finding the connections to other things I've heard. You can hear a lot of what we're hearing in pop music today from those early recordings. They're haunting, *Wasserman* in particular. There's the whole *Tubular Bells* thing in there, but there's a sense of space established by it that feels so empty, but not in a minimalist sense. *Model 1*, which is largely a drone, feels as if it is exploring the depths of a cavern that

turns out to be full of unseen life. There are pieces that feel as if they are in communication with machines, attempting to develop some sort of common vocabulary.

And that's something I got out of his work I never expected: language.

Many of his pieces are written as if they are short, sometimes momentary, phrases, and then come responses to those phrases. This makes his work feel at least somewhat conversational. Even when the pieces are designed to emphasize decay and non-determinist writing, I'm thinking of a piece like *Spiral for Saxophone and Shortwave Radio Receiver*, when you're getting is a lecture from a saxophone, trying to break-through the static and distortion. The phrases are clear, and when taken without the background noise, they lose coherence. It is a statement without a meaning, and that is hard to pull off in many medium.

Stockhausen often worked in systems, concepts that determined what the music would be even seemingly without direct interaction with the object of the sound production. It was a form of access music, music that is acquired less than produced and certainly less than written.

This is, of course, ridiculous.

Everything is constructed, and the result of that construction may not be clear at the time of that construction, but the path is evident, no doubt. This is why Stockhausen was a genius, and one that I think is unfairly forgotten in favorite of composers like Legeti, who is far more palatable to the non-avant garde listener.

Stockhausen produced work at CCRMA at Stanford, or at least did work there. I think that alone makes him worthy of study!



OK< that's all.

A short issue, largely because I've got *Journey Planet* layout to do!

I'm putting together an exhibit for the Boulder Creek Library on Sa-royan for next month, and that's gonna be a lot of fun. The Santa Cruz Library System is doing a series of Hugo Award-winning movies, and I hope to can go to at least one. It's always good to see the Hugos getting love.

Sadly, many of us who do zines that are nominated are not getting love from the Admins AGAIN, but hopefully this'll be temporary.

My book comes out in two weeks in the UK. It's got a couple of months before the US release. I'm excited!

I'm doing a series of San Jose stories on TikTok. I'm enjoying them!

OK, I'll see y'all next time!



