

This Here...

"...too drunk and howling with laughter..." (N Collyer)

EGOTORIAL

WHO'S WHO

First, the errata/apology section in which I realized ten minutes after #43 went out that several of **Ulrika's** fine illos had bled into the text a little (or the text had bled into them, whatever) because I fucked up the separation ("extra space") control which ended up being 0 rather than at least 1 or two points. I'd tend to suspect that not many people noticed, could be wrong as usual, but to me it was well fuckin' glaring, and a mistake I'll ideally not make again...

So here's a funny thing...

The other week **Alison Scott** hosts what was apparently a pre-birthday Zoom, later described as "a riot" with some justification, given that it included such gobby incorrect drunks as meself and **Graham Charnock**, although describing Grah as "gobby" is unfair since he lays doggo for considerable periods of time before being prodded into court jesterness for the amusement of the terminally clever. Others of us don't need the application of the taser to get us off on a rant, of course, but then again the definition of a "chance remark" is just about anything anyone else can say when **Alison** is in the room - it's a weakness of Zoom when you've got any number of people exceeding, say, 4 in any given screenspace that the gobbiest will prevail.

Wittily enough, as a result of some pre-gobfest comments on FBF, a breakout room called "Get Off My Lawn" was created, and proved so popular that the expected miserable

old scrote contingent (er - me & Grah) were suitably muted *some* of the time. I ended up bottling it off to an otherwise unoccupied "room" to which the occasional visitor came to pay fealty, **Charnock** among them, but also, relevantly to this here Egotorial, **Mark Plummer**, who writes:

[A]t the First Thursday this month, somebody -- **Alison**, I think -- was wondering what you and I had been talking about while we were in the separate room at the Zoom last Saturday. "Football and fanzines," guessed **Claire**. From there -- and I'm not sure how this happened -- somebody came up with the idea of you and me as the Harlan Ellison and Robert Silverberg of

contemporary fandom. My inevitable question was which is which, although I fear that there are no good answers to that...

(*Football, fanzines and **James Bacon**, actually.)

...and later adds:

I just asked **Claire** in case she has a better recall than me of *how* we collectively got to the idea of you and me as Ellison/Silverberg. We think it was something to do with us having

known each other for long time, possibly much longer than some people realise. But the only real explanation is that Drink Had Been Taken.

Now given my lifelong appreciation of utter absurdity, this is well up there, but we ought to be able to get some amusement out of it, shurely? "Which is which" indeed?

I'd suspect at the off that since one of those luminaries could be described as a gobby little bomb-throwing provocateur, this might suggest which way the comparisons are going to trend, but then again Harlan was described (I vaguely recall



Strummer & Farey (or vice versa)?

by Asimov?) as “a man with an impeccable moral compass”, so hmmm.

Mark makes the point that we have known each other for larger values of yonks (“much longer than some people realise”) which is reflected in our little running “joke” about the longevity of our friendship being an unfeasible number of years which is possibly due to break 200 around the same time *This Here...* gets to issue #50. The less entertaining facts are that we first met in the early-mid 1980s (in a later convo corrected by **Mark** to be mis-later ‘80s, and I trust his memory a fuck of a lot more than mine) and in one of those happy happenstances became fast friends after crossing paths quite frequently thereafter, when I thrust upon him (oo-er missus ect) copies of my then fanzine *Arrows of Desire* (aka “Arrers”, of course) remarking at the time that he didn’t have a pot to trade or a fanzine to piss in, so long, long ago.

I think it’s a given, at least in my experience of longstanding fan friendships, that you find both enough in common and enough difference to continue to find each other *interesting* in ways that endure. This is demonstrably true even when there’s a hiatus in the relationship eg as with **David Hodson**, **Steve Green** and even to an extent my bruv **Martin Tudor** (to mention a very few), although in the case of me ‘n’ **Strummer**, it seems as though we’ve *never* lost touch for very long.

Going back to dubious Ellison/Silverberg comparisons, was it actually the case that they were close friends as much as Harlan was with Isaac, for example? I’m not aware that they were, but that could also be a gap in my limited knowledge.

Certain factual comparisons may be possible. Ellison was (to my surprise) actually older than SilverBob (by seven months) inasmuch as I am older than **Mark** by about the same number of years. Bob and I have the fannish goatee look, which banjaxes the comparison a bit. I suppose the implication of the Drink Had Been Taken daft comparison is that one of us (the younger one) is in fact an elder statesman voice of reason and the other is as mad as a cut snake (or for the Australians “as mad as a gum tree full of galahs”).

I shall, however, continue to work on my impeccable moral compass...

It’s all good.

July 2021

RADIO WINSTON

WHAT’S IN A NAME?

Try & fail part 94: I’ve wanted to do another column on a band most of you have likely never heard of (cf *Eruca Sativa*), in this case an outfit yclept ‘Bad Camper’ but I’ve bottled that and gone to Plan B or some much later letter. Nevertheless, let me point you to their website anyway, and

sorry to Fish & the rest for not managing to be more effusive at this time...

<https://www.badcamper.org/>



In dodgy **David Hodson** tradition, I’ve therefore had to get into what was originally Plan A, superseded by Plan B(ad Camper) then back to the severely festering concept which my sore ‘ead had come up with: band names.

This was spurred in no small part by me listening to one of my Pandora ska channels (all day at work) and noting the influence of Prince Buster, who supplied the name of Madness (who [covered that slice](#), and did a marvelous tribute song, ‘[The Prince](#)’ which references a load of his titles), but you also had the usually very rude Judge Dread who took *his* moniker from a legendary [Buster effort](#).

Then, of course, what passes for my mind had some odd intrusions of bands who took their names from literary influences, the first I could think of being Steppenwolf, although better music historians than I could no doubt dig up earlier examples. Then of course there’s my beloved Mott the Hoople, the title of the Willard Manus novel that Guy

Stevens read while in prison and gifted that as name to the band who, having already had a couple of other monikers, were then known as 'Silence'. Stevens' suggestion was apparently met with a lot of dubiousness, but it all worked out in the end, didn't it?

I used to declaim (and it's still fairly true) that my favorite writers of all time were both named "James" (Ballard and Joyce), so it's rather predictable that I'd be predisposed to like a bunch of Yorkshire lads who took their group identity from a Ballard short story, 'The Comsat Angels' - are they now largely forgotten? Dunno, but as a reminder of how fuckin-A they were, [here's their Peel session from 1981](#), which ought to clue you as to why they were influential on later bands.

Of course, we can't conclude without mentioning certain fannish connections, most notably perhaps the prolific Jon Langford, younger brother of the legendary **David** of that ilk, who nevertheless resisted any temptation to name *his* band "The Deaf Twits", instead identifying with what might be considered at least a semi-literary reference to the old enemy of Dan Dare.

Finally, though, you have to admire a band who named themselves after a Goon Show episode, as if their use of two bass players wasn't unique enough: Ned's Atomic Dustbin, whose membership included Mat Cheslin, son of Ken, as one of those bass players - a solid little rock outfit whose stylings can be seen, I might suggest, in Reef, for one example. So here they are, advising you most strongly to '[Kill Your Television](#)', as unlikely as that is to occur...

FAANWANK / CORFLUX

Some news here. Even though the actual occurrence of Corflu Pangloss is still technically tentative (the US/Canadian border remaining closed for now), everyone is quite reasonably acting as though it *will* happen, and hotel room bookings are available. Given the bijou nature of the hotel, everyone's encouraged to get that room booking in, since this helps both the organizers and the hotel itself in cementing it all. Since cancellations (if you really must) seem easy enough to do and not subject to penalty, there's no reason not to, although round here we're actually waiting until I get the time off work confirmed, which may have happened by the time you read this. All the details you need are in [PR1](#).

Now then, the FAAn awards may see one significant change, and one perhaps less significant but sensible one.

The sort-of lesser one is that while there'll still be five slots per category on the ballot, the voters will now have the *option* of checking one of them as "top choice" for a bonus point, *or not*, if they prefer. The reasoning for this should be DoBFO - having a specified "top choice" slot for the 2021 awards restricted those who didn't want to name one to only allowing four selections. Now to be honest a review of the

ballots submitted would show that this isn't a huge fuckin' deal, since perhaps a plurality of voters don't use all five available slots anyway, but this little tweak to the method allows them that without having to name a particular top dog if they don't want to. My thanks to **Claire "M" Brialey** for this typically solid suggestion.

Let me reiterate that I see this really small change as an opportunity to improve the voter experience, since it seems to meet the needs of just about everybody: the "bonus point" for an ish or an individual who might be, in the opinion of some, clearly ahead of the pack found favor with a significant number of voters who were previously paralyzed by the thought of having to rank all their choices, and also this change doesn't penalize those who don't care to do so with a lesser number of available voting slots.

The second change might be considered a little controversial, I suppose, but here goes anyway.

I purposely refer to the FAAns as the Fanzine Activity Achievement Awards, whereas this has been abbreviated to "Fan Activity" on some occasions. I'm firmly in the camp that the awards are all about the core activities of the hobby: fanzine publishing, writing (including loccers) and fanart. I'll quote from the first ish of *The Incomplete Register* from 2018:

"A "fanzine", for our purposes, is defined as an immutable artifact, once published not subject to revision or modification. The fanzine might not exist in a physical form. A pdf, for example, is an artifact. Thus, fanwriters, artists and loccers listed are those who have contributed to such a publication."

Since 2008 there's been a category for 'Best Website' (or 'Online Achievement'), which in fourteen years has only generated two different winners: an 11-year sweep by **Bill Burns** for efanzines followed by three for **Joe Siclari** and **Edie Stern**'s fanac.org after voters finally listened a bit to the Magister's increasing embarrassment over this **Langfordian** excess. I've attempted tinkering with the category definition, apparently without much success, pretty much abandoning myself to a plea this year to vote for "fanzine-related websites", but ended up getting a thoroughly mixed bag of responses, some of which were only marginally "fanzine-related" at best. Thus, for the 2022 awards I again strongly advocate that this category be dropped, a position I've consistently held.

It might seem reflexively churlish to eliminate the category before **Siclari & Stern** have won at least as many awards as efanzines, but I've made the point previously that it looks a lot like having just substituted one perennial winner for another, for one thing, and for seconds I'll again point to the non-fanzine nature of several vote-getters the last couple of goes. I've also argued that the special award given to **Burnsy** in 2004 should have been left at that, and here's the follow-on...

