

This Here...

“...an utterly worthless exercise...” (K Huett)

EGOTORIAL

LESS IS NOT QUANTITATIVELY MORE...

...aka “skimpy”, which is likely to describe thish...

It shouldn't be too much of a fuckin' surprise that there's more than a bit going on round here what with trip stuff as well as FAAn Award vote recording (which as I write in mid-March is a pathetically small number).

There is, it seems, a sort of hinterland that exists in between excitement and trepidation, and this is where I appear to currently reside. There are many moments where I'm DoBFO

well up for The Trip, especially as the plans for various bits of gadding about are getting written in ink rather than pencil and there's much encouraging response from sundry and clearly mad individuals who are making heroic efforts to be in the same space as us - some of them whom I haven't seen in 40 years or more, and in the case of my biological family will be meeting for the first time! Much coo er gosh ect!

The trepidation arises from fretting about all the things that could go tits up, including but not limited to the concern that I might have a problem getting back in to the States, as some have jokingly suggested (along with the concomitant suggestion that the UK might not let me *in*, undesirable oik wot I am...

Then there's my paranoid concern about possible assassins, but that's just nighttime brain-churn, shurely? Not even Ms. East Ham would be that determined to shut me up...

The more actual iffiness comes from my mobility issues which aren't getting any better, and nor are Jen's, pending her hip replacement surgery which will occur after we get back. She's got a steroid prescription for the duration, though, which we hope is going to keep her in at least a somewhat spry condition (for certain values ect) although DoBFO not at Olympic gymnast level.

As mentioned above, though, it *is* an actual worry that the current orange regime seems to think it can rescind green cards at will. You have to wonder if the law even matters, but having had a look, I learn the following timeframe applies: “In order to rescind a person's adjustment to lawful permanent resident (LPR) status, USCIS must serve the person through personal service a Notice of Intent to Rescind (NOIR) within 5 years of the date of his or her adjustment.” (USCIS website). So in theory I should be good, since that five year mark passed almost 25 years ago. In case you're wondering, currently newsworthy Mahmoud Khalil only got his last year.

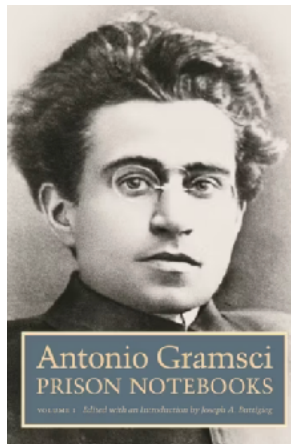
Under the law, a green card holder *can* be deported, usually if they've committed a violent crime, but not without due process, although it seems at the moment that the “due process” bit has been defenestrated at the whim of ICE. The procedure is set by the Immigration and Nationality Act (1952), which includes the provision that “[a non-citizen] whose presence or activities in the United States the Secretary of State has reasonable ground to believe would have potentially serious adverse foreign policy consequences for the United States is deportable.” This is the provision they've used to justify Khalil's arrest, by the way.

So on the one hand, I'm on safe ground as an almost 32-year resident who got their permanent green card in 1996 (it takes a couple of years after you get here), but on the other I might be causing “adverse foreign policy consequences” that I hadn't known about, ey?

My choice of travel reading (pictured) might not help (especially since I bought it direct from Columbia University Press), but as I'm fond of wearily noting, “We'll find out”...

It's all good.

March 2025



TAFFNESSABOUNDS

FINAL REMINDER - DEADLINE AFTER EASTERCON!

Once again...

The online ballot form for the 2025 Westbound race is at <https://taff.org.uk/vote.php> and contains all the info you need, candidate platforms ect. PayPal addresses are::

North America : sarahmiyoko@gmail.com

Europe : EUTAFF@gmail.com

All votes must reach the administrators by 11.59 pm British/Irish time (UTC+1; 3.59 pm Pacific Daylight Time, UTC-7) on **Wednesday 23 April 2025**. (It says here)

THIS FANZINE SUPPORTS ZI GRAVES for TAFF!

CORFLUX

43 NEWS

<https://corflu.org/Corflu43/CorfluPickledPRZero.pdf>

That there is the link for the now properly published "PR Zero" bid announcement by **Rich Coad**, and it's worth reprinting here his remarks on "The Elephant In The Room":

We can't help but be aware that many of the potential overseas attendees have deep reservations about the current Federal government in Washington D.C., particularly some of the more bombastic rhetoric coming from various politicians. Be assured that your reservations are overwhelmingly shared by a large majority of Californians, particularly in the Bay Area. As Spike has said, "If you're not safe here then there really is no hope". Fortunately there is still hope as much of what gets said does not get enacted and that which does often faces legal challenges that, at the least, tend to slow down enactment. And, as the saying goes, we may as well eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we may die. But not until after Corflu.

42 DEADLINES, FAANWANK & STUFF

A couple of reminders here, first (and importantly) to notify corflu42@corflu.org of your banquet menu selection by the end of March (roast beef, salmon or vegetarian nut roast).

Second is the **FAAn Award voting deadline, midnight PDT Saturday March 29**. (TONIGHT, as this goes out.) You'll have already had a separate reminder about this, and as usual I was despairing about the poor response so far, while still being aware that 60% of the ballots last year came in the last week of voting (as turns out to be the case). I expect to continue to bemoan the participation rate of Corflu members, although last year's 39.5% was an *improvement* on previous years' weedy turnouts of barely a quarter of the

members of an actual fuckin' fanzine convention being arsed to vote. Please do better...

Personal programme notes: as far as I know, perennial panel game *Just A Minac* will happen on Friday evening, renewing the vigorous rivalry of **Jen Farey** and **Rich Coad**, which other competitors will no doubt be keen to interrupt.

Saturday (after lunch?) will see us doing our duty as the Corflu 50 delegates and submitting to being interviewed by Corflu chair **David Hodson**.

Saturday evening at 9pm, I'll be hosting what we're calling The Vry UnSrs Music Quiz (based pretty much on 'Never Mind the Buzzcocks') featuring the lads' team of **Ian Sorensen** and **Nigel Rowe** vs the ladies' ensemble of **Alison Scott** and **Jeanne Bowman**. As you might expect, this carries the usual R-rated warning for coarse language (me), violence (from the contestants toward the host) but hopefully not so much nudity, depending on how much strong drink may have been taken. Ahem...

<https://corflu.org/>

FFS

NOT TOO LATE TO DONATE

We haven't met the target on the GoFundMe (though donations have been generous, thanks!), so here's the link one last time:

<https://www.gofundme.com/f/the-farflung-farey-safari>

Groveling gratitude to the following since lastish: **Kat Templeton**, plus a couple of private donors (you know who you are).

If you prefer to donate privately, contact **Jen** for details for Zelle or PayPal.

fareyjen@gmail.com

CONTACT!

Facebook Group : <https://www.facebook.com/groups/648334767678272>.

While we're in the UK we'll have our phones with us (DoBFO), but while we'll have a month's worth of international plan on the go, we appreciate that most of you over there probably won't. We have been prevailed upon by the wise **Claire Brialey** (who else?) to sign up on WhatsApp which we have duly done. I believe you should be able to find us by our phone numbers, which are (+1) 702-274-8384 (me) and (+1) 702-281-3769 (**Jen**). Facebook Messenger is also good, as is email, and for Corflu 42 activities, Discord. We'll *try* to be checking all that in a reasonably timely manner, but for itinerary info, that should all be on the FBF group linked above.

RECONNECT SCHEDULE

Having slogged through the "PlanZ" online scheduler, about which the nicest thing I've heard said is "I've seen worse" - possibly referring to the website for Hilton hotels - I've been given my schedule, which amounts to not quite fuck all. I've been listed for the Friday evening "Filk fest" (20:00-23:00) in the Glenbank room at the Hilton. No fuckin' idea if there'll be a keyboard available for me to actually perform any of my song parodies, nor whether others will be advised that my stuff is often quite swearsy if they didn't already know that. We'll see what happens - my appearance might be fleeting...

