

Find Historical Site Information

Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance

Dear Robert Pirsig Enthusiast

In your studies concerning the book, *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*, you may have discovered information concerning the whereabouts of the buildings, towns, highways, action sites, and natural scenery described in Pirsig's road trip through the American West. You are invited to contribute what you know to a collaborative effort to collect and make available historical information concerning this cross-country motorcycle journey.

If you have information please let me know by letter or email (HenrySG __ usca.edu). Any information collected will be made available, by email, to all persons who send in information. You may also tell me what you think of the idea of starting a web site having ZMM historical and documentary information.

Some ZMM road map, travel route, and itinerary information is in Disanto and Steele's (history & literary) *Guidebook to Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*.

The book, *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*, with total sales approaching 4 million copies and increasing acclaim, may become a classic and Pirsig perhaps will join the ranks of other greats such as Tolstoy, Dickens, Melville, etc (see "Best Books" lists below). In light of this, I believe an organized effort should be started to collect and document the physical location of the restaurants, motels, welding shops, travel landscapes, high country, hiking trails, mountain climbing scenes, views, and vistas, paths and streams, portrayed in ZMM.

You may find out more about this project and my interest in ZMM [below](#). Thank you for your consideration of this proposal and send me a letter if you have information to offer.

Sincerely

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Professor Gurr Homepage:

<https://www.usca.edu/math/faculty-sites/henry-gurr/index.dot>

My most recent information and photos concerning the Book *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*:<http://venturearete.org/ResearchProjects/ProfessorGurr/Main/HomePage>

PROPOSAL

Identify Buildings and Route of Travel in
Zen and the Art of Motor Cycle Maintenance

Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance

(ZMM), with nearly 4 million copies in print, has been widely read for over 25 years. In this time, many people have come to recognize the historical sites of events described in ZMM. For example, many people know the location of the English Department at Montana State University. But are the old offices that had Feininger's abstract painting "Church of the Minorites" still there? Perhaps a few people know the exact (or probable) location of the "high quality owner crafted" motel that Pirsig describes as being just outside the gates of Yellowstone National Park. But is this motel still there? This is the motel which had the wonderful evening scene..... flowers, rushing mountain stream, evening breeze..... I certainly hope this motel still exists.

Persons who have such knowledge may be willing to contribute what they know to a "data bank", which will collect and make available such information. I propose a collaborative effort be made to collect and share information concerning the locations of physical buildings, roads, natural scenes, etc. portrayed in ZMM. This effort would be similar to the preservation efforts of Local Historical Societies, who make records and museums of our past and put up Historic Marker Signs. Mr. Pirsig might help if he saw a serious effort taking place. This information would be of lasting value to present and future generations. Persons who want to contribute information should visit my new Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance site, where I have posted my research results so far. You will find much [information and photos concerning the Book *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*](#).

Some of the buildings that still exist might eventually be designated as "Historical ZMM Landmarks", if the locations of these buildings could be documented and preservation efforts started now. The trip in ZMM, for literary reasons, may be quite different from the actual trip upon which the book is based. But this probably would not be an issue when it comes to an effort of documentation or historical preservation.

I have studied over one hundred ZMM oriented web pages, which have been found with web search engines such as Google or Alta Vista. Although I have found much interesting information about ZMM, I have not found any "travel route" information beyond that given in *The Guidebook to Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* by Steel and Disanto. I spent several months, full time, contacting people who mention ZMM on their web site or have published articles concerning ZMM. Over 25 people, who have worked professionally with ZMM, have been sent an email describing this project and inviting them to let me know, if they have information they are willing to contribute. Below I report my more significant discoveries.

Anna Marie Roos, Professor of History, University of Minnesota Duluth, suggested I post my "Collect ZMM Historical Site Info" letter on [H-NET](#). This is a list-serve having discussion groups in many topic areas in the Humanities. My letter went into H-IDEAS in late August. All together I have submitted this letter to about 12 H-NET academic disciplines. I also sent this letter to other web based discussion groups, but with less success.

