

# Speculative Realms

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 9, 2010

## You Say Goodbye, I say Hello--Hello, Hello

*Paratopia says goodbye. Sort of.*

by Gary Haden

*Paratopia* said goodbye last week as it wrapped its 70th episode. Creators Jeff Ritzmann and Jeremy Vaeni are going into cryogenic freeze for three weeks. After that, they'll be favoring us with a new format.

These two guys did a great job with the shows they put together. *Paratopia* sounded very professional. It had good guests. They covered a lot of territory, most of it pretty compelling. I'm not qualified to state which was the best show. I haven't heard them all yet. My favorites, as of right now, are the Emma Woods series and the George Hansen series.

They sell themselves short in their farewell episode. Ritzmann and Vaeni complain that their work on Emma Woods did not have the impact they thought it might, at least on the paranormal subculture. They mention *Above Top Secret*, for instance. I don't think it really matters, unless of course this is high school and you want to be big man on campus, what the paranormal subculture thinks.

Mostly, it doesn't. Think, that is. It prefers to sleep.

It is going to turn out that Emma Woods was important. There will be folks down the road who discover the shows and wake up to the problems inherent in hypnotic regression. Those problems are a public concern. They aren't just limited to the paranormal community. This is like Ritzmann and Vaeni desiring the love of a certain bad girl not realizing they have the attention of a smarter, more attractive woman with a bigger dowry.

I know we're supposed to carve niches. I don't believe the Emma Woods case was strictly confined to a marginalized population. Surfing the margins might be fun and it might make you feel tough and all, but it doesn't mean everything you do and say has relevance only at the margins.

Speaking of toughness, I think Ritzmann and Vaeni could increase their audience by cutting out the f-bombs. Their production is radio level quality. To bracket some pretty good observations with effin this and effin that makes it harder to take the stuff in between the brackets seriously. I think it is done for street tough, cyberpunkish purposes. There is an audience for that, just not the biggest one possible.

It might make you feel tougher when you use the language but it tends to strike me as a sign of weakness, of the ego of the user and of the merits of whatever argument they are making. The street tough and the cyberpunk generate that kind of language out of impotent rage. It isn't productive anger. It is a nuke generated to repair the ego. You repair the ego but you enhance marginality.

I mean it feels good. It feels powerful. You're a rebel. You insult your enemies. It is great. It may also insult your allies. Then you've got Hobbes. You're in a war of all against all. You end up blindly cold-cocking everyone in reach. That is not indicative of the abilities of these young men. I believe they have skills and can build a healthy audience. I think the f-bomb stuff might take a baseball bat to their chances.

These are talented guys and I hope they keep at it. I look forward to their new product with great anticipation.

There was a shocking conclusion to *Paratopia* #70. Gene Steinberg put in an appearance and he and Jeremy and Jeff made amends. Steinberg shared the news that *Paracast* is going into radio syndication.

The *Paracast* has always belonged on the Radio. It has always been a professional level broadcast. It has had its moments, as we all do. But it has earned the larger

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hearing it is hopefully going to get. It offers *Paratopia* a career path example. I hope Vaeni and Ritzmann get that opportunity one day.

Gene Steinberg is an old radio man from wayback. It is good to see him make his way back home.

Posted by Gary Haden at 7:27 AM   
Labels: [Paracast](#), [Paratopia](#)

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Science

Religion

It is a tie

Not a fair question

Votes so far: 45

Poll closed

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