The other item is a "Meet the Corflu 50 delegates" Table Talk, ICC Boardroom 2 on Monday at 12:30, which seems like dead dog territory to me and after we'll have checked out of the Hilton, but it's well before our flight from Belfast City airport to Heathrow which is wheels up at 7:30pm. I had also suggested a general discussion of fanzines since they're notable by their utter absence from the main programme, but that was apparently beyond the pale. I also mentioned in the Third Thursday Zoom that I'd offered to do a DJ set (to which several people actually said "Oo!" In approving tones, but it looks like that won't happen either, not least because even if they decide to ask me tootish sweetish there isn't much time to prepare it. And apparently any contribution I might have to panels on conrunning is not required. Mind you, it's not like I have a massive history with Eastercons or their programming so possibly fair enough.

I shall most likely emulate the great **Leigh Edmonds**, find a bar and glue myself to a chair...

RADIO WINSTON

LORRAINE CHANDLER



You can actually blame James Bond for this'un, as I shall reveal in due course...

Born Ermastine Lewis in Detroit in 1946, a neighbor of percussionist Eddie "Bongo" Brown and family friends with (some say related to) Otis Williams of the Temptations, a career in music was probably inevitable. She packed up college for the industry and started off writing songs with Jack Ashford (not the "Ashford & Simpson" one), an early example being the 1966 dancefloor hit "[I'm Gone](#)" by Eddie Parker, now a rarity that changes hands for very silly money...

She signed with Ashford's label as a performer an'all, her first single being "[What Can I Do](#)" (also 1966), co-written by Ashford and his other songwriting partner Mike Terry, who also did the arrangement.

Now aficionados of Northern Soul (not you, **Leigh**) will have spotted the form right away, and the likes of Our Sal **Sarah Mooring** will be toe-tapping already. The mid-60s was like prime time for this kind of R&B output, often from smaller independent labels and highly sought after by the Northern Soul DJs who would stick blank labels over their 45s so other, competing jockeys couldn't read them. Presumably they wrote some sort of code down so that *they* would know...

One of those labels was Ashford's Pied Piper ("Giant") to whom Chandler was signed. In the mid-1980s Ady Croasdell of Ace Records in the UK and a DJ himself apparently unearthed a bunch of Pied Piper recordings, some of those unreleased up until then, and as a result there's more than a few compilations about. One of the more recent I found was a 2015 CD release on the Kent Dance label: 'Pied Piper - Follow Your Soul' which includes three Chandler slices including the great ballad "[Lost Without You](#)".

So where, you might be wondering, does James Bond come into it?

Part of Croasdell's trove included a then unreleased demo of a possible [theme for 'You Only Live Twice'](#), also, probably not unintentionally, at just about the right Northern Soul dancefloor speed. It's decent enough I reckon, but DoBFO was never going to compete with the name recognition wattage of Leslie Bricusse, John Barry and Nancy Sinatra, but o my dears, what if it had?...

MOVIE NIGHT

15/74

Oo, it's 'Red One' all over again innit? The above numbers are, respectively, the critics' score and the audience appreciation number (both %) for 'The Electric State', the latest honkingly expensive (a reported \$320million budget) effort from the Russo brothers.

The premise is that a war between robots and humans occurred in a retro-futuristic 1990s (a time period which

really does seem to be A Thing of late, don't it?) which the humans "won" (for certain values of...) using technology allowing them to upload their minds into drone robots of their own. We are left, however, with a rather dystopian landscape.



Michelle (Mille Bobby Brown, who seems to have been getting slagged off of late for reasons I cannot fathom) lives with her arsehole of a foster father (Jason Alexander) after being orphaned in a car crash that also supposedly killed her kid brother. A (semi?-)sentient robot turns up which seems to be controlled by said brother, and the quest is on to find him.

90s retro means we get robots of famous brands like Mr. Peanut (voiced by Woody Harrelson) and other types which would have been too twee and cutesy if they weren't all obviously duffed up by the war. Don't expect anything wildly original (as if anything is, let's face it), but what you *will* get is excellent presentation, coherent world-building, quite a few moments of genuine poignancy and a fab cast including Giancarlo Esposito who seems to be absolutely fuckin' *everywhere* these days of both human and voiced robot characters.

A lot of the criticism that came down was that people were expecting a much closer adaptation of the illustrated novel by Simon Stålenhag ('Tales from the Loop') which this apparently isn't at all, but I'd say it stands up well enough on its own merits...

HEALTH DIARY

MOSTLY MEH

Writing when you've just had a couple of bad nights' sleep isn't ideal, is it? Rather than the usual gush of wordage coming off the keyboard with felicity, I'll more likely have the arse that I can't get anything done because I'm both tired and moody as fuck, and while tomorrow is another day, the number of available tomorrows is dwindling considerably.

Add to that waking up this morning (March 17th) well before any avian flatulence, accompanied by a fairly comprehensive squirrel attack *and* managing to mangle my little toe by banging it against a bookcase while attempting to step over the dog who, as is her wont, was laying across the hallway. Of such small things are foul moods cumulatively made.

Later (March 26th): just got back from my regular oncologist visit, and the blood work numbers are all quite satisfactory (although white & red cell counts are still above the ideal). Hematocrit value of 48.6% obviates the necessity for a phlebotomy the day before we travel (50% is the line) so now I *can* spend all day Monday packing (muted yays).

The only item of slight concern is that nice nurse Hannah wants me to add an iron supplement to my vitamin regime, 2 or 3 times a week, so I'll be doing that (+ Guinness, ahem), and this may well also alleviate the joint and muscle pains, which if that is the case bodes well for me being able to walk more than a few steps at a time. I've also picked up a homeopathic supplement which is supposed to alleviate leg cramps ect, and we'll see if that does any good, ey?...

TV GUIDE

SOMETHING OLD...

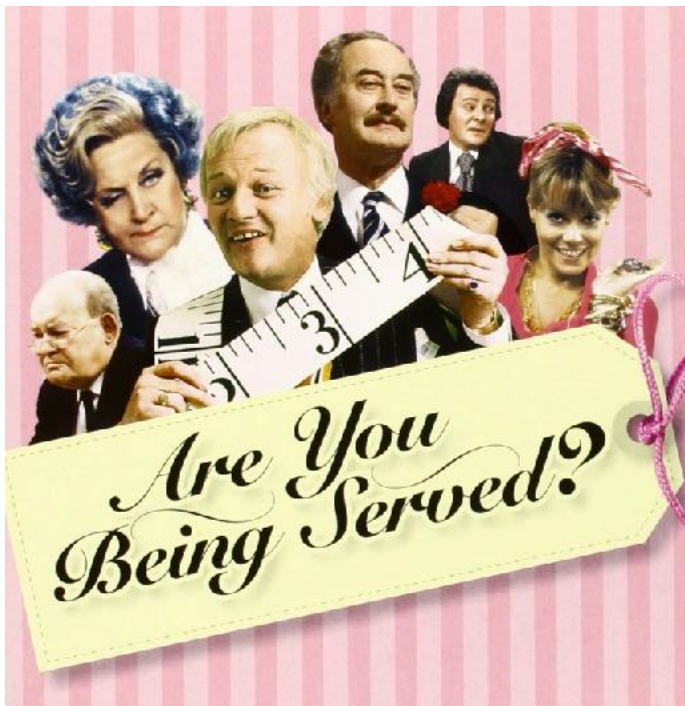
Despite the fact that we've got new and returning shows to clock, it still seems I have plenty of time to binge off older stuff, especially since "Movie Night" seems to have gone missing of late.

