

ANALYSIS

Catch-22 (1961)



Joseph Heller

(1923-1999)

“I see *Catch-22* as not about World War II. It certainly does not reflect my attitude toward that war. For everybody after Pearl Harbor, it was a war we wanted to fight—a war we knew had to be won.... An important point in the book is that the war in Europe is drawing to a close as the danger to Yossarian from his own superiors intensifies. He was able to say in the end of the book that the war against Germany is just about over and the country’s not in danger any more, but he is. It’s essentially a conflict between people—American officers and their own government. They are the antagonists of *Catch-22*—much more so than the Germans and Hitler, who are scarcely mentioned.”

Joseph Heller
Interview with Ken Barnard
Detroit News (13 September 1970)

“On the Mediterranean island of Pianosa during the last months of World War II, Captain John Yossarian of the U.S. air force attempts to avoid further combat after having experienced grisly events and observing his fellow officers being ridiculous in their lust for promotion. Trying to be grounded as insane, he turns up naked at the ceremony in which General Dreedle is to award him a DFC. But fantastic bureaucratic rulings, extending to a *Catch-22*, prevent him from achieving his objective, and he deserts to seek a saner world in neutral Sweden. His commander, Captain Cathcart, drives his men to more and more combat, so that he may look impressive, and General Peckham makes them fly in formations that will make his aerial photos look good, while Lieutenant Milo Minderbinder ignores the whole matter of war and enemy forces as he goes about making a fortune and gaining power in black-market schemes.”

James D. Hart
The Oxford Companion to American Literature, 5th edition
(Oxford 1941-83) 127-28

“*Catch-22* is a disconcerting book; it alternately attracts and repels, delights and bores.... A close reading of the text in terms of texture and tone reveals only that its complexity is superficial, that its variety is only apparent, that its apparent repetitiveness is unfortunately only too real. The novel proceeds from

Heller's discovery that everything in the modern world is up for grabs; that nothing—and therefore, ipso facto, everything—makes coherent, logical sense. By the ancient comic device of portraying the preposterous as normal, it is possible to make of this discovery something delightfully, often uproariously, funny, and Heller is superb at the creation of this kind of comedy.

Nearly everything and everybody in *Catch-22* is outlandish, wacky. There is Lt. Scheisskopf, whose monomaniacal love for dress parades finally earns him promotion to General. There is ex-PFC Wintergreen, who, for all practical purposes, runs the war from his clerk's desk by manipulating orders and memoranda. There is the Major named Major Major Major, who got his rank through an understandable IBM error, who doesn't want the rank nor know how to use it, and who consequently flees his office through a window whenever he is about to be approached with a problem. And there are others, equally wacky, but in a far more vicious, deadly sense.

There is Captain Black, who, out of jealousy of Major Major, institutes the Glorious Loyalty Oath Crusade in order to prove that Major Major is a Communist by the simple device of refusing to let him sign the Oath ('You never heard him denying it until we began accusing him, did you?'). There is Col. Cathcart, who is most upset to learn that enlisted men pray to the same God as officers...and that God listens to them; whose one great dream is to be immortalized in a feature story in the *Saturday Evening Post*, and who, to achieve this end, keeps upping the number of missions his squadron must fly until he has tripled the required number. There is Cpl. Whitcomb, the Chaplain's assistant, who devises a form letter to take care of the growing casualties resulting from Col. Cathcart's policy; the letter reads in part: 'Dear Mrs., Mr., Miss, or Mr. and Mrs.: Words cannot express the deep personal grief I experienced when your husband, son, father, or brother was killed, wounded, or reported missing in action.'

And finally—though there are many others who could and some readers would argue should be mentioned—there is Milo Minderbinder, angle-shooter extraordinary, caricature of the American businessman. He forms a syndicate, M & M Enterprises, dealing in everything imaginable from Lebanese cedar to Dutch tulips, Swiss cheeses, Spanish oranges, and Egyptian cotton. He insists that he operates a legitimate business in the American way, for each member of the squadron is a shareholder in the syndicate; and, since business is above quarrels between nations, there are English, French, German, and Italian partners in the syndicate as well—all of which makes very little difference since the profits are all plowed back into the business anyway, and there are no holds to share. Milo sells petroleum and ball bearings to the Germans and even contracts with them, in a major coup for the syndicate, to bomb and strafe his own airfield with planes of his own squadron. And because he is successful in the American tradition—that is, because his books show a substantial profit—Milo is admired and respected by the American people; even, though somewhat grudgingly, by those who lost loved ones in the bombing and strafing.

Lt. John Yossarian, a bomber pilot from whose point of view we observe most of the action, is one of the few even moderately 'normal' characters in the novel. The others—the Chaplain, Doc Daneeka, Major Danby, each a friend and confidant of Yossarian—are all caught up to some degree in the prevailing absurdity. But Yossarian is not. Each of his actions, preposterous, indeed crazy though it might be, is carefully calculated both to protest the absurdity and to get him out of combat if not clean out of the service. He complains of a nonexistent liver pain in order to be hospitalized to await the pain's becoming jaundice so that it can be treated. (The first variation of the elaborate joke: the doctors can cure jaundice, but a simple pain in the liver they cannot cure, whether the pain exists or not.) Yossarian censors enlisted men's mail by editing the letters unmercifully, sometimes deleting all modifiers and articles, sometimes blacking out all but the salutation and close; and he signs as the name of the censoring officer either Washington Irving or Irving Washington.

He either goes to sleep or behaves boorishly at briefing sessions. On the day that he is to be awarded a medal he appears in ranks totally nude; protesting that his uniform is covered with the blood of the man whose death earned him the medal. But his counter-absurdity campaign is fruitless, the world being what it is. In the first place, Yossarian is not considered crazy by his superiors but simply insubordinate, and therefore eligible not for a Section-8, but for flying more combat missions. In the second place, there is the magnificently absurd logic of *Catch-22* 'Which specified that a concern for one's own safety in the face of

dangers that were real and immediate was the process of a rational mind.’ All one must do to be grounded for mental reasons, Doc Daneeka explains to Yossarian, is to ask; but asking is proof that one is not crazy. Put in another way: ‘If he flew [more missions] he was crazy and didn’t have to’ but if he didn’t want to he was sane and had to.’