ZMM author, Mr. Robert Pirsig, has helped greatly by sending me information to help in my research. In a recent letter concerning ZMM he also stated: "It's holding up in the marketplace too with steady sales. The term, 'cult book' is now in almost complete remission in the ads and reviews, and here and there the term 'classic' has appeared". He also said: "I have heard from Bozeman that there has been a steady trickle of what they call 'Pirsig Pilgrims' who come through every summer following that route".

Consciousness, Rivers,

Landscapes and Pirsig Pilgrims: [Professor Anna Marie Roos](http://www.richmond.edu/~rnelson/PandV/conclusion.html), also directed my attention to the last page of <http://www.richmond.edu/~rnelson/PandV/conclusion.html>, which I have adapted into the following. Here, Prof. R. Nelson says

"As the novel opens, the unnamed narrator is in motion, "heading northwest from Minneapolis toward the Dakotas"His purpose, he tells us, is to develop a Chautauqua that will "not . . . cut any new channels of consciousness but simply dig deeper into old ones that have become silted in with the debris of thoughts grown stale and platitudes too often repeated". The analogy here between a river and American cultural tradition continues to function.....as one of the controlling metaphors of the narrator's unfolding Chautauqua[and thus] becomesan attempt by the narrator to recover the ability and willingness to see beyond the 'channels of consciousness' to the landscape.....[The narrator meditates on a certain ineffable quality he associates with the visually boundless landscape of the Great Plains:

"In my mind, when I look at these fields, I say to her [Sylvia Sutherland, one of three traveling companions], "See? . . . See?" and I think she does. I hope later she will see and feel a thing about these prairies I have given up talking to others about; a thing that exists here because everything else does not and can be noticed because other things are absent. She seems so depressed sometimes by the monotony and boredom of her city life, I thought maybe in this endless grass and wind she would see a thing that sometimes comes when monotony and boredom are accepted. It's here, but I have no names for it."

Professor Nelson suggests that the ZMM-enthusiast, (modern explorer), traveling west like Pirsig, would sense Pirsig's landscape in new or more profound ways. Eventually a ZMM Travel Guide could be prepared that would help the pilgrim. The enlightening experience, of the pilgrimage and the landscape, would then perhaps provide new ways of seeing "what is in front of you, around you, and within you". All this makes me think of ZMM p198:

".....He [Phaedrus] speculated that the other pilgrims, the ones who reached the mountain, probably sensed the holiness of the mountain so intensely that each footstep was an act of devotion, an act of submission to this holiness. The holiness of the mountain infused into their own spirit, enabled them to endure far more than anything he, with his greater physical strength, could take."

High School, College, and University Students, who need a good research project, should join this search effort. Oral History buffs may find the search for ZMM history a high quality opportunity. Museums, Historical Societies, Libraries, Civic Organizations, and Chambers of Commerce may wish to join this collaboration as a means to promote local awareness and community pride.

I first read ZMM back in 1988. And because I found this book quite valuable for myself, I decided that my students should also read it. From 1993 to 1998, ZMM has helped over 140 of my physics student improve their understanding of University Physics, and indeed their overall Liberal Arts Education. I have their writings to prove it.

I don't know exactly how to organize this effort, I am open to suggestions, and of course desire to hear from persons who have information to contribute. I have no vested interest in this project, except that I would like to see it happen. Actually, in the Summer of 2002, I did become a "Pirsig Pilgrim"!! My Photo Gallery shows [what I found along the ZMM Route](#).

You too, could become a Pirsig Pilgrim. Please join-in and contribute to this effort.

Other Key Words and Phrases

: travelogue, tour guide, scenic tour, travel, drive, ride, camp, traveler, driver, rider, camper, traveling, driving, riding, camping, west, western planes, prairie, great plains, Topography of the physical landscape through which the protagonist moves, Heading Northwest from Minneapolis towards the Dakotas. The Voyage as Quest for Self Discovery. My [homepage](#).

Paperback Book

Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance by Robert Pirsig

When Robert Pirsig's "Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance" (ZMM) was first published in 1974, it caused a literary sensation. A combination of philosophical speculation and psychological tension, the book is a complex story of relationships, values, madness, and enlightenment.

