

Brandishment Marketeering

By Marketeer inventor Don Meinshausen

"A flag is a banner to which a sword is attached"

The term marketeer is a takeoff on the term musketeer from Dumas's famous book; *The Three Musketeers*. Alexandre Dumas was a French writer who had black Caribbean ancestry. The book is a tale of various intrigues, wars, guns, religious conflicts, sex and gaudily dressed adventurers that call to mind gangsta rap videos. Marketeers are those who deal in intrigue, smuggling drugs, sex and other contraband and fight the system. It's an underground capitalism with an in your face style. Brandishment is a display of power that Freud would have seen as symbolic of manliness and potential hostility to aggressors.

The Musketeer fight against Richeleiu has modern parallels. Cardinal Richeleiu has been called the father of the modern nation state. He was effectively the political administrator of France as well as a power in the Catholic Church during the Thirty Years War (1618-1648). This was Europe's most destructive war as Catholics and Protestants fought over Europe. He deprived the French of their civil liberties, increased onerous taxation and engaged his country in numerous wars; civil, religious and foreign. He alternatively fought wars against the Protestants and then aided them in their fight against Spain. While engaging in all types of political intrigue to advance his religion and the state he oppressed and murdered political and religious enemies and dissidents. That he did this without the help of modern technology or Kissinger is remarkable.

The Three Musketeers is a revolt of style against misery, wars and oppression that is based on a modern technology (muskets were quite modern then) Muskets were not used much in the movie or book yet are rather swords are brandished or used in duels. Warriors, because of the invention of muskets had given up armor making them more flexible, mobile and vulnerable in warfare as well physically as well as psychically. They did not have the religious fervor of other warriors and substituted their commitment to their honor, themselves and their ladies. The musketeers while fighting Richeleiu reinforces the bad conditions of war by engaging in combat but have a grand time doing it, thereby giving hope. How the musketeers are rebels and even radical is that they do their revolt in style, honor and joy. They confront authority and beat it by outwitting it and being loyal to each other making them better warriors. That can shock the established order even while strengthening materialist values and violence.

Fortunately today there are other ways of brandishment and conflict besides guns and swords, even though they still make good props. Could we see drive bys with lasers? Car bombs and shootings are just so overused. When the news just repeats itself the show must be changed especially since it involves real people dying and so much expense.

What toys do we bring to our next virtual life? Prop culture and its commercial heft are important though seemingly vulnerable to criminals and not to be redundant, government seizures. Gangstas are like a few romantic adventurers who have no quest outside of their own survival against an army led by an evil mastermind. Revolutionaries survive by being well remembered before being dismembered by historians. Even those doomed to fail by lack of power can have a huge symbolic importance in future conflicts.

Until the time that people find out what is really wrong with the system such rebelliousness is thrilling to behold even though ultimately wrongheaded. Dealing is a way of achieving personal success and sticking it to the enemy while destroying the community at the same time. War does the same thing and is much more destructive. Guess which is more legally and socially accepted. Perhaps if wars were limited to duels we could limit the damages done and at the same time reduce the oversupply of politicians and other criminals.

I do wonder why there is no culture of dueling but maybe they are more sensible than that on a personal level. Creativity is, thankfully, now seen as a way to recognition and riches rather than just the use of force. Brandishment, the flaunting of force, is a style and part of martial art. It is a posture of power and a political or military gesture. It is part of the mating dance. While not always a discipline or a real show of force it is for show and sometimes amusement in serious art as well as popular art or sports like professional wrestling.

The marketeer is a marked man and a marketed man. On him image and wealth is marketed, either as a model or as a target to destroy. To him flies wealth and power and all he could possibly consume; yet to consume weighs him down and dulls his senses and make him a bigger target. Nimbleness, flexibility as well as the rapier of wit and perception is his survival. So are flight and the ability to hide. Gone are the olden days of armor. Layers of protection can dull your awareness and awareness is as important as anything else.

To seize the ring of power you must perform in it. It is better than wearing it as was discovered by characters in the Lord of the Rings who destroyed it or in the Wagnerian Ring cycle where stolen gold was made into a ring that ended up destroying the Gods. The Ring can be a wring of power and dangerous to all concerned. It is a statement of readiness of attack as well. You expect it as a condition of life as seen in the construction of the Pentagon which is a set of concentric rings. It then becomes a manacle or a fortified perimeter beyond which you cannot go. One can leave the matrimonial ring but to leave the crosshairs ring that is in a scope is a dance for all to learn. Only the circus ring is the one you can leave in good will after a good performance.

In the words of the famous libertarian arts commentator Camille Paglia: "Everyone into the arena"! Is life a gladiator arena of all against all? For whom are we performing? And is this the best show to be in and see? Is this the only way to achieve manhood or to even entertain each other? Is all the world a stage we are going through? .Even the leaders of the world can't answer this and they are quite unsafe. The house of power can become a prison in the pursuit of safety. What ring tones do you want in your cell?