The novel moves by fits and starts toward Yossarian’s eventual desertion, but this is not a forward movement. It really does not go anywhere that it has not already been in its first few pages, albeit with slight variations in situation and character. In addition, there is no clearly juxtapositional relationship among its episodes; they are by and large interchangeable—so much so that many of them could actually be removed without in the least marring the novel’s structure. In fact, since Heller tends to tell the same joke and laugh the same ironic laugh over and over again, removing some of the episodes would cut down the repetitiveness, the redundancy, and improve the novel considerably. Plotless really, the book is unified by the pattern of absurdity established at its outset. But this is a tenuous unity at best, and it is here, faced with chaotic structure and endless repetition of episodes which individually are often quite funny, that one begins to feel doubt and dissatisfaction about the novel. Somehow, one feels, it would have been better if it had been better made.

In one sense, this criticism may seem rather picayune; after all, the novel remains brilliantly comic, episodic or not. But in another, higher sense, the criticism is of major seriousness, for the episodic flaw is symptomatic of the novel’s failure—and most importantly, of its failure *on its own terms*: as absurd. The artist must have a position, a point of view, some awareness of what things should or could be in order to be aware of the absurdity of things as they are. Without such an awareness, he really has nothing to portray—and the portrayal of nothing as absurd equals the portrayal of nothing as nothing. And (here Heller is hoist by his own petard, *Catch-22* itself) all of the absurd episodes imaginable cannot turn his work into something—above all, cannot make it absurd.

Heller could have used Milo Minderbinder, the soldier-businessman who profits so heavily from the non-sense of war, to crystallize a direction and purpose for the book. The anonymous writer who reviewed then novel for *Daedalus* (which review was reprinted as a feature in the *National Observer*) apparently had this possibility in mind when he wrote that ‘*Catch-22* is immoral because it follows a fashion in spitting indiscriminately at business and the professions, at respectability, at ideals, at all visible tokens of superiority. It is a leveling book in the worse sense, leveling everything and everyone downward.’ However, Milo is far too outlandish a character, far too preposterous and overdrawn to contribute to any sort of social criticism, let alone to the leftist-nihilism suggested in the review. Milo is the only character who can support the reviewer’s conclusion, yet the conclusion is hardly inescapable; the evidence in fact would seem as justifiably to indicate that Heller is conservative, that by means of reducing Milo to the ridicule of caricature, he has reduced social criticism itself, especially of businessmen, to the same level. Still, it is difficult to believe that either conclusion is accurate. It seems most reasonable to believe that Heller consciously and intentionally failed to use Milo as any sort of social critical foil, that he feared that doing so would impose a seriousness upon the novel the responsibility for which he did not wish to assume.

Yet finally, as if he were suddenly convinced that the novel needed some direction and purpose—needed, so to speak, to be rescued from itself—Heller invests Yossarian with idealism and nobility of motive. In a scene recognized even by Robert Brustein in his extremely favorable review as ‘an inspirational sequence which is the weakest thing in the book,’ Yossarian justifies his imminent desertion against an appeal to his patriotism and his anti-Nazi conscience: ‘Christ, Danby,’ he argues; ‘I earned that medal I got.... I’ve flown seventy goddam combat missions. Don’t talk to me about fighting to save my country. I’ve been fighting all along to save my country.... The Germans will be beaten in a few months. And Japan will be beaten a few months after that. If I were to give up my life now, it wouldn’t be for my country.’ The weakness of the sequence is of course that it is totally unconvincing.

There is nothing wrong with an American novelist being in favor of the Second World War; Heller would in fact be unique if he opposed it. But since he appears to be opposed to it throughout the novel, there is something wrong with Yossarian, even as Heller’s spokesman, mouthing pro-war sentiments. The statement constitutes a reversal of intention almost as flagrant as Wouk’s in *The Caine Mutiny*; it really negates or denies the novel. One might forgive it if Heller could see it as even moderately integral, if the

novel had prepared the way for it. But such is not the case; the sequence is not added up to, it is simply added on, an afterthought, as if Heller were saying: 'You see? This has all been a joke—good, clean fun with overtones of the macabre to titillate. But underneath there has really been something deep and important going on.' Unfortunately, however, there hasn't been."

Joseph J. Waldmeir

"Two Novelists of the Absurd: Heller and Kesey"

Wisconsin Studies in Contemporary Literature V.3 (1964) 192-204

"Like all superlative works of comedy—and I am ready to argue that this is one of the most bitterly funny works in the language—*Catch-22* is based on an unconventional but utterly convincing internal logic. In the very opening pages, when we come upon a number of Air Force officers malingering in a hospital—one censoring all the modifiers out of enlisted men's letters and signing the censor's name 'Washington Irving,' another pursuing tedious conversations with boring Texans in order to increase his life span by making time pass slowly, still another storing horse chestnuts in his cheeks to give himself a look of innocence—it seems obvious that an inordinate number of Joseph Heller's characters are, by all conventional standards, mad.

It is a triumph of Mr. Heller's skill that he is so quickly able to persuade us (1) that the most lunatic are the most logical, and (2) that it is our conventional standards which lack any logical consistency. The sanest loony of them all is the apparently harebrained central character, an American bombardier of Syrian extraction named Captain John Yossarian, who is based on a mythical Italian island (Pianosa) during World War II. For while many of his fellow officers seem indifferent to their own survival, and most of his superior officers are overtly hostile to him, Yossarian is animated solely by a desperate determination to stay alive.... The single narrative thread in this crazy patchwork of anecdotes, episodes, and character portraits traces Yossarian's herculean efforts—through caution, cowardice, defiance, subterfuge, stratagem, and subversion, through feigning illness, goofing off, and poisoning the company's food with laundry soap—to avoid being victimized by circumstance, a force represented in the book as *Catch-22*.

For *Catch-22* is the unwritten loophole in every written law which empowers the authorities to revoke your rights whenever it suits their cruel whims; it is, in short, the principle of absolute evil in a malevolent, mechanical, and incompetent world. Because of *Catch-22*, justice is mocked, the innocent are victimized, and Yossarian's squadron is forced to fly more than double the number of missions prescribed by Air Force code. Dogged by *Catch-22*, Yossarian becomes the anguished witness to the ghoulish slaughter of his crew members and the destruction of all his closest friends, until his fear of death becomes so intense that he refuses to wear a uniform, after his own has been besplattered with the guts of his dying gunner, and receives a medal standing naked in formation. From this point on, Yossarian's logic becomes so pure that everyone thinks him mad, for it is the logic of sheer survival, dedicated to keeping him alive in a world noisily clamoring for his annihilation. According to this logic, Yossarian is surrounded on all sides by hostile forces: his enemies are distinguished less by their nationality than by their ability to get him killed. Thus, Yossarian feels a blind, electric rage against the Germans whenever they hurl flak at his easily penetrated plane; but he feels an equally profound hatred for those of his own countrymen who exercise an arbitrary power over his life and well-being.