Many good reviews of ZMM are [here](#)

Hardcover Book:

Guidebook to Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance

by Ronald L. Disanto & Thomas J. Steele

(adapted from Amazon.com book reviews of ZMM)

The "Guidebook to Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance" (by Ronald L. Disanto & Thomas J. Steele) serves as a metaphorical "backpack of supplies" for the reader's journey through Pirsig's original work. This [history & literary] guide book has 1) a map and itinerary of the motorcycle trip, 2) explanations of Zen practices, 3) several published literary reviews of ZMM, 4) an unpublished chapter that was eliminated from the original manuscript, 5) a complete listing (plus explanation) of the Pirsig's "Master Motifs" used in ZMM, and much more. One reader stated: "For fans of ZMM, this is an incredible book that summarizes various aspects of the ZMM book. First and foremost, it gives you the necessary background on philosophy to get a better understanding of where the Pirsig is coming from." This guidebook is a great resource for persons who are using ZMM in their teaching. Highly recommended. Many good reviews of **Guidebook** to ZMM are [here](#)

A Collection of "BEST BOOKS" Lists

Which Include Robert M. Pirsig's Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance

by Henry Gurr

A modest collection of "BEST BOOKS" internet documents which include Robert M. Pirsig's book, *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*. On these lists, Pirsig is listed with other greats such as Tolstoy, Tolkien, and Dickens. These lists support the worldwide significance (recognition) of Mr. Pirsig's work. This collection is just a start. I am sure there are many other entries yet to be found. The information below was obtained by "cut & paste", plus some editing, from the web site designated.

Random House Modern Library "100 Best Novels"

Authors Choice "**100 Best Novels**" Readers Choice

Since the "100 Best" story first broke in The New York Times on Monday, July 20, 1998, all kinds of opinions about the list - and theories about the Modern Library's purpose in concocting such a contest of sorts - emerged. The goal of the "100 Best" project was to get people talking about great books. We succeeded beyond our wildest imaginings — more than 400,000 avid readers rushed online to cast votes for their favorite books and the students of the Radcliffe Publishing Course quickly responded with rival list of 100 Best Novels.

<http://www.randomhouse.com/modernlibrary/100bestnovels.html> see also <http://listsofbests.com/list/3/>

Perennial Classics by Harper Collins Publishers

Harper Collins Perennial Classics brings some of the most celebrated and renowned books of our time to an even wider audience, in beautiful new editions enhanced with historical and biographical essays.

<http://www.perennialclassics.com/> , then click on "titles"

The 100 Best Spiritual Books of the Century

HarperCollins Publishers, is proud to announce the 100 BEST SPIRITUAL BOOKS OF THE CENTURY, a compelling and inspiring list compiled by Philip Zaleski. Stephen Hanselman claims, "[reading books of this list] will guide readers to books that will enrich their souls, serve as a reminder of the twentieth century's enduring spiritual legacy, and spark conversation about the blossoming genre of spiritual writing."

[This list is] compiled by Philip Zaleski, editor of *The Best Spiritual Writing* series. Based on nominations by Thomas Moore, Natalie Goldberg, Rodger Kamenetz, Harold Kushner, Lawrence Kushner, Christopher de

Vinck, David Yount, Kabir Helminski, Helen Tworkov, Ron Hansen, Frederic Brussat, Joseph Bruchac, Huston Smith, Lawrence Cunningham, and John Wilson.

For book description and reviews:

<http://www.amazon.com/gp/product/0062516701/104-0355672-9587167?v=glance&n=283155>

For list of each and all of the 100 Best Spiritual Books. Each with link to a full description:

<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/feature/-/15966/learningloveandl/002-6236226-4704011>

See also http://www.faith.com/library/articlesfaith/articles/f_lib_books_home_bestlist.html

In September 1996, **Waterstone's Book Stores** of London England, in association with **Channel 4 Television**, conducted a United Kingdom search for the greatest books of the twentieth century.

The 100 books listed here illustrate the incredible richness and variety of twentieth century literature.