As you do, I idly browse Britbox (via Amazon Prime) and having worked my way through 'New Tricks', alight upon 'Jonathan Creek', which I find mostly cosily amenable in that very British mystery way, although it does get a bit darker later on. I'm left wondering, inevitably perhaps in a very blokeish manner, when Julia Sawalha acquired that impressive shelf, something that does honestly take me a minute to notice, being a "leg man" & that...

Paramount+ is home to most of our regular shows, so gets browsed a fair bit when on days other than Monday and Friday when they've dropped on the streaming service after airing on CBS. As you might expect, there's all sorts of tosh hiding away in there, and I'm going to mention yet another forgotten series: 'Welcome to Paradox', one of the short-lived

efforts punted by what was then known as the Sci-Fi channel in its earlier years. This'un is an anthology series but with the same setting in each episode, the futuristic city of "Betaville". You'll clock just about every Canadian actor who would ever get a bit part in one of the 'Stargate' series but also notable appearances by Henry Rollins, Alice Krige and Ice-T, the latter predictably in a prison-based episode in which he is equally predictably very good. What's also notable is that quite a few of the stories are adapted from earlier sf eg "Research Alpha" (Van Vogt & Schmidt), "Blue Champagne" and "Options" (John Varley), "The Extra" (Greg Egan) and what I thought was a rather good adaptation of Tiptree's "The Girl Who Was Plugged In".

More nostalgia involved me wondering, given present conditions, whether Rik Mayall's 'The New Statesman' would still be funny, and by and large it is despite the occasional cringe at Nazi symbology. Someone watching the series for the first time now might well react differently, I suspect, whereas I can't really help contextualizing it all as it chugs along in its absurdist manner.



Then there's been a rewatch of 'Are You Being Served?' Which now comes with occasional warning about racial stereotyping (and noting a couple of instances of blackface). This strikes me as the sort of thing that the likes of Ms. East Ham would "recognize what [they] were watching" and engage in a righteous jog in the general direction of away. This, as usual, ignores the parodic nature of it all and the fact that such misconceptions (in general, misconceptions are what much of the humor is based on) usually come back to bite our hapless Grace Bros. Staff in the arse. It's certainly arguable (and valid) to point out that this is all very much

"of its time" - granted, an apologist interpretation which is often applied to more genuinely egregious examples eg 'Love Thy Neighbour', 'Mind Your Language' and 'Curry & Chips'.

SOMETHING NEW...

'The Residence', described by IMDb as "a screwball whodunit", dropped March 20th on Netfux. This'un is the latest product of production company Shondaland ('Bridgerton' and much else). It's what I'll call "classically" structured as murder mysteries go and includes meta-references to others to the extent of having the quite lovely conceit of titling each of the 8 episodes after notable examples of the genre. Extra pops for being set in the White House on the occasion of a state dinner for the Australian Prime Minister.



Although there's a couple of red herrings, there isn't any "cheating" in the sense that previously unrevealed information is essential to the solution - when you get to the end you'll realize (as does inevitably quirky detective

Cordelia Cupp, played superbly by Uzo Aduba) that the salient clue was actually there just about all along.

If there's any weaknesses, those would have been pointed out in an [NPR review by Linda Holmes](#), who writes, in part:

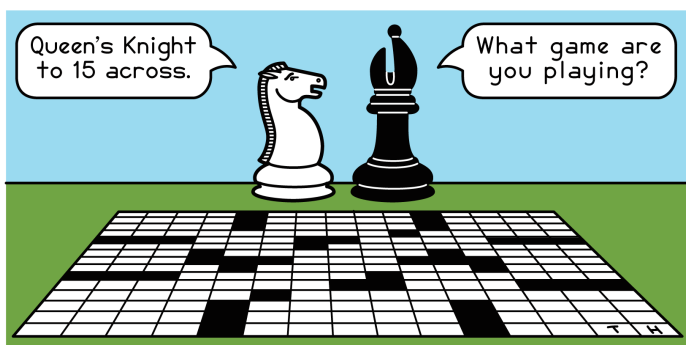
At the same time, we also get scenes from the congressional hearings about the investigation that happen later, which take testimony in preparation for the release of a report. That might be one more framing device than the show needs, but Al Franken and Eliza Coupe are funny as they play senators bickering disagreeably.

There are eight episodes; the last is almost 90 minutes long, and it's the segment in every great story of this kind where the detective gathers all the suspects, explains the crime, and announces the killer. The show probably doesn't need 90 minutes of that; it could have used a trim in this section. That's the closest thing to a beef that I have. But they're being true to the roots of the genre by allowing Aduba to make a meal of it.

The cast is uniformly very good indeed, with Giancarlo Esposito (there he is again) as the victim (but seen a lot in flashback), having replaced Andre Braugher who sadly died halfway through filming and gets a nice dedication at the end of the final episode. As usual it's very unfair to single out members of the ensemble for extra praise, but since I usually do that anyway I will mention Jane Curtin, "first mother-in-law", drunk and crankily of the opinion that the POTUS isn't good enough for her son, and Mary Wiseman (Tilly off 'Star Trek: Discovery') as the tattooed, foul-mouthed, temperamental and, as it turns out, explosively randy executive chef Marvella.

Recommended...

GIVE US A CLUE



Lastish (all of these were conundrum rounds on '8 Out of 10 Cats does Countdown'):

"Misshapen gonad tip is one way to become a parent (8)"

[[Definition: "one way to become a parent". Wordplay: "misshapen" (anagram indicator), rearrange "gonad tip" = ADOPTING]]

"Bumheads somehow waylaid (8)"

[[Definition: "waylaid". Wordplay: "somehow" (anagram indicator), rearrange "Bumheads" = AMBUSHED]]

"Unusually, nude Fred got his money back (8)"

[[Definition: "got his money back". Wordplay: "Unusually" (anagram indicator), rearrange "nude Fred" = REFUNDED]]

Steve Jeffery : "Adopting" ; "Ambushed" ; "Refunded". I knew those hours wasted on watching 'Countdown' would come in useful. For certain tightly limited definitions of "useful".

Joseph Nicholas : I'm doubtless coming in a bit late here, and your 85th issue is even now rolling off the production line, but I've been catching up on my fanzine reading and came across the crossword clues at the bottom of page 5 of *This Here...* 84. Bloody hell, but they were easy! **Eli Cohen** should surely get them without trouble, since they're obvious anagrams -- in truth, the easiest of all cryptic clues to solve. Anyway, the answers are: adopting ; ambushed ; refunded.

Easy-peasy, as I intimated. You'll have to revert to harder clues next time!

Eli Cohen : A new *Jenzine* just popped up in my mail, which is acting as a poke to put aside my state of lethargic depression (should really stop watching / reading the news...) and respond to *TH...* before another one of those shows up. Let's begin with the crossword clues: A straightforward anagram of "gonad tip", namely ADOPTING. Anagram of "bumheads" -- AMBUSHED. Finally, anagram of "nude Fred" -- REFUNDED.

[[As Joseph Nicholas correctly observes, all too easy, so at his implied request, see the following...]]

Thish's efforts:

"Poorly received cricket team a man short. You're nicked!? (3-6)"

"Mood. Nothing changes a classic Irish table game (11)"

"Empty vagina, down for this? (5)"

And a possibly more twisty extra one:

"Having prevented what some Knights say backwards, JK Rowling enters initial stop light (10)"

ANORAK

I AM A MOLE AND I LIVE IN A HOLE

There are quite a few anorak subsets, of course, and one of those is lamentation over now disused railway lines (with occasional celebration where one is revived by a heritage

group), and a more specific subset of *that* gets well into the old infrastructure, whatever of it may be left.

Unsurprisingly, then, I find a page on FBF dedicated to "Disused Railway Tunnels UK" (<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100087309025573>) which has 12K followers (now including me). The creator is a photographer, and this amounts to their personal blog - copyright is acknowledged of photos reproduced here.