Heller's huge cast of characters, therefore, is dominated by a large number of comic malignities, *genus Americanus*, drawn with a grotesqueness so audacious that they somehow transcend caricature entirely and become vividly authentic. These include: Colonel Cathcart, Yossarian's commanding officer, whose consuming ambition to get his picture in the *Saturday Evening Post* motivates him to volunteer his command for every dangerous command, and to initiate prayers during briefing sessions ('I don't want any of this Kingdom of God or Valley of Death stuff. That's all too negative.... Couldn't we pray for a tighter bomb pattern?'), an idea he abandons only when he learns enlisted men pray to the same God; General Peckem, head of Special Services, whose strategic objective is to replace General Dreedle, the wing commander, capturing every bomber group in the U.S. Air Force ('If dropping bombs on the enemy isn't a special service, I wonder what in the world is'); Captain Black, the squadron intelligence officer, who inaugurates the Glorious Loyalty Oath Crusade in order to discomfort a rival, forcing all officers (except the rival, who is thereupon declared a Communist) to sign a new oath whenever they get their flak suits, their pay checks, or their haircuts; Lieutenant Scheisskopf, paragon of the parade ground, whose admiration

for efficient formations makes him scheme to screw nickel-alloy swivels into every cadet's back for perfect ninety degree turns; and the cadres of sadistic officers, club-happy MPs, and muddleheaded agents of the CID, two of whom, popping in and out of rooms like farcical private eyes, look for Washington Irving throughout the action, finally pinning the rap on the innocent chaplain.

These are Yossarian's antagonists, all of them reduced to a single exaggerated humor, and all identified by their totally mechanical attitude towards human life. Heller has a profound hatred for this kind of military mind, further anatomized in a wacky scene before the Action Board which displays his (and their) animosity in a manner both hilarious and scarifying. But Heller, at war with much larger forces than the army, has provided his book with much wider implications than a war novel. For the author (apparently sharing the Italian belief that vengeance is a dish which tastes best cold) has been nourishing his grudges for so long that they have expanded to include the post-war American world.

Through the agency of grotesque comedy, Heller has found a way to confront the humbug, hypocrisy, cruelty, and sheer stupidity of our mass society—qualities which have made the few other Americans who care almost speechless with baffled rage—and through some miracle of prestidigitation, Pianosa has become a satirical microcosm for many of the macrocosmic idiocies of our time. Thus, the author flourishes his Juvenalian scourge at government-subsidized agriculture (and farmers, one of whom 'spent every penny he didn't earn on new land to increase the amount of alfalfa he did not grow'); at the exploitation of American Indians, evicted from their oil-rich land; at smug psychiatrists; at bureaucrats and patriots; at acquisitive war widows; at high-spirited American boys; and especially, and most vindictively, at war profiteers.

This last satirical flourish, aimed at the whole mystique of corporation capitalism, is embodied in the fantastic adventures of Milo Minderbinder, the company mess officer, and a paradigm of goodnatured Jonsonian cupidity. Anxious to put the war on a businesslike basis, Milo has formed a syndicate designed to corner the world market on all available foodstuffs, which he then sells to army messhalls at huge profits. Heady with success (his deals have made him Mayor of every town in Sicily, Vice-Shah of Oran, Caliph of Baghdad, Imam of Damascus, and the Sheik of Araby), Milo soon expands his activities, forming a private army which he hires out to the highest bidder. The climax of Milo's career comes when he fulfills a contract with the Germans to bomb and strafe his own outfit, directing his planes from the Pianosa control tower and justifying the action with the stirring war cry: "What's good for the syndicate is good for the country.'

Milo has almost succeeded in his ambition to pre-empt the field of war for private enterprise when he makes a fatal mistake: he has cornered the entire Egyptian cotton market and is unable to unload it anywhere. Having failed to pass it off to his own messhall in the form of chocolate-covered cotton, Milo is finally persuaded by Yossarian to bribe the American government to take it off his hands: 'If you run into trouble, just tell everybody that the security of the country requires a strong domestic Egyptian cotton speculating industry.' The Minderbinder sections—in showing the basic incompatibility of idealism and economics by satirizing the patriotic cant which usually accompanies American greed—illustrate the procedure of the entire book: the ruthless ridicule of hypocrisy through a technique of farce-fantasy, beneath which the demon of satire lurks, prodding fat behinds with a red hot pitchfork.

It should be abundantly clear, then, that *Catch-22*, despite some of the most outrageous sequences since *A Night at the Opera*, is an intensely serious work. Heller has certain technical similarities to the Marx Brothers, Max Schulman, Kingsley Amis, Al Capp, and S. J. Perelman, but his mordant intelligence, closer to that of Nathanael West, penetrates the surface of the merely funny to expose a world of ruthless self-advancement, gruesome cruelty, and flagrant disregard for human life—a world, in short, very much like our own as seen through a magnifying glass, distorted for more perfect accuracy. Considering his indifference to surface reality, it is absurd to judge Heller by standards of psychological realism (or, for that matter, by conventional artistic standards at all, since his book is as formless as any picaresque epic).

He is concerned entirely with that thin boundary of the surreal, the borderline between hilarity and horror, which, much like the apparent formlessness of the unconscious, has its own special integrity and coherence. Thus, Heller will never use comedy for its own sake; each joke has a wider significance in the

intricate pattern, so that laughter becomes a prologue for some grotesque revelation. This gives the reader an effect of surrealistic dislocation, intensified by a weird, rather flat, impersonal style, full of complicated reversals, swift transitions, abrupt shifts in chronological time, and manipulated identities (e.g. if a private named Major Major is promoted to Major by a faulty IBM machine, or if a malingerer, sitting out a doomed mission, is declared death through a bureaucratic error, then this remains their permanent fate), as if all mankind was determined by a mad and merciless mechanism.

