

Decade of the Sloth

KC WILLIAMS

December 21, 2002

I WAS HAVING A CHRISTMAS PARTY at my house, and my best friend's husband was coming over after work and was running late, so she asked to use the phone to check on him. I showed her to the phone in my bedroom to escape the noise of the party, and when she began to dial, realized it was a rotary phone and remarked, "I can't believe you still have one of these! Let's see if I can remember how it works." I proceeded to demonstrate in the air and gave her careful, explicit directions, then let her practice on my goddaughter's Sesame Street Play Phone. When I was certain she was ready, I let her try it for real. But when she dialed the first digit, a mysterious thunderstorm erupted sending a bolt of lightning through the phone line. Now she must use the assistance of a live monkey to perform all task requiring motor skills, including the dialing of a phone.¹ True story.... at least that's what I was visualizing would have happened after she made that ridiculously fatuous statement....

**Note to self:* Remarkable and verifiable proof that Evolutionists have been correct in their scientific theories; Evidence that *Homo sapiens* are losing the use of two major digits of the hand.

September 10, 2003

Just when I thought I had reconciled with my conscience to all those sadistic fantasies that separate man from beast, sane from insane, civilized from savage, I witnessed a perfectly able-bodied person with two unencumbered arms stop two

¹ Name withheld so as not to embarrass the imbecilic.

feet from a door and press the “handicapped” button to open it for him. At this moment, all self-forgiveness vanished to that unknown abyss where an “out of the dryer” sock mate goes. This is when I become technology’s biggest fan as I envision a bat swinging out from the bottom of the door when the button is depressed, breaking both of his legs. Hey, at least he would have a legitimate reason for pushing the button and time to reflect upon his fortunate and advanced capabilities....

**Note to self:* The Human arm is becoming ineffective and apparently shorter. With the lack of the opposable thumb and pinky, grasping seems to be becoming quite difficult. I am afraid.

October 16, 2003

Christopher and I are sitting outside in the courtyard on this unseasonably warm, sunny afternoon discussing his summer trip to Nevada with the University’s Geology Department. He is telling me that his group project was to hike and map a thirty-mile circumference of a specific area for a grade. His group produced an “A,” he says, but not because of anything he did. I offer support by reminding him that carrying the beer cooler is important to the success of any outdoor excursion. I then notice someone parking in a “permit only” space without a parking sticker and politely point out the error. The person in question then responds, “There aren’t any spaces close to the building, and I’m not walkin’ *that far*.” I tell Tisdale (Christopher), “It’s a good thing that guy wasn’t the ‘designated beer cooler carrier.’ They would have gotten an ‘F.’”

“Yeah, an ‘F!’” says Tisdale. “We would have gotten a freakin’ (that’s not what he really said) ‘F.’ That far...”

**Note to self:* Select members of the human species seem unable to move at quick or even moderate paces and can only travel for short distances. This sometimes happens to Tisdale, but only after the beer cooler is empty.

November 14, 2003

You know how we label our decades “The Seventies,” and “The Fifties,” and so on? What do we call 2000 and on? Well, here is my proposal: “The Decade of the Sloth.” Readers bear with me, and I will explain.

Each Chinese calendar year is named after a particular animal that indicates fortune, personality traits, and character strengths assigned to the people born under that year. We are in the decade of the “Two Thousands,” and honestly this analogy sounds quite ridiculous. But, before I go any further, let me give you a clear definition of the sloth. The sloth is a small arboreal (pertaining to living in trees) mammal of South America. They have either two or three toes, small round heads, large bodies and are depicted as resembling a “*drab mass of characterless vegetation.*” Sloths have low intelligence, sleep 18 out of the 24 hours of day, and are extremely lazy. They move only about 14 feet a minute along the ground and two feet a minute if in a tree. Now, let’s visit *Webster’s College Dictionary* and define the word sloth. *Sloth*: “Laziness, torpid, indolence.” *Torpid*: “Dormant, motionless, idle, and inert.”

**Note to self*: Cannabis elicits these effects on the human being and certain small dogs.

November 24, 2003

I do not have a cell phone or a beeper. My computer is a dinosaur, 93’ I think, and comes with a 14-inch monitor, hard drive with floppy and CD-ROM, a dial-up modem, no speakers, and Word 95/97. I check my e-mail once a week (if I have nothing better to do) and would not even have the damn thing if necessity didn’t dictate it. As a matter of fact, I only acquired it when I returned to school and paid only \$50.00. I do not have cable, a satellite dish, or a DVD player, preferring to read, create something with my hands, hike, work in the garden, or write. I still cook in pots on top of the stove. I manually shift gears, roll up my car windows, use a key to unlock my car door, trunk, and house doors. I prefer to write in longhand calligraphy, seduced by the smell of the ink, the wisp of the paper as the pen skates across it, fascinated by color fusing into mulched and pressed wood that once was a tall, standing tree with someone’s name etched into it.

These antiquated processes may seem iconoclastic to many, and this prose may seem snide; however, there is no harm intended in this. I am constantly berated because of my lack of “techno” conformity, and *I* am the one labeled soporific and backwards. I am confused. Appreciation for human capability as a priceless heirloom is being substituted for the technological advancement of

mankind with the only result being a backward evolving species of “drab, characterless, vegetative-like” masses, incapable of production by hand, thought for self, or a concept as simple as movement by motivation for the grace and artistry of creation.

**Note to self:* $E=mc^2$. Brilliant, Al. Totally brilliant, dude. *P.S.* Don’t forget to pick up new batteries for the “clapper.” Flipping the light switches on and off with my hands totally wastes me.