The first I clocked, having popped up in my feed via whatever curious (but in this case welcome) algorithm FBF was using that day was this'un of the Hose/Long Clawson tunnel on the expansively named Great Northern and London and North Western Joint Railway between Long Clawson and Scalford stations. Most of the line opened in 1879 and had decent business running freight, passengers not so much and was mostly closed in 1957, although Saturday "holiday trains" ran to Skegness seasonally until 1962. Long Clawson station itself had closed in 1953 - it's reported that the average ridership was 2 passengers a day.



Unlike probably most remaining disused tunnels, the Hose tunnel interior is still accessible, or was until recently, per this next photo. Old tunnels are more usually blocked or sealed off for DoBFO sensible reasons.

Photos below right show the south entrance (which looks like it was built last week don't it?) and the tunnel interior.

Although the first actual passenger trains anywhere started in 1825, a lot of the early lines were built for cargo eg coal, limestone and such, and the (much) later decline of UK heavy industry was a significant factor in closures.

Said to be the oldest surviving relics in the world (and one of the shortest at 32 yards) is the Fritchley tunnel in Derbyshire, constructed in 1793 and laid with 3'10" tramway tracks to shift limestone from Hilt's Quarry to the Cromford canal. Originally horse-drawn, a walking-pace steam train was trialed in 1813, and the line was upgraded and moved a bit in the 1840s to properly accommodate steam engines.

The quarry closed in 1932 or 1933 but remains as a derelict. Apparently Rolls-Royce used it as a dump for low-level radioactive waste from 1964-2002 when local activism finally put a stop to that. The line itself was closed by 1935, but the structure remained and the tunnel was used as an air raid shelter during World War II. In the 1980s the southern end was blocked by a wall (pictured below) and the northern end in-filled, but exhumed after 2012 when the Derbyshire Archaeological Society got a grant off lottery money to rediscover the old tramway.

Nothing in or around Newbury in the way of old tunnels for fellow anoraks to wank over - probably for the best ey - but don't forget there are those disused stretches of the old Didcot, Newbury & Southampton railway that I waffled about in a previous column.



THE OLD SOD

BY DAVID HODSON

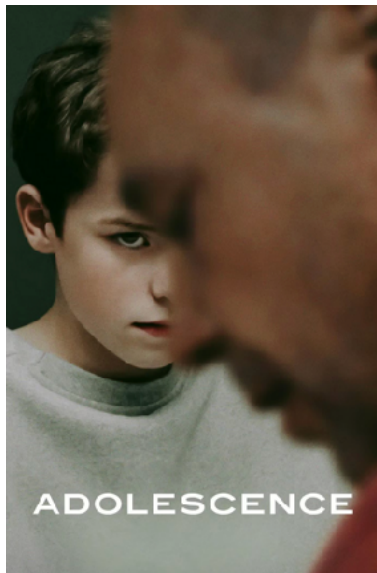
In the middle of March Netflix dropped a new, brutally realistic four-part drama called *Adolescence* in which a thirteen-year-old schoolboy stabs a thirteen-year-old schoolgirl to death. The four episodes follow the process of his arrest from the minute the front door of his family home is smashed in by the police at stupid o'clock in the morning through to the final admission of guilt to his father thirteen months later during a phone call. It's a very good and true to life portrayal of a scenario that seems to be reported in the UK press more and more often.

A lot of fuss has been made about how each episode was filmed in one shot; the first episode, for example, seamlessly follows various viewpoint characters as they enter the story, from the two police officers leading the arrest of the boy, to his being loaded into a police van, taken to the police station, booked in by the station desk sergeant, having his health assessed, being physically examined, and then being interviewed and charged. Again, it's brutally realistic but, like any television drama, it's a bit sanitised; most police stations aren't quite as clean and bright, they're dealing with scumbags and anti-social characters most of the time after all.

Over the course of the four episodes, it becomes clear that the boy knew and liked the girl – she was in his class at school – and was attracted to her. It's revealed that she sent a topless selfie to another boy in their class, and he had ridiculed her for being flat chested. Once this became common knowledge in the classroom, the young boy at the centre of our story reached out to the girl, ostensibly offered his sympathy to her, but secretly hoped it would make her like him "like that". The opposite happens and an inexperienced and fragile young girl whose ego has been deeply bruised rejects an inexperienced and fragile young boy, deeply bruises his brittle ego in the process, and the tragic die is cast.

Without wanting to overhype the show, this is Shakespearean in places. Just as *Romeo and Juliet* is mistakenly portrayed as one of literature's great romances, rather than a teenage infatuation with deadly consequences, this story can be misread as an incel manifesto just because the 80-20 "rule", the "Pareto principle" in which 80% of consequences are the results of 20% of actions, is misrepresented in one of the episodes as 80% of women only being interested in the "top" 20% of men.

One of the most chilling encounters comes in the third episode where the young boy, being held in a secure mental health unit because there's nowhere else to put him, has a meeting with a child psychologist for pre-trial evaluations. It's the third meeting between the two and the psychologist knows some of the buttons to push to try to get a positive dialogue established with the child; she buys him hot chocolate and remembers to bring marshmallows to put in it. The child has a few explosive fits of anger over the course of the interview, but a basic truth is established; he still doesn't think or believe he has done anything wrong. This is the episode where the details about the selfie and the girl's small breasts come to light when, whilst being asked about his attitude towards the girl, the boy says (and I am paraphrasing as best I can, I don't actually want to re-watch the show at any point) "she was like you, she had nothing up there, she wasn't really my type." "Do you like women with large breasts?" the psychologist asks, "I suppose so" is the basic reply.



Then we get the revelation about why the boy feels no guilt for his actions. Despite the fact that he has stabbed the girl to death, left her bleeding out on the floor of a car park, he "didn't touch her "like that"" even though he could have done at any time due to her complete defencelessness. The lack of uninvited sexual contact is seen as a virtue that outweighs the transgression of extinguishing the young girl's life in this child's mind.

At various points in the show discussions are had and points are made about "incel culture", and Andrew Tate, and the effects of the internet on young minds hiding their activities behind closed bedroom doors. Questions are asked by the parents of the boy about what they could have done

differently and the classic "I had should have been more involved" excuse is wheeled out by the overworked father, but the truth is there was nothing they could have done differently. Not buying a child a computer and not allowing access to the internet in the home would merely push the activity further into the shadows, putting it in the province of the mobile phone carried around sneakily and accessed secretly, and what parent really wants to just barge into a child's bedroom with the inherent risk of what they might see or encounter? (Why am I being so coy here, just like the child murderer was coy discussing whether he was attracted to women with small or large breasts? We've all masturbated as teenagers, we've all undoubtedly masturbated as adults, whether in a sexual relationship or not, but it's not just about being British with a stiff...upper lip... It's something we just don't discuss over our coffee and Danish in Starbuck's.)

From the late-nineties until the mid-2000s, I worked in the criminal justice system, initially in prison education, but later in a probation day centre. Sometimes I was loaned out to a youth offenders day centre called Sherbourne House in south-east London where I would encounter boys as young as thirteen frequently. Some of the things I saw and heard horrified me. Even then we were seeing a huge rise in teenage abuse on parents and a significant part of that was teenage sexual abuse on parents; predominantly teenage boys on their mothers, who had usually given birth to their sons at a very young age themselves. The logic was (sort of) the boy was the “man of the house” and should enjoy what they perceived as the sexual privileges of that position. I often wondered how many younger siblings of these teenagers were the result of either incest or being pimped out around a gang, but any questions would either be met with threats of violence (and these guys were perfectly happy and able to follow through on those threats) or stony silence from the mothers and outraged denial from the boys.

Older, more reactionary, adults would frequently espouse bringing back national service. “A short back ‘n’ sides and hours of square bashing will soon knock some discipline into them,” was the mantra, but this completely ignored the evidence, at least in London, of the 1950s and 1960s, when criminal gangs, now called OCGs as is the trend on the more sensationalist television dramas, were made up of men effectively trained by the state in knee-capping, Glasgow neck-tying, and murder. When challenged with these facts, the older, more reactionary, adults, mostly men, would reply: “Well, it didn’t do that to me.” It was pointless trying to explain that anecdotal evidence is no evidence at all.