Given my conception that the FAAn Awards admin gig is basically a “staff position” attached to the current Corflu, it’s very DoBFO that I’ve discussed this with **Ulrika O’Brien** (the boss), and we’ve agreed that the possible elimination of this particular category doesn’t prevent any Corflu team from deciding on a ‘Special Award’ for a website, or in fact anything else, whether that’s in consultation with the Awards admin or not, so I don’t see the category elimination as dissing any possible recognition for sterling work I’d define as *associated* with the fanzine hobby rather than being an integral part of the current expression of it.

All *that* having been said, if there’s a substantial (and well-argued) groundswell of opinion (something that needs to be more persuasive than “Well, it’s *nice* to have”) that the category should be retained then I will concede (with additional internal groaning). If that is the case, and someone wants to provide a blurb and/or actual listing for *The Incomplete Register*, I’ll willingly print it...

TAXINOMICS

One of the spots I used to stage a lot is the Waldorf Astoria (formerly Mandarin Oriental), but that’s been well hit-and-miss, so what happens now is that I’ll get a call from valet Daniela if they need a cab, and assuming I’m close enough I will naturally oblige. I’ll also just nip in from time to time just for a smoke break and footy chat with D (who supports Borussia Dortmund, being German, and - ugh! - Liverpool), and on such occasions I’ll also sometimes score a ride.

The Waldorf is actually part hotel (up to the 23rd floor), the rest being residential, and I’ve managed to get in there as well with a couple of regulars who will ask for me specifically for their usually short (but well-tipped) trips. This one time, however, I got a bloke and his daughter to the airport, and what a right fuckin’ herbert he was.

The airport drop zone is separated into three sets of lanes, the left ones reserved for shuttle buses, limos & that, the center more or less wide open, and the right lanes which are adjacent to the curbside check-ins and more often than not a bit of a scrum, so most times we’ll go in the center and drop next to the relevant crosswalk for the customer’s airline, in this case Delta. Herbert was not pleased by this maneuver claiming that in 20 years he’d *never* been dropped anywhere other than at the check-in curb (a transparent lie for many reasons, including but not limited to the statistical unlikelihood of the claim as well as the layout of the airport 20 years ago), and berated me (in measured tones) for clearly not wanting to brave the scrum for his benefit and concluding with “I’m *very* disappointed”.

Perhaps oddly, he did actually tip (\$3 I think) but was also one of these arseholes who includes a \$2 bill in the payment,

a bill which most deposit machines (including ours at work) won’t accept.

Fairly typically I didn’t immediately come up with any kind of witty acerbic response, but then I started thinking that what we had there was a bit of a profound socio-economic microcosm.

Let’s consider the roles of the participants here: we’ll designate the passenger as the mean capitalistic boss, shall we, and me as the humble worker, albeit in his temporary employ to meet his immediate transportation need. The boss assumes that his own specific needs must be met *at the expense of my own*.

The airport fare from the strip is a flat rate (\$23 in this case), and thus if I brave the scrum so that Herbert will have fewer steps to take, I’m making the same money but in a longer time - the fact that this amount of time would be mere minutes is not especially relevant as a matter of principle, but then consider that if those extra minutes are taken on every ride, my overall productivity is decreased, and so is my income. So logically I’d want to maximize my income by getting in and out as quickly as possible, which might be considered to make *me* the capitalist, or at least the one with entrepreneurial spirit.

It occurs at this point that Herbert, not wanting to have to take perhaps a dozen extra steps over a crosswalk, had the effrontery to suggest that *I* was the lazy one.

Capitalism, as I have so often observed, depends upon having winners and losers, and especially under current ultra-capitalist situations practically approaches zero-sum. If I take the extra time Herbert thinks I should, then I’m the loser, but the converse isn’t so obviously true, is it? He won’t be monetarily inconvenienced by having to walk a little more, whereas I will if he doesn’t.

Socialism would theoretically find some way in which both our needs would be met, and that’s possible by suggesting that I *might* have got a \$10 tip by dropping him where he expected to be, or perhaps more bureaucratically by imposing an extra charge for the convenience - another awful regulation for the capitalists to deride, shurely?

I’ll insert a small note here that, if I have passengers who are elderly, or perhaps encumbered with much luggage, or are disabled, I *will* bring them right to the check-in curb, and on one recent occasion took several extra minutes to secure a wheelchair for one who had a broken foot. ‘Cos that makes me feel good about myself. And I had a smoke break.

Now lets think about some sociological implications, which is (no surprise) going to have class structure elements.

Herbert, whose temporary employee I essentially am, has an expectation (as previously stated) that *his* needs are paramount perhaps on the simple basis that I am providing a service, which I am being paid for (nuances of the amount

of that payment aside). The fact this Herbert doesn't clock is that he is literally entrusting me with his life and depending upon my skill to deliver him safely to his destination, and with Vegas traffic and the many loons on the road that's not trivial. To pound that point in an even more DoBFO manner, every passenger's life is in my hands on every trip, which might seem overly dramatic, but it's true innit?

The servant is the effective master.



FOOTY

BY DAVID HODSON

So, I was two penalty kicks away from being wrong if one looks at the bald statistics (y'know, them things that follow on from lies and damned lies in the phrase mistakenly attributed to Benjamin Disraeli by Mark Twain), but, in truth, I was never really in any trouble.

Italy won the 2020 European Championship by beating England 3-2 in a penalty shot-out after a 1-1 draw over 120 minutes at Wembley Stadium on Sunday July 11th. Many would have you believe that the two best teams got to the final but, again, the truth is different and it can only safely be said that the two least flaky teams got to the final. Italy did it the hard way by coming through the side of the draw that contained World Champions France, FIFA's top ranked side Belgium (who they beat 2-1 in the quarter-finals), previous winners Portugal, Spain (who they also beat on penalties in the semi-finals after an extra-time draw), and Holland. England, just as they did at the 2018 World Cup, slipped quietly through the weaker side of the draw beating a very, very poor Germany 2-0 in the last sixteen tie, before needing a controversial penalty to beat Denmark 2-1 in extra-time in the semi-final (a result I could easily have seen going the other way if Denmark had not lost Christian Eriksen as discussed last time out) and then being kept at

arm's length by the Italians through the majority of the final. France and Holland kept up their schizophrenic traditions by being among both the most talented squads and the most psychologically combustible (Holland, a nation that has produced players like Johan Cruyff, who as a coach at Barcelona established the total football philosophy at club level; Ruud Gullit; Marco Van Basten; and Dennis Bergkamp, have only ever won one European Championship), whilst 2018 World Cup beaten finalists Croatia were shown to be aging and pretty much over the hill. Belgium has only ever been the world game's top seeds in name only (another one of those statistical instances that bewilder the unwary). Ronaldo couldn't keep carrying Portugal on his back forever. It's fair to say Euro 2020(1) was underwhelming in the extreme.

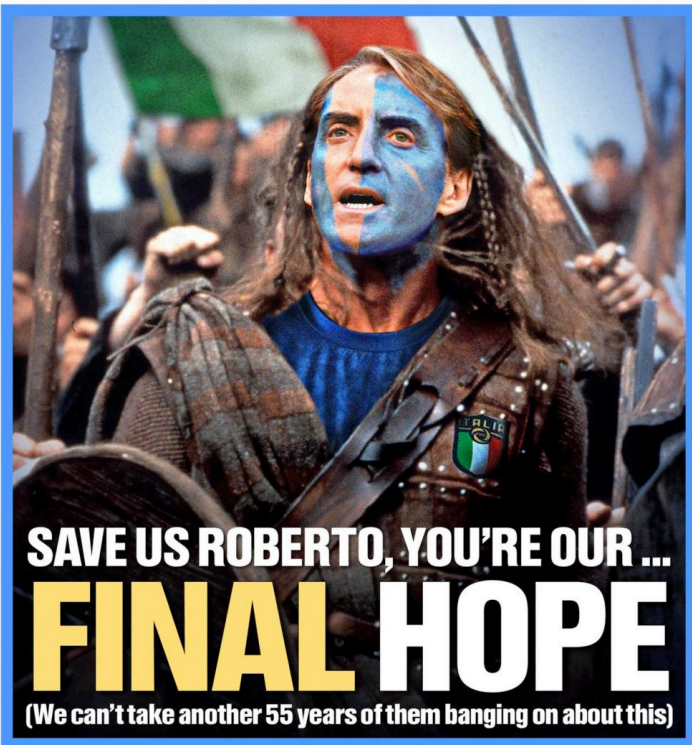
As England progressed through the tournament playing all but one of their games at Wembley, the pundits at the BBC and ITV kept referring back to Euro96, the previous tournament played in the UK when England, coached by Terry Venables and featuring Gareth Southgate as one of the team's centre-backs, reached the semi-finals before being beaten on penalties by Germany. To listen to Gary Lineker, Gary Neville, Alan Shearer, or any of the various other pundits and presenters, would give the impression that Euro96 was the equivalent of Woodstock, D-Day, VJ-Day, Christmas, Easter, and Pancake Day all rolled into one. I was managing a student union bar whilst Euro96 was underway; June 6th 1996, the opening day of the tournament, was the Saturday of Middlesex University's Fresher's Ball in a big top erected in Trent Park, Enfield. Live acts included Marc Almond, African Head Charge (who were absolutely, mind-bendingly brilliant), and The Wurzles. It was hard graft, but good fun, with a large amount of Columbian marching powder to keep the staff going for 36 hours solid. One of the female security staff who worked with me on a regular basis at the Tottenham Campus bar (all the security and bar staff were students), having finished her 8 hour shift and ripped to the gills, started chatting to me whilst I was on a break, produced a condom, and offered to let me use the inside whilst she used the outside. I still think that's one of the greatest chat-up lines I've ever heard, it was just a damned shame I was already involved with someone.

In other words, I enjoyed Euro96, it was a great tournament taking place whilst I was having a high old time, but it wasn't THAT good. We still had a Tory government; the economy was still tanked (that never really seems to change); things really could only get better and we all knew it. The magic of Euro96 was Britpop, The Lightning Seeds, Baddiel and Skinner, warm summer weather, and reasonably good humour as crowds sang along with their new favourite anthem: Three Lions; it wasn't the ramped up

faux optimism of a supposedly finished pandemic and post-Brexit sunny uplands.