Since this site is no longer available, [you may view my archived copy here.](#)

Or you may view the list here

ZMM IS AMONG THE 1770 BOOKS HAVING A "DISCUSSION GUIDE" IN READING GROUP GUIDES.COM

READING GROUPS GUIDE.COM IS AN ONLINE COMMUNITY FOR READING GROUPS.

http://www.readinggroupguides.com/guides/zen_and_the_art_of_motorcycle_maintenance.asp

Top 20 Most Inspirational Books Ever Written

Source of book list: "The Most Inspirational Books Ever Written" web page (URL:

<http://www.abacom.com/~topten/insp/booklst1.html>; viewed 27 October 1999), based on reader survey.

Compiled by Stephane Boucher, France. Readers answered the question: "Which books had the most positive impact on your life?" The Bible's rank of zero signifies that it was mentioned overwhelmingly by respondents.

http://www.adherents.com/adh_influbooks.html

ZMM IS AMONG THE 141 BOOKS, SELECTED BY STUDENT POLL, ON THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO'S SUMMER READING LIST

<http://students.uchicago.edu/pastpolls/summerbooks.html>

BookBuyers Book Company: Top 50 Philosophy Requested Titles Nov 1999

As of Nov 1999, BookBuyers Book Company provided a web page that listed the Top 50 Philosophy Titles their company handled. Bookbuyers apparently bought and sold a complete line of books.

Since this site is no longer available, [you may view my archived copy here](#).

"THE LIST" by The Encyclopedia Britannica & The Access Foundation.

The Access Foundation mission is to serve as an online international repository of literary resources and knowledge on the internet for both independent and academic scholarship. Access Foundation, in conjunction with Britannica Online, now sponsors an acclaimed site titled, Access To the Great Books.

ACCESS FOUNDATION holds that time spent reading the Great Books is time well spent. Great books lists are not meant to be exclusive of any tradition or culture, but rather form a foundation of knowledge on which to stand. Reading the great books allays the "busyness" of modern life; encourages self-examination, increases reflection, and provokes intellectual curiosity.

What follows is a list compiled by ACCESS FOUNDATION from a variety of sources, and based most notably from the one developed for the Great Books collection of the **Encyclopædia Britannica** by Robert M. Hutchins, Mortimer J. Adler, and Mark Van Doren. It is strongly recommended that the reader visit [The Center for the Study of the Great Ideas](#) for background on the ideas and formation of this list. To actively participate with others in a local discussion group, visit [The Great Books Foundation](#), whose goal is "to build communities of readers who explore important ideas through enduring literature." As a resource of over 235 authors and their greatest works, it is referenced by [ie hypertext link to] thousands of colleges, universities, public, and private schools online. It is part of the Great Books Web Ring, and is the most extensive site for finding original online texts.

[[A note from Henry Gurr, WebMaster: When you click on any of these links you will get confusing results. Some links will take you to WebSites which will have various information as well as links to find the complete book. Some links will to a search window, where you will have to click on the letter for the author you want. Many listings will (with a mouse click) send to you a free down load of: excerpts, reviews, bios, & occasionally the complete work. A book download from <http://www.britannica.com/> requires registering and payment of \$5/month.]]

To find ZMM in this list, you will need to do an **Edit>Find for [Pirsig]**. You will find it near the end of this list.

<http://www.anova.org/>

ZMM IS INCLUDED IN READING LIST FOR THE COLLEGE AT SOUTHERN IDAHO, HONORS PROGRAM:

Goal of Honors Readings: To introduce students to key works of critical thinking in many disciplines and cultures as well as provide students with opportunities to meet one-on-one with faculty and staff.

The 100 books listed here illustrate the incredible richness and variety of twentieth century literature.

Since this list is no longer available, [you may view my archived copy here.](#)

ZMM Is Included in Reading List For The University of Indiana , W505 Creative Writing for Educators:

This web site is among many which show the ZMM book as a part of their Creative Writing Program.

Since this list is no longer available, [you may view my archived copy here.](#)

ZMM Is Included in Summer Reading List For The South Hampton High School, New York:

This web site was among many which showed the ZMM book as part of a Summer Reading Program.

<http://www.southampton.k12.ny.us/hsummerread/BookListNF.htm>

ZMM Is Included in Reading List For The Tarleton State University Writing Program:

This web site was among many which showed the ZMM book as part of a Creative Writing Program.