And my conclusions from all of this: none at all. There has always been societal and youth violence, there always will be societal and youth violence, we just know more about it now because we have instantaneous reportage in the media. Even in the 1950s and 1960s in a relatively small country like Britain, there was no point reporting regional violence that had happened days and weeks before in the national presses situated mainly in London and Manchester; most people lived in a happy little bubble. As we sit in the middle of an international crisis in Ukraine caused by Russian violence, we should remember that, should a nuclear exchange have occurred in the 1950s or even 1960s, most people would have been dead before they even received the warnings that the birds were flying and I’m not sure that the situation now, with a mobile phone in every pocket, and the ability to know that you’re about to perish in mere minutes is any better.

As a famous author once said: “So it goes.”

Corflu 42 is less than two weeks away and I’m looking forward to welcoming many of you to balmy, sweaty, exotic Newbury, the throbbing heart of West Berkshire. A considerable number of you will also be rocking up to the

Bishop’s Finger in Smithfield for the First Thursday fan meeting; I’ll see you there also. A week after Corflu, many of us will descend upon Belfast for Reconnect, the 76th British National Easter convention. As much as I’m looking forward to chatting, laughing, drinking, and eating lemon drizzle cake with many of you, I’ll also be bleedin’ glad when it’s all over; I need a rest.

In the meantime, here’s that play I’m appearing in during May...

LOCO CITATO

[[“There’s something wonderful about drinking in the afternoon. A not-too-cold pint, absolutely alone at the bar – even in this fake-ass Irish pub.” (Anthony Bourdain) ...]]

From: grahamcharnock85@gmail.com

February 26

Graham Charnock writes:

Well done for producing an issue that doesn’t mention Trump once. Shame on you. But at least you managed to get

a few stabs in on that other bete noir, Mr Gaiman. I met him one evening at Rob Holdstock's place.

The stink that came off him was overwhelming even then.

From: Kim.huett@gmail.com

March 1

Kim Huett writes:

Being, as you know, a magnanimous individual I've always done my best to forgive your many faults. None of us can entirely escape our heritage after all and your ricket and scurvy laden upbringing has clearly left some grievous marks. Thus I trust you will do me a courtesy in return by accepting that it was a genuine accident which saw me leave out Penelope Keith, somebody it turns out was given even more opportunities to be a star than Richard O'Sullivan. I actually find her career even more of a mystery than O'Sullivan's. For starters it took her a surprising long time to score a major TV role. To judge by the majority of British filmographies I've looked at British actors who score a lot of bit parts on TV are either given a starring role fairly early on or not at all. In Penelope Keith's case she was a regular on British TV for 15 years before appearing in 'The Good Life', and initially it wasn't intended that she have a starring role in that either. Consequently all her major TV roles came later in life which I think you will agree is quite unusual. It occurs to me that a great many British actors follow up their one time in the sun with long stints in one of the British soaps, 'Coronation Street', 'Eastenders', or 'Emmerdale'.

While this theory is no more than an unscientific impression based on occasionally looking up acting careers on IMDB it still feels right to me. If nothing else the British soaps seem to exert a considerable talent gravitational field, constantly pulling in experience actors to ensure the product at least appears fresh. The US soaps on the other hand seem to be their own ecosystem with only modest crossover into the rest of TV. Australian soaps on the other hand do the opposite by feeding an endless line of young talent in 'Neighbours' and 'Home & Away' with the promise that if they can survive the boredom they will eventually be released into Hollywood.

Anyway, here are Penelope Keith's starring roles:

1975-78 The Good Life (30 episodes)

1979-1981 To the Manor Born (22 episodes)

1985 Moving (6 episodes)

1990-92 No Job For a Lady (18 episodes)

1994 Law & Disorder (6 episodes)

1995-97 Next of Kin (22 episodes)

What makes my not mentioning her previously especially galling is the fact that it was a joke about the BBC setting up a channel to show nothing but Penelope Keith series that started me on this line of thought in the first place.

[[I never could stand her meself, or more correctly, I really disliked her characters - an anti-toff knee-jerk reaction...]]

Your mention of the Carry On... series comes not long after I discovered the existence of 'Carry On Screaming'. I thought I'd seen every Carry On... film while growing up, even the early black 'n' white ones that had been a staple of ECN8's Saturday afternoon programming back in the 1970s. (Being a rural TV station with limited funds even after the advent of coloured TV ECN8 regularly relied on old black & white material to fill any programming slot that didn't yield decent ratings.) A quick check of the Classic TV Guide website proves that 'Carry On Screaming' had made it to Australian TV back in the day so I'm damned if I know how this one eluded me.



[['Screaming', while not atypically slagged off at the time, is considered in the top five entries of the series...]]

And on the topic of the Carry On... franchise did you know that there were two British actors named Charles Hawtrey? Not only that but both of them appeared in an SF film. Hawtrey the original (pictured) seems to have been mostly a stage actor who did a handful of silent films towards the end of his career. Of this handful it's the 1913 'A Message From Mars' which is most relevant. It's regarded by many to be the very first science fiction film though that might be stretching the definition a little given the plot outline I've read.

Charles Hawtrey the imitator nicked his predecessors name, probably because it was snappier than his own George Frederick Joffre Hartree. He has two SF credits that I'm aware of. I've not seen the 1969 'Zeta One' though I suppose I should since it's supposedly all about alien women coming to Earth so they might capture some men for breeding purposes.

Given this is very broadly the plot of 'Devil Girl From Mars', a film I find quite interesting, I'd like to know if 'Zeta One' bears any similarity to it or is just a piece of soft-core fluff.

The other, the 1967 epic, 'The Terronauts', I rather like. As with many such films it suffers from a lack of budget despite that I find it an interesting watch, at least until it arrives at a rather limp ending.

And while we're on the topic of science fiction films did you know there is a Hungarian conspiracy theory that claims Hungarians are descended from aliens of the Sirius Star System? A loopy claim I know, extremely GuNToV as only extreme nationalism can be. According to my sources this particular theory was somehow inspired by a Communist era SF film called 'Sirius'. I haven't watched this epic but according to what I've read about it Sirius was actually a machine that could travel through time. How a film about time travel could inspire such a disconnected conspiracy theory is beyond me. I do find the idea has a certain appeal though. It certainly would explain the tendency of Hungary's leaders to not cooperate with the rest of Europe. Whatever else you can say about aliens they have their own agenda and thus are unlikely to willingly fall in with the plans of humans. I also have it on good report that aliens from Sirius do not care for the delights of either sheep or goats. That remind you of anyone? Does somebody have something to confess?

Further on the science fiction front I was surprised to see you publish a photo of Michael Moorcock and Chris Priest with arms entwined in issue 82 of your thing. I hadn't realised they had somehow made up post the Harlan Ellison TLDV kerfuffle. Especially as I thought they were both dead but on checking online I see that the old GuNToV Moorcock continues to exist. On the topic of whom I continue to be disappointed that the BBC hasn't adapted Moorcock's History of the Runestaff after securing the rights in 2019. If done right such a TV series would be full of wonderfully exotic visuals and some entertaining scenery chewing. However it does seem to have fallen into development hell so I don't hold much hope of once more seeing England in the role of villain.

[[I've got no idea which photo you're referring to. It certainly wasn't in #82...]]

And on the topic of TV shows thank you for alerting me to the fact that I would find watching 'The Day of the Jackal' an utterly worthless exercise as it seems they have removed from the TV series everything I enjoyed in the book. For me the best part of the novel was how the assassin went about his business. But then I like problem solving and find characterisation to be mostly a waste of time. Luckily there are plenty of TV series from the 1960s still available for my entertainment.

