

Lunarize Harvard project gains momentum

Riding on the heels of Solarize Harvard's enormous success, the same group of environmental-oriented citizens are pulling together to bring their efforts to the next level. "In our most recent brainstorming session, we realized that there are other objects in the sky besides the sun—objects that could be the next source of untapped 'free energy,'" states Worthy Robbins, a Solarize Harvard volunteer, who was right-sized after sunsetting the Solarize program. "We're following the model of the high-tech industry, by creating a new start-up to address an obvious oversight in the strategies of environmental groups seeking to reduce the world's dependence on fossil fuels."

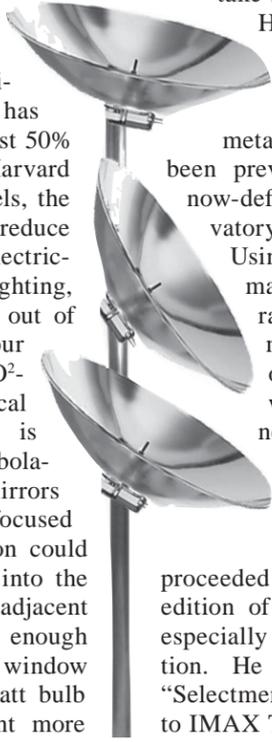
The idea is simple and, like most inventions, obvious once articulated. "The sun is a bright thing in the sky, and generates energy that can be harvested," said Robbins. "Well, the moon is also up there, and nobody is realizing that it is also a bright thing in the sky," he said, describing his eureka moment. Robbins has been taking repeated measurements, has calculated the number of lumens produced by the moon, and feels there is enough light energy up there to put to good use. "Most of it is

just wasted, going completely unused, except by some nocturnal animals and the occasional prowler. If it can be economically harvested, perhaps we can eliminate the need for electric lighting altogether," he explained optimistically. That was the germ of the Lunarize Harvard project.

The team of environmental zealots has calculated that if just 50% of the homes in Harvard installed lunar panels, the town could greatly reduce its dependence on electricity as a form of lighting, taking a huge bite out of electric bills and our dependence on CO²-producing electrical plants. The idea is to mount a parabolic-shaped array of mirrors on a pole. The focused light from the moon could then be redirected into the open window of the adjacent home, bringing enough light through the window to simulate a 25-watt bulb in that room. Want more rooms illuminated? Install multiple arrays and double or triple the night-usability of your home.

A prototype was built on Robbins' Massachusetts Avenue property, as a proof-of-concept to the Lunarize Harvard team, which meets every 27.3 days. His prototype was built primarily using discarded mirrors found at the Transfer Station's "take-it-or-leave-it" area.

He arranged the free mirrors onto a discarded dish found in the scrap metal pile; the dish had been previously used on the now-defunct Oak Hill observatory's SETI telescope. Using this free source of materials, the results are rather dramatic. On the midnight that a group of Press reporters was invited to witness the prototype in action, we saw just how much light can be harnessed from the moon. Robbins proceeded to read a large-type edition of the Press published especially for the demonstration. He read the headline "Selectmen Unanimously Agree to IMAX Theater on Town Hall Second Floor," missing only two words in the entire phrase. "That headline was too long anyway," he said.



POLICE FOG

Monday: An injured man flagged down an officer on Shaker Road to report that he had just been hit by a deer. According to the police report, the man had walked out to his mailbox, and was bending down to look at some crocuses when the deer bolted out of the woods nearby and knocked him senseless. The deer was uninjured, but the man suffered minor abrasions and multiple hoofprints on his back. While rare, police say that such encounters are not unheard of, and they caution townspeople to be on the lookout for deer, especially in the late afternoon, when they are often in a hurry to get wherever it is they spend the night.

Tuesday: Police, responding to a reported disturbance at Town Hall Tuesday evening, arrived to find a near-riot in progress. The rioters turned out to be enraged townspeople attending a Selectmen's meeting who told police they were fed up with the uncivil tone of town government. Officers called for backup and were escorting the unruly mob outside when the roof collapsed in the rear of the building (see story, page A-2).

Wednesday: A newcomer in Still River called to report gunfire near her house. "We moved out here for the peace and quiet, and it sounds like there's a war going on," she said. When the investigating officer

told her the sound was coming from the Army firing range a few miles away, she told her husband to stop unpacking. A worried Stow Road resident called to report someone outside calling for help. It turned out to be her next door neighbor, whose cat is named Helper.

Thursday: A Finn Road couple called to say that they are planning a week's vacation, and asked if an officer could check their house every day while they're gone. And water the plants and feed the cat. And see that their three children, ranging in age from 9 to 15, get to bed at a reasonable hour. They were advised to put their vacation on hold and consult a lawyer.

Friday: A third-grader at Hildreth Elementary School walked into the station to report that her parents have forbidden her see "The Hunger Games." She wanted to know if she could charge them with child abuse. She was told no, and instructed to pass the word around at school. Police say this was the fifteenth such inquiry they've had since the movie opened. In related news, police have received a number of inquiries from parents concerned about their young daughters' burgeoning interest in archery. Police caution townspeople to stay out of the woods and keep pets indoors as much as possible.

