

This Here...

"...still the same knocking-shop..." (G Charnock)

EGOTORIAL

BEST LAID PLANS

I am, as it must be continually inferred by the dazed readership, mostly cream-crackered, due to a combination of advancing age and a bit over seven (!) years (to date) of 60-hour workweeks with not a whole lot of time off. I'm entitled to moan a bit, and I do, don't I?

I've formulated a retirement plan of sorts, a possible timeline if you like, which seems half-feasible at least, but still depends on stuff not in my control, and going back over announcements I've made about previous "plans" in the personal sphere could well end up kiboshed simply by the fact of their announcement and the application of Sod's Law.

However...

About the time we head off to Corflu Pangloss this October, or perhaps a bit sooner, I'm going to request to go to a four-day week i.e. 48 hours rather than 60, which still pegs me as "full-time" (oh, isn't it though) and thus still able to get health insurance off the company which, independently of bits falling off of me due to increased decrepitude, is mostly vital because of Jen's rheumatoid arthritis and the consequent need for all sorts of exotic prescriptions.

What I have to keep my eye on is the number of shift credits I've got, since there's a threshold to get the twice-yearly safety bonus which a four-day week doesn't quite meet, so I'd likely have to put in a few extras (not too many) to qualify for that at the end of this year. The slightly nice bit is that, when working a day off, I only need to put in 8 hours to

get that shift credit rather than the full 12. The bonus money isn't insignificant: I've now been a permanent shift driver for long enough to get back the full amount of my gas expenditure (the company pays half), which in December was about \$1,800, due in part to driving a Dodge Charger then, not the most fuel-efficient of vehicles - the next bonus I expect to be less, but still decent. The plan is to make sure I have enough shift credits to get the December bonus, and continuing on the four-day schedule through 2023, chip in enough extra shifts to get at least next June's bunce, possibly even December's.

As far as overall dosh, I'll be taking my Social Security next year when I turn 65 rather than waiting until it maxes out, and that looks like it'll be enough to pay the rent at least (unless they jack it up again when the lease comes up in July). I'll have a little bit of UK state pension, but (Fuck The Tories) I can't get that until age 66. I'm also waiting to hear what's going to be available from the Scholl(UK) pension scheme I paid into for 11 years or so up until I left

Thatcher's dystopia for the States (1993). One hopes for a pleasant surprise there, but also fears the news of Maxwell-style thievery. We shall see.

The endgame makes a bit of a rude assumption, which is that the bid for Corflu 41 (2024 - shameless plug above) in Las Vegas will be ratified by the Business Meeting in Belfast at Corflu Craic. In that case I'm planning to pack in the job completely around my birthday (January 29) in 2024 and take at least a couple months off managing that Corflu before deciding whether to go back to work on the part-time basis of two (at most three) days a week. The spanner there is the question of health insurance, since although I'll be able



to be on Medicare (and how I'm looking forward to navigating that prospect - not), Jen won't, being six years younger (and twenty years better lookin') and as mentioned needing her RA stuff.

Something that tangentially occurred to me with retirement prospects was whether I would end up existing in a Harry Warner style state of hermitage, but concluded that the opposite was more likely. It's been an odd few years of pandemic, certainly, but despite me being fairly glued to chairs in the mancave (when not falling off them), I've actually had more personal interaction with bits of the Faniverse via Zoom & such: semi-regular face to face convo with eg **Ulrika O'Brien**, thinly masquerading as *BEAM* editorial meetings (but mostly irreverent gossip) and with eye-rolling **Fishlifters** as we dissect the wankiness of all things fannish, not to mention quite lovely (separate) natters with my sons here and there. All of the above are markedly joyful.

I idly wonder whether Harry Warner would have taken any kind of advantage of this technology which DoBFO wasn't available to him, but I rather suspect not. *I am* rather a hermit for now, pinging out this here virtual gobbage (not a real word, sez the spellcheck elf) yet managing to maintain the important personal connections that makes the Faniverse hum. I'd suspect that, in pending hopeful retirement, with more time available, I could actually be even more of an utter fuckin' nuisance, and on occasion perhaps even unglued from the seating arrangements...

It's all good.

May 2022

RADIO

WINSTON

THE HAVALINAS

Oh, go on then, another short-lived band that I'm fairly confident most if not all of you won't have ever heard of, even as some of you might be mildly intrigued by the designation "gypsy-folk-rock"...

With the usual caveats, memory actually strongly suggests that I clocked a review of this esoteric trio in one of the music rags of the time, thought it might be interesting and managed to acquire the cassette of their self-

titled set released by Geffen (in the UK anyway, Elektra in the US I think), a label which at the time was more notable for punting scads of dodgy disco rather than this all-acoustic (yet well powerful) set of slices. Thanks, by the way, to **John Wesley Hardin** who found and gifted me the CD of the album some years back now.

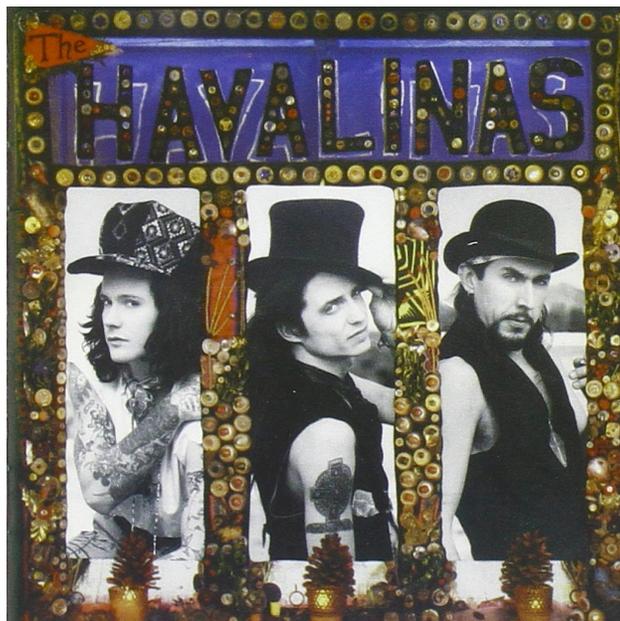
'The Havalinas' (1990) is the sole set, with the following year's 'Go North' being a live version.

The first one off this that squeezed my knackers was undoubtedly '[That's Not A Lot to Ask For](#)', with the terrific descending riff from founder Tim McConnell, essaying guitar, octave mandolin and (wonderfully) dobro in propulsive ways. The band formed after double (upright) bass player Stephen Dennis Smith ("Smutty Smiff") returned to LA from a spell of rehab in Arizona, and considering McConnell his "soul brother" sought him out. Charlie Quintana ("Chalo") was added as drummer and percussionist - that'un had a solid punk background, by the way (being a founder member of The Plugz), and ended up playing for Social Distortion for nine years (2000-09).

The band got some attention at the time, playing support on tours with Dylan (!) amongst others such as Chris Isaak and Tina Turner (!!).

What grabbed me the most about their recorded set was that it sounded like absolutely nothing else on offer at the time and that was, well, fairly exciting.

Regular readers of this column might recall that I'm a sucker for "story songs" (hence my adoration of the likes of Steve Earle, and particularly identifiable slices, to me, like the Clash's 'Stay Free'). The Havalinas' '[Jesus + Johnny](#)' is one such, and although not relatable in topic (in my case, honest) is not only a brilliant piece of cautionary storytelling but a musical wonder - is it rockabilly? Kinda. OK, it's "gypsy-folk-rock", then...



L-R: Smith, McConnell, Quintana

Springsteen covered McConnell's '[High Hopes](#)' in - er - 2007? and named an album after that slice. His version starts out with proper minimalism before getting into the typical (though slightly restrained) bombast, and is quite all right really. If you want to be really gobsmacked, Sheena Easton covered what Tim described as his "young and confused" song 'Swear' on her 1984 set 'A Private Heaven'.

Since 2007 McConnell has recorded and toured as 'Ledfoot' in a genre he describes as "Gothic Blues". Worth a look an'all...

CORFLUX

PANGLOSS DELEGATE NAMED BY CORFLU 50 FUND

It's not exactly accurate to describe the 'Corflu 50' fan fund as a secretive operation, though perhaps "private" might do the trick. **Rich Coad** wrote this account of its genesis which appears on the Corflu website:

This idea grew out of the successful funds to bring **Bruce Gillespie** and **William Breiding** to Corflu Titanium and to bring **Harry Bell** to Corflu Quire. At Corflu Quire, additional names were mentioned for fans we would like to see at Corflu but who are unable to attend for a variety of reasons. Subsequently, **Andy Porter** came up with the eminently sensible idea of gathering a group of 50 fans, each willing to donate \$25 a year (or, to include British fans, £15) to a fund for the express purpose of defraying most, if not all, transportation and lodging expense.

The recipient for each Corflu is determined by discussion and consensus among the group members (who currently number less than 50, in fact), and for Pangloss in Vancouver the gestalt has alighted upon the name of **Moshe Feder**, who has agreed to accept the honor. Thots have also been mooted for the swiftly following Corflu Craic in Belfast. The administrators of the group are **Rich Coad** (North America) and **Rob Jackson** (Europe) and contact info can be found on that very same Corflu website.

Full disclosure: I've been a member of the collective for some time, so it's DoBFO a worthy endeavor in my estimation ...

OMPHALOSKEPSIS

WHY OH WHY?...

"...very nearly spells YOYO", writes Mrs. Trellis of North Wales - and yes, I know I've used *that* line before, but the likes of **Bill Burns** and other fans of 'I'm Sorry I Haven't A Clue' will still get a smile out of it.

Wm Breiding (locs) notes that this column has had a fair bit of guff about the "how" of fanzining, but he's interested in the "why", which has been perhaps tangentially mentioned here and there, but all right, let's go there, at undoubted risk of some repetition of previous remarks.

I've perennially observed that one of the simpler aspects of 'boo is that we all just want to be told that we're brilliant, whether that's expressed in award voting or, in what I think is the preference of those who are not Chris Garcia, reader engagement via the loccol. I've referred many times to the Fishlifter quasiquoted contention that *Banana Wings* is intended as "a conversation between us and a couple of hundred friends", and while I can't claim to have that much of a reach, I see *This Here...* in very similar, if perhaps more confrontational ways.

I suppose I shouldn't try to ascribe motivations to any other faneds out there, which sadly only leaves me with having to attempt to formulate my own answers to **Wm's** pointed question.

I've just been quite startled to go back and (re)discover that the third series of *This Here...* began in May 2019 with #16 (ooh, third annish this month then - 94 more and I'll be up with **John Purcell**), leading with the inevitable "Why is this fanzine" 'Egotorial' which I'm not going to burden you with again - you can go look at its retrospective naivete on efanzines if you like. It's also genuinely croggling to realize that I've been at it in here for *three fuckin' years* now on a monthly schedule broken only by skipping one to get *BEAM #16* finished, and this here virtual bollocks still seems to have legs. In that respect the "how" would be a topic of deserved mention.

The "why?" itself turns out to have a little more complexity than you might think. I've habitually kept contact with fan friends old and new with the kind of DNQ convo that's been relevant to my own perhaps peculiar subset of fannish interests. I have got a bit of the arse on occasion that these kind of discussions happen below the radar, but maybe necessarily so, and without breaking any of that DNQ (which shall remain sacrosanct) I really wanted to get some of it out into the open, despite the limited number of people interested in such smoffish minutiae. Let's say that, although not entirely consciously, I thought there ought to be a venue for this that was public.

