

Carsten Burmeister's Blog

This is the email exchange that forms the background to the previous two pages

W. is a friend and an editor. After we met for the first time and I found out she was an editor I asked if she would like to have a look at my essays. We started talking about my book, both in emails and in person, in the beginning of 2019. She quickly got enthusiastic about reading it in-between work assignments and in April '19 we got to this stage:

Hi Carsten

I think you are at the point with your book that structurally, there is no further improvements that can be made. I found it readable, easy to follow and it logically makes sense; some observations:

- *I found the italicized text hard to read as it's quite light - the use of italics is fine as it distinguishes between your words and those of other sources, but I would suggest making the font darker so it's easier to see/read.*

This point is very pertinent, it has been made before. In the beginning I always bore in mind that my book would ultimately be printed in offset and the grey type would be a solid second colour, rather than rasterised black; right now, with the digital printing process I have to contend with, I don't have a solution ... I tried using a darker colour (I'm using 50% black) but it didn't work for me; I like the strong difference between the two sections.

- *The use of illustrations are a great visual feast for the eyes, adding context and character to your words - for example, on page 4. If you can find more illustrations for more of the work, I think it would really jazz it up.*

There was a point where I had many more illustrations (photos) until Jan pointed out that they could be copyrighted. I tried to get permissions, for instance for using the drawing on page 4, but I didn't receive a response; so I deleted a fair few photos (a point in question, I had a great shot of the Rolling Stones, from the year I talk about in the essay, but I felt I had to delete it).

- *Your blog section (the appendix) - needs paragraphs as it's hard-going-reading getting through it.*

Agreed ... can't do it, haven't got enough space; I would have to shorten the text, but that's already cut down from the original blogs (it sometimes is hard work abridging the blogs). And I also want to emphasize the difference between my essays and the appendix (but I'll do it for 'your' pages!).

It was not until we had been talking and emailing for quite a while, that I received the email at the top of page XXXIV and I learned then that W. is a believer ... in God and in Jesus Christ. I was flabbergasted ... how can a believer possibly like my book? This was always a point I was bearing in mind ... that I might be excluding about 50% of the population from my potential reader pool. Then this week (Dec. 2019) we arrived at this email exchange:

Dear W.,

your latest note is remarkable: *Your book is always an experience for me every time I open it.* It spawned a lengthy talk between Jan and myself. *I very much enjoy it.* The gist of our talk was: Why are there not hundreds of thousands of people feeling that way? *That's why I have to get back into it!* Well, that is the reason for its existence, its format, its style: One can easily put it down, leave it, ponder its content, get back into it.

People ask me: "Who do you write for?" You know, I never thought my book would be much of a success with a 'true believer', someone who is Christian, with an staunch belief in God and Jesus; a belief that I am after all ardently critical of.

In principle - I trust that is what you pick up in my writings - I am in favour of BELIEF (as long as it is tolerant and peaceful), it often gives us valuable communities and potentially inner peace; and FAITH, which can give us strength (read the footnote about Desmond Doss).

So, back to my question: "*Why aren't there hundreds of thousands of people feeling that way?*" That of course is my heartache. Why oh why?! In 2017 I spent \$13k on publicizing my book ... a press release was sent to over two thousand English speaking media all over the world. The reaction? Zilch. None. Nil. Zero. Nothing ... Yet, I'm hopeful.

I trust there are many more people out there who one day will say: *Your book is always an experience for me every time I open it ... I very much enjoy it. That's why I have to get back into it!*

And they will tell their friends, who will tell their friends ...