MOVIES • MOVIES • MOVIES • MOVIES • MOVIES • MOVIES • MOVIES

Movie reviews in 140 characters or fewer

In this age of social networking, it's time we started learning how to adapt art critique to the ever-shrinking character capacities (and attention spans) of popular websites like Facebook, Twitter, and Tumblr. I'm lucky if you've even finished reading that sentence.

As such, I've concluded that the only way to properly maintain the relevance of my movie reviews is to shorten them. Let's be honest, a full-page discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of, say, "The Artist" would be much more boring than a review that simply read, "This movie's old-timey."

So I've decided that, from here on out, I will be writing one-word movie reviews. If you were hoping I'd go see "The Hunger Games" and then let you know if it was faithful to the book or if it could stand up to the hype or how it compares to other enormous movies like "Harry Potter," you might be upset. But who looks for that kind

of detail? More likely you'd be looking for me to say either "THIS MOVIE IS AMAZING" or "This movie is trash." So that's what I intend to give you, in exactly one word, starting next week.

To transition to this new form of movie review, I've compiled a list of movies, both classic and modern, and I've written for each one a review that could fit on Twitter. That is, each review below consists of no more than 140 characters, including the title of the movie. Enjoy, because it's the most you're ever going to get from me again.

Titanic: Sappy. Boat ride ends with rich girl hogging the only floating door in the water, unbeknownst to sleeping audience members.

The King's Speech: Prim-and-proper English period drama, complete with obligatory crying scenes and an inspirational speech. Eh.

Lawrence of Arabia: Unbelievably long. And lots and lots and lots and lots of sand.

And Peter O'Toole rides some camels.

Citizen Kane: Reporters try to find out what "Rosebud" is. Small plot hole: no one is present to hear Kane say "Rosebud."

Pulp Fiction: Long, but worth it, unless you're only watching to find out what's in the suitcase. Also, Christopher Walken? What?

Fight Club: Unnamed narrator deals with the rowdy Tyler Durden. People fight excessively. Unnamed narrator is Jack's raging bile duct.

Goodfellas: Great gangster drama, and a rare example of a great voiceover. Also, my thanks to Joe Pesci for giving hope to short actors.

The Truman Show: Terrific movie with a clever script. Jim Carrey does his usual shtick, but this time with more poignant results.

Sunset Blvd.: Classic Hollywood melodrama features a washed-up old lady going absolutely bonkers. No, but seriously.

She's nuts.

Dr. Strangelove, or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb: Title is too long to leave room for a review, but suffice it to say,

The Lion King: Early-'90s Disney cartoons at their peak. Simba and Co. reenact "Hamlet" and eat bugs. Sounds like a good day to me!

Blade Runner: Slow sci-fi classic features Harrison Ford fighting robots. Also, I think Edward James Olmos tries to speak slang.

Annie Hall: Brilliant romantic comedy. Woody Allen would hate that I've turned it into a tweet.

Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid: Horseback ridin', train robbin', cliff jumpin', gun firin' fun. And... Burt Bacharach?

Inception: A dream within a dream within a dream within a dream. Alternate title: "Look How Meta We Are."

Book Review: Spleen—It's no fun without one

by May O. Clinique, M.D.

Everybody knows that the spleen is important, but few understand just how important. In fact, the spleen ranks among the body's most under-appreciated organs, according to Dr May O. Clinique, the world's foremost authority on spleeniness, in her new best-seller "Spleen—It's no fun without one."

For one thing, says Dr. Clinique, the spleen is quite unattractive, even when it's in good shape. When it's in bad shape, you don't want to go there. Ever. But none of the body's organs are really good-looking unless you're in need of one. Then they become quite desirable. And so it is with the spleen, even though you don't hear of people lining up for new spleens the way

they do for hearts and lungs.

That's a sore point with Dr. Clinique, who would definitely be the one to go to if you were looking for a spleen transplant. She spends quite a few chapters trashing her colleagues in the heart and lung business—venting her spleen, you might say if you wanted to be a real jackass. She likes to point out that the spleen is just as important as the heart or the lungs, even though everybody knows that's not true. People are in some kind of trouble without a spleen, but not even close to the

trouble they're in without a heart or lungs. For example, Dr. Clinique mentions a patient—let's call him Q—who went into the hospital with a damaged spleen and never came out, not because his spleen failed but because his heart stopped and she couldn't get it started again. So much for Q.

The spleen plays a very important role in the body's lymphatic system and is a major player in the immune system. It is indisputably workmanlike, accomplished, and remarkably dependable. In a movie star metaphor, think Gene Hackman. But even Dr. Clinique has to admit

that the spleen will never be Al Pacino, let alone George Clooney, no matter how hard it ties.

In fact, Dr Clinique would abhor the movie star metaphor, or any attempt to enliven her prose. From beginning to end, her book is one red blood cell story after another, complete with diagrams and utterly devoid of suspense. In her telling, the patients come to her, are correctly diagnosed and then cured, except for poor schleps like Q, who are brought down by other, more tempestuous organs.

All in all, this book is for hard-core spleen lovers only, but there might be others who will want to add it to their lymphatic system libraries.