Not, of course, that all this is po-faced *fanpolitik*, since it's leavened by the likes of music, TV, movies and of course the serious business of the footy.

I don't actually think that any given fanzine sets out to define a "community", rather that if the ish is any good and is appreciated, a community of sorts forms around it, and this seems to have been the case in here, something I'm both gratified and massively humbled by.

I might just have to rather weakly conclude that the answer to "why", is that, as has been stated about **Archbishop Bruce**, I mostly don't have anything better that I like to do (right now)...

OLIPHAUNT-O-SKEPSIS

BY JUSTIN E. A. BUSCH

[[Editorial note: I got this honkin' letter (dated May 13) from Justin independently of his earlier note (see locs) and decided that it might better appear as a column, even though as the man himself pointed out, this could blur the genzine/perzine divide in the case of this here virtual bollocks. I'll weasel around that by calling it a "featured letter" in fine Banana Wings tradition, shall I? I'm going to append my own brief comments rather than interrupt...]]

It will be obvious that my imagination has been caught by the problem of defining a fanzine; I've taken up the topic in *Fanactivity Gazette* ('Fanfaronade') and *Far Journeys* (editorial) and now in what is in fact my first intentional loc to a digital-only fanzine (there have been at least a couple of accidental ones, but this is the real thing). I will start with a blunt definition, followed by some ideas expanding on that definition, and noting some concerns, in the hopes of helping generate a reasonably focused discussion going forward.

So, what is a (---) fanzine?

A fanzine is a temporally distinct artifact, created by a self-identified fan, current or former, of (---), designed to be, or as if it were intended to be, printed.

The phrase 'temporally distinct' is my attempt to address the point being made by **Bill Burns'** idea of immutability as a criterion; it is less apodictic than his term, allowing for variations, each of which remains nonetheless tied to a particular moment in time. Book collectors will already be familiar with this: it is not unheard of to see books listed by dealers as 'first edition, second state', for instance, where some element in what was still a single printing changed noticeably (the character of the paper, for instance). While it is unlikely that fanzines will ever be subjected to the same detailed consideration, using this definition as a starting point avoids the problem associated with variant covers, say.

A fanzine's editor/publisher is what they say they are.

Readers may disagree on so-and-so's significance as a fan, but allowing for self-description as a key factor avoids irrelevant, and potentially bitter digressions into personal considerations posing as analytical interpretations. Something like this already exists in the voting process for the FAAn awards.

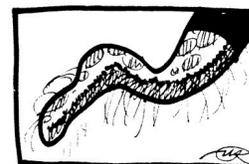
The heart of the definition is the fact of design. A fanzine is still shaped by the existence of print, contemporarily and historically, because it exists within a process which is both a tradition and a component within a particular type of communication. That this must be the case stems from the temporal nature of fanzines: each responds, in ways shaped, whether directly or indirectly, whether recognized by the editor or not, by its place within history and current events (which themselves will soon be part of history). The messages, so to speak, of each fanzine are developed, whether in acceptance of, or resistance to, via a particular set of expressive expectations. Printing, whether actual or potential, is the formal acknowledgement of time.

The (---) bracketed bits are where the appropriate term regarding the editor's subjective intention, insofar as it can be ascertained, would be inserted. In *This Here...* this discussion will develop mainly in regards to science fiction/fantasy fanzines, but there will always be liminal cases. Consider, for example, **Andrew** (as he then was) **Hooper's** zine *9 Innings* from the late '80s. It is, as he described (in #3),

"a semi-regular excursion into my thought processes, presented under the cover of being a fanzine devoted to, well, it has to be said - baseball". In short, it's arguably a baseball fanzine by a science fiction fan - but it's clearly a fanzine, as noted in a favorable mention by Brian Earl Brown in *The Whole Fanzine Catalog 29*: "Interesting sort of personalzine in which a Tigers baseball game provides the framework for various meditations. Kinda neat". What matters here, as this should suggest, is not the zine's subject matter (which even Hooper, in later issues, admitted faced powerful limitations), but its relation to the foregoing definition. In other words, the format, rather than the subject matter presented within that format, is determinative.

Similar examples will come readily to mind, at least for fanzine fans.

This is *Nine Innings* #3, copyright 1988 by Andrew P. Hooper, member fwa. Rights to all art revert upon publication to the artists. This is the 23rd publication of the Drag Bunt Press, available for the usual. Send correspondence to: BLEAR HOUSE, 214 N. Brearly St., Madison, WI, 53703, until June 1st, 1988, and afterwards to 315 N. INGERSOLL ST., MADISON, WI, 53703. Don't say I never gave you a COA. Thanks to those who responded to NI #2; we'll round up the mail for both that issue and this one in #4, hopefully in July of this year. Thus far, the Andre Dawson Home Run TAFF pledge count is at \$5.00, but don't worry, it's early in the season. Predictions: SF Giants take Bay Area World Series in seven from the Oakland A's; Special Hugo for "Other Medium" awarded in New Orleans to a plate of Broiled Scrod with green beans and shallots.



APRIL 10TH, 1988

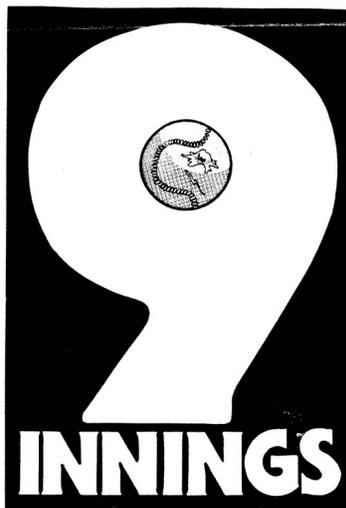
Well, this has been a hell of a long winter. It didn't help that I had to spend most of it with visions of Gary Gaetti smacking the ball into the upper deck of Tiger Stadium tormenting me. It would have been a much better off-season for me if the Tigers had never contended last season at all...now I'm left with a profound sense of having the best behind me and naught but a long, slow slide into the second division to look forward to.

Oh, for those of you who are joining us in progress, Hi. My name is Andy Hooper, and this is *Nine Innings*, a semi-regular excursion into my thought processes, presented under the cover of being a fanzine devoted to, well, it has to be said -- baseball. Even if you don't think much of the game, have a seat. We might make it to one or two other topics, and after all, I'm buying.

After Wiscon 12 ground itself to an apocalyptic halt this year, I found myself longing for baseball with an unusual intensity. I actually got out the video tape I had used to jog my memory while writing NI #1, and watched the Twins beat hell out of the Tigers again, just for old times sake. Then I erased the damn thing.

No, the recorded item was unlikely to satisfy me any further, and the table games had been put away for another winter. I wanted to see the real thing, even if it turned out to be an inter-squad high school softball game. Girls softball would be fine, too. I entertained thoughts of an opening day drive down to Milwaukee or Chicago, such as I enjoyed last year, but the news came back that opening day at both Milwaukee County Stadium and Wrigley Field would be more than sold out, and besides, the Cubs wouldn't get home to Chicago for a week after the season started. This presented an unpleasant problem.

I suppose it may seem laughable to people who would not, as a rule, cross the street for free tickets to the All-Star game, but a major part of my personal self-esteem and well-being hinges rather heavily on my having access to baseball -- outdoor baseball at this time of year. There was a time, not too long ago, when I was a callow youth given to cynicism and writing bad poetry, when winter was the prime attraction of the year for me. Winter presented ample opportunity for staring tragically into the frost-rimed distance. Still in the process of recovering from allergic bouts with flying pests, winter always held for me the prospect of an environment free of mosquitos, not a small thing when your limbs have a tendency to exhibit swellings reminiscent of elephantiasis whenever you're shown a picture of a mosquito (Which is the Minnesota State Bird, you know). I used to spend a lot of time in a glacially cold room, scribbling knotty little scraps of doggerel, and listening through headphones to bands with the names of Major American cities, long on cover art, short on dynamic variation. Whatever happened to them? They weren't quite heavy metal, they only flirted with art rock...these things probably passed you right by, but I was in high school then, and for me the war of Disco wasn't something you read about in the *Weekender*, it was something I lived every day. But I digress.



Note also that the quality of the zine is irrelevant to the definition. Fanzines will, as always, come in varying degrees, ranging from primetime to crudzine, depending upon the level of writing, art (if any) and overall aesthetic appearance. Each is still a fanzine, definitionally the same as any other. Nor is the overall significance of a given fanzine relevant to the definition; the early fanzines of James Blish (*The Planeteer*) and Robert Silverberg (*Spaceship*) are, to say the

least, unimpressive, especially when compared with the best fanzines of their respective eras, yet remain interesting historically, more so than some slicker productions, because of what those young editors went on to achieve. In other words, good design is a matter for criticism and debate, not a relevant definitional criterion.

The argument may be made that a fanzine is whatever anyone declares to be a fanzine, that being all the definition needed. There are many problems with this, but a central one is straightforward: it provides no grounds for settling disagreements. Suppose that a publication from 1940, hitherto unknown to fanhistorians, is found. The editor and contributors are long dead, and the masthead reveals no particular intention or self-description. One person says it's an obvious fanzine, another says it's not. On the 'anything goes' approach that's it; it is both a fanzine and not a fanzine simultaneously (note that any appeal to its similarity to other things accepted as fanzines silently abandons the 'anything goes' credo in favor of one grounded in history). Perhaps A.E. Van Vogt could make sense of this as a sort of *Å* claim, but few others will agree.

A second response is similar: if *anything* - and therefore potentially *everything* - is a fanzine simply on someone's say-so, it will quickly become necessary to develop new terms to distinguish among the enormous variety of everythings yclept fanzines. In short, we will find ourselves gaving to develop new definitions which account for the vast differences among Michaelangelo's fanzine *David*, Eliot's fanzine *Middlemarch* and Kant's fanzine *The Critique of Pure Reason*. That this is ludicrous only strengthens the point; if a fanzine is simply what someone declares to be a fanzine, it surely cannot be doubted that fannish jokers will evoke the ridiculous for confusion and laughs by dubbing all sorts of things 'fanzines'. Without some deeper definition, these jokes become canonical facts, for they cannot be refuted. I'm sure that Hoy Ping Pong would have had a field day with this opportunity for inflating nonsense to a principle.

Doubtless there are solid objections to be made to this typological methodology. I look forward to reading them.

[[My contribution to the "solid objections" would cite 'Lulzine' (Coxon & Sheriff) as an example of a 'fanzine' which doesn't meet the "designed to be printed" test. Alison Scott (locs) also makes a convincing case for 'Galactic Journey' in that it's structurally fanzine-like, with that descriptor doing a fair bit of heavy lifting. I've yet to peruse and form my own opinion of 'Galactic Journey', but I do consider the not-designed-for-print 'Lulzine' to be a fanzine. This returns to the question whether an obvious blog is sufficiently "fanzine-like". The Hugo admins say it is, and I and Rich Lynch, among others, continue to contend otherwise...]]