THE NATIONAL

THE NEWSPAPER THAT SUPPORTS AN INDEPENDENT SCOTLAND



The magic of Euro 2020 faded in the memory much, much quicker than the nostalgia for Euro96. The magic of Euro 2020 faded before the final had even kicked off when [a reported 5,000 fans stormed an open gate of the stadium](#) to gain admittance, overcoming the under-resourced and under-trained private security, and causing the ground to be locked down for a period prior to kick-off. I've been a steward at Spurs, Arsenal, Leyton Orient, Charlton Athletic, and various other venues and the security staff are always under-resourced and under-trained; they're just a bunch of bodies hired at minimum wage to make up for the lack of police at the venues. The reason there are no longer any police officers in venues is because they now have to be paid to attend events, the drawback with this approach is successive governments have failed to legislate to force venues to have at least a minimal police presence to oversee onsite security. It's all well and good only having private security when the ground is full of ticketed only, smoked salmon sandwich eating and craft beer drinking, middle class, predominantly middle-aged, home owners (who the fuck else can afford a season ticket to a Premier League club?), but when it's the over-hyped first final in 55 years for a nation that regularly produces specimens like [Charlie Perry](#), the 25-year old moron who drank 20 cans of cider, snorted coke, and then placed a lit flare between the cheeks of his arsehole before being one of the storming mob, it's

probably wiser to have several firearms units backed up by S.A.S. and S.B.S. specialists on the gates. The only thing that pleasantly surprises me about Perry is his ability to not put the wrong end of the flare up his arse!

Before anyone accuses me of being too harsh on the unwashed Great British public, it might be worth reading [Marina Hyde's Guardian column](#) from the Friday after the final: What a week for England, and, yes, I know it was England fans that forced their way into Wembley, but don't kid yourself it wouldn't have happened at Hampden Park or The Millennium Stadium had it been Scotland or Wales playing a final on home soil. More than one commentator has traced [the connection between the upturn in Covid cases in Scotland and Euro 2020](#), especially following the "invasion" of London for the England-Scotland "derby".

The Week magazine has [since reported](#) that there were at least nine breaches of disabled entrances at Wembley before the game kicked-off and a police officer in attendance outside the stadium has accused superiors of holding back officers from intervening in security problems because of "brand image" fears. Fans were reported to be "running in packs" and "the stewards didn't care" about them gaining entrance to the stadium.

Of course, following the penalty shot-out loss in the final, the inevitable happened: all three penalty failures for England were by black players and literally within minutes the social media abuse started. With usual target Raheem Sterling off limits after being one of the players of the tournament, Jadon Sancho, Marcus Rashford, and the excellent Bukayo Saka, a 19-year old Arsenal player with the guts to take the final penalty of the shoot-out knowing what would likely come should he fail to score and whom I would love to see in a Spurs shirt, were all being [told to "go back where you come from" at the very least](#). Rashford even found himself being singled out by Conservative Member of Parliament Natalie Elphicke, who [accused him of "playing politics"](#) by holding the government to account over the lack of free school meals and other benefits during the (first) height of the pandemic when he should have been "perfecting his game".

Euro2020 wasn't good for the Tory party in general as Lee Anderson, MP for Ashfield in Nottingham, was [reported as refusing to watch England games](#) because he disagreed with the players taking the knee in a stand against racism in the game and Boris Johnson was ridiculed for his [fashion faux pas](#) of wearing a replica England shirt over his usual collared shirt and tie during the semi-final against Denmark. If only they had a media savvy special advisor to tell them when to shut up, what not to wear, and how to conduct a culture war.

The abuse against Rashford escalated as a mural of him in Withington, Manchester, was [defaced with what the local](#)

police called “racially aggravated” graffiti, although other sources later described it as the classic white spray paint cock and hairy balls scrawl. Within hours, the black covering put in place to cover the graffiti was itself being covered with notes and pictures from local well-wishers showing their support for Rashford. The site was beginning to look more like a shrine by the time the notes and tributes were being [removed to save them from forecasted bad weather](#) .



The only thing more depressing than the abuse suffered by Rashford, Sancho, and Saka, is, as I've already said, the obviousness of it. It was always going to happen as and when England lost a game, especially in the knock-out phase of the competition. And if it's not surprising that football “fans” would abuse players who actually spectacularly over-performed to get to the final of a competition, then it should also not be surprising that those fans are probably amongst the electorate that put a government in place that England centre-back [Tyrone Mings accused of “pretending” to be disgusted](#) at racist abuse and of “stoking the fire” of that abuse in the case of Home Secretary Priti Patel. Patel is a British Asian, which, on the surface, could make her a strange target for Mings to reproach, but there's absolutely no doubt that she did say she didn't support “people participating in that type of gesture politics” when discussing players taking the knee just before games kick-off.

There does seem to be very different sets of standards at play when discussing racism directed at footballers of predominantly Afro-Caribbean extraction and, for example, the attitudes displayed to British Asian cricketers. Sunday July 18th saw the England T20 cricket team win the second of three games against Pakistan at Headingley, Leeds, to [level the series](#) . Key to England's win were three British Asian players – Adil Rashid, Moeen Ali, and Saqib Mahmood –

whilst Afro-Caribbean player Chris Jordan, a fixture in the T20 side due to his line and length bowling specialism, played a cameo role as well. All four players were also involved in the series decider two days later at Old Trafford, Manchester, which [England won by three wickets](#) . It's hardly surprising that there was no jingoistic, chest-beating euphoria about a three game T20 cricket series against Pakistan to rival the Euro 2020 final, but, even when the “Barmy Army” is in full voice during an Ashes series against Australia, there never seems to be the same animalistic animosity towards the opposition or racist bile produced towards the players in defeat. Maybe I'm viewing cricket through rose-tinted spectacles, there undoubtedly have been incidents in the past that I'm missing, but they certainly don't seem to approach the vitriolic levels that following the national football team seems to inspire. The crowds at both T20 games seemed good humoured and genuinely supportive of players who, regardless of race, had produced exciting performances and it's unlikely that humour and support would have been any different had England lost. The thrill was in the nail-biting nature of the knife edge results; both games could have swayed either way several times over.

Oh well, the pre-season friendlies are upon us. Spurs played Leyton Orient on Saturday, July 17th in aid of the Justin Edinburgh Foundation for research into prostate cancer and drew 1-1 and last night (July 21st) best Colchester United 3-0. Nic's beloved Watford played two one-hour games behind closed doors against Colchester at the weekend to run the rule over several trialists, it'll be interesting to see if anyone made a mark in the matches and goes on to play for them in the coming season. Spurs have another new coach, ex-Wolverhampton Wanderers manager Nuno Espirito Santo, who will probably be a better fit at the club than Jose Mourinho but I can't claim any great optimism for the coming season. Until fans are back in grounds on a regular basis, safe from large-scale covid outbreaks, football as a whole is really just treading water and the coming financial meltdown will hove more clearly into view as clubs try to prune their squads, sell fringe players for unrealistic amounts, and attempt to pick up bargains among free agent players.

All that and we haven't even discussed the Olympic Games in Tokyo yet...

LOCO CITATO

[[“I don’t care that they stole my idea. I care that they don’t have any of their own”. (Nikola Tesla)...]]

From: mikeglyer@cs.com

June 18

Mike Glycer writes:

I’m mystified by your inaccurate “correction” of my fanhistory cite, insisting that “Garcia never got anywhere near a FAAn award” when the official Corflu FAAn Awards list shows him winning the 2006 ‘Best New Fan’ category.

[[You’re correct in (only) that, Mike, and of course, yes, I missed it, probably since I only tend to focus on the “main” categories...]]

This reminds me of the deflating experience I once had on a fanhistory panel at a Worldcon. A question about Harry Warner’s involvement in something in the Forties came up and I supplied the answer. Jack Speer, sitting in the front row of the audience, immediately contradicted me. I knew my answer was right because I’d just read it in Harry’s own fucking book the previous week.

You’ve artfully avoided my point that real fanzines by real fanzine fans that make the Hugo ballot are treated as dead to those of you complaining why real fanzines don’t get Hugos. That you don’t like something is a red herring diverting from the issue. But I guess if any Hugo winner was ever admitted to be a real fanzine, then you’d have to expend even more words explaining why the Hugos are irrelevant to FAAn voters. Which is a problem in what way? Aren’t you always looking for the next reason to write thousands of words about the FAAns?

[[One of the things I forgot to get back to was additional comment on your last loc on this very topic. It’s most certainly arguable that the FAAn Award constituency doesn’t “recognize” most if not all of the Hugo nominees as belonging to their world. Then again, I thought, it also seems likely that the eminent Deaf Twit tended not to get FAAn awards (or Novas?) perhaps on the basis that he’d got a lock on the rocket for quite a while. Perhaps this implies that at least subconsciously FAAn voters might favor less “well-known” titles and individuals, given a presumed broader knowledge of the field than most Hugo voters? Purists might suggest that any “publication” without a loccol isn’t a “real fanzine”, hence, perhaps, their disinterest in Journey Planet, for one example...]]

Thanks for adorning my LoC with an illustration by **Ulrika** -- I am honored!

[[A mere quirk of layout, but you’re welcome...]]

From: robjackson60@gmail.com

June 18

Rob Jackson writes:

Your reprint of the 1976 FAAn Award ballot, along with your request for comments, instilled in me a distinct sense of nostalgia for my earlier incarnation as an active fan. Of course, those were the days when neatly duplicated zines and other publications were often typed out using IBM Golf Balls, and that awards ballot was a prime example. *Maya* was different; it was typed using an IBM Executive C with variable spacing.

Although I went on to win some FAAn Awards over the next couple of years, as did people I published such as **Harry Bell** and Bob Shaw, I don’t really remember being all that central to the FAAn award deliberation process – I think I was more a sort of token Brit. I certainly don’t remember being there being any active canvassing or manipulation of voting. The ballots were just flung out there in the usual way, and the results floated in or not as the voters chose.

[[I’d ask for clarification on “the usual way” there Doc - it would be interesting to learn exactly what the distribution of the ballot was. The wording of the document suggests that it wouldn’t have gone to anyone not known (or approved of) by the “committee”...]]

I think I must have been asked to be on that committee simply because I was one of the higher profile British fans in American fandom at the time. That was almost certainly because *Maya* was the highest profile British zine in American fandom during the second half of the 70s. I simply spent a stupidly large and obsessive proportion of my junior doctor’s salary on photolitho printing, and posting copies to pretty much every American fan – or pro – for whom I could find an address. I’m nowhere near that obsessional now. (Just think – there must have been a time when Harlan threw away some copies of *Maya*.)

