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A Hundred Years of: LEX FLEX

Ruth Laxson

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A Hundred Years of: LEX FLEX ★



Ruth Laxson

Behind the Curve - '90
 Best Seldom - '57
 Biodegradable '65
 Bioputure - potential course of one's state of health '85
 Bionics '63 study of living creatures to improve human-made mechanisms
 Biotron '65 a facility for study of living organisms
 Bircher '62 member of John Birch Soc. (Burchison)
 Bitchy '72
 Blackteer '43 bl. market operator
 Black nationalist '64
 Blacktop - 41
 Bleep '76
 Blimp - '43 a non-rigid rigid airship
 Blitz - '41 (blitzkrieg)
 Blackbuster '44 - 48
 Blood-bath '42 - a massacre
 Blue collar '60
 Bobby socks '45 (teen)
 Bop '49
 Brainwash '56
 Breast feed '56
 Britcom '86
 Brown out '45
 Puppie '89
 Businesspeak '84
 Byliner - '58 newspaper columnist
 By pass '43 to pass up
 Call up - '51
 Captive audience - '51
 Careerism '60 putting it above all other values
 Car pool '43
 Castroism '61
 Cease fire '51
 Cell '41 - a nucleus within a larger organization
 Cellular - '83
 Certified mail '56
 Chat line - '89
 Chuckbook baseball '76
 Cheese cake '43
 Chichi '50
 Circuitry - '58
 City shorts - hot pants '71
 Classic car - credit - well engineered car '25-42
 Cocktail circuit '49
 Cocooning - '88
 Coke bottle '56
 Cold war '57
 Colony '53
 Colat cast '56
 Computeracy '87 comp. literate
 Condo - '72
 Conglomerate '69
 Consumerism '57
 Contact lens '42
 Cook '52 to make radioactive
 Copter '49
 Corn row - '71
 Corny - '44
 Couch potato '88
 Counter productive '70
 Cronyism - '56
 Cross back '54
 Crypto Communist '49
 Off the cuff '42
 Curtains '42
 Cynical '41
 Customizer '63
 Cut back '48
 Cutting edge '85
 Cybernetic '66
 Daddy track - '90 allowing men time off to be with family needs
 Date rape '89
 Debrief '53 questioning + instructing after operation
 Deck checked '71
 Declassify - '51
 Deconstructivist architecture - '90 new, sloping walls, tilted columns, diag. lines, warped facades - distort
 Decontamination '42
 Deep fat fry '56
 Deep freeze '50
 Demitball - '51
 Denazify '46

little story across top of page in mud section
(I'd do this on letterpress)

A cool wind was blowing through the portals as she came in from the fields. She knew Mael had been there, his acrid mix of body fluids still charged the air. The knew Europe was also in a slow dance show down - in denial of seething rumors of war. She scoured harder because cleanliness was the measure. There was no money gage. The neighbors were not the Joneses. She had no inkling of the dynes in her being. They all belonged to Mael.

You, you, you, she said, you Kings and Warriors, YOU...

Israel overheard her as she turned the knob. "But this is no
King, no... it's a Dictator. ^{A genocidal Dictator - to} I can't just stand by, and

The next week on the eve of his departure, they had dinner together. ^{any decision}
Pachy looked around at the proud proofs of civilization.

"We can't take all this for granted, we have to fight for it"

he said. SHE: But fighting and opiates ^{are killing} have killed the poetic voice in this century. "He'll have both war and poetry. Variety is spice"; ^{He said} "He earned a bronze star in that war for risking his life to radio the enemy's position under heavy fire."

She rivited planes and bogs in that war and rationed sugar and gasoline. The immediate relief and excitement of the war's ending blurred the blunt, grim reality of the nuclear

debut ^{the} UNCLEAR named bodies victims spelled 4

Time end of the age of innocence

It was mid-century and all the eyes were glazed over with peace.

But Now the leaders were restless. - Fear of demon difference in the world - beliefs and creeds akimbo... "Kill the commie bastards" they said. What's a man to do? And the bombs were out of control. Mae said: "The United Na-

tions just decided that women's rights are human rights" SHE said
"Knew War means oppose abortion rights. Mrs. Brown said
"Birth control is war control". They only make abortion

Now the youth were going to jail instead of war. The music be-
came the poetry. The children became the leaders.

~~has no power~~, ~~and self-destructive~~. ^{We intelligible Japanese life.}
The world is a new place now. Enrico Fermi unwittingly
~~it left the civilization as the first atomic bomb in 194~~

1950. Phoebe's not turning back.



If God almighty tossed a coin to find the luckiest clay spot in the Southland
fell on Alabama County Ran-
And there by hook or crook laid
the gut workin' share cropper
Wiltie K. But not sharin' for long
on brink of hard times
bought 40 acres nearby
his mother's stash. The
family seeded, hoed, plow-
ed gathered, milked, hog
killed, churned & mended.

And on the 4th of July
when the crops were
laid by they fiddled
and sing - laughed
and danced. After
2 or 3 days Wiltie would
have to say "Old Lady
I guess you better
make me a milk
shake. This raw egg
elixir always does
this back up to
And everyone
down again.