Since this site is no longer available, [you may view my archived copy here.](#)

12th Grade Reading List Montgomery County Public Schools, Rockville Maryland, 20850

A very good example of how ZMM Book is incorporated into a highschool. The requirements are for both honors program students and normal students.

Since this site is no longer available, [you may view my archived copy here.](#)

**ZMM is Included in the Reading & Discussion List for
The McIntire School of Commerce, University of Virginia.**

**Fall 2000 COMM 462: CLASSIC INSIGHTS IN BEHAVIOR AND
ORGANIZATIONS**

Since this site is no longer available, [you may view my archived copy here.](#)

ZMM Is Included in the Following List of Books on Self-Improvement.

This is a very good and very comprehensive list of excellent books for self-renewal. There is no indication who the author is, beyond the signature: "The Scribe".

Since this site is no longer available, [you may view my archived copy here.](#)

**WebSites of persons who highly recommend ZMM and/or include ZMM in their reading list. (NOTE:
none of these links will open a new browser page as is done for the above links.)**

http://www.writing.com/main/product_reviews/pr_id/108242

<http://www.joelonsoftware.com/navLinks/fog0000000262.html>

http://www.religioustolerance.org/spir_bk.htm

<http://www.abc.net.au/myfavouritebook/top10/100.htm>

<http://rawnotes.blogspot.com/2004/07/zen-and-art-of-motorcycle-maintenance.html>

<http://www.worldchanging.com/archives/003678.html>

<http://www.sellingwaves.com/2005/11/21/okay-here-are-some-books/>

<http://www.oracle.com/technology/oramag/oracle/05-mar/o25info.html>

<http://hnn.us/blogs/entries/8733.html>

<http://www.d.umn.edu/publications/bridge/Spring2000/books.html>

<http://www.cs.uni.edu/~wallingf/miscellaneous/recommended-reading.html>

<http://andrewolmsted.com/archives/000903.html>

<http://dy999.acm.jhu.edu/booklist.html>

<http://www.teachersandfamilies.com/open/lifelist.cfm>

<http://www.shared-visions.com/reviews/reviewfind.cfm?keywords=philosophy>

<http://www.potters.org/subject11314.htm>

<http://users.pipeline.com.au/gasp/Sandy/booklist.htm>

<http://www.cuke.com/reviews/review.html>

<http://kevinforsyth.net/books/zmm.htm>

<http://www.synaptic.bc.ca/ejournal/theone.htm>

<http://www.amadirectlink.com/roadride/library.asp>

<http://www.eleceng.adelaide.edu.au/Personal/phillips/readinglist.html>

<http://discuss.fogcreek.com/joelonsoftware/default.asp?cmd=show&ixPost=934>

http://www.zug.com/scrawl/textrip/v_doors.html

<http://www.share2learn.com/booklist.html>

<http://www.fsl.cs.sunysb.edu/~aditya/data/bookmarks.html>

<http://webpages.marshall.edu/~striz1/quality/index.htmlx>

http://archnet.org/forum/view.tcl?message_id=38077

<http://www.boardgamegeek.com/profile.php?action=search&cat=book&keyword=Zen+and+the+Art+of+Motorcycle+Maintenance>

<http://www.roundtheworld.ca/books.htm>

<http://www.radix.net/~bobg/books/rab.long.pt3.html>

<http://home.earthlink.net/~hipbone/IDTWeb/HistHB.html>

http://64.233.187.104/search?q=cache:-hk1trF6k_4J:ijsm.org/archives/2005/05/20/brushing-up/+%22Zen+and+the+Art+of+Motorcycle%22+best+book++list+&hl=en&client=firefox-a