Talking about perfectionism, I was as usual seriously impressed by **Bill Burns’** knowledge of exactly how to manipulate a computer. We all know that there are fiddly things we can do with the abstruse depths of such features as the Find/Replace function in word processing programs, but most of us simply forget. Arcane wisdom...

[[The Magister knows all...]]

Dave Redd’s mishearing of the Who track “I’m an Ear Sitting in the Sky” leaves me with quite a sense of wonder. It’s much more awe-inspiring than being told by Chumbawamba in Tubthumping to piss in the microwave.

[[I should point out that “I’m An Ear Sitting In the Sky” was supposedly Speedy Keen’s original title...]]

From: johnsila32@gmail.com

June 19

John Nielsen Hall writes:

I will make no more remarks on the "train wreck". I think you own that by now.

[[By the same token I should probably also stop teasing you about it. A correction, though, since it seems we've mutated the original, which I found in your loc published in This Here... #14 : "...this latest gripping instalment in the long slow motion car crash that is your life.". This topic is now mercifully closed...]]

A one year lease does indeed seem very short term, but I guess it is a case of what you are used to. This place I am living in, which is basically a converted stables and coach house/ garage was let on a 25 year lease when Audrey and I moved in, in 2004. There are various exclusions and peculiarities about the lease, but it has suited us and now just me, all this time and the rent is, by current U.K. market standards, laughably cheap. But the lease will be up in 2029, eight years away, and while I have thought about buying what folks around your way call a trailer, there are voices elsewhere that suggest/insist that I think about moving to sheltered accommodation (Yes, I really am that old!) and start looking soon, not wait until about six months before I have to go, such accommodation being in short supply with long waiting lists. Actually I think that my landlords, the family who live next door in the big Manor, are just as likely to let such legal niceties as a lease expiry slide, but a bigger problem might be that being out in the bush, as it were, I cannot do without a car, specifically my lovely 4.2 litre Supercharged V8 Range Rover, yet the older I get, the more likely it is under U.K. law that the powers-that-be (Fight The Power!) will find a medical reason why I should not drive. Or that my planet warming, gas guzzling, noise abatement society annoying conveyance, will not be permitted to go anywhere. So I must start doing something positive about that soon. Only the very thought of having to move depresses me. I think I might just leave everything behind and start again.

[[Good luck with it all, old lad. A year-to-year lease isn't uncommon round these parts, since it gives the landlord a chance to jack up the rent fairly regularly. We'd like



to buy, but that's pretty much contingent on Jen getting a million-dollar movie deal on one of her books - we'd naively like to think that's not totally unlikely. We still appear to be in mostly good graces with the landlord's agent here anyway, although they're not especially joyous about the place smelling of tobacco smoke - "Please try to smoke outside", to which my curt response is likely to be" "Tried. Failed". But I suppose we'll see how it all goes ey?...]]

Good news about the haircut, by the way. If you got shot of the beard as well, you would start looking proper.

[[Not likely. I do remember after my fund-raising haircut for Martin Tudor's TAFF candidacy, Rog Peyton remarking "I've always 'ated that bloody moustache!" and me saying that if he wanted rid of it he should stick his hand in his fuckin' pocket, then (and of course remove said hand with dosh attached). As he did. I'm keeping the traditionally fannish goatee, though...]]

From: billb@ftldesign.com

June 19

Bill Burns writes:

Nice tape machine photo with **Steve Jeffery's** LoC! This was taken in the 1960s in one of the studios at my first employer, BBC Overseas Services at Bush House on Aldwych. Those EMI BTR2 machines were built like tanks, and ran forever. You'll note that there's a rail at either side of the top deck - these were the attachment points for the slings of a hand-operated hoist to lift the top part of the machine for service.

The Liverpool Group were early adopters of tape and film, Norman Shorrocks being the techie, and **Rob Hansen** has recently been putting up some details of presentations at UK Eastercons in the 1950s. 'The March of Slime', an audio spoof by the Liverpool Group of the American newsreel series '[The March of Time](#)', was presented as a "[tapera](#)" at the 1955 Eastercon in Kettering:

Before that, there had been presentations on tape in 1952 and 1954, then there were tape and film shows in quite a few subsequent years. Rob has a [detailed list](#).

[[You continue to amaze us, O Magister...]]

From: noel.collyer@btinternet.com

June 20

Noel Collyer writes:

I really enjoy reading the thoughts of Chairman Nic.

[[Falls off chair, gets arse tattoo...]]

The infamous Fart blow-back I do remember witnessing once as an apprentice when we were sent off for a weeks course with BT. The kid, for such we were then, did the deed through his jeans but the flame got sucked back & stuck between his jeans & him! Needless to say we were too drunk & howling with laughter to help the guy who had the flame blossoming around his buttocks on the inside! I can't remember if the girls were laughing louder than the rest of us though but they probably were.

[[This gives consideration to the possibility that the Noel Collyer arse tattoo could be constructed in such a way for it to be fire-breathing...]]

As for the footie, "Oh god not again!! When will the horror ever end!" I say it's about time the 15th Century prohibitions for playing foot-ball at the expense of archery practice on Sundays were reinstated. However, I'm glad that the (supposed) Law that said it was "legal to shoot a Welshman with a longbow on Sunday in the Cathedral Close in Hereford; or inside the city walls of Chester after midnight; or a Scotsman within the city walls of York, other than on a Sunday" was repealed otherwise I might have to shoot myself.

[[David Redd thus remains in hiding, and Doug Bell continues to avoid York (other than on a Sunday), even as Ian Sorensen is encouraged to visit. Possibly not related to archery (though I've a vague memory of the law you cite), didn't one of the King Jameses actually ban golf at some point on the simple basis that "it looketh like a silly game"?...]]

From: leighedmonds01@gmail.com

June 21

Leigh Edmonds writes:

Since I am old (as defined by the Social Security Act, 1991) and half blind (as defined by the Road Safety Act, 1986) I almost missed your little dig at me on the final page of *This Here ...* 43. But, by chance, I did notice it and I did press the little blue button and, you're right, I'm bewildered. So far as I could tell the song in question had three main ideas, namely; he is driving his car, he is in possession of an illicit substance and he is pulled over by the coppers. There is also something about signing a piece of paper in there. I think I could string together a meaning from these fragments, but I'm waiting to read your lucid and colourful description instead.

[[You've pretty much clocked the gist of it. The fun aspect of Smiley's delivery is how he can switch from Jamaican patois to Cockney without a breath - the bit I figured would require most explanation is the term "producer" - the cozzers in UK will ask to see your license, insurance and MoT (vehicle worthiness certificate), but if you don't have them in your immediate possession you're given notice to bring them to your local nick within (vaguely recalling) 7 days i.e. you must "produce" these vital documents. Smiley prays "police officer, don't give me no producer", giving the assumption that he will be unable to comply. Now to BOACAs like meself who spent some of their formative years in London in communities with a West Indian contingent, all this is well fuckin' hilarious. 'Police Officer' was a sequel to (and references) his previous slice 'Cockney Translation' which is a guide to mutual slang understanding...]]

The above attack of officialism was brought on by **Mark Plummer's** speculation on our comparative rankings in the Public (or Civil as he would say) Service. I was told that the old Class 9 was converted to an Executive Level 1 position when they went to the new system, which is the bottom grade of what one might call the 'Red Hat' brigade. So say, equivalent to Lieutenant Colonel. What a frightening thought, me the equivalent to a colonel? I wouldn't want to be in any armed force which had me as a senior officer, nobody would be safe! The truth is that I may never have made it to a substantive Class 9 because I had very long hair, looked intolerably scruffy, never wore a tie and didn't possess a suit. I had long realized that if I really wanted to get on in the service I'd have to sharpen up and do a Masters in Public Administration, but that would have been less fun than engaging in fanac or hanging around in universities, so I didn't. No doubt the inertia of the service in Canberra would have lifted me to a Class 9 eventually no matter what I did. As it was, I found that at universities, in the Arts and Social Sciences at least, my appearance and attitude were more or less the compulsory uniform if one wanted to get on, so here I am.

[[And now I'm thinking of you as William Mandella...]]

So there's another little tid-bit for **Bruce Gillespie**. I'm reminded that we went together to see the Rolling Stones at Kooyong some time in the early 1970s. Don't get me wrong, the Stones were a great act and in many ways superior to The Beatles. Probably they were the greatest rock and roll band in the world until AC/DC, and that band's "farewell" concert in Festival Hall before going overseas was unforgettable, not just great. However, The Beatles shone brighter while they were around and, I think, played a greater part in realigning popular music than the Stones. As another aside, the other day I was contemplating the Bell UH-1 helicopter which led me to think of the Little Richard number 'Long Tall Sally' (as you do) and that led me to You Tube to watch a performance or two. Among the versions

was the Beatles performance and, boy, where they a tight little band in 1964. Their performance was not as good as the best Little Richard performance but great in its own way. After that I found my way to Chuck Berry's 'Johnny B Goode' and 'Roll Over Beethoven' that the Beatles also covered rather nicely. And while I'm in this mood, I was cruising down the road to visit the doctor the other day (as one of our age does) listening to the radio when on came the Kinks 'All Day and All of the Night'. I turned the volume up to 11 and was transported back to 1964 for a couple of minutes. That is a high water mark in 20th Century music but not well remembered. Who knows what popular music would have been like if Ray Davies hadn't reimagined himself a songwriter.

You are right that my contention that popular music calmed down some times after 'The Who Live at Leeds' needs further analysis, but I recall wearing out my copy around the time of Syncon in 1970, so that's later than I thought. A bit before that Hendrix and Joplin died and The Beatles and Cream had broken up, and it seemed that the record companies had decided to go back to making money out of pop music rather than rock and roll. There was also Disco, but let's not think about that too much. Thankfully punk came along to save us all from a fate worse than the kind of musical death we'd endured in the early 1960s. If I recall right there was a long article in a British fanzine by Peter Roberts (or was it Hank & Lesleigh's *Starling*) around that time by a fan who wrote very well about music and heralded the arrival of the Sex Pistols as the savior of good popular music. At that time I thought he was absolutely right. Talking of which, thank you putting in the hypertext link to **Dave Hodson's** recommendation of The Avengers that I did enjoy because You Tube took me through a few of their tracks. Enough about music, apart from to write that your link to 'Little Miss Can't be Wrong' was the first piece of music that you've linked to that I've actually recognized. Pleasant and listenable, but not on my top 1,000 tracks of the 20th Century.