FAANWANK

INCOMING

Jerry Kaufman wrote (in early April):

I'll hypothesize (with no data) that fanzine readers, contributors, and publishers who didn't vote [in the FAANs], but might have elevated other zines/writers/artists, were those who don't like the FAAN Awards or anyone who supports them. Which is why we see the same zines and people take the top spots nearly every year.

I replied to the Killer that I was going to hold this quote for a future column discussion about the *constituency* of FAAN award voters and who considers themselves part of that (or not). The "same old, same old" criticism of the winners is both perennial and to an extent valid. I'm intending to go into this in more depth nextish, but I'm punting this topic here to give any of you who might feel the urge (oo-er) to weigh in ahead of time to create the prospect of one of those "chunks lifted out of locs" efforts...

TV GUIDE

JUSTICE LEAGUE



Like most of us, I think, I have default "rewatch" shows which come into play when it can't be agreed what's going to feature on 'Movie Night', but also when the remaining braincell can't be arsed to get into decision mode. Lately that's been the 2001-2004 animated ("Timmverse") *Justice League* which is well arguably superior to anything that's been chucked at a movie screen (Jason Momoa looking all drool-worthy notwithstanding).

Retconned as much as just about every fuckin' thing is, this is a sort-of fit to the first incarnation, although that included Aquaman, not a "founder" here. The comics origin story I perhaps faultily remember involves aliens using Earth as a gladiatorial arena, and the "team" ends up being Superman (albeit in a *deus ex machina* cameo), Batman, Flash (Barry

Allen), Green Lantern (Hal Jordan), Martian Manhunter and Black Canary.

A terminally cute aside has the team (post-victory) discussing what to name themselves, with 'The Avengers' being suggested, and Barry Allen (I think) remarking "Nah, people will confuse us with those other guys - you know, John Steed and Emma Peel"...

The Timmverse version substitutes Hawkgirl for Black Canary, Wally West for Barry Allen and John Stewart for Hal Jordan. These are inspired choices for the group dynamic.

A couple of things I particularly note: Hal Jordan was pretty much an arrogant flyboy (until Green Arrow schooled him in the GL/GA comics), whereas John Stewart has a strong moral center despite his human frailties and circumstances. He's an ex-Marine, and in one show (with Dr. Destiny as the villain) is starkly contrasted with Clark Kent with a scene in which their separate living arrangements are shown, Stewart in a fairly grotty spot in a run-down neighborhood and Kent in his luxury apartment. These kinds of details are typical of the depth of the show. Stewart has a sort-of thing going on with Hawkgirl, and this gets well complicated in the sequel series *Justice League Unlimited* where he's moved on (sort of) and is slipping the length to Vixen.

Wally West's Flash is the comic relief (he's the kid on the block, after all), and this portrayal sort-of presages the JLA membership of Plastic Man in later comics.

Hawkgirl is far less "girly" than Black Canary was back in the day (although even then Canary was shown as highly competent), but might be considered one-dimensional in that all she wants to do is thump everything (which admittedly she's good at) and doesn't take any guff from the rest of them.

Most, I could say gratifying, is that in the first season at least Superman is shown as weaker than we'd expect, fairly regularly taking a whacking from foes that in previous encounters he'd have bollocked with contemptuous ease. They did up his power levels for season 2, but it's still the case that the show is a bit down on the "big blue schoolboy" as he was dubbed (probably by Lex Luthor) who is pretty much just good for punching big holes in shit and not possessed of a jiant brane like what Batman has got (as Ernie Wise would have noted). Supes' absence from episodes is a welcome avoidance of the lazy temptation to just get the big guy to splat the villains, and even when he's there he's often shown as being a bit thick and tending to make things worse (eg v Amazo).

Not having mentioned J'onn Jonzz (Martian Manhunter) yet - incidentally a member of just about every incarnation of the League - he is in almost every case the genuine moral center of the team, the counterpart to the Machiavellian Batman and the gung-ho Supes. Being gravely (possibly also gravelly) voiced by Carl Lumbly doesn't hurt, either.

In sum, the show has a fuckin-A voice cast, generally solid to superb writing, and I continue to prefer just about any of the DCAU efforts (*lots* of animated movies an'all) to the live action versions...

FOOTY

BY DAVID HODSON

Whilst the country (The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, just to be clear) awaited today's (Wednesday's) publication of the Sue Gray report into the political scandal that is called "Partygate", Spurs fans went in to last weekend's final Premier League game of the season against Norwich City, when stories of Harry Kane and several other players coming down with illness started to circulate in the media towards the end of the week, worrying about a repeat of "Lasagnegate".

In 2006, Spurs were a point ahead of Arsenal in fourth place in the Premier League and a win in their final game of the season, against West Ham United, would see them finish ahead of Arsenal and qualifying for the Champions League for the first time. The team stayed at the London Marriott West India Quay Hotel, in Canary Wharf, the night before the game. Overnight, Edgar Davids, Teemu Tainio, Robbie Keane, Michael Dawson, Michael Carrick, Aaron Lennon, Radek Cerny, Calum Davenport, Lee Barnard, Tom Huddlestone, and Lee Young-pyo were all said to have been taken ill.

The eleven all reported being violently sick during the night, with Calum Davenport telling *The Athletic*: "I remember waking up at about 5 am and thinking, 'I never wake up for the toilet or anything, what is wrong here?'. I got on the toilet and had my head in the sink and my backside on the toilet and... Well, it wasn't pretty." Carrick wrote in his 2018 autobiography *Between the Lines*: "I'd never endured agony like this. It felt like a fire was lit in my guts with petrol poured on it again and again. The pain kept flaring up and I curled up in bed, praying for it to pass."

All the players had eaten at a private buffet dinner the previous evening. Many were said to have eaten lasagne, which was one of the dishes on offer alongside steak, chicken, and pasta, and this appeared, on first examination, to be the culprit. Spurs requested a postponement from the Premier league which, despite West Ham being happy to delay the game, was refused, and, with several players in visible distress during the game, lost 2-1 whilst Arsenal beat Wigan Athletic 4-2 to finish fourth and qualify for the Champions League.

In early-May, with this season rapidly drawing to a close, Arsenal were four points ahead of Spurs in fourth position in the table and looking odds-on for a Champions League place next season. Then, on Thursday May 12th, came the

North London derby at the Tottenham Hotspur stadium, which had been re-arranged from January when Arsenal had requested a postponement ostensibly because of a Covid outbreak at the club. It was eventually discovered that Arsenal only actually had one case of Covid at the club; other absences were due to player bans due to poor on-field discipline and players representing their countries at the African Cup of Nations. The Premier League decided as a direct consequence of this situation to change the rules under which a club could request a postponement: clubs now had to have a minimum of four Covid cases in available squads before a postponement would be granted. Spurs, and Spurs fans, were understandably furious. Were the Premier League and the Football Association again conspiring to rob Spurs to the benefit of Arsenal?

Arsenal fans will accuse Spurs of gaining a “soft” penalty and Son Heung-min of using the “dark arts” to get Arsenal centre-back Rob Holding sent off, but the truth is Arsenal were so comprehensively beaten (I would say thrashed, but I really don’t want to offend Tommy Ferguson or Graham James...*snort*), that five minutes into the second half, with Spurs 3-0 up, and with forty minutes of the game left to play, Spurs could take their foot off the gas pedal and coast to a comfortable and energy saving victory before the visit of Burnley the following Sunday. Sky Sports pundit Gary Neville reported that the much lauded Tottenham stadium was probably the loudest ground he’d ever been in and the atmosphere for the game was the best he’d encountered all season, which is saying something when one remembers that Neville was a regular combatant at both Old Trafford and Anfield for Manchester United.

Burnley proved a much tougher nut to crack than Arsenal and an unfortunate but legitimate handball against them gifted Spurs a penalty for a 1-0 win, which meant that Arsenal travelled to Newcastle United on Monday May 16th for an evening kick-off two points behind Spurs and in fifth place in the league.

Since the take-over of Newcastle in October 2021 by a consortium led by the Saudi Arabian government’s sovereign wealth fund, it’s been assumed that the club would splurge huge amounts of cash. I certainly expected them to maybe appoint a flavour of the month foreign manager and buy ridiculously over-priced players in an effort to avoid relegation, but, despite the takeover still being a transparent case of “sportswashing”, the club has taken a pleasantly surprising level-headed approach. The appointment of ex-Bournemouth manager Eddie Howe following the dismissal of the dour Steve Bruce was completely unexpected and his being allowed to take pragmatic and relatively low-key steps in the January transfer window suggests someone behind the scenes of the new regime actually understands something about football. Howe had been able to take Newcastle from second bottom

of the league when he was appointed manager to the verge of a top half of the table finish by the time of the Arsenal game; they had the fourth best form in the division since January and were only getting better. Arsenal collapsed completely, lost the game 2-0, and went into the final game of the season two points behind Spurs and out of the coveted and financially lucrative Champions League positions.

It was in the run-up to the final weekend of the season that the stories of illness in the Spurs camp surfaced and Spurs fans started to develop “squeaky-bum” syndrome and an uncomfortable sense of *Deja Vu*.

By the end of Sunday’s (May 22nd) games, it was obvious that Spurs fans never really had any need to be worried. Whilst Arsenal beat an Everton side with nothing to play for 5-1 at their home Emirates Stadium, Spurs went slightly better again; beating Norwich City 5-0 at their Carrow Road ground and gaining that crucial fourth place finish. To add to Spurs fans joy, Son Heung-min scored twice at Norwich and shared the Golden Boot for top goal scorer in the Premier League for the season with Mo Salah of Liverpool with 23 goals apiece.



Of course, most of the attention outside North London was on the battle for top spot in the Premier League and Manchester City did, for 75 minutes of their last home game of the season against Aston Villa, look to be making a pig’s ear of things, but at 2-0 down with 15 minutes to go, they turned on the rocket engines, scored three times, and won the title for the fourth time in five seasons whilst Liverpool defeated Wolverhampton Wanderers 3-1 at Anfield to finish second.

Nic’s beloved Watford, along with Norwich City, had been relegated to the Championship (don’t get me started on explaining promotion and relegation again, please!?) several weeks ago, but they were joined on the last day by Burnley as Leeds United defeated Brentford 1-0 to jump above them and out of the bottom three positions. Fulham and AFC Bournemouth have won promotion directly to the Premier League from the Championship and we’ll find out who the

third replacement side are on Sunday (May 29th) when Huddersfield Town play Nottingham Forest in the promotion play-off at Wembley. I admit to not being impartial about the result of the play-off; Nottingham Forest were the opponents in 1970 when I attended my first Spurs game with my grandfather, so it feels like they should return to what I regard as their rightful place in the top division.

And thus we approach a summer break. No footie til August, except for a few completely ignorable internationals. I have to say: I need the rest. Not from this column, but from the football. I fully intend to spend some days away over the summer watching cricket. I can easily get to places like Colchester and Chelmsford to watch Essex play; Surrey play at The Oval in Kennington and Middlesex play at Lord's in North-West London or places like Radlett in Hertfordshire, so those are easy commutes; and Kent and Hampshire play at venues that offer an attractive day out and maybe a stay in a B&B or hotel for a night for one-day or T20 games. I've only used my Nikon Z5 camera once in anger since I purchased it two years ago, so I think I'll try to get that 300mm lens I've had my eye on and start snapping away given the opportunity.

