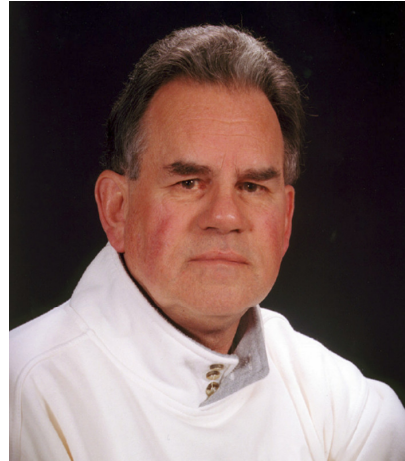


## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Will Durant was my first and most important intellectual mentor. At age twenty-five I had not yet read a book cover-to-cover. Then one day, while sitting aboard a submarine tender in Holy Loch, Scotland (I was awaiting the arrival of the fleet ballistic missile submarine, *USS Theodore Roosevelt (SSBN 600)*, to which I was assigned as a member of one of the two crews), Durant's *The Mansions of Philosophy* fell into my hands—probably by chance. How this happened eludes me but that day was the beginning of a long journey that continues even now.

Somewhere Durant wrote that a reader of nonfiction needs to know about the author in order to accurately determine how much credibility the author deserves. So here I hope to let you look into my intellectual psychic so you will “know where I’m coming from.”

Quite frankly, I’m an under-educated intellectual snob. My days in college were few, mainly because I couldn’t find instructors who knew more than I did (not an idle boast since, as a high school dropout I was confined to community colleges, a known hotbed of low-level instruction). Understand that I didn’t pass through any college doors—as a student—until I was thirty-seven years old. This was after my retirement from the U.S. Navy where I served for 21 years. By this time Durant and others had worked their magic (black or otherwise) on me. I didn’t think I knew it all (I still don’t think that), but I knew enough to know when others (often) didn’t know



what they were talking about. Let me begin more closely to the beginning.

I was born in Portland, Oregon, in 1936 to blue-collar parents. I received the standard public education in a rural school (Metzger, near Tigard) until fifth grade. The first three grades were spent in the same room where Mrs. Barnett kept kissing me and thereby insuring that I received plenty of ridicule from my classmates. After fourth grade, the family moved to Prineville where my Mother’s family had settled in the 1920’s having left Wisconsin for the opportunities of Oregon. The rest of my undergraduate education took place in Prineville but ended six weeks into my senior year when I left school to join the U.S. Navy. I had had enough of that small town.<sup>1</sup>

My Dad was from a Catholic French-Canadian family but I never saw him inside a church until he helped build the current St. Joseph’s in Prineville; but he only built—didn’t worship or attend. After moving to Prineville I met a good Catholic woman, Veronica Wilke, and she introduced me to the teachings of the Roman Church. I was hooked and loved everything I was taught— even the concept of original sin. It must have been the

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<sup>1</sup> And I still can’t stand the place (December2008).

# MARTIN MORISETTE

discipline my religion imposed on me that prepared me for entry into the military.

When I announced that I was joining the navy many of my relative said, "You'll never last; you don't know how to do what you're told." I had always been an "independent spirit." But I managed to adjust to military life and lack of discipline was never one of my military problems.

My first duty assignment after basic training (San Diego, California) and 16 weeks of advanced quartermaster (navigator) training (Bainbridge, Maryland) was aboard the aircraft carrier **USS SHANGRI-LA (CVA-38)**. My first duty aboard ship was "Captain of the Head;" I cleaned toilets—all day, every day.

After several months of this character building work I was told that I was the new division training petty officer. (In the Navy a "petty officer" is a non-commissioned officer. The word "petty" was a factor only when dealing with civilians or members of the other branches of the armed services.) "What does 'training petty officer' mean?" I asked. They told me that I had to establish a training program of continuing education for the enlisted navigation specialists aboard the ship. So here I am, 18 years old, a high school drop-out, now in charge of educating others. I still had not read my first book (other than text books and **Classic** comic books for book reports)!