[[Yeah I suppose it could be called a "modernist" take in that it does include much characterization and backstory, but as well as the business of the hit(s). If that's not your cuppa, fair enough...]]

Well now I'm wondering why you think Angus Sampson can't be a plausible Australian if he isn't ocker. Is this old fashioned English bigotry towards colonials?

[[Probably...]]

From: fabficbks@aol.com

March 1

Bob Jennings writes:

Glad your trip planning seems to be going well. I presume that we mere readers will learn how it all went down in the next few issues of *This Here*... Any plans to post live updates while on the trip itself? I don't think you mentioned that possibility, but if you did I missed it.

[[Not sure yet about updates in situ, although I wouldn't be surprised if we end up posting to FBF as we go. We do plan to produce a trip report after...]]

Wow! Even more discussion about fanzine categories. Talk about beating a dead horse...

[[Yes and no. My point remains that for the purposes of the FAAn Awards categories may not overlap. Apart from that, you can call any fanzine what you like...]]

I think in this day and age when there are lots of internet blogs along with YouTube hosts, and a lot fewer fanzines around, that there is always going to be category overlap, so we might as well get used to it. I like your idea that a zine is whatever type the editor/publisher decides to call it. If he wants to call it a genzine despite writing it all by himself, then so be it. The same with perzines or anything else.

[[I'm not sure about that either. Editorial self-identification is one element of categorization, not the whole of it. If I, as admin, decide that a publication ends up in a particular category, then that's final...]]

The implosion of fanzines seems to have been wiped some categories off the face of the planet. For example, there used to be fanzines around that specialized in showcasing amateur fiction, but as of right now, so far as I know there are only two of those left. Same for zines that liked to showcase new advancements in science and technology. I think all of those are gone now too, from what I can see anyway. There also used to be fanzines that specialized in poetry, and maybe there still are, (I have never been a fan of poetry), but apparently they are not well enuf known to warrant a separate category. How about newszines? Are there any left, or are we just going to concede that *File 770* has that category locked up forever?

[[Again, those are all categories which overlap into the broader definitions. In this here superfluity of nuns there are bits of news (Corflu, TAFF ect) and science stuff often appears in 'Indulge Me'. I've also included fiction at least once. I'll contend that those aren't "categories" in the sense

of, again, how they are categorized for the FAAns. Rather, they are descriptors...]]

The world of stf is much larger than it ever was before, while the sphere of fanzines in the genre continues to decline. If there is sufficient interest in some fanzine sub-set, then new categories can always be added, but I don't think arguing about it accomplishes much.

[[No new categories for the FAAns on my watch, thanks. We'll leave that sort of thing to the Hugos...]]

I've never seen the movie 'Unstoppable', or even remember hearing about the runaway CSX train in 2001 on which the film is supposedly based, but your write-up was sufficiently interesting to get me to seek it out. I'm not sure how well this is going to go, what with my severe hearing loss, since a runaway train movie is sure to have plenty of loud sound effects going along with the action and dialog, but I'm willing to give it a try based on your enthusiasm for the film.

I certainly applaud **David Hodson's** effort to protect his friend Sylvia from scam artists and other predators while she is dealing with ongoing dementia. I think losing my reasoning abilities would be one of the worst things that could ever happen. Nobody can predict the future, but I hope that if I ever started showing signs of slipping into my dotage that friends would alert me so I could move into an elder facility that would help me deal with the situation.

[[Same here...]]

The letter column seems full of people talking about bicycling. When I was a youngster living in a smallish town my brother and I biked everywhere. We had those clunky Schwinn bikes kids of my generation rode. Bikes with gears and lightweight frames were for adults making the big money and able to afford such luxuries. Then, in the late 1950s the family moved to Nashville, TN. There were some suburban streets we could have biked on, but the main roads leading to shopping centers, or small stores, or anywhere else out of the immediate neighborhood were heavily traveled roads that would have been death traps for bikers. I tried going down to the strip mall half a mile away and nearly got whacked by cars three times. That was the end of biking for me. The bikes went into the crawl space under the house, and stayed there until my Mom died and we sold the house (and the bikes).

From: srjeffery@aol.com

March 2

Steve Jeffery writes:

'Misfits of Science' sounds a hoot, and could give rise to a whole fannish game of which improbable, flawed or useless superpowers fans would be likely to develop.

[[Not a new idea, though cf 'Temps' and 'Euro Temps' collections (1992) which Gaiman put his name on despite, by some accounts, not having had that much to do with it - I re-read these last year and thus was in a position to only slightly embarrass Marcus Rowland on a Zoom by reminding him of his own contribution. What might be a bit of fun would be wondering what superpowers certain fans already possess [evial cackles]...]]

You knew I'd have to Google CSX8888 incident didn't you? I haven't seen 'Unstoppable', but the real incident (which Wiki also refers to as "the Crazy Eights incident") sounds exciting and improbable enough itself for a film, or at least a drama documentary, without having to be embellished.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/CSX_8888_incident

[[As I mentioned, the movie does actually hew quite closely to actual events...]]

I started to read **Dave Hodson's** 'Old Sod' column with a nod of recognition, although in our case it's the social side of the local Methodist Church where Vikki and I do our stint behind the book tables at the monthly Collectors Fairs and it's the organiser's wife, Glen, who has developed a form of

dementia over the last couple of years and has gone from being bright and active to lost and confused. The saving grace here is that she does have someone to take care of her and look out for her. And then as I read further along I started to get angry at the sort of scumbags who perpetrate these scams against vulnerable and confused people. I suspect most of us have been on the receiving end of these emails and phone calls. Most of the former end up, unseen, in my junk folder until they are automatically deleted. For a few years we used to get calls once or twice month from some outfit who identified themselves as the Energy Saving Council or some such - a name close to, but not quite the same as a pukka industry sponsored advisory service - about a "problem" with our loft insulation. Given I laid most of this myself, my default response was "what the fuck do



know what's in our loft" and an insistence that they remove our name from their contact list, although the default response now is just to put the phone straight down and cut off the call before they have a chance to speak.

I've heard many accounts of these "fraud investigation" scams on radio phone in programs. They follow the same pattern of wearing down through persistence, plus warning not to contact the bank or police, and to ignore any warnings from the bank because they are somehow involved or complicit in the fraud and they nearly always involve getting the recipient to transfer money from their account into a fake account the scammers claim to be tracking at which point the money just disappears into the ether (and if the scammers feel they can push their luck, the cycle starts again).

[[Now that I'm of that age, I get frequent calls about Medicare "plans" which are usually scams. Most of the time I like to exasperate them by claiming utter ignorance which usually gets them to hang up quite quickly. My latest fuck 'em technique is when they ask if I have the "red, white and blue Medicare card" I reply "I don't know, I'm color blind"...]]

I remember reading Melvin Bragg's *The 12 Books that changed the world* and seeing that entry for the rules of association football. It was arguable, but with only 12 books they were probably others not included that had just as much or more impact. (You could argue early 17th century books on chance and probability by Pascal and Bayes gave rise to the gambling industry and 90% of the daytime TV adverts on ITV4 - the other 10% being for pre-paid funeral plans.)

I can't remember the last time I saw a cigarette vending machine - most often in a pub or hotel, but also in train stations. They were always overpriced and very much a last resort. 2011 seems a bit late, but they may have started to disappear before being made illegal. 10 packs were made illegal five years later.

[[The outdoor machines were different to the pub ones. I did wonder about 10 packs as well, so thanks for that info...]]

Best and possibly strangest film seen in the last month: *Three Thousand Years of Longing* with Iris Elba and the always wonderful Tilda Swinton. No further recommendation needed, I suspect. Terrible Science Joke for Eli: Oh dear.

From: leighedmonds01@gmail.com

March 5

Leigh Edmonds writes:

I read and enjoyed this issue. There were lots of interesting comment hooks from a lively letter column. All the usual stuff in fact.