<http://www.people.virginia.edu/~rcj6t/booklist/1994.html>

<http://sprott.physics.wisc.edu/pickover/biblioa.html>

<http://answers.google.com/answers/threadview?id=135892>

http://www.businessweek.com/bschools/content/apr2003/bs20030415_2025_bs027.htm

<http://sinequanon.spleenville.com/archives/004571.php>

<http://www.viktoria.se/~anna/literature.htm>

<http://www.mcycle.co.nz/reviews.html>

<http://monkeyfilter.com/link.php/10376>

http://www.listology.com/content_show.cfm/content_id.8704

<http://www.japaneseswordschool.homestead.com/booklist.html>

<http://www.shared-visions.com/reviews/reviewfind.cfm?keywords=psych>

http://216.239.51.104/search?q=cache:TSaEUSCIshEJ:www.readaloudamerica.org/2003_booklist.pdf+%22Zen+and+the+Art+of+Motorcycle%22+best+book++list+&hl=en&client=firefox-a

http://64.233.187.104/search?q=cache:Jsn7qImWioIJ:www.bkellyhs.org/BKHS_Summer_Reading_List.doc+%22Zen+and+the+Art+of+Motorcycle%22+best+book++list+&hl=en&client=firefox-a

<http://lunanina.com/index.php/RIF/unread-books/>

<http://www.vanemden.com/links/>

<http://www34.pair.com/zoil/books.html>

<http://contemporarylit.about.com/cs/readinglists/tp/nonfictionTop10.htm>

<http://www.sparks.co.uk/progress/popbooks.html>

<http://wkstratton.com/faq.shtml>

<http://www.csc.calpoly.edu/~jdalbey/Passions/booklist.txt>

<http://www.markings.bc.ca/spirit/cwgbook1.html>

<http://www.charityfocus.org/insp/?p=expr&s=books>

<http://www.800ceoread.com/blog/archives/000953.html>

<http://www.dcs.ed.ac.uk/teaching/cs3/pi/booklist.html>

http://qin.laya.com/ap_booklist.html

http://www.usna.edu/LibExhibits/Readinglist/Subject_reading.html

http://64.233.187.104/search?q=cache:_Z5insQo2XgJ:streamer.espeakers.com/1/181/4233.pdf+%22Zen+and+the+Art+of+Motorcycle%22+best+book++list+&hl=en&client=firefox-a

<http://www.advogato.org/article/794.html>

<http://www.physics.uq.edu.au/people/wahyu/read/read2000.html>

<http://jmm.aaa.net.au/articles/16306.htm>

<http://home.earthlink.net/~johnw.anderson/lit.html>

<http://www.frankpress.com/books.htm>

<http://www.pikevillefirstchristianchurch.org/pastorreading.html>

http://www.vegpeople.com/gossamer/VPBooks/index.php?country=com&ax=list&sub=14&cat_id=14

<http://meridianmagazine.com/classicscorner/010207american.html>

<http://www.friendsinlowplaces.co.uk/Booklist.htm>

http://www.radicalmiddle.com/seventies_books.htm

<http://www.faqs.org/faqs/alt-support-depression/My-Book-List/part3/>

<http://davespicks.com/misc/readinglist.html>
<http://books.valdosta.edu/read/booklist.html>
<http://blue.frogfoot.net/me/books/>
<http://members.tripod.com/~Idafab/books.html>
<http://www.buffalolib.org/programs/readinglists2005/WilliamNorth.pdf>
<http://www.billnelsonmusic.com/usarchives/book/billpicks.htm>
<http://www.lasvegasm Mercury.com/2003/MERC-Aug-14-Thu-2003/21899541.html>
<http://bluepyramid.org/library/bookcomp.htm>
<http://www.mousetrap.net/~mouse/books.html>
<http://www.adprima.com/favorites.htm>
<http://www.cbc.ca/checkup/summer95.html>
<http://www.cfar.umd.edu/users/aravinds/personal/reading.html>
<http://www.npr.org/programs/totn/summerread99.html>
<http://www.yogibob.com/reading.html>
http://personal.nbnet.nb.ca/rosellam/Reading_Lists.html
<http://www.crm.umontreal.ca/~titcombe/books1sted.html>
<http://www.chebucto.ns.ca/Philosophy/Taichi/Zen/books.html>
<http://www.joelonsoftware.com/printerFriendly/navLinks/fog0000000262.html>

Google probably found more book lists, but I'm out of time.

Reviews and related information concerning ZMM.

http://www.swami-krishnananda.org/disc/disc_94.html
<http://use.perl.org/~spur/journal/19281>
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/human-nature-books-l/message/6>

Your reward if you got this far. Here is where to get free book down loads over the Internet.

<http://www.e-book.com.au/freebooks.htm>