Thus, Heller often manages to heighten the macabre obscenity of total war much more effectively through its gruesome comic aspects than if he had written realistic descriptions. And thus, the most delicate pressure is enough to send us over the line from farce into phantasmagoria. In the climactic chapter, in fact, the book leaves comedy altogether and becomes an eerie nightmare of terror. Here Yossarian, walking through the streets of Rome as though through an Inferno, observes soldiers molesting drunken women, fathers beating ragged children, policemen clubbing innocent bystanders until the whole world seems swallowed up in the maw of evil.... Here as the book leaves the war behind, it is finally apparent that Heller's comedy is his artistic response to his vision of transcendent evil, as if the escape route of laughter were the only recourse from a malignant world.

It is this world, which cannot be divided into boundaries or ideologies, that Yossarian has determined to resist. And so when his fear and disgust have reached the breaking point, he simply refuses to fly another mission. Asked by a superior what would happen if everybody felt the same way, Yossarian exercises his definitive logic, and answers, 'Then I'd be a damned fool to feel any other way.' Having concluded a separate peace, Yossarian maintains it in the face of derision, ostracism, psychological pressure, and the threat of a court martial. When he is finally permitted to go home if he will only agree to a shabby deal whitewashing Colonel Cathcart, however, he finds himself impaled on two impossible alternatives. But his unique logic, helped along by the precedent of an even more logical friend, makes him conclude that desertion is the better part of valor; and so (after an inspirational sequence which is the weakest thing in the book) he takes off for neutral Sweden—the only place left in the world, outside of England, where 'mobs with clubs' are not in control.

Yossarian's expedient is not very flattering to our national ideals, being defeatist, selfish, cowardly, and unheroic. On the other hand, it is one of those sublime expressions of anarchic individualism without which all national ideals are pretty hollow anyway. Since the mass State, whether totalitarian or democratic, has grown increasingly hostile to Falstaffian irresponsibility, Yossarian's anti-heroism is, in fact, a kind of inverted heroism which we would do well to ponder. For, contrary to the armchair pronouncements of patriotic ideologues, Yossarian's obsessive concern for survival makes him not only *not* morally dead, but one of the most morally vibrant figures in recent literature—and a giant of the will beside those weary, wise and wistful prodigals in contemporary novels who always accommodate sadly to American life.

I believe that Joseph Heller is one of the most extraordinary talents now among us. He has Mailer's combustible radicalism without his passion for violence and self-glorification; he has Bellow's gusto with his compulsion to affirm the unaffirmable [?]; and he has Salinger's wit without his coquettish self-consciousness. Finding his absolutes in the freedom to be, in a world dominated by cruelty, carnage, inhumanity, and a rage to destroy itself, Heller has come upon a new morality of refusal. Perhaps—now that *Catch-22* has found its most deadly nuclear form—we have reached the point where even the logic of survival is unworkable. But at least we can still contemplate the influence of its liberating honesty on a free, rebellious spirit in this explosive, bitter, subversive, brilliant book."

Robert Brustein

"The Logic of Survival in a Lunatic World" (1961)

The Critic as Artist: Essays on Books 1920-1970, ed. Gilbert A. Harrison
(Liveright 1972) 47-54

"Although *Catch-22* (1961) is ostensibly a war novel, Joseph Heller's brilliant dark comedy is less about the tactical struggle of two armies than the struggle for survival of the individual within his own society. For Yossarian, the hero, though the anonymous flask of the Germans creates a background of death constantly threatening to obliterate him, the real enemy is his own side: American society as it manifests

itself in the Air Force. Nearly all the action takes place on the base, or in the hospital, or in occupied Rome, and the drama and double-edged comedy of the book are really precipitated by Yossarian's desperate maneuverings to survive in this world. An army (or in this case an air force) is based on the complete structuring of life down to the last detail; the intention is to achieve an absolute organization which will eliminate human vagaries and subordinate every individual impulse to a pattern of mechanical efficiency. Such complete rigidification of human life is clearly unnatural and anyone who has experienced being in an army, fighting for no matter what cause, will probably agree that often one finds oneself in the middle of a confusion dressed up as a system.

Heller is very aware of this and reveals it in some hilarious scenes, but he also sees that the implications of this can go much deeper. In his novel he shows a society in which, if the forms do not say that a man was in the unit, he is said not to have existed although his corpse is rotting on the ground; a society in which if a man is scheduled to be on a plane and that plane crashes then that man is officially dead even if he is standing there protesting his manifest existence. That is to say, the humanly obvious categories of life and death are utterly confused or inverted, and replaced by a pseudo-reality of forms, papers, rules and regulations.

The man who finally reaches the position of greatest power is the obviously named Scheisskopf whose sole interest in life is the organizing of 'parades.' Like many of the characters in the book he is conceived (and perceived) more as a cartoon-strip grotesque than as a real person. He considers various ways in which his men might be nailed or wired together to produce the perfect parade pattern. The humor in this exaggeration scarcely conceals the horrified sense of what mindless authorities are willing to do to the individual in order to secure those fixed arrangements and monolithic organizations which are the essence of their authority. This elevation of form over substance, of abstract pattern over living process, shows up at its most sinister when, for instance, Aarfy murders a girl and the military police arrive, only to ignore the *corpse* and to arrest Yossarian for not having the correct *identification papers*; or when the men are ordered to obliterate a village which has not the slightest strategic significance because the general wants a 'neat aerial photograph' recording an elegant 'bomb pattern'—a phrase which he himself readily admits 'means nothing.' This is a society in which 'identity' is a matter of papers rather than flesh and blood, where people may pointlessly die to satisfy the authorities' desire for a meaningless pattern. It is little wonder that Yossarian should claim that all those who subscribe to this world are mad, and only he is sane. He seems to be caught up in a vast conspiracy to accept the unreal as real.

The world of *Catch-22* offers more menaces to the self than the world in *Invisible Man* and *Augie March*, though the novel seems to me to be about essentially the same dreads and apprehensions. In a time of war, Yossarian's paranoia and death-hauntedness are entirely understandable. Starting with Hitler, he goes on to enumerate all the known and unknown people in the world who want him dead. As his list compulsively extends itself it envisages a universe of omnipresent hostility to the precious and precarious self. Yossarian sees other threats as well, and he goes on to list some of the ways the body can let you down, and the various diseases to which it is vulnerable. No wonder he sees every day as a 'dangerous mission against mortality.' What is particularly disconcerting is that the superior powers on his own side seem to be more hostile than the enemy or the processes of nature. It is this experience of the intense gratuitous hatred directed at the individual from within his own society, the willing subversion and distortion of all values, logic, reason, principle and language in the interest of reducing the individual to a manipulable and disposable thing (which is *Catch-22*), that provides the special black humor of this book.

