

The newsletter for Baby Boomers who haven't lost their curiosity. Inspired by the
Out Of My Mind podcast and, now, the blog as well.

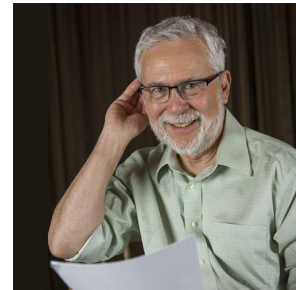


Out of My Mind Newsletter

March, 2016

Greetings!

I get excited about little things. In February what brought a smile to my face was the back story on the post "[Sticking it To Millennials](#)." It marked the first time, at least for *The Out Of My Mind Blog*, that a reader suggested a story. As I said, little things.



I realized I never mentioned that I'm always looking for post topics and story ideas. If you have one, by all means send it along. My email address is jdouglas@thetheaterofyourmind.com. Put something clever in the subject field, maybe "Story Idea." If your idea leads to a post you'll get a credit line, so when you share the post with your friends they'll treat you with the respect you deserve.

Speaking of stories, this month's newsletter contains a story related by diamond cutter Barry Rogoff that didn't make it into the original post. And, there's a story about something I've been curious about: what is it like to play a Disney character at one of the company' theme parks.

In the blog this month, there's an interview with Denny Tedesco, the producer and director of *The Wrecking Crew*, a seminal documentary about the studio musicians that made the music of the 60s what it was. Later in the month, stories about the Limerick Laureate of Facebook and the great tattoo coverup. Plus, I take on Albert Einstein and how he's right except when he's wrong. It's part of the usual March madness that goes on in the blog.

In the meantime, have a March that will make your friends turn (Irish) green with envy.

--jay

Take My Girl Datin' At the Drive In-Redux

First up, a little left over business from February's newsletter where I asked if you knew the song from which I lifted the title for the story on drive-in movie theaters.

Nobody got it correct. The lyric came from *Just Like Romeo and Juliet* by the Reflections. Looks like we need to brush up on our rock and roll history (an excellent reason to read the Denny Tedesco interview when it goes online March 1st---and to watch his documentary, *The Wrecking Crew*, which streams on Netflix).



(Image via [Jack Pearce](#))

Caught in the Act

What kind of job would you imagine requires the most thinking on your feet? Stand-up comedian? Courtroom attorney? Surgeon? Think more magical.



What are called the "face characters" at Disney theme parks, characters like Snow White and Mulan who appear in costume and have to talk to park guests, have to be quick thinkers. Not only do they have to respond to all sorts of questions (and often accusations such as, "You're not a real ____"), their responses have to stay true to their characters---and the Disney image.

Disney puts its face characters through a training program where they learn to move, talk and behave properly. But once they hit the streets they're on their own. One performer, who's played the roles of various princesses at Walt Disney World in Orlando, Florida described her experiences on the social media platform Reddit.

When, as Silvermist the fairy, kids pressed her to fly, she came up with the line, "I'm saving my pixie dust for later."

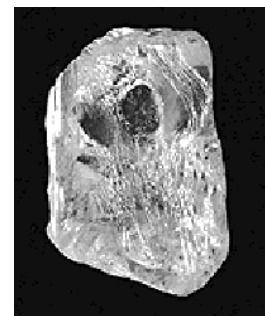
A little more challenging was the case of Mulan, based on the legendary Chinese warrior Hua Mulan from the poem the *Ballad of Mulan*. "Chinese people would always tell me to speak Chinese and I'd tell them that I bet Mushu [the red dragon---jd] if I could go an entire day without speaking Chinese he'd feed the chickens for me tomorrow."

What's the cleverest thing you ever said in a spur-of-the-moment situation?

(Image via [traveljunction/Flickr](#))

What a Bunch of Cut Ups

The Star of Sierra Leone. Heard of it? No, it's not a John Huston picture, a 70s rock group or a WWE celebrity. It's the name given to the largest diamond ever unearthed, a 968.9 carat stone.



Who got to cut the stone? Well, that's the story. As Barry Rogoff said in the post "[Slice of Life](#)", cutting a diamond is less about art and more about economics. The question wasn't who should cut it, but how it should be cut.

A group of six diamond cutters used models of the stone, marking and cutting them, to understand what cuts would produce the best economic value. It wasn't about the size or shape of the stone, it was about the total package. What cuts would give them a large diamond and smaller diamonds that, in the

aggregate, would be worth the most?

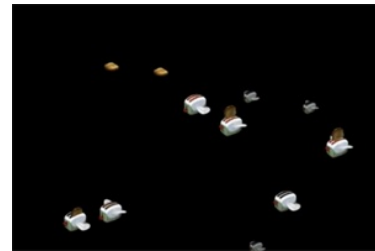
Despite their best efforts, the first cut resulted in a a 143.2 carat emerald-shaped stone with an internal flaw. The stone was recut into a flawless pear-shaped diamond of 53.96 carats. Jeweler Harry Winston purchased it for around \$2.5 million.

There were 17 additional diamonds, 13 of which were flawless. Winston set 6 of them into the Star of Sierra Leone brooch.

Can you think of any other time a result of such magnitude came out of the workings of a committee?

You're Not Hallucinating, You're Remembering

Androids might dream of electric sheep, per Philip K. Dick, but every once in a while Baby Boomers might dream of flying toasters. If you're a person of a certain age, those toasters you recall were part of a class of computer programs called screen savers. This unsung, and highly creative, branch of computing has a history that's as fascinating to look at [as it is to read](#).



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