Then I remembered what you'd written at the top of page 2, "Just over five weeks ..." OMG, and all the things I have to get done between now and then. I'm on a plane to Paris on 2 April (flight time about 21 hours with a three hour stop in Singapore, which makes a 15 hour flight to Los Angeles seem like a picnic. Arriving in London on the Eurostar on 6 April, which should not be as painful). Can't say I'm looking forward to the trip though being there should be alright.

[[And we're looking forward to seeing you again mate!...]]

What, no 'Radio Winston'? Hence nothing to moan about. Most unsettling.

Perhaps the main benefit of having two categories of fanzines in the awards is that two fans get egoboo instead of only just one. Perhaps the solution to this one is to do what the Hugos do and divide fiction up by word count or page count. Then there would be 'Little Fanzines' (up to 20 pages), 'Big Fanzines' (20 to 50 pages) and 'Big Fat Fanzines' (over 50 pages). There would be, of course, the problem of fans printing on different sized paper (or virtual paper for PDFs) but if people want to print on smaller pages to bump up their page count that would be up to them. Or we could go by word count if somebody with a big brain could figure out how to do that easily. The only disadvantage to this is that then we would have one less thing to disagree about, and where would the fun be in that.

[[Yeah, you've suggested this before, and it's still a load of old cobblers, but you do point out the inherent weaknesses of page count as a dividing line. Word count would theoretically be better, BUT... with your writer's blinkers on you don't take into account illos, photos and layout which are also important considerations, I would aver. Thus, "page count" would be affected by the proliferation or otherwise of photos ect, while "word count" alone ignores the effect of art contributions and layout to the overall quality, even as voters will still consider those aspects...]]

I remember seeing that movie about the runaway train. Exciting,



wasn't it! Mind you, I know so little about trains that they could have made the movie far less realistic than it was and I would not have noticed. On the other hand, as you relate to **Bob Jennings** later in this issue, I'm an aviation geek so I notice all the little things they get wrong in aviation movies. Valma used to get a good laugh out of me when I'd go into an apoplexy of annoyance in a movie when one kind of aircraft took off and another type landed, and that sort of thing. (Somebody told me that the film makers do it deliberately to upset me, and others like me, but I can't see people being so deliberately cruel.)

How many movies have been made with rail locomotives as the star? I can think of a few movies that have aircraft as the stars; *Top Gun* and *Final Countdown* which star F-14s come to mind immediately. There's also a F-14 guest appearance in *Top Gun 2* although it's the F-18s that make that movie worth watching. I could go on like this all night but then I'd have to go and watch some of those movies and this wouldn't get written.

['The Great St. Trinians Train Robbery', perhaps?...]

Thanks to **Dave Hodson** for his sensitive and well written piece about Sylvia. That guy can run conventions, write well and be tall! Is there anything he can't do. Anyhow, not only is it well written, it contains a very harsh lesson about something that could happen to us in our declining years. We'd like to think otherwise, but we just don't know. His piece is also a commentary on the people who pick over people like Sylvia. I'd like to wonder how they sleep at night, but I expect that most of them sleep very well despite what they do during the day.

Bob Jennings comments on smoking reminds me that it was one of the many vices I learned all about in fandom. In the case of smoking I picked that habit up from sharing a Slan Shack with John Bangsund back when I was young and innocent. I may have thought, deep down, that if I took up smoking I'd become as witty and urbane as John, and a better fan writer too. Sadly, no, none of that did rub off on me but the smoking habit did. Fortunately for my lungs, I gave it up a few years later so, as I explained to Valma at the time, I could spend the money I saved from not buying cigarettes on drinking and other vices.



[[From limited observation, I have concluded that I might be Fandom's Last Living Tobacco Smoker, although I'm sure that's not completely the case. Former smoking buddies eg Rich Coad, Pat Virzi, Aileen Forman have all packed up the habit as far as I'm aware. I am trying to cut down...]]

Bruce Springsteen is "as cheesy as they come"? **William Breiding** is brave to write that in a fanzine read by some fans I know. I hope you have an asbestos inbox. For myself, I can take Springsteen or leave him, but others think he is pretty good. Apart from that, I thank **William** for his comments and the reminder to be more thorough in reviewing what I write in letters before sending them off. Getting my words quoted back to me is quite unnerving since I don't remember what I've written or have copies I can go back and read again. My reaction in such cases is sort of 'did I really write that?'

[[I like a lot of Springsteen's output, but am also of the opinion that "strap your hands 'cross my engines" ('Born to Run') is one of the cheesiest lines ever written...]]

I reckon that **William** and I agree on basic principles when it comes to music, just that he would prefer to listen to one kind of music and me to another in the time we have left to us. My only remaining question to William on this topic is how come he "used to have" the complete Bartok Quartets? Did he sell them to feed his Power Pop addiction?

I knew I remembered the name **Steve Johnson** from some where and then it came to me when he mentioned *APA45*. That's also from back when I was young and innocent. **Steve** likens Facebook to an apa, which is partly right. Except that apas aren't

littered with all that advertising the way that Facebook is these days. And also so much bad and unsettling news. I admit that the only thing that keeps me going back to Facebook is the photos of cats and the Simons Cat cartoons that always give me a good laugh. As far as I know Simon's cat is never named but he has many of the mannerisms of young Tristan here. However, when Simon's cat is hungry he points at his mouth while young Tristan just yells, which is not quite so endearing.

I could go on ...

From: eli.cohen@mindspring.com

March 12

Eli Cohen writes:

Read and enjoyed, but somehow don't have much to say about it -- I clearly need to watch more TV and movies (preferable, in my opinion, to becoming a footie fan).

[[You can do both, of course...]]

I'll just throw in a science joke: A photon checks into a hotel, where a bellhop asks where its suitcase is. The photon replies, "I didn't bring any luggage. I'm traveling light."

Have fun on your travels!

From: gsmattingly@yahoo.com

March 16

Gary Mattingly writes:

[...]

'FAAnWank': Sent my ballot in and not even in the last ten minutes, according to my clock. I still feel like I should read all fanzines and spend tons of time thinking about it all. Of course, I should read all the books and magazines out there. I also should listen to all the music.

Yeah, right.

I'm trying to remember if Leah Zeldes ever received any award from or during a Corflu. She was the primary instigator for Autoclave which was a predecessor of Corflu and Ditto. Was there an earlier fanzine fan convention than Autoclave? She was a special guest of Cincinnati's Corflu IV that was chaired by Bill Bowers. Well, there were a couple of other special guests (one who gave one of the worst Corflu speeches ever, hm, guess that was me) but she was the one who really initially had the idea for it. Next year, 2026, will be the 50th anniversary of Autoclave 1.

[https://corflu.org/Corflu04/Worlds%20of%20Corflu-PR%20for%20Corflu%20IV%20\(1987\).pdf](https://corflu.org/Corflu04/Worlds%20of%20Corflu-PR%20for%20Corflu%20IV%20(1987).pdf)

<https://corflu.org/history/cinc.html>

<https://fancylopedia.org/AutoClave>

She has done numerous apazines and worked with her husband Richard (Dick) Smith on *Stet*, nominated for a Hugo.

https://fancylopedia.org/Leah_Zeldes_Smith

She has never been voted in as a member of FWA

<https://corflu.org/history/fwa.html>

[[You've completely misread the very page you link to. Members of fwa (always lower case) are not "voted in", per Ted White's description: "If you do fanwriting and think you could be a member of the FWA, then you are a member. It's that simple." What is voted upon is the non-office of

"Past President". I'm massively croggled you could get this wrong...]]

Then I started thinking about histories that have been written about the various and sundry fans and fandoms in England and Ireland and probably also the East Coast of the US, but how much has been written about the rest of the US or Australia or ?? I bet **Linda Krawecke** could probably write some interesting information about New Orleans Fandom. Of course there's Cincinnati Fandom, several iterations of Detroit Fandom, Seattle Fandom, LA Fandom, Albuquerque Fandom, Madison Fandom, Ann Arbor Fandom, Minneapolis Fandom, Kansas City Fandom, all the various Southern Fandom centers, etc. I think it is a long list. Out of those did come numerous fanzine writers and a lot of good fans and long-standing fans.