This assignment began a 20-odd year career not only in the military but also in training others. My biggest educational splash came in the early 1960s when I was sent by the Navy to confer with the Dean of the Harvard Graduate School on the design of an associate's degree program for sailors aboard Polaris submarines. Did that dean ever suspect that he was listening to the advice of a high school dropout? Doubt it.

The college level program was a great asset to the submarine force. On one

"patrol" aboard ROOSEVELT I supervised 24 college-level classes and taught a course in "speed reading (reading improvement)" three nights a week. This effort (almost an act on my part) is what lead to my advancement to commissioned officer.

By now I had read quite a few books cover-to-cover and sometimes more than once. Reading had become a habit and a passion.

Somewhere during my tour aboard nuclear submarines, while acting as the assistant to the Catholic Chaplain, the Bishop of Boston learned about my devotion to my religion and my accomplishments in education. Since I was still an enlisted man, the Bishop offered to "buy" me from the U.S. Navy and send me to seminary at the cost of the Catholic Church (something that is seldom done). I asked for time to think about it.

One night while reading my prayer book before going to sleep, a light went off in my head and in an instant I knew that whatever I had believed about God, faith, religion, and church was a sham. I had become an atheist in the blink of an eye. I also had my answer for the Bishop: "Thanks, but no thanks." I don't try to explain this transformation and I do not accept the explanations offered by others.<sup>2</sup>

By this time my abilities as a cynic were quite pronounced. I was also a confirmed pessimist and champion of the underdog. Maybe military service does that to you but, in my case, I think it was fostered, at least in part, by all those philosophers that I had been reading. My study of human psychology didn't help either. My cynicism has always served me well: I prepare for and expect the worst and since seldom does the worst occur, I usually come out of

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<sup>2</sup> But that has all changed. See addendum to this chapter.

# GREEN GOLD

a situation on the plus side. That was certainly true of my Navy career.

Personal political views, during those Navy years, were few and far between; military personnel are not encouraged to think politically. I was too busy doing my job to think about politics—or the environment. Had I thought about politics I would have done something to resist the war in Vietnam and probably ruined my military career. I served on two different ships off the coast of Vietnam (an ocean tug and an ammunition supply ship) and not once during those six years did the morality of what I was doing enter my mind. My failure to think about what I was doing caught up with me in college and may have fostered the political beast that haunts me now.<sup>3</sup>

Just as I didn't have political views until "late in life," I didn't have views about the environment until even later in life; except for one. As far back as the mid-1970's I had become aware of the world's overpopulation problem. I realized that unless the nations of the world got their reproductive house in order we were all doomed. Guess what? Not only have we failed to get our reproductive house in order but also today that house is in worse shape than it was when I first came across the problem. Almost every problem facing our civilization today is the result of too many people trying to crowd into too little space (and all of them wanting our standard of living).<sup>4</sup>

My awareness of this problem and the subordinate problems it creates—the danger it poses to the environment—will significantly color anything I write. This belief became more clearly entrenched in my mind as I studied the timber industry and there is little chance that I will be able

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<sup>3</sup> But not any longer; which you'll understand when you read the addendum.

<sup>4</sup> And now I know why: man's inability to refrain from sin.

to keep this belief from what is to be written here.

But let me temper that a bit. People, who know me, know that I am able to admit when I'm wrong and make that admission public. If I've made errors in judgment in doing my research and in reporting that research to you, show me where I'm wrong and I'll recant in public.

Whatever my beliefs, I do not place labels on myself. I'm a registered Republican only so I can vote in the primary elections.<sup>5</sup> I don't call myself an environmentalist yet I see man's failure to protect the environment as his greatest sin against the earth, himself, and all of mankind. The fact that I do not believe in a supreme being does not prevent me from respecting your rights to such a belief nor does it prevent me from seeing that mankind is nature's greatest creation. In spite of my cynical and pessimistic attitudes I still have faith that our species can save the world from destruction—but that faith, sad to say, is waning. But to do so, corrective action had better start soon. There are about three days out of four when I think it is already too late.<sup>6</sup>

Now that you know something about the person who writes what you are about to read, I hope you are not discouraged from reading further. Among my good qualities I

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<sup>5</sup> I'm no longer registered as anything, nor do I vote. God directs us to pray for our leaders and our country and to follow their laws—unless those laws violate God's law. I do my best to follow the laws of God and man.