The other reason to get around the cricket grounds is I've just signed up for Tommy Ferguson's Belfast Corflu and, seeing as cricket writing seems popular with several Australians of this parish, I might try to pub my cricketing ish in case any of them decide to fly half way around the world and plonk an elbow on a bar alongside me. I'm also hoping to get down to Dublin to visit a co-administrator of All Things Tottenham Hotspur, the facebook group I'm involved in, and catch a Bohemians fixture either just before or after the con. I'll wait until closer to the time before tapping Tommy up about catching a game somewhere in the north.



All of which wraps up this column and this football season. The only thing left for the month is my new tradition of Raducanu-watch, which finds my Spurs supporting heroine Emma watching a dodgy feed of the Spurs-Norwich game on her laptop whilst the

Manchester City-Aston Villa game plays on the television in her hotel room as she prepares for the French Open. If I used twitter, she'd have achieved 32,087 other followers on the thread.

And a quick shout-out to the trainee at the BBC news desk, who, whilst being shown how to update the ticker at the bottom of the screen, told us what we already knew.

Gawd only knows why the Beeb felt the need to apologise on air for such demonstrably true reporting; this was one trainee who looked out the window to see if the rain was falling for his or her self. The United fans I know want an apology from the players for the season they've had to endure.



PS: I couldn't find a place to include this is the column proper, but one of my pet movie loves has always been baseball movies. Charlie Sheen in Major League, Tom Selleck in Mr. Baseball, Dennis Quaid in The Rookie; blimey, Kevin Costner has almost made a whole career out of baseball movies, but the stand-out movie in his career and in the sub-genre is Field Of Dreams, the gentle 1989 fantasy that is among a very few films that I've always owned a copy of (I really must read the W.P. Kinsella novel Shoeless Joe; it's been on the shelves for a goodly number of years). Yesterday, it was announced that Ray Liotta, who played Shoeless Joe Jackson in Field Of Dreams, had died aged 67. Sixty-seven seems a very young age to die these days; memorial viewings of Field Of Dreams and Cop Land would seem to be in order.

LOCO CITATO

[[*"I told my psychiatrist that everyone hates me. He said I was being ridiculous - everyone hasn't met me yet."* (Rodney Dangerfield)...]]

From: grahamcharnock85@gmail.com

April 30

Graham Charnock writes:

'Polly' is one of my favorite novels and one I have read many times. The film is not bad either. The ending (spoiler alert) is very satisfying in a comfy kind of way when Polly is assumed dead and thus released from all pressures and expectations and is able to settle down with a "comfy" partner in a relationship where neither is making any demands of the other. As you say it's all good. **Justin Busch's** fanzine includes a dissertation on Wells' 'The Croquet Player' by **John Purcell** which he unnecessarily hinges upon Covid Paranoia. I got in several years earlier with a piece on the same novella in **Rich Coad's** inestimable *Sense of Wonder Stories*. It's a psychological horror story with gloomy intimations of WWII, the sort of territory J.G. Ballard made his own much later.

[[*I'd totally forgot there was a film of 'Polly'...*]]

Congratulations to **Fia** on her second bite at the TAFF cherry. I wonder if TAFF is still the same knocking shop it was in my day, when I was narrowly defeated by pretty-boy **John Coxon** who went on to partner up with **Espana Sheriff**. Fia seems to be very attractive. I hope she escapes the predatory clutches of those randy US fans, unless she doesn't want to, of course.

[[*I did immediately recall working on Jim Mowatt's TAFF campaign in which we punted a photo of him in his kilt with the caption "Because You'll Vote for Anything in a Skirt". This caused hysterical chair-plummeting from S&ra Bond at the time. Not to devalue Fia's win, of course, but this might prompt a Plummer-style analysis of whether female candidates, when they run, have tended to be favored by the constituency of "randy US fans", or indeed European ones in the case of Eastbound races. In a comment on John's trip, the ever-sensitive Chris Garcia gleefully noted that he "got himself a girlee" (I'm sure Espana was equally gleeful to be so described - ahem), which led me in turn to adapt one of his epithets as "John (The Boy) Coxout" ...]]*

I occasionally like watching football, but not necessarily reading about it, so I tend to gloss over **Dave Hodson's** worthy columns. It helps when someone is enthusiastic about it though. You will probably know your love of Watford made me interested in their development in the Premier League, which of course proved a waste of time. I

generally support the underdogs, so was pleased with Newcastle's recovery and now half-follow Brentford. Most of my watching is via MOTD of course although I have discovered BT Sports sometimes has some live gems on Saturday lunchtime.

I'd like to thank you, incidentally, for introducing me to Shuffle Dance music on Radio Winston *[[Facebook group]]*. At last it seems **Uncle Johnny** and I have a sort of musical taste in common, even though I'd suggest most of it amounts to a fondness for watch young eighteen year old girls shake their booty, it is joyous and watchable though.

[[*Fab to hear from you, Grah, followed by another welcome rara avis...*]]

From: drl@ansible.uk

May 1

David Langford writes:

I was feeling too tired during recent upheavals to point out that anyone who wants to post online comments to *Ansible* can do so on Facebook (Langford profile, Ansible group, Ansible page) and Twitter. For those allergic to Facebook or Twitter there's the Wordpress site at davidlangford.co.uk, where I've had nothing but spam for years. Oh well.

The theological discussion of the day would seem to be the distinction between a unique *Ansible* URL like <https://news.ansible.uk/a418.html> (which some might say is just another indistinguishable post at news.ansible.uk) and a unique *File 770* news roundup URL like <https://file770.com/pixel-scroll-4-30-22-those-who-cannot-remember-past-pixel-scrolls-are-doomed-to-re-file-them/> (which you and **Rich Lynch** prefer to think of as just another indistinguishable post at file770.com). Yes, I number these things as issues and **Mike Glyer** doesn't, but I'm sure **Rob Hansen** -- as Our Greatest Living Fanhistorian -- could provide many examples of indisputable fanzines which were unnumbered or had whimsically misleading numbers.

Hey, let's muddy the waters a bit more!

[[*Perhaps muddier, yes, but I'd suggest this tracks back to my previous "two tents" analysis. Online comment is an available option to respond to 'Ansible', sure, but you've also published "Outraged Letters" in the ishes themselves. The DoBFO difference to me is that 'Ansible' is designed as what we'd identify as an "ish", and 'File770' is set up as a blog. With that clear distinction, the similar method of access to either possibly isn't relevant. These are developing arguments, I should mention, since I could quite see that some would infer a tone of desperation from my remarks. I continue to encourage discussion on the topic...*]]

From: ianmillsted@hotmail.com

May 1

Ian Millsted writes:

Interesting that the same ish includes Marina Sirtis and cricket, as the good lady is a fan of the sport. A few years ago, chatting to Paul Cornell at a convention here in Bristol, he told me he did a 'how to play cricket' programme item at a US con and Ms Sirtis, who was a guest at the same con, came running out to join in.

[[Which also allows me to note that I typically refer to Mr. Cornell as "Porkinell", nicking that peripherally off Jasper Carrott, who coined it for the former Newcastle footy player Paul Cannell, whose name sounded just like that in the local accent...]]

From: alison.scott@gmail.com

May 2

Alison Scott writes:

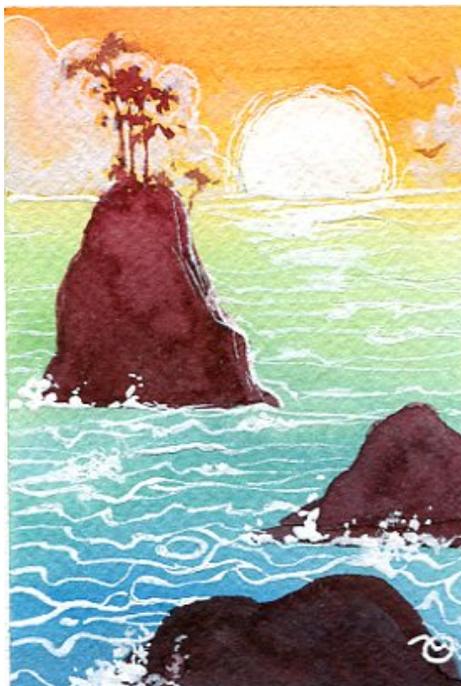
It was, I think, a jolly good TAFF race, with excellent spirits and great participation. I'm sure Fia will be a great delegate as she brings dill chips to the world.

[[You, and presumably Fia, will then be surprised to discover that dill chips are already quite prevalent and enjoyed on this side of the pond...]]

Octothorpe's sense of injustice at our FAAn award exclusion has been eclipsed for the time being by our equal and opposite sense of injustice at being on the shortlist for the BSFA Award for Non-Fiction, despite the latter's clear, incontrovertible restriction to written works. Which the FAAn awards might want to copy, come to think of it.

[[Despite my recent tendency to lean toward definition avoidance, I did note the strong implication that the FAANs are for written (or artistically drawn) work, but that has to be within the "fanzine" context. Another can of worms, innit?...]]

The denizens of WSFS who care about the Hugos spend hours toiling in smoke-filled Discords to make sure that entities cannot, in general, be eligible in more than one category. Not for them the gentle overlap of "well, this is sort of a gennish perzine, and that is mostly fannish but a bit sercon". Octothorpe sits tidily squat in the middle of the Fancast category despite that category's rather silly name. A fancast is, you see, something quite different, as a quick peruse of the Internet will show. It seems



likely that a lot of people's outrage about the Best Fanzine Hugo would go away if WSFS had simultaneously invented a new name for the category that reflected the content described. "Best Fanwank", say.

[[falls off chair...]] I do, though, approve (as you'd expect) of the intent to avoid category overlap...]]

I have offered a future column to one of this year's Best Fanzine nominees, *Galactic Journey*, and in so doing found myself admitted to its editorial space. And it turns out that it is not merely a fanzine according to the Hugo rules, but feels very like a monthly fanzine in terms of its production. The month's articles are planned (they appear every two days); it has a strong overall theme; there's a set of regular and occasional features; there's quite strong editorial direction and control; and it has quite a lot of btl commenters, or letterhacks as we might call them. If it bound all this up as a PDF once a month it would obviously be a fanzine. This seems to me to exactly encapsulate what "or its equivalent in other media" might look like in a world where most people are not reading their sercon and fannish commentary in the form of PDFs. Some of the other things that have appeared on the shortlist seem to me to have much less coherence than *Galactic Journey* does though.

[[I may now try to have a look at that, then. No promises...]]

That seems a very long way from **Rich Lynch's** interpretation of what a blog is. His argument seems to me to be very specious, like saying that because *This Here...* has a consistent template that all the material appearing with that template is in fact the same issue. This of course is another great virtue of *Journey Planet*, which looks completely different every time.

[[Bites tongue...]]

I do not think there is a serious risk that the fan Hugo categories will be dropped any time soon. The bigger risk is that they will be presented separately, like the technical Oscars; but DisCon showed that it's quite straightforward to manage the ceremony with the current number of Hugos in good time.

