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*[Neoporteria jussieu flower at LA Succulents](#)*

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For the weekend...

*from Douglas E. Welch*

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Issue #26: June 3, 2022

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## Join The Conversation On Discord.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, I have been running a Discord community for friends and family.

Click the link below to join today!

Join Our Community Discord Now!



*Mount Wilson Observatory*

## Sometimes you need to get away

I wrote a few weeks ago about how the world can seem like the world is ganging up on you sometimes. Day after day, week after week is filled with one crisis after another. I know it wears me down over time until I want to do nothing but sink into my bed and pull the covers over my head until it is all over.

Of course, it is never over. By its very nature life is chaotic. We can do things to make it less so, but we must remember that the amount of chaos is not under our control. All we can do is hold on and ride out the larger waves and wait. That said, it is also important to enjoy the calmer seas in between the waves. In our efforts to simply cope with it all, we often lose sight of the better moments in our lives.

This weekend, Rosanne and I are making a trip to Mount Wilson Observatory. The evening is made up of a talk on the women who made the science at Mount Wilson possible, a picnic dinner, and viewings of the universe as seen through the observatory's 100" and 60" telescopes. In this way, we will both see some of the more beautiful parts of our planet and the amazing sights beyond it.

## Missed Opportunities

This is all part of our attempt to come out of our pandemic shell (in the safest way possible) and start living our lives again. We missed many opportunities over the last few years. Joseph graduated from Cal Poly Pomona with no ceremony in 2021, we had many conference trips canceled to places like Oxford, UK, and way too many days simply sitting around the house. Rosanne spent countless hours at her computer teaching classes at Cal Poly and even hosting her twice-yearly workshops for the Stephens College MFA in TV and Screenwriting on Zoom — three. The garden benefitted, of course, but we want to see more of the world again.

When this Mount Wilson event showed up in my mailbox it seemed the perfect opportunity to "get away from it all" if only for an evening. I highly urge you to do the same. Find an event that allows you to be around people, yet distanced, preferably outdoors. Turn off your phone. (Mount Wilson is a cell phone dead zone so that greatly helps me.) Bring snacks, an important part of any getaway, and tune out. I know that when we drive down from the mountain we will be eased, refreshed, and ready to face another week.

### Off On A Garden Tour

If you follow me here and elsewhere, you will know that I love photography. One great opportunity to exercise that part of my creativity was the Mary Lou Heard Memorial Garden Tour in the South Bay. My sister was in town and had discovered this tour, so we spent the day bopping around to around 15 gardens (of the 59 available). It was a great day that allowed me to take lots of photos and gather many great ideas for my garden. We even ended up with some new plants, thanks to the kindness of one of the garden hosts, who had made up small pots for everyone who visited.

So, what would you like to be on your agenda in the coming months? Can you find ways to emerge from your COVID cocoon as we have? Be safe about it, but get out, get moving, get eating, get seeing, and jumpstart your new post-pandemic life!

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## Video



Amazing Physics Toys/Gadgets 1

## Explain things **simply**

Simplify written and verbal communication to improve signal.



## Explain Things Simply.

Via Andrew Yeung

***I must admit that when I was studying for my communications degree I often laughed at the seeming silliness of it all. Surely everyone knows how to communicate properly, right? Well, as we all find as we grow older, no, many people DON'T communicate very well and some even try to communicate poorly. Here are some tips that made me think again about my academic communication training. – Douglas***

You'll occasionally come across someone who talks (or writes) a lot — but says very little.

For example — this sentence:

I have a deep passion for regularly spearheading holistic and authentic peer-to-peer tech-enabled events for a wide

array of extensive professionals in the commerce, technology, and financial markets space, including venture-backed founders, institutional buy-side financial professionals, and high-performing business people, to facilitate investment deal-flow, foster mutually beneficial business connections, and generate other synergistic opportunities.

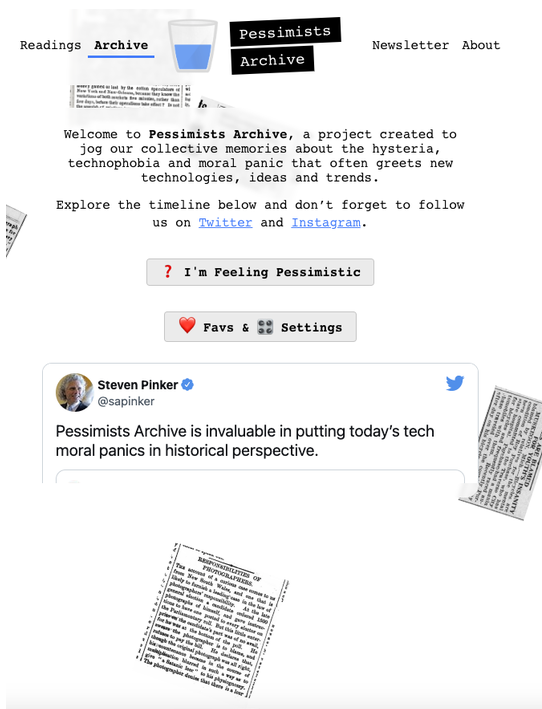
(Don't you want to bash your head into a wall?)

Can be translated into:

I organize parties for entrepreneurs, investors, and business people.