[[See also W^m Breiding's, er, spin on that band...]]

You're right that **Perry Middlemiss** has put well the the explanation of the current trend to favour virtue over quality, when it comes to lots of things. It makes me wonder how much of the currently fashionable stuff will be read in a few years time when other virtues are fashionable. This also raises the question of what is quality, which is maybe

something that people smarter than I can discuss. Your comments following on from that about tokenism and the quality of many of our fellow humans seems appropriate too. Unlike you, I spend most of my days with no other company than Valma and two wilful cats but in your line of work you must be exposed to it all the time. I don't know that most people's nerves would last long if they didn't know what was going to happen every time they picked up a passenger. And I don't know that the good and entertaining people you see would counterbalance the bad ones. That's why I have a lot of time for people who work in shops, having to deal with all sorts of people and never knowing what is going to happen next..

Perry suggests that it only costs about \$1 a week to be a supporting member of a Worldcon, which would be fine if I had an infinite (or overly large) amount of money to spend.

But perhaps the point is that I wouldn't get as much bang for my buck from a Worldcon supporting membership as I do get from my subscription to Big Jet TV which I could watch for five or more hours a week or my subscription to Netflix that also give me much more entertainment. True, I also pay memberships to a couple of history of technology groups that hold annual conventions that I don't get to, but they send me journals packed with interesting stuff to read which is, in its own way, entertaining. So I guess there are some among your readership who get more value from a Worldcon supporting membership than they would if they paid money to the people and groups I do. This is, I guess, why I reckon that the Hugos are none of my business, since I am not prepared to pay for that particular activity.



[[Pretty much my take, that, but it sometimes seems unavoidable to address the topic...]]

Steve Jeffery reminds me that I have an EMS Synthi A sitting in the bottom of my wardrobe that I haven't opened in at least a decade. The last time I did it still had that lovely 1970s electronics smell to it. I guess that it still works but I haven't played it in maybe twenty years mainly because it would take more time to get into tune with it again. Like most musical instruments, it needs constant practice to be able to play it well and this one is no exception, and I just don't have the time to dedicate to it. I suppose, also, that there are many synthesizers available on computers these days but I'd have to learn them too. The other thing is that I played a few Synthi As and each one had its little quirks so it

needed to be played a little differently - on mine the ring modulator was always a bit twitchy for example.

[[A duet of thee and me on the keys might have more traction than a choral duet with Mike Glycer, to be sure. This gets you membership of the roster of the so far mythical fanband 'The Inky Fingers', a DoMI construction floated by meself and S&ra Bond...]]



Both **Steve** and **Bill Burns** have come comments on wire and tape recorders which, as **Bill** points out, both work in the same basic magnetic way. I only saw one wire recorder and wondered how the wire fed off one spool and onto the other without getting tangled. I guess that eventually the tape recorder won because the tape meant it could record one, two or four tracks. Around the time I was using the Synthi A all the time I also had an old style single track tape recorder which meant it was easily possible to play the tape in reverse. But, of course that was back in the days of analog sound recording when a lot of the work still had to be done physically. Reading **Steve's** comments on 'In C' sent me off to look at the 53 sequences and the playing instructions on the www, which were almost enough to get me interested in that kind of music again.

I was very disappointed by **Jerry Kaufman's** attempt to explain away the trans dimensional portal in his house as a heating duct. The heating ducts in our house look nothing like that. I will have to let his question to me about whether or not Spain and Italy are part of Europe go through to the keeper because I cannot now remember what I was thinking, if I was.

[[Edge nick - yer out!!...]]

Perverse is the only word I can think of to describe the publication of early issues of *Banana Wings* by copying laser printed masters onto electrostencils. As Mark says, 'retro-teched', 1980s onto 1950s tech. I can only imagine that mimeo was cheaper than offset printing at that time. I remember electrostencils as expensive things to be used (and reused) sparingly but things had probably changed by that time. The Roneo 750s that several of us in Melbourne had were electric but for shorter runs it was easier to turn them through by hand, and even when you had a 300 copies print run it was fun to crank them through as fast possible as though we were competing in the fannish Olympics. Besides, if anything went wrong it was quicker to stop by hand than to turn off the motor.

I know the photo that **Eli Cohen** talks of well: me, he, Valma and Susan Wood at Discon II. It is one of our favourites and I'd scan it and send it to you except that it's piled up in the back shed at the moment while renovations are taking place here. As for that issues of **Eli's** 1981 fanzine, I guess that I forgot to LoC it. However he will be happy to know that it most likely sits on a shelf in the Murdoch (Walter, not Rupert) University all safe and sound and I'll get around to it RSN the next time I'm in Perth.

John Hertz has a good point when he writes "Ask not what Worldcon can do for you ... etc". I guess that this tells me is that it's not only Hugos that have little interest for me but Worldcons in general. If there was another one in Australia I'd probably go just to keep my record complete, but otherwise ... Otherwise, if there was a con nearby in a hotel with a good bar I'd probably go for a day to hang out there with friends and ignore the program entirely, as usual. **Perry** knows all about convention organizing so I'm sure he could put on such an event, except that I heard him and David Grigg (Chair of the 1985 Worldcon) say on a recent podcast that they're never doing that kind of thing again. Can't say that I blame them, so perhaps my liver remains more or less unsullied for now.

[[My version of Hertz's point boils down to "Well, Worldcon does nothing for me, so I therefore do nothing for Worldcon" ...]]

It's nice to see that you and **Mike Glycer** are on conversing terms these days.

[[That's an odd observation, since I'm not aware that Mike Glycer and I have ever not been on "conversing terms",

despite what you might deduce at an Antipodean remove from our interactions in these pages. This is an interesting adjunct, perhaps, to Justin Busch's review analysis in which he admits (and usefully expounds upon) the inherent subtexts in any given fanzine eg me taking the piss out of John Purcell in a previous 'Egotorial', or in this case you not being aware of the fact that that "Mr. 770" and I have engaged in friendly correspondence for many years. Thus when Mike (happily for me) decides to engage on any topic in these pages, however critically or snarkily, I take that in the context of that friendship, as indeed I do with the mathematically-challenged Purcell. I could also point out that Mike was invited to my wedding to Jennifer as "Official War Correspondent", most nicely turned up and managed to [write a report](#) while modestly omitting the fact that he was feted shamelessly by other attendees. I mention your comment to Mike, who very cordially confirms: "Heavens to Betsy! We get along fine. Always have so far as I know. And while "embedded correspondent" was a term to be avoided under the circumstances, I was there [at the wedding]! Even if we didn't get along fine, I don't think you'd shy away from talking to me. Not your style to go holier-than-thou."...]]

From: jakaufman@aol.com

June 21

Jerry Kaufman writes:

I was happy to see Dave Hodson's call-out to the Avengers, because I saw them at Washington Hall (I think it was called) in the late 1970s or early 1980s. I remember loving Penelope Houston's singing and the band's powerful drive, and that I got to the front of the house and was slamming my hands on the edge of the stage. (More or less in rhythm, I swear.) I got one of their albums, and much later one or two of Houston's solo work, but as usual, the raw energy of the live performance didn't translate fully to vinyl. (The same was true of Patti Smith's *Horses* when compared to the PSG in person.)

[[So many bands who were pure gold live but didn't manage to capture that, quite, when in the studio. Early (and beloved) Mott the Hoople come to mind there, but I'd also mention the Radio Stars...]]

It's wonderful how Ulrika's watercolors come out in reproduction - they retain their watery look, "Moonrise" on page 12 may not be watercolor, but it's my favorite of the pieces in this issue.

I think I've got more to say but it's not immediately coming to mind. I'm rather bursting with thoughts about possible travel later this year to conventions, not to mention the fanzine that Eli Cohen admonishes me about, the small but perfectly formed convention I will help to run next year

(known as Corflu Pangloss), the books I want to read and movies I want to watch on DVR and the mail I'm about to pick up from our PO Box.

[[Speaking of Pangloss (as you do), the first stage of intended attendance is in process, having requested time off work...]]

From: tommy@tommyworld.net

June 23

Tommy Ferguson writes:

This is a draft loc on *This Here... 40* - fer fucksake man, slow down - give me a chance!

I still think this Winter's UK cons (Corflu & Novacon) are doable in person. Even with a "third wave" - I'm sure that's a shitty 70s SciFi movie from John Carpenter - the vaccination program in the western world at least is very well advanced. I'm going to Bristol - even if there isn't a con! And just about to book flights to Vancouver next year whilst they are still £430 return - from Belfast.

Dublin 2019 was my first WorldCom - I had fun - but not too sure those big cons (even EasterCons are a stretch) are for me. Looking forward to hosting TitanCon in-person next year (virtual one-nighter set for 28th August this year) with the same great guests [titancon.com](#).

At least this'll get me into the WAHF column...

[[Too good to WAHF, Stavros! Explanation for Leigh Edmonds and Justin Busch: 'Stavros' was a character created by the English comedian Harry Enfield, of a Greek kebab vendor and dedicated Arsenal fan, the latter of which also applies to Tommy Ferguson. The former may as well, as far as I know, mind...]]

From: portablezine@gmail.com

June 25

William Breiding writes:

Lassitude. Mental, physical, emotional. One of my great failings as a human being is a necessary distancing. One is not the loneliest number. Thus, the sounds of silence. But I do rock back and forth, yep.

For instance: the Spin Doctors. A one trick lick band. I never saw them jam, but they were certainly embraced by the jam band culture. Guitarist Schenkman's loose grooves (but the same ones, pretty much over and over, with a slight variation) and Barron's loopy, bouncing stage presence (not to mention the goofy hats) caused jammers to love the band's essentially precise 3-4 minute pop songs. I tired quickly of both Schenkman's guitar and Barron's voice. Though

White's bass was *always* tasty. John Popper's harp would have been a great addition to their sound—essentially as you called it, with no argument here—hugely influenced by the southern rock sound.

[[I'd certainly agree that "essentially precise 3-4 minute pop songs" is a very valid summation...]]

For a much more hardcore true-blue southern rock band from NYC that existed in the same time frame as the Spin Doctors, but seemingly in an alternate universe, I direct you to the band **Raging Slab**. True—they verge close to metal at times, but the band has too much boogie in them, and Greg and Elyse (now dead, alas) were masters of irony and lyrical stylists, and never fully trudged into the Heavy.