I mostly read fanzines on my iPad these days, as a split screen affair so that I can be typing a letter at the same time. But for books and other long-form content, I prefer an e-ink reader, which I think best combines the restful experience of books with the lightness and convenience of electronic formats. Paper is a distant third, even though the electronic formats have not yet replicated the thrill of waking up to find a fanzine on the doorstep.

[[‘Woosh’, that went over me ‘ead. “e-ink”?...]]

Like **Leigh Edmonds**, it was working for Ministers that sorted my writing speed. Prior to that I was quite a careful writer, but I was cured by repeated experiences of people demanding briefing notes very rapidly. Once you learn that bashing out a rapid draft and then editing for infelicities will normally do the job, it’s hard ever again to be elegant and precise.

[[I prefer inelegant and imprecise, and I think I’ve got the hang of that, at least in here (ahem). More effort goes into bits for BEAM, but as noted from reaction to my editorial in #16 that hasn’t always worked either...]]

From: kim.huett@gmail.com

Kim Huett writes:

I assume your decision to put my letter adjacent to the idiot fartings of your creepy uncle is a deliberate attempt to annoy me? Well, if so, then I will admit you’re very good at being an annoying dick. Next thing you’ll be giving me one of those cretinous nicknames you seem so fond of. On the topic of which, why did you give **Bruce Gillespie** a nickname that implies he fucks small boys? For all Bruce’s failings, and there are many, I have never thought of him as a paedophile so this mystifies me.

[[“Very good at being an annoying dick” will prompt nods of agreement from many, including long-time friends and current collaborators. However, wrong and wrong in your opening salvo. Locs are put in order of receipt, so your adjacency to **Uncle Johnny** is due to that alone. Also, I cannot lay claim to the epithet for **Bruce**. In his loc in #46, **Marc Ortlieb** said that criticism of the venerable old sod was “akin to pissing in the Archbishop’s chalice”, and he’s been referred to as “the Archbishop” by Antipodean correspondents (and me on occasion) since...]]

It has also only just occurred to me that I really should mention how impressed I am by **David Hodson**’s ability to turn out a sportsball column for you month after month. Unfortunately he mostly writes about the sort of sportsball that doesn’t hold my attention which is why I’ve failed to previously comment on his efforts. Now if he devoted some space to farnarkling...

[[Given the typically wide-ranging nature of that lad’s columns, don’t be surprised...]]

Anyway, the following is just for Mr. **Hodson**. Given some of his comments in this most recent issue I’m sure he will appreciate how I reworded the song ‘Nigel’ by Aussie band Mental As Anything:

Oh by the way Boris lied yesterday
A porky for the gammons as they say

He’s a political skill
Who’s been going down hill
For a very long time
But he’s had a good time

Look at him, he’s as guilty as sin!
Nobody heard him speak the truth
He parties like a ghost
Not me is his boast
He’s your criminal boss
Who’ll miss him when he’s gone?

I see **Marc Ortlieb** put the mock on ANZAPA given the official total of the April mailing is 434 pages. Admittedly there are another 100 pages in the supplement but those fanzines were not produced specifically for ANZAPA and thus just ride along with the mailing for convenience.

May 4 Not having ever been part of the fannish zeitgeist, all this argument about celebratory buttplugs and other awards fails to hold my attention. So long as nobody ever bothers me with a nomination I’m content. (I’ve also had an aversion to zeitgeist ever since I shared an apartment with a bloke who liked to drink a spirit called that.)

Horrible stuff it was, the flavour of which is best described as having a troop of monkeys fucking in your mouth. He kept buying it though because it was \$2.99 a bottle and he was eternally optimistic that eventually he would find a mixer which would improve the flavour. He didn’t.

Still, surely you could find something a little more riveting than fannish awards to dissect. I’d suggest Shakespearian porn as this has been an interest of mine ever since I saw an interview with Robin Williams on the topic. As Williams pointed out for every movie title there is a porn version and not unnaturally he then asked why the same had not been done with Shakespeare’s plays?

[[Unfortunately for you fannish awards will continue to be a topic round here, but of course you don’t have to clock those bits if you don’t want to...]]

He went on to offer some sample dialogue and by jigger it did sound classy. Unfortunately after all these years I don’t recall enough of Robin’s immortal words to quote them. The best I can do is offer a few examples of my own from a little thing I like to call:

HOT AS YOU LIKE IT

Scene 1: Outside of that famous pub, The King’s Firkin (and you can too). Our hero is whipping up his companion’s enthusiasm as they begin to suffer cold feet.

“Onward gentlemen onward!
Nothing does rouse hounds more than to hunt the black hare!
I see you stand a quiver, like greyhounds in the slips,
Straining upon the start we be.

The game's afoot so raise up, your spirit and upon our charge,
Cry out, "Once more into the breach, dear friends, once more,
To close up our game with our English swords!"

Scene 2. In the bedroom. Could it be that our hero has met his match?

"Look and meet my serpent.
Of old Nile he is, and wise to the world.
Come now. Do not lower your eyes at his advance.
You need not fear length, nor breadth for he is like,
The smiling barber's chair, that fits all buttocks."

"Oh tush, tush my lord.
I look earthwards for no other reason
Than to judge your well risen friend.
Do you think I have not met his like before?"

"Well then wench prepare, to lend me your all!
I come to bury my friend, not to praise him."

"Onward then eager one, do your worst, but beware.
I have that which can, suck the pretensions,
Out of you as quick, as weasels suck eggs."

Scene 3. The street at dawn. Debauchery past and with everything well spent now comes now the summing up.

"What now for this drunk and naked party?
Rest now I hope till the ending of the world.
But here we shall be long remembered.
We few, we happy few, we band of brothers."

I think you can see the movie potential in this even if I had troublemaking the lines scan a la Shakespeare. It occurred to me as I was working on this that using the line "I could suck the pretension out of you as a weasel sucks eggs" would be an excellent way to confuse the average pick-up artist. And they say Shakespeare has no relevance to everyday life!

[[Given the typical English characterisation of the Aussies as a tad uncouth (eg: Australian pick-up line: "Fancy a fuck? No, well you mind lying down while I have one?") this is amusingly welcomed, but of course I wouldn't resist adding the definition of Australian foreplay: [BELCH] "Brace yerself Sheila"...]]

And on a final note, you may be impressed by Northern Territory crocodiles eating feral pigs but I'm far more amused by the news that in the French commune of Albi the introduced catfish have taken to catching and eating pigeons that came to bathe now the former have eaten all the native fish. Nothing I like better than one nuisance eating another.

[[Could this have fanzining applications?...]]

From: portablezine@gmail.com

May 5

W^m Breiding writes:

After loccing *Banana Wings* 78 I went looking for those issues of *This Here*. . . that I had failed to read and respond to, but hadn't printed out. It actually went back to the massive 48th issue, so I was five months behind. Yikes.

I have been spending this lazy Sunday afternoon drinking beer with you and catching up. Boy. You do go on. My smart ass comment about you being a blue collar intellectual has never been more noticeable, or true, than in these recent issues.



[[It does occur that, as much as I might embrace the "blue collar intellectual" label, when I found fandom around 1980 I was markedly white collar, although with Marxist sensibilities. It is what it is, these days...]]

We did "meet" at that Corflu in Richmond, Virginia, but we were not introduced. You left the convention meeting hall for a smoke and **Rich Coad** and I followed you - for obvious reasons; Rich wanted to bum a cigarette from you - he does smoke OPs - and you good naturedly cursed him out while obliging him with a smoke. That was the extent of our interaction. Undoubtedly I was an appendage to Rich, being a nonentity, though you most certainly were not such to me. I thought, "who is this mad man?" (Invisible exclamation points, or maybe *falls off chair*.) I otherwise spent time with **Gary Mattingly** (we worked out together in the hotel's gym), Rich, and **Jeanne Bowman**, shy guy that I am. It's true that we have some commonalities. While our backgrounds are seemingly at odds and you think my taste in music sucks there is a sense that we are riven twain at times. Except I am not a wild man, but your shy opposite. Ha. Did you fall for all that?

[[That all sounds about right. I don't actually recall TFL following me out to bum a smoke, but then that's a wholly unremarkable occurrence, accompanied in this case by your

apparently unremarkable presence, though your impression of me is quite fuckin' hilarious, and probably accurate. Hopefully we'll be able to parse 'separated at birth' conjectures in Vancouver. It would be an excellent thing to actually meet and talk...]]

I resolved to start publishing again after that Corflu; **Michael Dobson** showed the path with the print on demand *Random Jottings* and **Andy Hooper** encouraged me, while making friendly jokes about **John Hertz**. Eventually I did pub my ish. Did I send *Rose Motel* the precursor to *Portable Storage*? If not, and you feel up to stomaching a collection of my writings, say the word. Your monthly intensity far exceeds my twice-yearly contraption, and your depth of thought well exceeds my own limitations. And regards **Ulrika's** perceptiverses in *BEAM 16* I find that my *idea* of you is constantly recalibrating.

[[I did get a copy of 'Rose Motel', a fine precursor indeed for your current project...]]

Your explanation of fannish acculturation regards Farah Mendelsohn makes perfect sense. But I still disagree with how you went about writing your *BEAM 16* editorial. From the quote you used by Farah it deserved none of what you gave it. It was too ambiguous. You gave no further background to convince me that she deserved such blindsided scorn, or even a mild disagreement; what you should have asked for was clarification. But then, as faneds of yore have frequently done—you went off half-cocked.

[[I don't want to pre-empt my comments on your excellent loc on that ish, but I'll mention the salient point that, having concluded that the editorial was less well-written than it might have been, these subsequent comments have clued me in as to why that was the case: I was reacting to the whole of Farah's comments without having given that context to the reader. A salutary lesson...]]

Then in the 50th issue **Jerry Kaufman** brings a measure of reasoned clarity to the *BEAM 16* editorial. You've been bandying about the phrase "critical thinking", or lack thereof, in these last few issues like a weapon and I think it's designed to insult anyone who disagrees with how you went about presenting that editorial. Check this out: I am on the outside looking in at all of this. I don't know Farah. I've slogged through some of her critical writing, that's it. I am on no social media whatsoever. So your editorial came out of the blue to fresh eyes with no bias towards anyone or thing, except my own opinions about the woke and cancel cultures. What disturbed me the most about that editorial was that you essentially took the same tact as those you were criticizing: you insulted, and then essentially cancelled. Your



tone was not one to invite conversation, but to invoke hysteria, which it did. (If you'd written that about me I would have had the reaction to vomit and get as far away from you as possible.) This was no better than those you despise and they trapped you into playing their own game. And guess what? That's not critical thinking. That's acting out. Farah's original quote in *BEAM 16* remains an ambiguous statement. With no further examples of Farah's opinions on the matter, or where she stands, I failed to understand what was arousing you. And I will say it again: it should have been an opening to a conversation, not an ire-filled rant. You are complaining that your shouting over-shadowed the point of your piece. Well, your piece was not critically

thought out. It was an emotional attack. Emotional attacks will always out run critical thinking. That's why the attack overshadowed your points on the woke and cancel cultures, and the idiocy of this theory about *Firefly*. On the other hand **Steve Jeffery** seems to be embracing your point by reading more into Farah's one line comment than what was there. Yes, Farah's sentence was dismissive. But no reason was given for this dismissal. Farah simply could have disliked what she saw of *Firefly* and thus wrote it off "for what it was". There are many people who dislike Joss Whedon's work.