There is an underlying feeling that these people responsible for inventing and imposing the patterns have a loathing for life *per se* and that their mission is not the prevention of the Germans but the annihilation of anything that seeks to resist the inexorable clamps of their system. This produces a situation where Yossarian finds himself moving between the threat of a chaotic death in the air and another kind of death among the sinister parodies of pattern on the base. In such a world, why not have nightmares every night, as Hungry Joe asks. The gentle chaplain's dreams teem with violence and imagined disasters and atrocities, induced by the world around him. In the world of this book the individual awakens from one nightmare into another, and the ensuing strains on consciousness are registered by the style in which an almost hysterical acceptance of the incomprehensible barely conceals a sobbing incredulity. When Yossarian wakes up to open his eyes 'upon a world boiling in chaos in which everything was in proper

order' he is registering the paradoxical nature of the reality into which he has been plunged, a reality administered by the 'spinning reasonableness' of the a-logic of *Catch-22* itself.

In this world the problem of identity is unusually acute. A figure in hospital graphically demonstrates one kind of threat. He cannot be seen for bandages; the only evidence of 'life' is the liquid waste which drips out of him into a jar from which it is then fed back into him. This soldier 'was constructed entirely of gauze, plaster and a thermometer.' 'Maybe there's no one inside,' suggests Dunbar. This image of a completely hollow figure, a moulding of gauze over a void through which some water endlessly circulates, represents a vision of the emptied or pre-empted self, a dread of one's identity being reduced to an arrangement of surfaces which is to be found in many different American writers (see Burroughs and Purdy, for example). It is another example of society's ability to take your living body and visible identity and replace them with a 'construction' of its own making. In terms of the atmosphere of the book, this aspect is more important than the fact that the bandages may represent an attempt to heal. This scooped-out figure represents one fate of the self.

Milo Minderbinder represents another. Milo Minderbinder is the Rinehart figure in this novel; he makes himself completely at home in the chaos of a world at war by constant metamorphosis. He is Major Sir Milo Minderbinder in Malta, Vice-Shah in Oran, Caliph of Baghdad, the Imam of Damascus and the Sheik of Araby; he is looked up to by the Allies and the Germans; he is even a corn god, a rain god and a rice god in primitive regions. He is paid by both sides, by all sides. He runs a 'syndicate' which transcends all petty impediments like loyalty and principle and reaches into every country in the world; he is in on every deal. If the price is right he will arrange the bombing of his own men. He is the idol of every society, the profit principle in all its forms, the exploiter, and thus the slave, of every base human greed. In a more naturalistic novel he would be entirely improbable. He is another cartoon-strip figure who, in the particular atmosphere of this book, is all too convincing as a presence, a spirit which can appear and dissolve at will. As descriptions of his behavior make clear ('in the grip of a blind fixation') he is in his way as much an automaton as anyone, a robot which responds automatically to the summonings of commercial opportunity. To have adapted to the reality situation in this way is the ultimate loss of self. For Milo, April is the 'best month.' [in contrast to Eliot's 'The Waste Land']

Another character who is at home in this intolerable world is Aarfy. He is literally like the figure in a dream who will neither hear you nor disappear, and he terrifies Yossarian. He is the human shape devoid of all human responses; unmoved by the flak and the ruins, impervious to all distinctly human communication, indifferent to human pain. He is another zombie—indestructible because inhuman, at rest within the current system, at home in nightmare. These two figures show ways of enduring within the present state of affairs, but both represent for Yossarian particularly chilling examples of lost human identity. Clevinger on the other hand is a decent man who accepts all the imposed terms and claims of the system, trying to reason other people into justice and fairness; he and people like him are the easiest victims and are effortlessly annihilated. Idealism, or even a belief in reason, in the world of this book, lays one helplessly bare to the manipulators. So the question for Yossarian is, what to be to hold on to his self?

At the start, as censoring officer, he plays with various names and in the hospital there is some revealing confusion caused by changed temperature cards. Once again officials tend to ascribe identity on the basis of paper evidence. When the nurse accuses Yossarian of not caring if he loses a leg, he replies that it's his leg. She answers, 'It certainly is not your leg!... That leg belongs to the U.S. Government.' In this system it is hard for a man to say which parts of the self are his own. Certainly when the system denies you your self, the effect may be as close to death as is conformable with the retained powers of motion. The doctor who is declared dead because he was scheduled to be on a plane which crashed is gradually stripped of his identity, until his wife no longer answers his letters and he is gradually wasting away, until he is indeed to all intents and purposes dead. For Yossarian, looking for some way to survive and retain his own authentic self, the available models seem to offer intolerable alternatives—how to stay in this world without being like Minderbinder; how to draw out of it without becoming a bandaged void?

Yossarian may be Assyrian but he is entirely American in his dislike of conditioning forces. 'That men would die was a matter of necessity; *which* men would die, though, was a matter of circumstance, and Yossarian was willing to be the victim of anything but circumstance.' To get beyond the reach of

'circumstance' is his impossible dream just as it has been for many American figures. But in this book the margin of refuge offered by a Nature as yet undominated by man is so thin as to be non-existent. The sea offers a cleansing experience, but one boy standing on the beach is cut in half by a plane. The chaplain finds some pleasant peace in his clearing in the woods to which, like one or two other oddities regarded as superfluous on the base, he is banished. But there can be no emulation of Thoreau in this world, and he is soon submitted to further harassment. Yossarian takes off his clothes and climbs a tree, only to be followed by Minderbinder and his schemes. Paradise is not so easily regained. In one raid Yossarian takes his plane 'into a calm, diamond-blue sky that was sunny and pure everywhere' but the old American yearning for the freedom of clear space is cut short by the necessary re-entry of the plane into the fields of flak.

Within the man-made or man-controlled environment, the hospital seems to offer him the best hope of peace and safety. Like Augie and the Invisible Man, Yossarian is drawn to places where he can safely lie down, out of the fray, and he specifically says that he enjoys relaxing in the hospital. It is only another aspect of this inverted world that a healthy man should have to seek out a hospital as refuge. And it is a very risky refuge since a patient in the hospital is most vulnerable to the decisions of the administrators and upholders of the system. In the hospital 'they' can do anything to you (hence the number of times the image of the hospital recurs, from Ellison, to Burroughs, to Kesey) and it is in the hospital that 'they' decide to 'disappear' Dunbar. Yossarian may complain that 'It doesn't make sense. It isn't even good grammar,' but this is precisely a world in which sense is not made but destroyed, and deeds outpace language's ability to contain them within orthodox grammar. The hospital is the place where the self may vanish without trace, as dangerous in its way as a flak-filled sky. Once again we find that the American hero, in his attempt to hold on to his self, cannot find any one safe place but has to have recourse to a mode of motion. He runs and dodges, or rather—he spins.