The Who: I never liked their sound, and still don't. "Armenia City in the Sky" seems typical British fey psychedelia (also not one of my faves, with the exception of Pink Floyd's *Piper at the Gates of Dawn*) until you realize that Townsend ended up using much of the guts of it for the ever-irritating *Tommy* concept.

[[Fully disagree. See also later comment...]]

That NPR top fifty list for 1971 is pretty eccentric, I think, and probably not what these "member station" music geeks might have actually been listening to, but a retrospective summing to reflect NPRish diversity. I'm a couple of years older than you: I was 15 in 1971. I'd just taught myself to play guitar that year and we were living very hippie, still, even though the era had its death knell toll and gong and there was no one but grifters and junkies wandering around San Francisco's Haight Street while the neighborhood tried to pick up the pieces in the aftermath. I'm setting the scene here because one of the biggest bands of 1971 is not mentioned in the NPR list; the totally square Bread was very much embraced as part of the new singer-songwriter movement that was emerging, and David Gates was a brilliant songwriter, regardless of what you might think of those songs. Bread were the epitome of the moment, and also of that movement: completely bland and self involved, but *soothing* for the soul. I taught myself Bread songs and belted them back to the world. James Taylor, Carole King. Yikes. I'm cringing already, but that kid loved them all. There is a lot to nit-pick in that NPR list. Elton John's *Madman Across the Water*. No mention. The great thing about looking at yearly retrospective pop music charts is seeing their diversity. I am always amazed when I see that diversity, even in the top of the pops, let alone in the bubbling-under, not to mention the music underground. (I will admit this: I might have been a hippie kid and I might have embraced pabulum. **Rich Coad**, at the same time period, was no doubt listening to far edgier tracks.) And so, as with everything in these days of the The Fall, NPR's list has an underlying agenda, I think.

[[Generally agreed. See also ect...]]

What you are missing in both **Leigh Edmonds'** and **Mark Plummer's** statements about not having expectations of publication while describing their method of letter composition (indeed, justifying that choice) is false modesty. I understand that compulsion. If you write a letter to a fanzine and tell yourself it may not get published, and that it's the fan editor's right to choose not to, then your feelings are left unscathed if you are merely WAHFed. But. Both **Leigh** and **Mark** are exceptional letter writers and skilled communicators (as well as innately interesting men) and frequently there is a sense of performance to their letters that makes them exciting. So while they might philosophically embrace the it's-the-faned's-prerogative attitude, it's a false modesty driven by insecurity, because they are brilliant.

[[That's a good observation, and I think a quirk many of us have tended to share. While these days I tend to reject "false modesty" as such, it's observable that I'm wont to engage in self-deprecation, and on the basis that in doing fanac (as with comparable endeavors) a true and significant part of the motivation, as I have stated before, is that we simply want to be told that we're brilliant. As you've rightly done here re: Leigh and Mark. In some ways I can quite clock the need to proceed with lowered expectations, and personally I can waver between the semi-extremes of pride in having a fuckin'-A loccol but also joy in the fact that I get any response at all, a joy which exerts its presence with every ping of the electronic mailbox. It's also an occasion when the likes of Perry Middlemiss mentions the "This Here... community" (in a previous loc) giving rise to a bit of astonishment before realising that, yep, at least at this moment, that is A Thing...]]

Thanks again for forwarding the N3F's new nameless newszine (actually looks and reads like a reviewzine) with **Justin Busch's** fanzine review column. You are absolutely right to be impressed with **Justin's** review of *This Here*. . . and *Pablo Lennis*. There is serious critical thinking going on in this particular column, and the writing is flawless and compulsive. I don't necessarily agree with him, however; this disagreement comes from a difference in perception of what I personally feel is of value. But Justin's thinking about fanzines is coming to peak level. Anchoring his review column with *Tommyworld* is the type of stroke of insight that has caused me to admire him from first contact with his zine publishing enterprise. And he is evolving and getting better, or perhaps more accurately, slowly unveiling the true nature of his abilities.

[[Nods of almost full agreement for this paragraph, W^m, but I'd hesitate to describe anyone's writing as "flawless", even as there are those who do approach that holy status. "Compulsive", certainly; "serious critical thinking", absolutely. It's massively fuckin' tempting to suggest that Justin is wasted over at N3F (where I might conclude that he's read only by a bunch of insular sorts), but then again

you've got to give pops to George Phillis for giving him the outlet for what is, as you say, excellent work. In several ways we're actually bouncing ideas off each other, in that Justin notes my own remarks on what are almost entirely separate fanzine communities and runs with that - his column also serves as encouragement to that community to check out what exists beyond the N3F walled compound and, extremely importantly, why they should. There's also comment to be made here that general dismissiveness of the N3F (or anything else) is massively fuckin' lazy. While, yes, "communities" of fanzine fanac do exist in separation from each other, it seems much more productive to root for the truffles therein, don't it? As a final comment ("Was that a 'Thank fuck!' from the back?" (c) Chuck Connor) I'd like to note that I fuckin' love the fact that you and I can fully disagree and fully agree within the same loc...]]

[...]

[[W^m later adds (July 13): ...]]

One of the [other] things that stuck in my head was your comment that your haircut was along the style of Jason Statham. Mine also! But what I wanted to say was that it's a damned shame Statham only does action films. He's a really good actor, if you take the time to notice. I'd love to see him in a romantic comedy or a period costume drama. Or some serious arty film. That would be fucking awesome!

[['Parker' (2013) could be considered to have rom-com aspects to it. Jennifer Lopez is excellent in it an'all...]]

From: eli.cohen@mindspring.com

June 27

Eli Cohen writes:

There I was, halfway through filling out the FAAN nominating ballot you so thoughtfully included (1976 fanac! At last something I'm qualified to nominate in!), let's see, *Amor* 10 and *SpanInq* 7/8, of course, and what issue of *Mota*... when I see the ballot is due by March 21, 1977! What is this Farey up to, I think, sending them out so late?? So I gingerly open up *This Here*... and -- Bloody hell, just a historical tidbit attached so you can go off on a rant about voting



procedures? And you don't even mention Arrow's Paradox, Pareto efficiency, EPH, or Bruce Schneier!

[[I had to look up 'Arrow's paradox' which I found quite fascinating. I am familiar with Pareto, though - in earlier days when I was at least semi-obsessed with category definitions in the FAAn awards I somewhat reflexively attempted to apply metrics, including Pareto optimality (the "80/20 rule" for those unfamiliar) to define whether an ish is a perzine or a genzine, but finally arriving at the more subjective conclusion that, like porn "we know what it is when we see it"...]]

Oh well, as long as I'm here I guess I might as well write a LoC.

Re David Redd and translations of different Welsh dialects -- I remember seeing the movie 'West Side Story' in an Amsterdam theater, where the subtitles dutifully translated both the English and Spanish dialog into Dutch. Losing something in the translation, as they say. And when it comes to different dialects of the same language, it's got to be much worse for any translation. There was a hilarious episode of 'A Very Secret Service' (*Au service de la France*, a French comedy series on Netflix that takes place in 1960), where some *Quebeçois* come to France to seek help with their separatist movement -- there's a meeting with the French officials where the Canadians chatter on in their deep Quebec accent while the French shrug at each other in puzzlement, not understanding a word! ("I thought you said they spoke French!" "We do speak French!" "What did he just say?") Of course the English subtitles are all, well, English.

[[I did have one occasion when I had some passengers in the cab who were chuntering on, and as I half-listened concluded that they were speaking French (of which I have a minor fluency) but didn't understand a fuckin' word - at which point I clocked that they must be Quebeçois, as was indeed the case. I'm also reminded of some hilarious dubbing of "chop-socky" movies back in the early 1970s, in which one diminutive Oriental turns to his pal, and referring to a third and much larger aggressive person, says in a very Brooklyn way "Hey! Who is dis guy?"...]]

Ulrika's art is, as always, just beautiful.

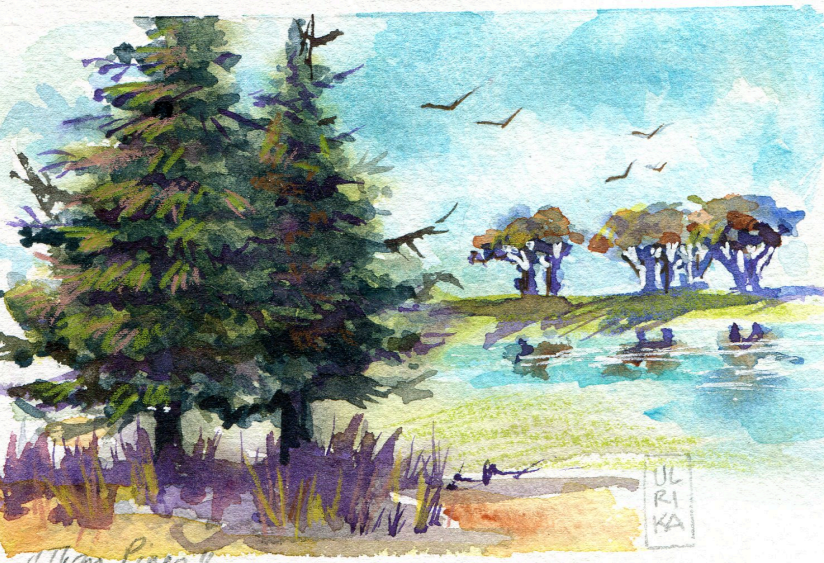
“CROSSWORD CLUE: HIJKLMNO (5). The solution: WATER.”, says our Gracious Host. Are you taking the Piss? An explanation of your puzzle to you I don't owe, and it would in any case be a hard row to hoe (see what I did there, adding an h to owe to make a rhyme?). I'm not going to complain, though, because that would be changing WATER into whine (see, that's adding an h to... oh, never mind). I'll have you know that unlike Jon Singer, I was not a chemistry major -- the sum of my chemical knowledge is “Here lies poor Charlie, poor Charlie is no more, for what he thought was H2O was H2SO4”.

Anyway, perhaps your crossword puzzle clue is one of your obscure bloody acronyms, maybe How I Just Kinda Like My Nice Oltretorrente (showing off your hitherto obscure oenophilia), and we arrive at the solution by changing the wine into water! I knew you were taking the piss...

[[Falls off chair...]]

Re **Mark Plummer** and his RTF formats, I plan to just leave this LoC in its original WTF format.

[[Achievement unlocked...]]



[[That's not a RW column I'm about to write, but I'll happily entertain submissions on the topic...]]