[[See comment above. Yes...]]

Oh dear. In FAAnWank you note that people vote for themselves. That's rather gauche. I hope when I voted for **Alan White** you didn't think I was voting myself by proxy. Alan had done stupendous cover art throughout 2021 and deserved my vote.

*[[It's potentially arguable that a vote for cover art from one's own ish is peripherally self-voting, but I don't see it that way, and have myself voted for BEAM covers. It's possibly a little oo-er in that the editor(s) may have input into the idea, design and presentation but certainly **Ulrika** and I have never taken or sought credit on our title for that. Without speaking for herself (who may even agree) I just see that as what we could call an 'art director' function which shouldn't be stomping on the actual artist's efforts...]]*

My guess for who might have voted with a Grand Rapids, Michigan postmark? Gary Hubbard. He lives in Kalamazoo, just south of Grand Rapids and I bet the closest USPS processing station is Grand Rapids, just as mail from Morgantown, West Virginia is always postmarked Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. This makes absolute sense if the voter had their fan writers correctly noted.

In your navel-gazing columns you have discussed the weird disjunction of liking a fan in-person yet finding their fanzine a bore. We have discussed this phenomenon in private correspondence. In an odd turn around in personality, I am likely more dismissive of both the fanzine and the person than you are. I do try to be open-minded, but like Farah, I “saw [them] for what [they] are”: boring. I have no doubt—and this now filters into the **Leigh Edmonds’** Big Fat Fanzine theory - I am treated with the same disregard by others. Some have made it clear; two examples being a rude note from a long time fan friend that he had no time for reading or responding to such a huge fanzine, and the other, cutting to the quick by saying, “it would be a kindness” to take her off my mailing list. I am notoriously thin-skinned. Because I know both of these people intimately (in very different ways) it hurt. This is my baby you are rejecting, a creation that runs to the deep core of me. I try to assuage hurt feelings with bonafides; okay so not everyone views fanzine publishing as *art*. And not everyone likes the art I *do* produce (hurts, but it’s the truth). I view my fanzine as a *gift*. But it could also be viewed as *I didn’t ask you to send me this so I have no responsibility towards it*. That, however, goes against my grain as a fanzine fan. If a fan editor doesn’t hear from me, even if just a note of *Thanks!* and not a loc, it’s pretty clear I don’t want it coming over the transom. So what am I to think of my generally quiet mailing list? Is *Portable Storage* just a burden to most? Your discussion of the Big Fat Fanzine as a *burden* is telling. An aspect that is not being discussed regards the Big Fat Fanzine is the greying of fandom. With few exceptions, *Portable Storage* is sent to old folks. If there is anyone under the age of 40 on my mailing list I’d be surprised, and most are probably over 60: they are old, tired, and jaded. I certainly get that feeling, too, of just not having enough time, not only to read the damned thing, but to *respond* to it. So when does a gift become a burden? The two examples above made it clear that *Portable Storage* was a weight on their conscience and they needed to slough it off. I got over it. **Leigh Edmonds** is demonstrably kind, as is **David Redd**, in that they give what they can. That’s all I ask. I get texts and emails that say *OMG! I just got it!* and that’s all I ever hear about it. And that’s okay; that’s all I require. I guess what this boils down to is what is the *responsibility* of the recipient of any fanzine, let alone a Big Fat Fanzine, when you didn’t ask for it. Obviously for many the answer is none, none at all. The wife frequently asks (when I’m bitching about non-respondents) “Just *why* is it that you keep these people on your mailing list. Why?” Not being a fan she doesn’t quite understand the concept that I’m pretty sure that even though much of the mailing list is silent I believe they appreciate receiving *Portable Storage*. Here there is a throwing up of the hands. How would I know? I have several retorts to that. But the most telling and most cutting (to myself, not her) is that if I don’t have a mailing list then why publish a print fanzine at all? Just send a PDF off to **Bill**

Burns like **Chris Garcia** does and otherwise say fuck it—Garcia’s latest issues don’t even include a way of contacting him to write a loc, which I wanted to do recently; I chose not track down a contact address to loc him because he obviously doesn’t care if I have a response or not. To me, fan publishing is about response; if I don’t get a response then why bother doing it?

[[Much to agree with there, W^m. I noted lastish that it probably takes me most of the six months between issues to get through ‘Portable Storage’, but nothing wrong with that.

Fanzine publishing is an act of creation. In my world that means it’s an act of art. While it’s true that acts of creation rarely rely on a response, because the act of creation is a necessary one, fanzines are slightly different, at least to me, but obviously not to **Chris Garcia**. He won a Hugo Award, right? So someone out there was reading the damned things. Ultimately he was rewarded for his efforts even though he wasn’t involved in a conversation with those who rewarded him. I’d prefer a letter of comment, thank you very much.

[[Bites tongue, again...]]

Just as your column on Big Fat Fanzines kinda fizzled I’ll cut that train of thought off right there. Let’s just say I have a propensity towards Big Fat Fanzines. *Starfire*, published when I was 17 (now soon to reach that beautiful retirement age of 66 in less than three months), had the same trajectory as *Portable Storage*. A couple of slim early issues and then—*wham*, a Big Fat Fanzine, and no turning back, nor wanting to. It’s who I am apparently, sloppy warts and all. (Apologies to Ben Bova and **John Hertz**.)

Then you go on to explain *how* you publish such a lengthy monthly fanzine, which was all very interesting because I could never do that. I am first and foremost low energy. Secondly, I’m a procrastinator. Everything takes time. I am also a slow reader and a slow writer. Acts of creation are wrenched from the soul after avoiding them for as long as possible. That includes locs, hence this long-ass missive on the last five issues because I took a break from fanzines to read some fiction—yes, I am a *very* slow reader—and writing responses takes just as long as reading a fanzine. (And hence this days-long loc.) I would enjoy having a bit more of your hyper-speed ability, but alas. Perhaps another question for you: rather than *how* do you pull it off, *why*—why do you do it, when you could be doing other things, like reading those sixteen Perry Mason novels?

[[Gardner is a fast read, usually, and it’s not all sixteen since there’s several I already have in other editions...]]

Leigh Edmonds’ continued pontifications on the Big Fucking Fanzine are both reassuring and depressing. As an instigator of a BFF perhaps I can request (beg?) that the whole thing not be totally written off because it’s big, but rather read (and hopefully) enjoyed in smaller dollops. Obviously everything I publish I believe deserves to be read by the

person I sent it to. They may not agree. Well shit, that's the depressing part. The reassuring part is that Leigh has given all of this so much thought and written so elegantly about it.

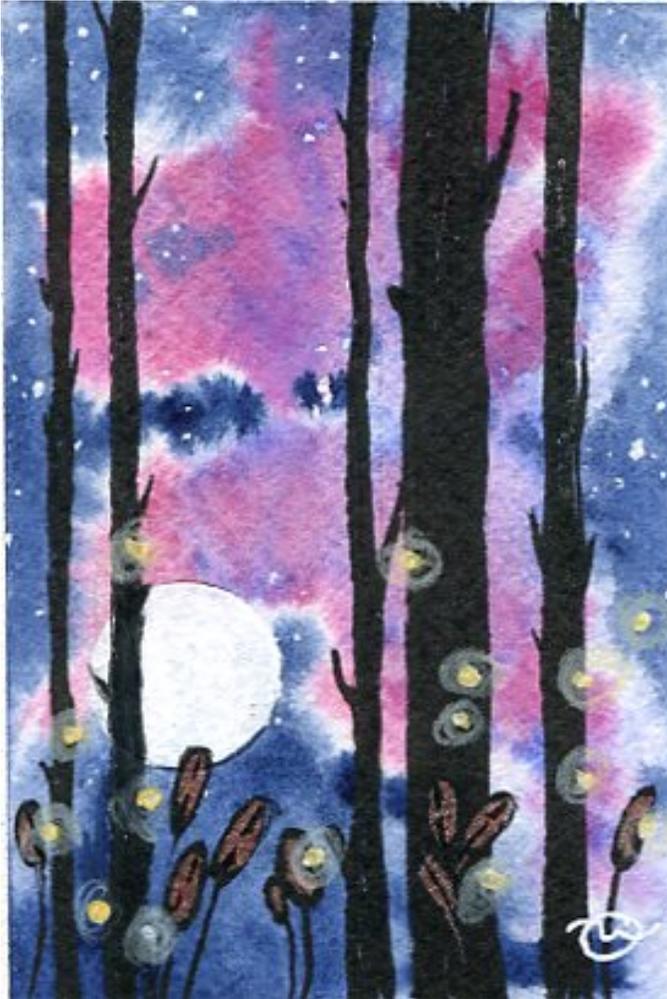
As to the whole Hugos/**Mike Glycer** thing, oh, for gawd's sake, when did Mike lose his sense of humor and his sensitivity? His attack on **Sandra Bond** was unkind. Since when has Mike disavowed variance in opinion? And what caused him to take it as a personal attack? Mike was formative (and formidable!) in my neohood, a presence to be reckoned with both in fanzines and at Westercons. As one of the progenitors of the Hogos, I have witnessed great mirth while Mike sarcastically ribbed the Hugos at a Ranquet (at McDonald's, where elst?). Mike needs to meditate upon his back issues of *Herbie* and find guidance.

[[Mike has certainly got incredibly defensive over the Hugos and Worldcons, typified by his outrage at my sarky terminology of 'WorldThing' for that event. Is this another example of twue lockstep being required to be admitted to the hallowed portals? Fuck that bollocks...]]

Coming at last to the fifty-first issue I find myself coming up short on hooks.

The Drapers were fun. I went back to the digital copy and followed all of your links. Too bad they were so ephemeral.

There's egoboo for **Kim Huett**'s communiqués. He is always entertaining in large ways. I do want to note though, that while SMOFs may grumble among themselves (in this instance Bruce Pelz dissing Ken Keller) about the nature of how WorldCons are run, the regular old attendee can have explosive fun. Big Mac, KC in 76, MidAmeriCon, was both pivotal for a great many fans that I knew, whom were all teenagers. Obviously Ken Keller read the writing on the wall financially. All of us budgeted to attend that WorldCon, and not a grumble was heard. Bruce was ignoring the inevitability of increasing financial burden; he was an exemplary fan looking out for the welfare of cash strapped youngsters such as myself but it didn't occur to me that Ken Keller should be demonized for it.



How far can you go in deconstructing a fanzine? In the end it's cellular, genetic, endemic. I am of a curious mind. I read about stuff that has little relation to my own life. I find it odd that fans complain "I can't relate" or "it doesn't interest me" or "it's about people and things I don't know about" when it's something foreign to their immediate interests. I just don't get it. Old, tired, busy, "having a life"—that I do get. I publish what I do because that's who I am. The entire run of *Portable Storage* is reflective of a certain willingness to expand horizons. By the time the Portable Storage Experiment has come to an end I may have decided retrospectively that it was all a waste of time and money. That's okay - I've done that aplenty in my life, made bad decisions. But as Frankie-baby crooned - "Regrets I've had a few, but then again, too few to mention, I did what I had to do without

exemption" - I did it my way!

2,541 words. That's not too many.