Yossarian's unique way of moving is perfectly demonstrated by the way he leads the other planes on a bombing mission. The men like flying behind him because he does not adhere to the orthodox formation. He comes 'barreling in over the target from all directions and every height, climbing and diving and twisting and turning, weaving his way through the flak with every sort of extreme maneuver.' His only mission is to come down alive. When it comes to getting away from the target area 'Yossarian was the best man in the group at evasive action.' Here again we see the American hero breaking out of the fixed formation prescribed by the system, making his own lines of movement in order, simply, to hold on to his life. When he finally decides he has had enough flying he has recourse to somewhat similar self-preserving motions on the base. 'He marched backward because he was continuously spinning around as he walked to make certain no one was sneaking up on him from behind.' He is forced to remain within the system, but by his way of moving he can refuse to be of the system, ignoring or negating its rigid patterns. His nickname is 'Yo-yo,' pointing to the sort of to-and-fro movement which has as its only goal the indefinite postponement of stillness and arrest (a notion which will turn up in the work of Thomas Pynchon).

It is not long after that that Yossarian breaks out of the system altogether. But first he has his nightmare walk through Rome which R. W. B. Lewis has seen as 'the novel's apocalyptic vision.' It is indeed a visionary walk through scenes of destruction, violence, fathomless misery and ruin. Having asked the reason for some particular act of brutality, Yossarian is told, 'No reason...Catch-22. Catch-22 says they have a right to do anything we can't stop them from doing.' Coming from an old woman in the heart of the Eternal City, it suddenly makes it seem that Catch-22 is the unchangeable law of human history. After such a discovery the appalled American hero might well want to escape out of time and space altogether, jump out of the nightmare of human history. In Rome Yossarian 'walked in lonely torture, feeling estranged,' and the estrangement is from all the horrors which occur in, perhaps inhere in, existence. Hungry Joe's recurrent nightmare is that a cat is sleeping on his face. One night he dies in his sleep and they find a car sleeping on his face. Reality is the worst of our bad dreams.

Such a vision may well seem too sweeping and extreme. In many ways the book is a palpable exaggeration, and there remains the problem—what does a society do when confronted by a Hitler? And paradoxically there is something almost sentimental in the walk through Rome; not that the unspeakable doesn't happen every day, but to isolate and assemble a series of vivid examples is to risk a rather theatrical melodramatic exhibition of horror which, without being a falsification of the entire beastliness and lunacy of war, is nevertheless a simplification of the complexity of human experience. When Yossarian later

wakes up to the brutal attentions of two 'evil' doctors, in answer to the question of where he was born he says, 'On a battlefield.' Asked in which state he was born he says, 'In a state of innocence.' Heller, we realize, has re-activated that most basic of American themes, the confrontation of innocence and experience. And as so often, the world of experience is seen to be so unmitigatedly horrifying that the innocent hero cannot assimilate the experience, he can only flee from it. Which leads us to the significant ending of *Catch-22*.

Yossarian has reached the point where every alternative seems intolerable. He considers staying and 'vegetating' in the hospital bed; again, the attractions of inertia. But when Major Danby concedes the attraction of the vegetable life, Yossarian turns on him with some relentless questioning. When Danby says he would like to be a good cucumber, Yossarian points out that he would be sliced up for salad. Conceding that he would prefer to be a poor cucumber, Danby is assured by Yossarian that he would then be used for fertilizer. For the human being, already born into a society, there is no safety in vegetable stillness—he will be devoured or dumped. Yossarian does not want to be a vegetable or a jelly-fish. Nor does he want to be a whale, one of the brutes of the system like Scheisskopf, or one of those inhuman automata that thrive in the nightmare, like Minderbinder. Is there any alternative model or example? There is one, as it transpires in the last chapter, the cunningly named Orr. Orr is a small ugly man, who awakens Yossarian's pity. When he is missing, presumed dead, Yossarian is very sorry. But in the last chapter the news comes that Orr has turned up in Sweden, and, two pages from the end of the book, Yossarian sees his alternative.

He realizes that Orr has planned everything from the start, and that so far from being washed ashore in Sweden by chance he 'rowed' there (hence the possible pun in his name, which could also allude to the very notion of an alternative—as in Kierkegaard's *Either/Or*). All the time Yossarian thought of him as the most helpless victim of the system, Orr was quietly developing his own plan of action. To effect this plan he had to disguise himself as the most ordinary and innocent of servicemen, and even Yossarian never read the disguise properly or saw the planner beneath the role-player. (It is worth noting that Orr, the canny outsider, is from a border area, 'the wilderness outside New York City.') Here we have one of those cases of justified self-preserving disguises, discussed in *Augie March*: this kind of role-playing is to be distinguished from the roles unconsciously accepted by society, or adopted for the purpose of exploiting other people. With Orr as an example, Yossarian is energized to put into practice his own considered alternative, which is: 'Desert. Take off. I can turn my back on the whole damn mess and start running.' This is of course the primordial gesture of the American hero, and Yossarian is making it for reasons just as basic; he is quitting the society in which it is impossible to put his ideals into action. For, like the majority of American heroes, despite a mask of cynical self-concern, he is a frustrated idealist at heart....

Major Danby calls it a negative move, 'escapist,' but Yossarian laughs his disagreement. 'I'm not running away from my responsibilities. I'm running to them. There's nothing negative about running away to save my life. You know who the escapists are, don't you, Danby? Not me and Orr.' There is a genuine insight here that it is those people who build and service the system, in this case the monolithic regimentation of the army (no matter which side), who are the real escapists, erecting their grotesque patterns between themselves and reality. Yossarian is not alone in American fiction in asserting the need of the individual to redefine the direction in which true reality lies, so that what society would see as retreat he maintains is advance.