There came to this place one John Wilkes alone & responsible - a darkie a.k.a. niggah by definition
He moved because

his possessions to the mid-Alabama farm in a wheel barrow, from where it was not known. He lived in a bleached board shack the embodiment of work. The plowed fields 'lines of poetry' were his magnum opus. He followed Jude the mule or Doc, the ox, which ever was the least worn from the previous day, down row after row. With chin up & bottom lip cupped so the snuff juice wouldn't spill, he called his commands with gentle lashes. And he chopped wood, cut sugar cane, thought no evil, fed the live stock... He stood at the middle of the white warshed universe. did he dream & desire? Nobody knew about nature nurture of body & soul > He ate what he could get. Sometime s white food like Mama make nna. His work schedule was set by the rhythms of daylight & dark When he came into the yard he would catch an unexpected fly he would claudly & scruff so to not take n by surprise. light of his ke the year elec tricity came to the farm.

the work
the surface
knuckled

23
MAEL vanished in a fog of obscene questions...: Birth? Name? Death(s)? ...

★ Sex-uality ? & God? ? ? ➤

Re-entry was not easy ➤ even with butter and gasoline. The smirmy reign of technology diffused the relief of war's end.

Hinterland home folks worked and talked
a right smart - "Shoot its been ill-convenient
in these parts for years I reckon a little
war won't kill us."
All the universe
ticks its way

2 print across grey clouds
↑

last century economic, social and political systems were transformed by more or less violent revolution. Absolutist Russian, German, French, Ottoman and Chinese empires have vanished, but so has satisfaction with the potential for liberty and social justice.

--From: A Dictionary of Modern Revolution by Edward Hyams



God is with us and we are with God.

Washington until the early 60s with President Johnson.
rights didn't gain a real toe-hold in
politics in the 50's so civil
rights work and attitudes of Martin Luther King brought hope to the struggle
kill the work and attitudes of Martin Luther King brought hope to the struggle
the die-hards used untold desperate measures. His mountain top was
a precarious pinnacle - when the King of Norway awarded him the Nobel
Peace Prize in 1964 he had no idea MLK would be in jail in a few days.



Visionary

1991
Apple Computer introduces the mouse

1994
The Chernobyl nuclear reactor explodes

لیزر باها بیدار
نبرد اولی از من
قر... نبرد اولی

Black oil Lake

91
Gulf War



Deserts
sand

It's only a paper moon

The world's first operational computer was constructed by Alan Turing and colleagues from telephone relays, to use in cracking the German Enigmatic code - thus turning the tide of WWII.

The techno world has been in overdrive ever since. Brain power and knowledge seeds expose neural nets and algorithms - and intelligence beyond the skull. Compared to computers the brain is a very slow computing medium. So DNA based evolution will eventually come into the picture. Computer speed grew at a snail's pace until 1970 and now it doubles every year. There will continue to be ever smaller component geometries packing greater numbers of yet faster transistors on each chip. But as circuit dimensions reach near atomic sizes undesirable results may appear. The next frontier will be the third dimension. Already there is competition to build chips with dozens and ultimately thousands of layers of circuitry. Although not yet cost competitive with customary flat chips the third dimension will be there when we run out of space in the first two.

DNA is nature's own nanoengineered computer and its evolution is well suited for solving combinational problems. By combining any sized DNA molecule we wish with quantum bits we could soon glimpse sensual machines and eventually virtual touching. Whereas digital computing is based on bits of information which are either off or on - 0 or 1, quantum computing (Qubits) is zero & one at the same time while processing information. But it changes from its ambiguous 0 - 1 state to an actual 0 or a 1, leaving a series of 0's and 1's that pass the test. Essentially all 2^{100} possible solutions have been tried simultaneously leaving only the correct solution. As David Moser said "Quantum particles are the dreams stuff is made of".

The physical world only bothers to manifest itself in an unambiguous state when one of us conscious beings decides to interact with it. While we can't image the image with the same molecules as the image, oncoming nanotechnology is poised for another universe of computing that will change the ground rules. Before 2030 we'll have earnest machines repeating "I think therefore I am" and it won't seem like a programmed response.

• these thoughts are influenced by Ray Kurzweil's *The Age of Spiritual Machines*.



A Hundred Years of: LEX FLEX

Ruth Laxson's book is about much more than the new words in 20th-century English. Touching lightly on topics of poverty and power, it provides an accurate timeline of the technological innovation that propelled the language to new extremes of inventiveness. At the same time, it considers what was being lost.

Without a shred of nostalgia, the book recounts the first third of the century in a typewritten account of large historical events counterpointed by site-specific tales from the rural South, where the vividness of spoken language stood in contrast with the flatly utilitarian new nouns naming products of American industry. The middle segment, printed from handset type, recounts the transformation of American life in the war years and after, leading eventually to the digital revolution that Laxson captures in the final, computer-assisted segment.

Each of the three segments is full of Laxson's usual mix of witty wordplay, shaped lines of concrete poetry, and drawings combining word and image, in a sharply intelligent balance of observation and aesthetic delight. Laxson's books stir thought that is as pleasurable as the experience of holding and reading them.

— Jerry Cullum

is a succession of images

to speak to make things



ruth
laxson