<sup>6</sup> Now I know it's too late. It has always been God's will to completely destroy this earth and replace it with a New Earth and a New Heaven. You may not believe me when I tell you, but both the New Heaven and the New Earth are in the same place: planet Earth. That has always been God's plan and mankind had only to read His Word to know that. This plan was published well before Jesus came to teach more clearly than ever before how man obtains eternal life WITH God, both occupying New Earth.

# MARTIN MORISETTE

hope I correctly list honesty and fairness. Some of what follows will displease and offend some readers; some of those readers will be the very people who encouraged me to begin this journey in the first place. If you find something you don't like, don't stop reading because if you continue to read you'll find more that you do like. What follows has not been written to please anyone; it has been written to chronicle the history of the timber industry in Central and Eastern Oregon. That history contains some unpleasant events and not everyone you read about will come out smelling as good as a pine tree.

Writing this book has been one of the most exciting experiences my life. I hope the reading of it brings you some measure of gratification.

## THE REST OF THE STORY: AN ADDENDUM

Since finishing *GREEN GOLD* in March 2005, there have been major changes in my life. Because of back surgery the previous November, I felt I could no longer maintain my property at the standard I insisted and it looked like I would need more frequent visits with doctors, so by the end of March I had sold the Post property and moved to an apartment in Bend—near Highway 20 and 27<sup>th</sup> Street. Quite an adjustment: from isolated hermit (for 17 years!) to city apartment dweller, not easy at first but well adjusted now.

While still undergoing physical therapy I met a wonderful Christian man, Jesse Hinrichs. He knew of my pagan, perverted ways of living but we became good friends. To my surprise he didn't try to convert me from any of my "vices". His Christian unconditional love was exactly what God orders of all of us. Jesse was quite a lot younger (understatement—I could have easily been his grandfather!) but we got together for coffee and talked about secular things. Then one day, at Barnes & Nobel, something started happening, not with words, something very difficult to explain.

As Jesse and I talked our secular talk, out of his eyes I saw something looking at me. The only way I can describe what I saw

was what you sometimes see on a cloudy day when the sun breaks through the clouds and it looks like spotlights are shining down on earth. Spotlights were shining out of Jesse's eyes directly into mine. I didn't mention this to Jesse. After the third time, still saying nothing to Jesse, I knew God was calling me back to a life of faith.

Months earlier I had been introduced to a wonderful young, handsome, captivating minister, Loren Anderson. Loren had come from Medford to start a new church in Bend which he called "The Fellowship at Bend". Even though Loren and I had never talked theology (I had introduced myself to him as a "devout atheist") it was him that I called for counsel. Neither he nor I remember the exact day or how the conversation started or continued. I do remember how it ended.

"Loren," I said, "I've saved the hardest part for the last. I'm a homosexual." Loren replied, "That could be a problem."

As I left Loren's main office of the time, Starbucks' 27<sup>th</sup> Street, I thought, "Well, I've ruined that." By the time I walked the two blocks between Starbucks and my apartment there was already an email from Loren in which he quoted several verses which point out that lying with men as with

## GREEN GOLD

women is an abomination, all of which I'd heard before and knew of scholarly refutations for each. So if Loren didn't want me in his church, maybe someone else would. Someday I'll tell you about my search for a church.<sup>7</sup>

My best friend, Kelly Neuman (from our time as neighbors in Post), listened to my story and invited me to go to church with her. It may have taken some thinking time (maybe weeks) but I accepted her invitation and joined her at New Hope Church. Beautiful facility, large, well appointed, not very holy "feeling". After service Kelly asked, "What did you think?" I hesitated in answering but I had to say something. So I said, "Kelly, that wasn't church that was entertainment." This, from a 44-year atheist who knew no church beyond the drama and paganism of the Church of Rome! I expected Kelly to be very sad, but she wasn't.