But we notice once again that after disengaging himself from what is felt to be a bad society, the hero cannot define the next necessary step. Once again the one value the hero can assert is—life itself ('What else is there?' he asks). But how to use one's life is a question not answered, not often admitted, since the unspoken conclusion is often that you use your life to stay alive. The euphoria of the last scene gets positively strained, and Yossarian's off-the-cuff assertion that he will also try to save the kid sister of Nately's whore—'so it isn't all selfish, is it?'—is a most unconvincing scrap of sentimentality which does nothing to conceal the fact that the only responsibility he is moving towards is simple self-preservation. At the same time, as Norman Podhoretz pointed out, his last-minute agreement that the war against the Germans had to be fought would undermine the vision of the book if taken seriously....

He takes off, but this time on a personal flight to Sweden. Nately's whore has by the end of the book turned into another of those nightmare figures, constantly metamorphosing and terrifyingly ubiquitous with

her ambushes and threats. Yossarian has always been afraid of knives, the edge of the world's hostility, and Nately's whore has become the multiple incarnation of everything that waits with a knife for the Yossarians of the world. Once again the American hero's best exploit is an avoiding leap. Yossarian calls himself a superman, and shows what it means by jumping clear out of the world of *Catch-22*, the realm of knives, flak, human history, death.

What he jumps into is less certain. His destination is nominally Sweden, but Minderbinder's deals extend there and it would be a dream to imagine that the age-old principle embodied in *Catch-22* was miraculously excluded from that one society....Yossarian is looking for his Eden in Sweden, an unpatterned territory [Socialism?] where procreation flourishes rather than war [On the contrary, the native-born Swedish population is declining toward extinction.]... In the context of Yossarian's predicament, Sweden is less a place than an ongoing dream of freedom which provides a motive for momentum, an aspiration towards a realm beyond all the systems imposed on the self by society. In a sense this is a dream of total autonomy of the self, and if achieved it might well prove to be just such an icy, barren landscape... But in reality such a state cannot be achieved prior to death."

Tony Tanner
Cambridge University
City of Words: American Fiction 1950-1970
(Jonathan Cape 1971) 72-82

"Joseph Heller blasted the idea of suffering as the mark of nobility with his jokes. *Catch-22* is the by now legendary novel of World War II which may have set a style for detached humor about any kind of violence or victimization. Through gag after gag, Heller strips war of any meaning but personal greed and sees victims as victims of the army. For Yossarian, the hero, the only purpose in war is to stay alive; for his friend, Milo Minderbinder, it is to get rich. Both see themselves as outsiders. Minderbinder uses his detachment from 'the system' to exploit it; Yossarian to get out of it.

All evil in *Catch-22* is external, coming from your own army or your friends. The novel's main conflict is between external strategies: the army's attempt to close all loopholes of escape, the hero's determination to open them up. The army is a model of an American corporation, led by men who 'would not even come to an orgy unless [the] could do business there.' The power of the book comes from Heller's ability to make all appetites and all suffering seem external, to create not characters but cartoon figures of vulnerability and power. Through these Heller mocks both power and vulnerability. What wins out is Yossarian's fantasy that there is a world without either, without a 'system' of winners and losers."

Josephine Hendin
Vulnerable People: A View of American Fiction since 1945
(Oxford 1978) 110-11

"*Catch-22* is not simply a comic novel full of puns, high jinks, slapstick, witty dialogue, and satirical asides. It has these in abundance—on occasion in overabundance—but its purpose and execution are fully serious.... Vanity, egotism, hypocrisy, folly... Heller's literary recoil from these false qualities takes the form of his attack upon religion, the military, political forces, commercial values... Evidently strongly influenced by *Ulysses*, Heller had originally tried to make the narrative typically Joycean: that is, full of intermittent streams of consciousness and involutions of temporal modes....

Heller works through all his mysteries—the man in white in the hospital, Snowden's bloodbath, Nately's whore, for example—whereas Pynchon withholds. The latter's is far more a 'constipated vision,' denying as much as is given out; information restricted as though the supply were finite. Heller's vision is more oral, the material withheld only so that its parodic and humorous elements can be better perceived. In the long run, the two novelists belong to different traditions: Heller in the oral tradition, the stand-up comic, the conventions of verbal barrage; Pynchon, for all his prolixity, connected to those who hold back, like Gaddis and Hawthorne....

'*Catch-22*' as a phrase which has entered the language is connected to its litotic [understatement] function. For it expresses an underlying negative aspect: if you are crazy, you need not fly, but if you do

not want to fly, that proves you're not crazy. The expression upsets our notions of what is, what is not, in the way a comic uses wit to express the opposite of what we ordinarily take for granted. It is a form of verbal irony, whereby what is stated differs from what is suggested—thus, in the phrase, Heller has a context for and expression of them military of the 1940s...and the defiance of authority which would characterize America of the 1960s....

The forward movement of the novel proceeds by means of brief character descriptions in which plot elements are embedded.... Our sense of narrative is glacial—a large mass moving almost imperceptibly toward some resolution of the catch. As in a comedy routine, the resolution is not of what lies behind the joke, but of the joke itself. Thus, Yossarian's movement toward escaping *Catch-22* will resolve the irony contained in the phrase... Yossarian works out a means by which he can counter *Catch-22*... He steps outside history... Part of what made this intensely fifties book so popular in the later sixties and then in the seventies was its glorifying of individual solutions, the sole way in which mass lunacy could be contained. Kesey's *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, a far lesser novel, offers a similar play of events: crazy is sane when all else that is crazy is accepted as sane....

Those early reviewers of *Catch-22* who saw it as formless or as running on failed to note how linguistic elements are wedded to overall plan: language based on negations juxtaposed to chapter segments based on interruption, dispersment of elements, undercutting of expectation.... One reason *Catch-22*, both as novel and phrase, seemed such a penetrating expose of the sixties was that, still in the fifties, it picked up all the paradoxes of affluence, success, media hype, empire-building. Milo Minderbinder is 1950s affluence run rampant, embodying in himself and his syndicate a multinational corporation. He is our own I. G. Farben, the element that holds everything together and, at the same time, makes war desirable. Pynchon in *Gravity's Rainbow* points in the same direction...Heller's Milo, while presented within a comic framework, is the 1950s wrapped up, the enterprise, energy, drive toward the top....