Elkie Brooks: yes, fine indeed. Must finally get around to checking whether her version of “Nights in White Satin” was any good. I suspect it was.

[[I've always hated that fuckin' slice, but if I have to listen to anyone sing it, then it might as well be Elkie...]]

From: perry@middlemiss.org

July 1

Perry Middlemiss writes:

I'm quite happy for *This Here...* to be a (the?) journal for Australian fanhistory, it has to be somewhere. It's the letter column that does it. The Australian fanzine scene is rather dead at present, with most fans contenting themselves with whiling away their time on social media platforms. Most of the activity, as I see it, occurs within the pages of ANZAPA with such worthies as Jack Herman, David Grigg, Marc Ortlieb and Eric Lindsay confining their written fanac to the apa's mailings. **Kim Huett**, **Leigh Edmonds** and **Bruce Gillespie** carry on the fight in ANZAPA and elsewhere. We're all old and tired I'm guessing.

[[I've got over my crogglement (a bit) about TH... being a vehicle for Australian fanhistory, and as you say this is turning up in the loccol with what seems like increasing regularity. Nothing wrong with that. My only contact with Australian fandom (well, obviously until recently in these pages) has been via Fishlifters and favorable references to ANZAPA and koalas, that and the occasional email exchange with the Bruceness. It's a fair point that I pretty much have considered (because, again, Fishlifters at the outset) Oz fandom to be “friends of friends” and thus I am

From: dave_redd@hotmail.com

June 30

David Redd writes:

[T]he complexity of year-dating in fan awards is as nothing to the confusion in children's annuals, so often dated for the year *after* the Christmas for which they were published. But let's not go there. Thank you to your correspondents especially **John Hertz** for the discussions of wire-recording fanac, which I had noticed mentioned in *Thrilling Wonder Stories* or the like and laid aside with my usual vagueness, never to be followed up until now. I presume all this dead-format activity is now lost?

[[I'd think it more likely that it's all gathering dust in someone's attic or basement, that's if the purveyors are as shite at chucking stuff out as I am...]]

I'm not sure that popular music did seem to “calm down” after 1969, as **Leigh Edmonds** notes. The experimentation did slow down, but without excessive detail I'll simply

predisposed to like you all, and I'm certainly well pleased to be on the Perryscope mailing list 'cos it's well sound. Not to mention Claire Brialey's observation of yonks past (and apparently no longer true) that Kim Huett and I could easily be mistaken for each other. At my drunken and swearsy remove I might wish to suggest that ANZAPA is Antipodean fanzine fandom (SFC notwithstanding) and inherently there's fuck all wrong with that really. Those you mention are indeed "worthies", and is it an idea to add Jack, David and Marc to the email list which of course Leigh, Kim, Bruce and yerself are already on? It's all good...]]

Claire can scream all she likes about there being only one of her, I still don't believe her. And don't start me on Mark Plummer.

[[Oh go on, start on Mark. I can also confirm that there's only one of him, and since we've been close friends for 114 years (approx.) now (including previous lives and the foray into the used onion business) I think I ought to fuckin' know, ey?...]]

From: 236 S. Coronado St. #409, Los Angeles CA 90057

July 8

John Hertz writes:

I apologize. You saw condescension where I meant none. Joking about it I offended you again.

*[[To be clear on this, John, I'm really not so easily "offended", but when confronted with bollocks (oo-er missus, Noel Collyer style unwanted image there) I'll tend to want to call it such. I blame the malevolent influence of UI**k* O'B***n, of course...]]*

I'm glad to agree with Perry Middlemiss. I attended one of his Worldcons and liked it (I did have one sad and one strange moment, but never mind that for now).

Worldcons are what we make them. That includes the Hugos.

[[That's massively DoBFO, but also succinctly apt...]]

More swell artwork from Ulrika O'Brien, thanks.

Actually "Firelighter" would be a good name for a fanzine.

From: penneys@bell.net

July 14

Lloyd Penney writes:

[...]

Looks like business is better in many places and professions. I am still looking, but I have had a lot more jobs to apply to in the past few months, so hope spring anew. We finally did get our haircuts, which is a massive PITA out of the way and done. You should see the rent rates around here... anywhere

between "Ridiculous!" to "You have GOT to be kidding!" That's why we're still here in this little box on Eva Road. For the record, we've been here 23 years, so we are steady tenants, too. We are now seen as the "nice, elderly couple", so that helps keep the rent increases down to a minimum.

I hereby declare that, outside of this sentence, I shall say nothing about the results of the UEFA Cup.

Words from Mike Glycer... you may control the horizontal and the vertical, but your efforts may wind up putting you in... The Outer Limits. Mention of Sara Felix reminds me that we may be going to a convention the end of October in Rochester, New York called Astronomicon, and she is the ArtGoH. I hope to meet here, plus Allen Steele (whose Captain Future books I have been working on), and Yvonne is working on a Marvel Black Panthers costume for con chairman Wayne Brown. We have lots of reasons to go.

[[Croggled to hear the name of Allen Steele, who I thought long-gone, only to discover that he and I are a mere 10 days apart in age...]]

Paragraph return symbol? That's called a pilcrow. Actually, 'Pilcrow' might make a good zine title... I would like to see another Jerry & Suzle zine RSN as well. They're fun to read.

[[Various punctuation and other diacritical marks have been suggested for zine titles, but I doubt any would come up to the standards of Hyphen. Without wishing to pre-empt the Killer, I'm given to understand that there will be an ish of Littebrook (aka 'Seattle Fandom Decadely') this year. I'm looking forward to it an'all...]]

My loc... Yup, still job hunting, etc., etc. CSA Group ignored me, as did Next Magazine, and the national lottery. Such as it always is. I may have to do what you suggest, be much more selective with my letters, if only to reclaim some time, and work further on editorial work and making costume jewelry for our steampunk table. This coming Friday, we finally escape lockdown, and may have our first in-person, sit-in-the-pub fannish pubnight in 16 months. Toronto and Las Vegas are pikers when it comes to temperatures, seeing that Death Valley hit 57C, or 135F, just a few days ago. These are temperatures that should only be seen on the top of an oven.

[[I'll note that Las Vegas "official" temperatures (recorded at McCarran airport) are typically lower than what we'll experience on the east side of the valley, so bollocks to you in your comfy abode, matey...]]

We're cookin' outside at 29C, so Death Valley should be frying eggs on the bare rocks. I have been warned, by Microsoft itself, that soon, I will be able to download an app telling me if the computer I have will accept Windows 11, and it will probably laugh at me and my Frankenputer, and send me directly to my friendly neighbourhood MS store to buy something new. Nope, not going to happen. [...]

[[And speaking of bollocks, I believe that 'Mythbusters' proved that frying an egg on pavement (or presumably a rock) doesn't happen...]]

From: mark.fishlifter@googlemail.com

July 23

Mark Plummer writes:

I realise this is very late in the day, and applying an old papernet sensibility to a monthly efanzone. You know, from back in the days when you knew there'd be months, years even, until the next issue came along and so there was No Rush. Interesting to see **Mike Glycer's** comment about the wordage in *TH*... I just checked and I make it about 16k in #43, so a long novelette. For some reason I expected rather more. It feels like something for which I need to allow myself more time.

[[Now I'm assuming that 16k count includes all the content, including the locs, so I can assume that I'm not meself writing the equivalent of a long novelette every month, amirite? Just editing one...]]

This week is the grand reopening of the UK, Freedom Day, all restrictions lifted and people running exuberantly through the streets and licking each other because they can. It's peculiar because it's only been five days – Freedom Day was Monday – and yet it feels longer. Probably because it was announced a week before that, and pre-announced a week before that, and the pre-announcement was heavily trailed a week before that, and of course once it's been trailed that it'll be pre-announced many people think, oh, if they're changing the rules in x days' time what harm does it do if I change my behaviour now? So it doesn't feel like only five days.

Still, we've just been over to the Craft Beer Cabin and Nick the owner was saying that Crystal Palace have a friendly next week and their first league game is 21 August and, well, I guess it's the time of year where we have to start paying attention to their fixtures again.

Good column by **Dave Hodson**, which didn't at all go where I expected. One of the consequences of being late to write back to a monthly fanzine, that football seems to have moved on so much since he wrote. Just as well I came to it too late to follow his advice and bet on France, not that I've ever bet on a football match. But if anybody isn't reading **Dave** because they expect football neepery and they're not interested in that then I think they're missing out.

[[From a similar perspective, let me quote (at a little length) from Justin Busch's latest review column, prefacing this with Justin having stated his avowed disinterest in sports:

"David Hodson's football column seems at first to be following its usual line when suddenly the spectre of

death raises its head. It seems that, during the course of a game, "Denmark captain and ex-Spurs player Christian Eriksen [...] suffered a cardiac arrest [...], collapsed, was briefly dead whilst CPR was administered, was revived using a defibrillator, and then transferred to hospital, where he was stabilised and, hopefully, started his fullest possible recovery." This news leads Hodson to a series of recollections intertwining the personal (family history) and the professional (another player who was actually declared dead but then revived on the field). The shift is very powerful, and I suspect many a reader will remember these accounts far longer than the outcomes of the various games also described. Some powerful writing here."

...]]

I think I said when we last spoke that we were on our usual Sunday night video call during the final. Most of us aren't interested in football but it was difficult to resist the lure of *The Guardian's* liveblog as an England lead gave way to a draw and then to extra time and then to penalties. And I just knew that if England won, Boris Johnson et al would try to claim some credit for it, that it was some kind of vindication of Brexit or whatever; and yet the England squad seem like a bunch of right guys, and you don't need any sense of nationalistic pride to think it'd be nice if they did win. I look forward to **Dave's** take on the final and subsequent events.

[[See pp5-7...]]

That FAAn ballot... well, at least it's explicit about how it works. There's a committee of nine people who rule on eligibility, both of voters and nominees. With current FAAn ballots there's usually one person. I wonder how many votes were rejected as being ineligible in 1976?

As you're correcting **Mike Glycer** I feel I should probably correct you in the interests of accuracy. **Chris Garcia** did win a FAAn Award, for best new fan in 2006. Something I heard in a podcast so I can't easily look this up and get an exact citation, but I think it was in a recent letter to *Octothorpe* that Chris said something to the general effect that people seem to show their appreciation for *Journey Planet* with Hugo nominations rather than letters of comment. **Chris** and **Bacon** do better in the Hugos than they do in the FAAns. Then again, for years **Dave Langford** was the best fan writer in the world (on the Hugo scale) and yet at the same time didn't crack the top-three best fan writers in the UK (per the Novas).

