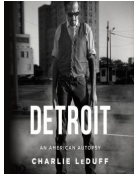


Information, Answers & Reviews

Detroit: An American Autopsy



Leading the news today is the announcement that Detroit filed for bankruptcy. They aren't the first municipality to file, but they are the largest. What this means for residents, city workers, retirees and the state of Michigan remains to be seen. 20 billion dollars is hard to wrap my mind around, and is a figure without names and faces.

Hoping to personalize this story is native son Charlie LeDuff. His recent nonfiction work is called *Detroit: An American Autopsy*. LeDuff is a journalist who left Detroit at an early age and traveled the world covering international conflicts and won a Pulitzer for his contributions at the New York Times. He returns to Detroit to work for The Detroit News.

This book covers a variety of stories, including the fall of ex-Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick, city council corruption, the crumbling auto industry implications, and the struggles of a local fire station. You also meet LeDuff's family and follow them while they are coping (or not) with living in and near Detroit. [Read more](#)

Posted by sbowman on July 19, 2013

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Geeking Out on the 80s



The decade was only roughly ten years gone when the BBC (and then US network VH1) brought nostalgia for the 1980s to TV with *I Love the '80s* in 2001. America has long been fascinated with looking back on its pop-culture history, but the decade that saw PCs, video games, cable TV, and a variety of musical sub-genres explode maintains a hold on our imaginations. Two of this year's [Rosie Award nominees](#) focus on the decade, centered on what has become our true national pastime ? gaming. [Read more](#)

Posted by Chris H. on July 18, 2013

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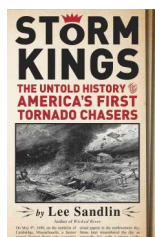
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America's First Tornado Scientists and What They Taught Us



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I was afraid this would be another macho book about reckless men roaming the plains chasing tornadoes during storm season. Instead it turned out to be a wonderful compendium of tornado lore through the centuries. Also included are biographies of some of our most important weather scientists.

Storm Kings begins with a description of how during the 1600s New England settlers called any phenomenon that happened in the sky meteors including: meteors (of course), lightning, thunder, rainbows, comets, clouds in the shape of hands and faces, etc. Although the science behind tornadoes was not understood and barely documented then, many colonists recognized that the weather in America was much more violent than in their home countries.

When a tornado swooped down near Cambridge, MA in 1680, two farming families were shocked when one lost a servant and another a barn during the storm. They were so frightened by this event that one wrote to Increase Mather (the father of Cotton) asking about it. Increase, who was a self-educated weather expert, had no answers so he wrote to a scientific association in Europe. No one replied to his inquiry, but Benjamin Franklin found this letter seventy years later when he became interested in the study of weather and electricity. [Read more](#)

Posted by Dory L. on July 18, 2013

[Storm Kings: the untold history of America's first tornado chasers](#)

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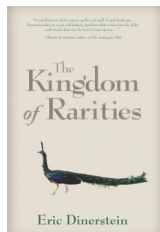
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The Kingdom of Rarities



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In another life, I would love to become a wildlife biologist; it combines things I loves such as working with animals, walking, observing deeply, and travel. This book does all of the above plus makes you more curious about the flora and fauna around us. Why are robins common and not Kirtland?s warblers? Why are deer abundant and not jaguars? Eric Dinerstein, the author, started his scientific career studying tigers and later rhinoceroses. He is now Chief Scientist at the World Wildlife Fund. In *The Kingdom of Rarities*, he travels to many continents to explore the rare creatures and plants living there.

One of the places he and his scientific team visit is Irian Jaya, a remote island on the Indonesian archipelago. It combines two aspects of places that often give homes to rare creatures: remoteness, and being situated on an island. Another factor that makes Irian Jaya home to rarities is its geology?its steep mountains and gorges serve as barriers to invasive species which have become common on many other islands. The description of Dinerstein?s flight to this research spot is compelling; it was incredibly risky just to land a plane there. But well worth it because the scientists found many rare creatures quite close to them and not shy at all with humans. The scientists were amazed by how many species divided their habitats vertically.

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Posted by Dory L. on July 11, 2013

[The Kingdom of Rarities](#)

[Science & Nature](#)

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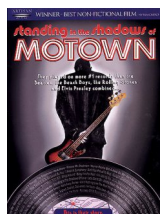
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Always Heard, Never Known



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This is the story of a band that everyone has heard and yet most people don?t even know their name. They played on more hit records than Elvis, than The Beach Boys, than The Rolling Stones or the Beatles ?.combined. They were responsible for the driving beat of the Motown hit factory. The riffs you remember to so many songs were arranged and performed by them; yet

if I mentioned some of their names, James Jamerson, Richard Allen, Joe Messina, to name a few there would be no flash of recognition in your mind. [Read more](#)

Posted by Keith C. on July 10, 2013

[Standing in the shadows of Motown](#)

[Rock Music](#)

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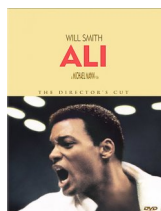
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Ali



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I visited the [Muhammad Ali Center](#) in Louisville this past weekend, so it naturally occurred to me to watch [Ali](#) again afterwards. While the film is noticeably uneven as a bio-pic, it does cover the most notable part of Ali's boxing career from his first fight with [Sonny Liston](#) to his "[Rumble in the Jungle](#)" with [George Foreman](#). The film also delves into his [relationship with The Nation of Islam](#), his fight against being [drafted](#) into the Vietnam War, his appearances on television with [Howard Cosell](#), and so on. [Read more](#)

Posted by Brandon R. on July 9, 2013

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