"I'm so glad you said that!" she said. "I feel the same way." So, what next? I wondered. I told Kelly that I knew of a guy who held church in a high school gym and that what he did was teach the Bible; no entertainment. "Should we try it?" I asked. She agreed that the following Sunday we would.

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<sup>7</sup> Loren and I never again talked about "it may be a problem" and my being gay did not make me unwelcome at The Fellowship at Bend. But, on my own, I found Scripture that cannot be refuted: homosexuality is against the laws of God. I found these two verses on my own as I launched into a program of Bible reading. First, "You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination" (Lev 18:22 ESV); second, "If a man lies with a male as with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination; they shall surely be put to death; their blood is upon them" (Lev 20:13 ESV). From the mouth of God right into my depraved heart. There was no longer any excuse or claim that would permit me from continuing to be gay.

But I got sneaky: I knew someone that went to Loren's church and I asked if he would take me with him on the Wednesday before the Sunday Kelly and I would attend. After this one visit I knew where God wanted me and after Kelly's Sunday visit she felt the same way. We're both still there, coming up on the anniversary of my third year of being born again. That is a story in itself but I'll leave it for another time. But I do want to tell you some interesting things that have happened since I've become a son of God.

First, I know about miracles because I've been the recipient of several in less than three years. In looking back on how I lost my faith and all that transpired during the 44 years of my unbelief, I'm convinced that it was God who took my faith. Yes, I know that sounds crazy, but I really think He did. Why: To save me from the Catholic Church. God knows I'm a Type A perfectionist and knowing that He knew that I would become an outstanding priest and probably rise within the church's structure. Had that come to pass, it wouldn't mesh with God's plans for my latter years. God has strongly impressed upon me that I have work ahead but He has not revealed the nature of that work. I'm getting ready by being a Type A student of and for God.

I would love to launch into many words of what I've learned about God and His work but this is not the place for that. It is a pretty good guess, though, that **Green Gold** would be a different story were I to write it as a Christian. How it would be different I don't know but everything in my life is different so how could my writing not also be different. But if I ever write another book it won't be about an industry it will be

## MARTIN MORISETTE

about the Glory of God. On that you can count.

God has saved my life at least once since being reborn. I crashed my bike into a bridge and my neck should have been broken or at least my hip (onto which I fell very heavily). But He would not repair my damaged finger from that wreck. Like Paul, I need a reminder of the value of humility. I observed at least three miraculous healings where Jesus Christ supernaturally “fixed” things in the bodies I was watching. Oh, He is mighty and great!

He leads me in my studies, guiding me to books and subjects other Christians are unaware of. I’m not claiming to be better or more deserving but one thing I am that

many are not: I’m available. My total lack of obligation to others gives me freedom to be at the LORD’s beck-and-call.

I praise God for all the innumerable blessings he has bestowed upon me throughout my long life and if you are not a follower of Jesus Christ I swear to you, you are missing the best part of living. If you want to spend eternity (and that’s a very long time) not in Hell you have but one alternative and to get there you had better learn how one gets to Heaven. It isn’t as easy as many think and Jesus told us Himself, “For many are called, but few are chosen.” (Mat 22:14 ESV). I pray that you qualify as “chosen”.

Fred Herrick Lumber Company Sawmill, late 1920s. Fred had overextended himself in trying to build a sawmill and a railroad—from scratch—to satisfy the terms of his contract to buy the largest timber sale ever made by the U.S. Forest Service.

Fred almost made his commitments but he went bankrupt and lost everything, not just his Oregon investments but all those in Idaho and elsewhere too. A broken man, he never recovered. This is the main sawmill building circa 1928. Everything you see was scrapped and the Edward Hines Lumber Company, in 1932, started fresh and cut lumber at Hines, Oregon, until about 1983 when their failure to keep pace with modern equipment and control of union wages forced the company from business.