From: 308 Prince Street #422, St. Paul, Minnesota 55101

May 5

Justin E.A. Busch writes:

Thanks for the kind words in *TH...* 52's 'Egotorial'. I was surprised, given what I know (and what you noted) of your political leanings, to see that you'd only read *The History of Mr. Polly* (and that as a school requirement); there was a time, long ago alas, when any proper English socialist (and plenty elsewhere) would have read practically the whole Wells canon. In the interest of leaving you time enough to prepare *TH...* 53, I will eschew providing an annotated list of recommendations...

[[As I noted in that ish, I didn't get shifted well left until later than my grammar school days. Wells could be seen as a subject of admiration for his socialist principles even without reading him, as indeed could Dickens who subversively highlighted the plight of the poor. Marx was prevalent in my LSE years, but if I have a touchstone (as

briefly mentioned in a comment on Joseph Nicholas' loc lastish) it's probably Antonio Gramsci...]]

The enclosed may interest you. The Squamish (B.C., where I taught intermittently for a decade) Public Library maintained a regular series of book talks, and I gave one on the centennial of *The Outline of History*, which they published in an expanded form - just before Covid hit and the Library shut down for a year and more. Recently they sent me a batch of leftover copies, thinking I might find good homes for them. I'm sure yours is one such.

I hope you enjoy it.

[[I'm equally sure that I will, and thank you!...]]

From: paulskelton2@gmail.com

Paul Skelton writes:

I agree that the unchangeability of something, once it has been published, is important when defining something as a fanzine but pdfs are acceptable as fanzines, and they can be changed. I have a copy of one issue of *A Meara for Observers* that was completed just before they came to visit us, so they printed just my copy and brought it with them. By the time they had returned home they discovered that one of their parents had died, which clearly required an extensive rewrite before publication. I don't know if even they kept a copy of the original version. So I have a copy of *A Meara for Observers* from an alternate reality... except I am possibly the one person sitting here in both realities. I realise that this was a very special case, but that original copy was a fanzine when they wrote it, a fanzine when they printed my copy, and a fanzine when they delivered it to me. How could it now, when superseded, cease to be a fanzine?

[[Agreed. Noting that printed ishes can also be superseded...]]

So, I see no reason why a fanzine, which can exist on paper, or as an ezine, can't exist as a podcast. At the same time I have no argument with you, if you are running the bloody thing, defining the ground rules, which includes if a zine is a genzine or a perzine, or not a zine at all. The person doing the work gets to define the terms. Given my druthers I would always see *Banana Wings* as a genzine, but the latest issue had a LoCcol and a single outside contributor. Just like the most recent ('recent' being very generous definition) issues of my personal zine *ANoR*.

Not sure what I am trying to say here, other than that as usual I read and enjoy every issue, but generally just seem to agree with everything, but usually I never get around to saying that as it seems a bit too blah to need saying.

[[Agreed again - it's certainly arguable that my administrative definitions for the FAAns could be described as "strict" or perhaps even "harsh" but quite honestly I've got more nods of approval for that than I have brickbats.

Making these kinds of rulings is the admin's fuckin' job, shurely? I'd like to think that consistency (in spirit) is key so that basically voters (and even non-participants). can see that it's transparent and understandable...]]

From: dave_redd@hotmail.com

May 8

David Redd writes:

Thank you for another action-packed issue, an excellent example of a perzine with genzine bits. I suppose we use text to decide our classifications – could an editor-written zine with heavy art portfolios by others be called a genzine? Suspect not.

May 7 *[[That's another great point about art, but especially in the case of fillos of various stars and stripes which (like the locs) wouldn't be reflexively deemed to water down the "perzine" definition...]]*

Random Jottings: a nice unexpected glimpse of cricket in the USA there. On *The Equalizer*, you demonstrate beautifully that a modern TV series can contain good and important work way above the old "popular culture" tag. Memorable. Also great to find **Dave Hodson** in fine form discussing the recent football review with respect to politics, finance and history. Nice too to see **Ulrika** back – although the recent guest visual artists were ace – especially liked her cheerful fungal caps on p.15. With letters I tended to nod or shake my head, e.g. **Joseph Nicholas** got a nod for treating *Portable Storage* as a book for reading purposes. Sorry can't join in the general hurly-burly just now, but thanks again, and hope you over there are less affected by cost-of-living increases than we are here.

[[Who caused the head shakes, then? Inquiring minds, etc...]]

From: leighedmonds01@gmail.com

May 8

Leigh Edmonds writes:

My brain has been elsewhere for the past few weeks so perhaps a rather fluffy letter of comment this time.

Typos is a fact of life for me so I haven't noticed any if they've been in either yours or **Perry's** fine publications. In the good old days when I produced fanzines by cutting stencils, Valma usually read them to find the typos so the stencils went onto the duplicator looking as though they had a severe case of measles from all the corflued corrections. I may not have noticed any spelling typos but I did notice a most appalling typo on page 20 when either you or **Joseph Nicholas** wrote '1674'.

I am actually thankful to Joseph for mentioning the Putney Debates because they came to mind in another context a week or two ago but I could not remember the name of the place where the debates had taken place and so could not look them up. Now I can. (I actually have a copy but it is lurking somewhere in the huge stack of books in our back shed waiting for the new bookshelves to be installed and the old ones put up again). I read it in some detail back in my university days while studying the English Republic and thought that calling a break in debates to resolve a question by going off to pray about it was a rather sensible way of not rushing to hasty conclusions.

Joseph is probably also correct in suggesting that something as monumental as *Portable Storage* is likely to end up in the pile of to-be-read books. (As an aside, the list of the books in his pile looks rather interesting and I'm looking forward to reading his comments on 'Capital in the Twenty-First Century'. On that subject, one of these days I'll have to go back and re-read Lenin's 'Imperialism, The Highest Stage of Capitalism' which probably has more than a touch of relevance in relation to the current state of the world.) The difference between the books in Joseph's pile and *Portable Storage* is that the authors of those books probably did not expect to get paid in egoboo in the way that we should pay **William** for his efforts. For that reason he deserves a different kind of attention to being stuck in a pile of books to be read, to my mind anyhow.

[[I'm quite taken with the phrase "a different kind of attention", which immediately made me think that some faneds should get the kind of attention which includes being taken out back by the bike sheds for a robust analysis...]]

I applaud **Fred Lerner's** proposal that he might learn a bit about cricket. Everyone should, and the world would be a better place for it too. I would not recommend, however, immersing himself in the Laws of Cricket or studying Wisden, the pleasure of cricket is sitting in the warming late Spring sun watching a bunch of people dressed in white running around on a lush green field for no apparent reason. There is, I think, a lot to be said for a spectator taking cricket as an excuse to lounge about for an afternoon being content with their place in the world. I reckon those who have tried to turn cricket into a version of baseball have missed the point of cricket entirely. Anyhow, Fred, the Laws of Cricket

are so baffling that learning them would detract from the simple enjoyment of the game.

In the meantime it's the footy season here, and mighty Dees are still going very nicely thank you. The trouble is that, after endless decades of bitter defeats, one Grand Final win and some good wins so far this season cannot dispel in the heart of the hardened supporter the fear that it will all crash in a heap next weekend. **Dave Hodson's** comment about Watford suggests that you know the feeling. Which reminds me to mention that I enjoyed his column this time and it leads me to wonder if what he wrote about is a problem common to all big business professional sport or whether it is rather suited to English football which seems to be very popular around the world (for some unaccountable reason).



[[Indeed, the Hod-me-son, as is so frequently the case, has it spot on. We had a bit of a natter some time ago about those known as "plastics" or "tourists", people who decide to support a given team because of their perennial successes. Now his team, Spurs, are always considered one of the top contenders, but his support for them is deeply rooted in family history. While my lads might get mocked as being mere minnows, Dave succinctly expressed his admiration for my support of the team by observing "No-one chooses to support Watford because of their well-stocked trophy cabinet". And so it is...]]

Perhaps it is an advantage for Australian football that is may be intensely popular, but only in a small corner of a continent on the other side of the world from where the big bucks really count.

As one who uses words for fun and profit I am puzzled that I find cryptic crosswords impossible to deal with and ordinary crosswords very challenging. I'm not very good at Scrabble either. I wonder if anyone else feels the same way, particularly in this community which uses words so much and so well (generally speaking). Consequently I found your description of the 'syntax' of a cryptic clues interesting but still baffling. This made me think of something else touched on in several points in this issue about the different modes of transmission of fannish information - ie the difference between fanzines, podcasts, live streams and video productions. It is obvious from the wide range of fannish activities that some people's brains are more suited to say, a podcast, than they are to the written word and that while I might enjoy listening to a podcast I feel that a written response isn't quite appropriate to the way

I felt about what I heard. So, while I cannot fathom out a crossword it is still the case that my preferred mode of transmission is the written word.

[[‘Octorhorpe’ does actually get locs (I’ve been told). If anyone blurs all the lines and must be seen as the polymath of all forms of fannishness, including but not limited to fanzines, podcasts, conrunning, partying both online and in meatspace, herding duck-billed platypi etc etc it’s Alison Scott, innit?...]]

On a related topic and in Harry Warner mode, last week our builder installed more than 30 meters of book shelf space in my room. While doing it he proudly said that he had one book in his house, a local history of where he lives. He is a very intelligent man with excellent skills in many areas but just can’t see the point in reading for pleasure. I pointed out that most of those 30 meters of shelving is going to be occupied by books which are my ‘tools of trade’ (history, sociology, geography, political science, etc) but that doesn’t account for the many more meters of book shelf space in the rest of the house which will hold the fiction, art, music, etc, etc. I can’t imagine a world without books and yet he lives in quite a different kind of world. I wonder if the difference is that the books on our shelves somehow anchor us to our cultural past and helps to give us an understanding of the present in a way which a person who is not so anchored cannot understand. Does it also make us more understanding of other people in other places and other times and perhaps more understanding of the varieties of human experience, I don’t know but I’d like to think so.

[[Reminded there of one of the best lines from early ‘Red Dwarf’, with Dave Lister lamenting his wasted life: “And I’ve never read...” (pause for effect) “...a book”...]]

Due to delays resulting from Covid those books have been piled up in our back shed for the past half year at least, and it’s been a very frustrating experience not to be able to go over to the shelves and pull out just the right book with the right thoughts in it when I’ve needed them. Since I have other things to do (like write letters of comment).

I’m only shelving a couple of meters of books a day and not sorting them yet, that pleasure will come later. Even so, putting a book in the shelf is like welcoming an old friend back into our home (even that one by Charles Eric Maine that seemed to have snuck into the company of some labor history) and I’d like to think that I will have the time to sit and get to know them all better in due course. Won’t happen, of course, but one can always be hopeful. I’m particularly looking forward to having another look at the Putney Debates **Joseph** mentioned but that book has yet to find its way onto my shelves again. By the time it does come to light I will, no doubt, have discovered some other old friend to relax with instead.

From: eli.cohen@mindspring.com

May 9

Eli Cohen writes:

And another *This Here...* rescued from the spam folder (why do they keep doing that?), #52 this time.

[[I’m sure there’s some button or other you can click to fix that...]]