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## Pessimists Archive



***As a long-time technologist, I always think I have seen the last moral panic around new technologies, but new ones are being created every day. I figure if we adapted to modern-day warfare, telegraph, telephone, television, and more, we (and our children) can surely adapt to the Internet. Read here how people reacted to new technologies in the past and how the complaints about them are nothing new. – Douglas***

Welcome to Pessimists Archive, a project created to jog our collective memories about the hysteria, technophobia and moral panic that often greets new technologies, ideas and trends.

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## Root System Drawings

*via Wageningen University & Research*

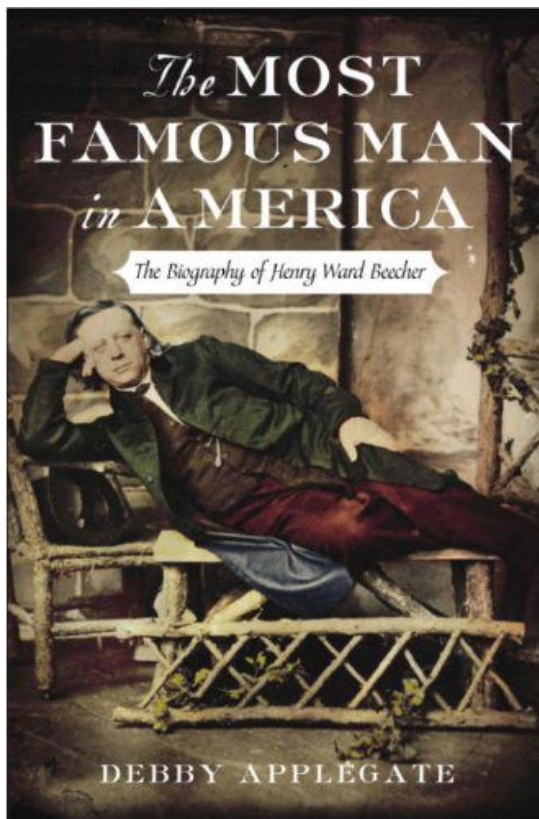
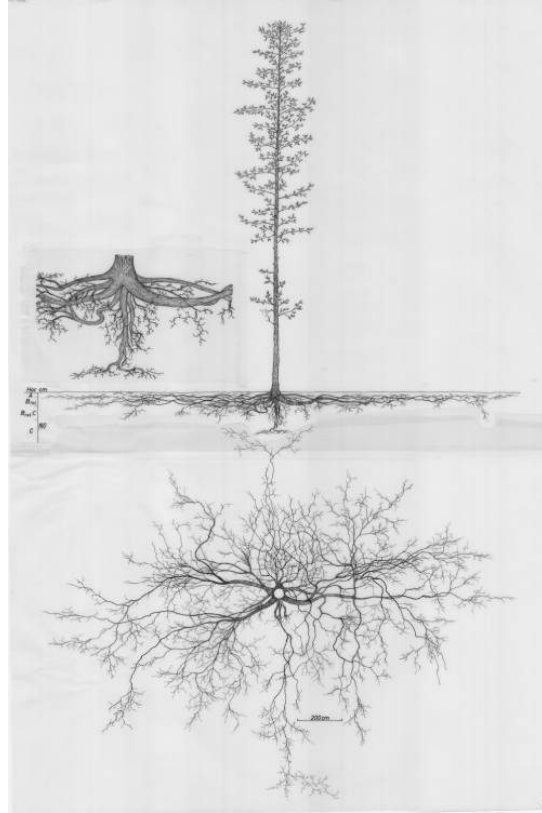
***I love art that makes the unseen world visible. Like timelapse and slow motion, these drawings help us visualize the structures beneath our feet whenever we walk among the trees – Douglas***



This collection holds 1,180 drawings, the outcome of 40 years of root system excavations in Europe, mainly in Austria. The drawings, their analysis, and description were done by Univ. Prof. Dr. Erwin Lichtenegger (1928-2004) and Univ. Prof. Dr. Lore Kutschera (1917-2008), leader of Pflanzensoziologisches Institut, Klagenfurt, (now in Bad Goisern, Austria).

The knowledge of root depth and spatial extension of different plant species in arable land and grassland immensely helped to better understand their growth conditions, and, in turn, this helped to develop several new farming ideas.

[View More](#)



## The Most Famous Man in America: The Biography of Henry Ward Beecher

*by Debby Applegate*

***A man both pious and scandalous -- brother of famous author Harriet Beecher Stowe and son of one of the most prominent Calvinist preachers of the era, Beecher rose and then fell into the depths of a vicious sex scandal.***

***I am finding it a great source for this particular era of American history, one that I didn't know much about. I especially like that much of it takes place in Ohio, my home state. – Douglas***

No one predicted success for Henry Ward Beecher at his birth in 1813. The blithe, boisterous son of the last great Puritan minister, he seemed destined to be overshadowed by his brilliant siblings--especially his sister, Harriet Beecher Stowe, who penned the century's bestselling book *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. But

when pushed into the ministry, the charismatic Beecher found international fame by shedding his father's Old Testament-style fire-and-brimstone theology and instead preaching a New Testament-based gospel of unconditional love and healing, becoming one of the founding fathers of modern American Christianity.

[Bookshop.org](#)



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