The military for Heller serves the function of any large, impersonal organization, not unlike Kesey's *Cuckoo's Nest*. Cathcart sets production quotas; the Chaplain, until he rebels, offers faith in whatever the boss decides; Milo assures the stockholders that profits will be maximized; the generals, Dreedle and Peckem, skim off the benefits in the form of perks. Korn vies with Cathcart, each jockeying for power and promotion to general. In the middle range, just below decision-making, are the officers who fly the missions; and well below them, like janitors, maintenance men, kitchen help, are the enlisted men, those already left behind by the corporate system. Once again, this is a 1950s vision, the manifestation of what James Burnham warned about in the 'managerial revolution,' and what William Whyte described in *The Organization Man*.

Within the organization, the leitmotif may be the man in white—an encased figure, which may or may not contain a human body. It may be the carcass in Yossarian's tent, a man who has fallen between assignments and is not even a statistic; or blood and guts spilling out from behind a flak jacket, Snowden's demise; or the mechanical raising of missions, so that formal release becomes impossible; or the setting of ever higher standards which the men, but not the senior executives, must meet. It may be the formation of a syndicate which, like a corporate office, takes precedence over any individual expression; or the offer of relief—whores in Rome, superb food, beach facilities, nurses—which, however, at every turn carries with it the whiff of death. Even pastoral becomes contaminated, for an idyllic day is interrupted by McWatt's buzzing of Kid Sampson, his miscalculation and, before everyone's eyes, the slicing of the Kid into two.

'I'm cold' is the human response, and the only one who responds fully to Snowden's death, Nately's and Orr's disappearance, and the slowly dwindling supply of veteran fliers is Nately's whore. Her reaction to Nately's death is to try to kill Yossarian on several occasions. Her logic is clearly within the novel's frame of reference, linked to both theme and technique. For Nately's whore is life-giving—even more than Yossarian, who does his seventy missions, drops his bombs, destroys and kills—and the sole way she can avenge Nately's death is by way of her one connection to the mechanistic force that did it. Her reappearance in various military guises reinforces Yossarian's commitment to some form of escape, for wherever he goes, she follows, and he recognizes that his death is for her a form of life. When the novel ends with his jumping from her knife thrust, he is ready for the escape to Sweden.

Part of Heller's strategy of interruption, delay, frustration, repetition—all intrinsic to comic effects—is based on military procedures which allow little linear movement. Even the generals are impeded in their plans by ex-PFC Wintergreen. Wintergreen, who does not appear, is the key strategical figure in all maneuvers, for he has achieved the position in the enterprise that has at the pivotal point in the seams along policy and decision. Just as Wintergreen has positioned himself centrally in policy-making, so Yossarian, by refusing further missions, has located himself centrally in the carrying out of such decisions. The military must, in its way, work around both: Wintergreen at the comic level of the novel, Yossarian at the level connected ultimately to human survival....

Structurally, the two extremes Yossarian must avoid include the avarice and egoism of Milo and the innocence and naivete of Nately ('newborn') and Snowden (pure, white). As Heller presents the alternatives, a person must be in the know in all the particulars of life or else he cannot be true to himself. Only a fool walks in darkness. Yossarian tries to be an honest man through balance, but balance fails him, and he must assure his own survival without others' help. He must skip between Nately and Milo; the latter obviously stands for a base, commercial acquisitiveness, while the former attempts to be Jesus Christ in a situation that calls for an instinctive sense of survival....

Although the action is on Pianosa, the novel is really located in some undefined middle kingdom where every god, whether of waste land or fertility, has died. The nightmarish scenes of *Catch-22* which convey its tragic sense culminate in the cosmic nightmare of Chapter 39, 'The Eternal City.' Once glorious Rome is now a 'dilapidated shell,' as though modern Goths and Vandals had destroyed everything in their path; or as if a modern God had visited his wrath upon it. Monuments are shattered, streets contain surrealistic episodes, people seem the husks and shards of humanity. All values are overturned, all hopes and dreams made valueless; sanity itself becomes a meaningless term. Everything visible—an emblem of what lies beneath—is off balance, out of phase. The center of Western religion is godless. Here we have Heller's 1950s vision, a scene from Hieronymous Bosch's Hell, in which Aarfy can freely rape and kill while Yossarian is picked up for lacking a pass. Caught in such a dark world, Yossarian can only run. If he stays, he will—like Milo and the others—eat and sleep well at the expense even of those who share his ideals....

Yossarian—the ancient Assyrian, the modern Armenian, but really a wandering New York Jew—can give vent to his disgust and revulsion, and through recognitions show us that our better selves may still turn up in Sweden. In the 1960s, when the novel peaked, no one remembered that Sweden's 'neutrality' favored Nazi Germany, or that its corporate barons sold high-grade steel for Hitler's war machine. In the 1960s, Sweden was our fantasy of Edenesque pastoral."

Frederick R. Karl
American Fictions 1940-1980
(Harper & Row 1983) 309-313

"Joseph Heller entered the U.S. Army Air Corps in 1942 and was sent to Corsica in May 1944 as a replacement in a combat group of the Twelfth Air Force. He flew sixty missions as a wing bombardier in a B-25 bomber. Heller later described his early missions—bombing railroad and highway bridges in Italy—as relatively short and safe. His squadron did not lose a plane until 3 June, and he first saw a plane shot down in flames on 3 August over Avignon. He enjoyed his first few months as a gunner, he said, 'until my 37th mission,' the second to Avignon, on 15 August. After another gunner in his plane was wounded, Heller remembered, 'a co-pilot went a little berserk at the controls and I came to the startling realization—Good God! They're trying to kill me too! And after that it wasn't much fun.'

This central event in Heller's combat experience lies behind the death of Snowden in Heller's first novel, *Catch-22* (1961), a central moment for Yossarian as well. Yet, although Heller kept a diary on Corsica and although there are other similarities between Heller's and Yossarian's experiences, *Catch-22* is not for the most part autobiographical, and it is more a satire on institutional bureaucracy in general than a depiction of military life in wartime.

Though *Catch-22* is now one of the most widely read novels to come out of World War II, it received mixed reviews when it was first published and was not a best-seller in the United States (though it was in

England). In the 1960s the novel's sales grew in proportion to the protest against the Vietnam War, and after the movie version was released in 1970, its sales skyrocketed. Heller's 'Catch-22 Revisited,' published in the April 1967 issue of *Holiday*, mingles memories of his combat experiences with a report on his return visit to the scenes of those events."

Karen L. Rood, ed.
American Literary Almanac from 1608 to the Present
(Bruccoli Clark Layman/Facts on File 1988) 291

Michael Hollister (2014)