[[As I've said interminably, when it comes to locs vs nominations/awards, I know which I'd rather have. Getting locs (on topic, an'all!) does show that the punters have actually read the fuckin' thing...]]

I didn't say so explicitly but we follow the same model as **Perry Middlemiss** for Worldcon membership, voting in each

year's site selection which in turn translates into a supporting membership. I have in the past genuinely thought of it as a *supporting* membership, supporting the Worldcon even if I can't or don't want to attend, but then I also acknowledge that I can afford to do that and also that the Worldcon seems sufficiently a part of my fandom that I'm willing to do that. Others will feel differently. As somebody who is interested in contemporary sf, the fact that I get free ebooks of stuff that I'd like to read goes a long way to offsetting the cost of the supporting membership. I think I would once have taken the supporting membership anyway. Now... well, maybe, although without the voter packet incentive I might support Worldcons on a case by case basis.

[And reference **Leigh Edmonds'** letter, to nominate for next year's Hugos you need to be a member of next year's Worldcon or this year's Worldcon. To vote on the final ballot, and to receive the voter packet with e-copies of whichever works the finalists choose to make available, you need to be a member of next year's Worldcon. I just mention that in the interests of accuracy, without the expectation that it'll change your, Leigh's, or anybody else's behaviour.]

Written in haste, and after a couple of hours in a bar and so really under less than ideal circumstances. Looking forward to #44.

[[*“Written in haste after a couple of hours in a bar” seems like a noble, tried and tested method of fanwriting to me...!*]]

WAHF

Justin Busch ; Fred Lerner : “No comments on the text this time around, but I’ve got to say that I love **Ulrika’s** pictures.” ; **Cathy Palmer-Lister** : “Ooh, nice one! Good quote!” ; **George Phillies** trying to be clever about the term “footy/footie”. Boooooooring! ; **Garth Spencer**, wishing us all a happy Canada day (and a break in the heatwave) ; **Alan White** : “This gives me another fine excuse for not going outside” ;

FANZINES RECEIVED

Exigencies of time (wot? you’ve had *five* fuckin’ weeks!), lazy and drink but also lots of other stuff to do today ahead of next week’s cookout, much of this goes without comment, but ta to all nevertheless (and apologies to any I might have missed). Most of these are clockable at efanzines.com ...

ASKEW #34 (John Purcell) - Is it my imagination, or is this perzine actually longer than **John’s** recent genzine?...

NINE UNKNOWN FEN BULLETIN 2 (Garth Spencer) - ...

ALEXIAD 116 (Joseph & Lisa Major) - ...

PERRYSOPE 12 (Perry Middlemiss) - ...

VITA TRANSPLANTARE 19 (John Nielsen Hall) - ...

PABLO LENNIS #404 (John Thiel) - Once again I am admirably sent the ish which contains a brief and perhaps

dismissive review of *This Here...* The editorial addresses **John’s** own attitude to fanzine production, a little different from my own previous ‘Drudgery’ Egotorial but essentially arriving at the same conclusion. The review of *TH...* seems to imply that because I deemed him an “odd duck”, I am therefore “highly argumentative”. Chair plummeting ensues in all corners of the Faniverse. What does strike me as a bit of an oddity is his use of the terms “faandom” and “faanish”, which seem to beg for a ‘Princess Bride’ quote in response. **John** does note improvements in layout from previous versions, and that aspect is quite functional, if unexciting...

30 N. 19th Street, Lafayette IN 47904 - The old usual (ie contribution or *paper* trade) or \$2 for a copy...

THE OBDURATE EYE #12 (Garth Spencer) - ...

COUNTERCLOCK 38 (Wolf von Witting) - ...

NAMELESS NEWS #2 (George Phillies) - Notable, as usual, for **Justin Busch’s** fanzine review column, but if I’m noticing a weakness here it’s that the same titles (*Tommyworld*, *Pablo Lennis* and *This Here...*) are cropping up, but then the reviewer can only address what he sees, of course. Let me, therefore, quote a bit of the lad’s end-of-column plea: “Editors desiring reviews: If you have a print zine, send it to me at 308 Prince St., #422, St. Paul, Minn. 55101; if you have an e-zine, send a PDF to jeab@musician.org”, and thereby encourage others to loop him in. This column sees **Justin** perhaps ruefully observe that his only readers might be other faneds clocking what he’s saying about them. Part of the “problem”, if such it might be termed, is that a monthly zine review column doesn’t exactly have a plethora of frequently pubbed ishes to analyze, hence the appearance of the three named in this column as well as the previous one, although this also makes a separate argument about the value of such frequency in engendering conversation, albeit limited to a few, and I do wonder whether **Tommy Ferguson** even clocks what’s been said about his excellent efforts when not remodeling his back garden (nice job, Stavros!) and bemoaning whatever latest shite Arsenal have created. As I write, this isn’t yet up at the N3F’s new website, but #1 with the spectacularly fine column by **Justin** (reviewed lastish) is at <https://tnfff.org/the-n3f-newszine/>, and I commend you all to have a gander..

BCSFAZINE #54 (R Graeme Cameron) - The Graeme cites dotage as the reason for delay. Stay with us, that man!...

INDULGE ME

✘ **DOTAGE** : I ruefully note to Jen that I must look as old as I feel because people are holding doors open for me. She remarks, accurately, that “When you walk you look in pain”. That would do it, yeah...

X FOOTY EXTRA :



X **IT TAKES A MINUTE, SOMETIMES** : I eventually figured out what "TIL" means, at least I think I did. So, TIL that until the law was finally repealed in 2013 (!) it was illegal for women in France to wear trousers, finding this out from a snippet about Marlene Dietrich...

X **TV GUIDE ASIDE** : Fridays I more often than not have an extended nap in the mornings, sometimes up to four hours, and this, equally as often, has me sitting up until midnight drinking whiskey and listening to music or watching footy or comedy clips (quite a lot of Graham Norton) off the YoobToob. One of my favorites is 'Penn & Teller: Fool Us', because I've always been fond of magic acts. I'm in a little agony of indecision about which is worse, though: the oily smarm of presenter Jonathan Ross in the first two series or the utter vapidness of Allyson Hannigan in the rest...

X **TV GUIDE (ACTUAL)** : American TV does like to play silly buggers with the scheduling, so in the gaps I've finally got around to watching the original series of 'Leverage', which Jennifer knew I was going to like because it's very 'Mission: Impossible' (TV series) with more interesting characters. Also been clocking 'Loki', and enjoying it - had a lovely messenger chat the other night with My Favorite Geekgirl (which should be a sitcom) Allison Douglass, who delights in relating all the Easter eggs that the likes of me would have missed - she's now on the *This Here...* mailing list, so I promised her a deserving mention, and now I don't have to tag her in a link on FBF...

X AGELESS BEAUTY (UK) : Anne Diamond...



X **NATURE NOTES (1)** : From the Department of Things That Remind Me of Stephen Baxter, an office with no pronounceable acronym. The reminder came via the connection that Baxter posited (in his Xeelee Sequence of stories) that wherever humans went, to whatever utterly inhospitable environments, they nevertheless found life. You don't even need to leave Earth to make such discoveries, eg [ice worms](#)...

X **SELF-INFLICTED** : Finished the good whiskey so had to follow that with some of the good tequila to sustain the mini-binge of 'Leverage' (now up to season 3). Oo me poor 'ead ect...

X **EGOTORIAL (2)** : Melissa Harris-Perry can give me a right case of the shits more often than not, even though she's a perceptive and highly intelligent interviewer and commentator, but oh my good gawd, how one-note she can be, seeing absolutely *everything* through a racial and/or minority lens. Now that of itself shouldn't be a criticism, since such usually well-expressed advocacy needs its champion, but listening to her a lot of days (she's guest-hosting NPR's 'The Takeaway') makes you wonder if there must be a specifically black way of ordering a large fries from McDonalds. There's a particular terminology which seems *de rigeur* for some progressives, and most of these terms make me fuckin' wince, since I do wonder about the reflexiveness of it all as opposed to voicing from personal experience. While it could easily come across as the "I've got black friends, me" defense, I could point out that as well as that, I've counted friends who are (separately) racially diverse, physically disabled, a transgender stepkid, and the

beat goes on. I'm not honestly much on this kind of bragging rights bollocks, but I'll relate one little anecdote from fan-run *Star Trek* cons back in the UK (mid 80s) when there was an uptick in disabled awareness (for about five minutes) in particular to the point that committees included a "disabled access" person. Now as far as I know I was the only con chair to appoint an actual disabled person (wheelchair, MS as I recall) to the job. We did a hotel visit together (they passed muster), but the little bastard tested my commitment by having me go to the lav with him and help insert his catheter because he needed a piss. That was an humbling experience, and achieved the desired effect of massively increasing my understanding of his situation.

Back to terminology after that digression, the phrase that came up the other day was "identity group" as a catch-all to describe sections of the community who are less well-served by a system which caters primarily to the needs of the able-bodied (in the example then under discussion), but of course also to an Aryan and patriarchal hegemony.

Now of course it's *nice* that I have a diverse bunch of friends, and we continue (as observed in the upfront Egotorial) to find each other *interesting*, but it would also be accurate enough to note that most of them are oldish white people, because that's simply how it all played out, and the composition of that group of dodgy individuals could also be fairly described as "accidental" - I've been lucky enough to meet and befriend some fuckin' *amazing* folks over the years, naturally interspersed with knowing some right arseholes an' all.

Harris-Perry has make me think about what my own "identity group" might be, and I've come up with it: "Human" ...

✘ **NATURE NOTES (2)** : Check off [monster goldfish](#) on your apocalypse bingo card...

✘ **CROSSWORD CLUE** : For many years Tom Driberg, under the pseudonym 'Tiresias' was the crossword compiler for *Private Eye*, establishing its reputation as one of the hardest (and filthiest) tests for aficionados. A not too difficult example: 'Seamen mop up anal infusions (6)'. Solution next month, here if not in the loccol...

✘ **NEXT** : Haven't decided yet whether #45 will get punted the weekend of August 21st or 28th. I guess we'll find out, subject to the whims of a Footy columnist...

✘ **AGELESS BEAUTY (AUSTRALIA)** : Evonne Goolagong Cawley...



MIRANDA

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"Shall I mourn your decline with some Thunderbird wine and a black handkerchief?"