On perszines vs genzines, the line can be, indeed, very blurry, especially if you focus on a single issue, rather than the whole run. If I may quote from some neofan’s LoC in *This Here...*#46, “the perzine/genzine boundary can sometimes be fluid: My genzine *Kratophany* was accused of being a perzine after an issue that was, shall we say, somewhat thin on contributors; while conversely, one issue of Susan Wood’s letter-substitute’ perzine *Amor* had 4 articles and a letter column!”

[[As you note, pertinently, looking at a single issue “rather than the whole run” can skew things. Referring back to the “two tents” theory, this is where intent comes in...]]

Waddya mean the FAAn ‘Best New Fan’ award has “fallen by the wayside”? Are you implying that my ex-roommate **Jerry Kaufman** was making fun of me when he gave it to me at the last awards ceremony? Are you saying that wasn’t a real award?

[[I totally missed that, but if it occurred as you say then the Killer was indeed having a larf in no uncertain fashion. That’s why I love him...]]

And still another obscure crossword clue I’m supposed to be able to solve. Well, maybe for some of you old-time fans solving this would be a cakewalk, but to a poor neo like me (cf. my FAAn award), who never actually received any Pickersgill fanzines, and has been gafia for most of the last 40 years anyway, this required much research in *Fancylopedia*. Does it have anything to do with blogs? (Re the whole debate about blogs vs. fanzines, it seems to me British fandom always had a lot to do with blog, not to mention snog and fog. In fact, *Fancylopedia* credits the first use of the term to the Liverpool group, in 1955 no less!).

[[I only now realize that you were taking the piss with your previous loc as indeed you are with this one, you sneaky old git. The solution (too DoBFO for anyone else to remark upon, apparently) is, of course, ‘CAKEWALK’...]]

And yes, R.I.P. Neal Adams -- I vividly remember the Green Lantern/Green Arrow series. And also R.I.P. George Pérez, who just passed away -- I remember his Wonder Woman reboot fondly. (I was an avid DC Silver Age comics fan as a child in the late ‘50s and early ‘60s; very loosely followed them after that. Though there was a point in the ‘80s when my wife worked for Warner Books, and therefore got freebies of every DC comic being

published!) So thank you for that p.22 illo, plus, of course, all those lovely **Ulrika** illos scattered throughout the issue.

WAHF

The futanari-obsessed loon **Robin Bright** sends seven articles "you might like as contributions to *This Here...*". Needless to say, I declined, but did wickedly suggest *Journey Planet* or *Pablo Lennis*, which have probably also got them as well anyway since this reeks of mass mailing... ; **Bill Burns** ; **John Hertz** sends a rather nice card containing an acrostic based on the letters N-I-C, and perhaps predictably totally spoils it by fansplaining what an acrostic is ; **Mike Lowrey** includes me in mailing notice of his flight booking to escape his London isolation after testing positive for the Covid. Not sure why, but it's all good. He's now safely back this side of the pond... ; **Mail Delivery Subsystem** : "Your message to penneys@bell.net has been blocked. See technical details below for more information. 554 Access denied". Have I upset him, I wonder?... ; **George Phillies** : "A further complication: Some blog services do add separate URLs for each post, e.g., <https://books-by-george.com/2022/04/30/eclipse-29/> is an entry in <https://books-by-george.com> . The N3F will add a Neffy award for 'Best Other Fannish Activity'. You didn't say it, but your comments and LoCs provided much evidence for it." Good luck with that, George... ; **Heath Row** sends copies of two of his APAzines, which are also newly up on efanzines... ; **Garth Spencer** ; **Alan White** : "Always a delight to brighten up any Saturday morning"

FANZINES RECEIVED

Since the lastish. The usual apologies for whatever I've missed...

VITA TRANSPLANTARE 26 (John Nielsen Hall) - I did manage to loc this'un, since the old sod is keeping alive the topic of arses and the decoration thereof...

PERRYSCOPE 22 (Perry Middlemiss) - Along with VT above, a primo example of what puts the "personal" in perzine, as if you were camped out in the snug with your like-minded mates...

LOFGEORNOST #147 (Fred Lerner) - 'From Balbec to Baden-Baden', announces the top line, and it's the always readable erudite reminiscences. Extensive notes on a new and self-described "controversial" biography of Kipling which asserts that he was gay...

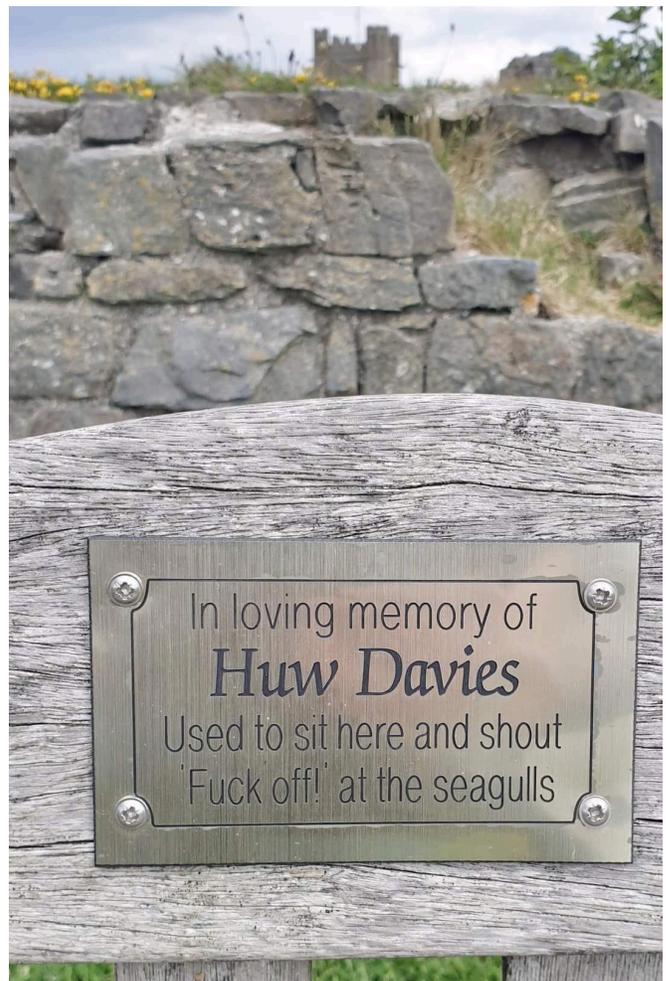
FANACTIVITY GAZETTE Vol 1 number 12 (George Phillies) - I continue to get the rafts of N3F zines, most of which tend to be untroubled by eyetracks round here, but I always clock this'un for **Justin E.A. Busch**'s 'Fanfaronade' zine review column, and now having added a general club news column by **Heath Row**. Justin, as he notes in his "featured letter" / guest column thish has been much engaged by discussions on fanzine definition, and here addresses the genzine /

perzine divide in exceptionally interesting ways which focus in part on lettercols as a defining tool. Not (as of May 20) up at tnfff.org, but seriously worth a gander when it is...

INDULGE ME

✘ **EGOTORIAL CODA** : Jen has been doing ebay reselling for the past several months, and doing all right with it (though not at **Hooper** levels of plutocracy), and when I have the time it's something I want to look into as well, mindful of the caveat that I'll have to include of everything smelling of smoke. I want to shift a substantial pile of mostly older issues of *Private Eye* (back as far as the 1970s), some *Asimov's* and *F&SF*, books books books, and a dresser-load of t-shirts acquired over the last 40 or more years. The other likelihood for 2024 is that we could flog off Jen's Honda Insight and revert to being a one-Honda household - it should be well workable even if I'm doing a couple of days a week at the taxi gig, she'll still be able to work around that with her side trips to auction houses and the like...

✘ **R.I.P HUW** : Shared by **Ian Cat Vincent** on FBF, a nice bench memorial. Sadly, the Grate Aitch **Harry Bell** reports that the plaque was [swiftly removed](#) by the local authorities...



✘ **CROSSWORD CLUE FOR ELI** : Back atcha, you snidely sod: “Short firm bird valued correspondent (5)”...

✘ **SCIENCE & NATURE (1)** : Beats waiting for Godot? The scientific community is all agog for the possibility of [witnessing an actual supernova](#), hopefully not next door...

✘ **GENUINE INQUIRY** : I’m getting the impression that anti-trans tosh coming from what dear departed Molly Ivins called “Shi’ite Baptists” is based on the concept that your “God-given” physical attributes must not be altered, and so I have questions:

- Is that your God-given hair color?
- Did you ever have braces on your teeth, changing your God-given dentition?
- Do you remove or otherwise modify your God-given body hair?
- Etc, etc...

Too personal? They’re the ones who want to talk about other peoples’ genitals...

✘ **HEADLINE OF THE WEEK** : Shared by **Al Sirois** on FBF, from where I do not know: “NASA warns alien life may not be fuckable”...

✘ **AGELESS BEAUTY (1)** : Cheating, as she’s younger than me by a couple of years, but purposefully to continue to annoy **Jerry Kaufman**, here’s **Gillian Gilbert**...



✘ **NOTE TO ‘ANSIBLE’** : Like me, you may have been mildly startled by the headline “**Alan White** dies age 72”, which refers to the Yes drummer and not our Las Vegas resident mad artist. Our Alan is in any case 103(-ish)...

✘ **SCIENCE & NATURE (2)** : Rarely-seen deep sea [Dragonfish](#) spotted in Monterey Bay...

✘ **NEWS OF THE BONKERS** : Vry srs skiffy wokeness - approx 5 minutes after being announced as the latest SFWA Grand Master, Mercedes Lackey (and her husband) are booted from the conference because she supposedly used

a “racial slur” on a panel discussion. The SFWA has disabled access to the panel recordings and everyone seems very coy about saying what it actually was, but Mercedes described Samuel R Delaney (while effusively praising him) as “colored”, which I learn is these days considered pejorative. I obviously missed the change where “person of color” is approved of but what I’d consider the more-or-less synonym “colored” isn’t. Chip noted that he was thoroughly unoffended and defended the term. SFWA has (as far as I know) yet to apologize. I expect I’ll continue to refer to my good mate **Anthony Moore** (whose superb photography has appeared in here) as “the bloke who looks like Lenny Henry” (he really does) and hope this passes muster...

✘ **AUSTRALIAN ITEM** : Cricket is icumen in (at least on my home soil), so here’s an old advert featuring a legendary player and oo-er...

What does Rod Marsh do with his Vaseline Petroleum Jelly?

Rod's skin may look like it has that Aussie toughness. But a Test Match can be more than a match for his skin. That's where his Vaseline Petroleum Jelly comes in. He puts it on before his gloves and pads to prevent chafing. Soothes it on cuts and abrasions after his flying catches. And uses it to help relieve sun-dried lips. Even a tough Aussie needs a little softness.

Vaseline
MOTHER NATURE'S MAGIC SOOTHER.

✘ AGELESS BEAUTY (2) : Comics department:
Jenette Kahn...



✘ NEXTISH : June 24 sounds about right...

✘ AGELESS BEAUTY (3) : Oh all right then, one more, and as we must now refer to her, *Doctor Ann-Margret*, who recently received an honorary degree from UNLV...



MIRANDA

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**"You're talkin' to me like a bitch.
Do you ever hear the way that you speak?
Don't have to be so mean just 'cause you're weak."**