[[I suspect much of the history appears in club newsletters and/or regional APAe...]]

'Health Diary' : Good luck with your continuing health issues and good luck with your new teeth. My primary current problem is arthritis in my thumbs and wrist and it seems to be getting worse. Admittedly this is at a much lower level than all the things you have to deal with.

'TV Guide' : I don't recall watching '7 Days' or 'Misfits of Science' (well, maybe). I keep meaning to watch the dvd series collections I have of 'Mr. Lucky' and 'Peter Gunn'. I have a bunch of other series on my to-be-watched shelves, but those two seem to be coming up more in my mind lately. Still haven't watched 'Elsbeth' or 'Matlock'. I only watched the first few episodes of 'Paradise'. Maybe I'll get back to it.

[[I find it difficult to comprehend anyone watching the "first few episodes" of 'Paradise' and then abandoning it, but ey, YMMV I guess...]]

I have watched all of the episodes of 'Watson'. Haven't watched 'Zero Day'. I've been watching 'Daredevil: Born Again'. It's okay. Have watched all the episodes so far of the new season of 'The Wheel of Time'. Still watching 'Ghosts' and 'Will Trent'.

'Anorak' : Interesting train and movie information. I did watch 'Unstoppable' but it has been a while.

On a side note about trains, I was wondering what steam engine was used in the filming of the 1903 silent film, 'The Great Train Robbery'.

Internet sources show three different notes:

- 1) DL&W (Lackawanna) 921, a 4-4-0.
- 2) The 1903 film 'The Great Train Robbery' depicted a steam locomotive, likely a type of 4-4-0 or 4-6-0, commonly used in the American West during that era.
- 3) The 1903 film 'The Great Train Robbery' features a J-15 0-6-0 steam locomotive, specifically No. 184 (built in 1880) and No. 186 (built in 1879).

[[My own fleeting research shows that 1) may be one correct answer - still from the movie below. It's also possible that more than one engine was used in the film...]]



'The Old Sod' : Sad story. It probably is duplicated many times with many people. I don't understand how the scumbags can live with themselves.

'Loco Citato' :

Bob Jennings : I know a number of other people that also seem to like bad movies, like, say, 'Sharknado'. They like action, movement. They complain about long movies, slowly paced movies, too much talking, etc. Whatever. More often than not it does me absolutely no good to alter their opinions. No good whatsoever.

Gary Hubbard (actually your comment) : I watched 'Leon the Professional' on June 29, 2012. My comments at the time: "I watched the extended version which included a scene that made audiences uncomfortable. I liked this film. I agree with parts of the *New York Times* review, specifically with respect to the "condescending American stereotypes" not that I have any great familiarity with the New York mafia but . . . I think these settings are simply the symbols, the sign posts, in Luc Besson's mind for his vision of reality in New York. Of course they are just symbols, not reality and I think the audience understands this. This is Natalie Portman's first starring role at age 11 and, as the review notes, "poses far better than she acts." However taking into consideration her age and lack of experience this is not hard to understand. I still like her in the role."

Gary Mattingly : Well, gee, I have had a fair number of beers, so I'm really only missing out (?) on cigarettes. I have smoked a couple total, but that was primarily because it is easier to light fireworks with a cigarette.

I was being sarcastic about the Steadicams, although I think they would be truly beneficial for any filming, but admittedly totally outside of any Corflu budget. Relative to

who keeps them after the convention, I'm aware of that issue too. I actually had some vague thoughts of buying a portable mixing board and some higher quality microphones for Corflu but yeah, I'd have to 're them every year and show up to Corflu every year, wouldn't I?

Okay, now I've sent in my ballot for the FAAn awards.

Gee, no 'Movie Night' column this issue (and no 'Radio Winston' either. My goodness). Hm, do I include the long list of films I've seen since last issue. Well, I mention that I saw 'Mickey 17' which I enjoyed, and plan to see 'Death of a Unicorn' on my birthday, 10 days from today.

Of course, you can also see my list of watched movies on letterboxd

<https://letterboxd.com/gsmattingly/films/reviews/>

or tumblr

<https://www.tumblr.com/gsmattingly>

SF Film Society's International Film Festival is April 17-27, 2025. I hope to see a number of those films

Neil Gaiman - my response wasn't really run away, run away. It is just that there are so many of these types of issues that come up, that I can't really dig into all of them. I would be spending all my time just investigating such bad situations. I have better things to do. I haven't bought or read any additional books by Gaiman since this all came up, but I do still have some books of his on the to-be-read shelves, along with the hundreds of other books on said shelves.

'Indulge Me' - Good luck on the receipt of your Social Security checks.

I enjoyed the artwork by Mike Dringenberg, **Sara Felix**, and **Teddy Harvia**.

From: jabberwocky2000@hotmail.com

March 23

Brad Foster writes:

So, let's just look at the numbers.

5 months since I sent any sort of response at all. Since then have received:

This Here... #80 through 84 delivered on time

Plus *BEAM* #18

Plus *The Incomplete Register 2024* - FAAn Award Voters' Guide

Plus *Old Farey's All-Fanac 2025*

I think we can both see who is at fault here for my lack of any communication.

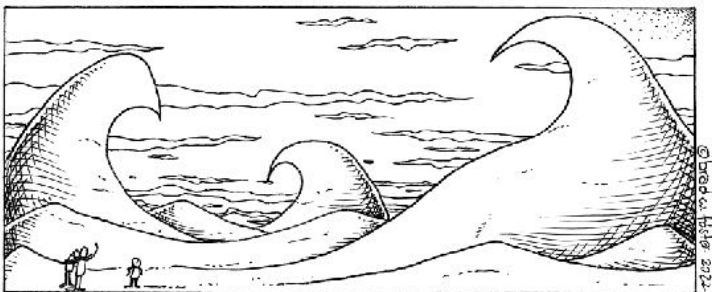
It's you, just overwhelming me, all this fannish energy and enthusiasm, not just keeping up a monthly schedule, but extra projects added in as well. And all, clearly, meant to simply point out my own loathsome lack of any response at all, building up the guilt on me, month by month, as more zines appear in my inbox.

[[That's really a "you" problem innit?...]]

I can't take it anymore, I tell you! Yes, yes, some would say it is "my fault" because I am "lazy" and "spend too much time arguing with strangers on the internet". But what do they know? I mean, I could be spending exactly the right amount of time arguing with strangers on the internet, there haven't been any definitive studies on that yet. So....

Here are a half dozen new bits of art to spread about as you fill fit to use.

[[Much appreciated as always...]]



GALACTIC TOUR ATTRACTIONS - THE FLOPPY MOUNTAINS OF ARCTURUS-9

This line is where I would have lied about how I will try to do better in responding in a more timely manner to future issues but... we are both men of the world, and have been down this road before. It is just not going to happen, so why even keep up the sad lie? I will try, of course. Ghod knows I will try. But something will come up, and then another thing will happen, and a second issue will arrive. And now there are two of them, which makes me feel guilty not getting to the first, so I put off until the third appears and... well, you know how it goes.

But, every once in a while, I'll throw some drawings at you, in hopes it will keep me from being booted off the mail list.

[[Not a consideration. I'll remind you that the days of "being booted off" for non-response are pretty much done since there's zero physical cost in sending out an emailed pdf. I only remove recipients from the mailing list if they ask me to or, sadly, if I hear they've dropped off the twig. Some people [koff] John Thiel [koff] might remove themselves by blocking my emails, though...]]

And, in the end, that is probably the least we can expect of me.

WAHF

Ross Chamberlain produces a St. Patrick's Day wish (below) ; Rich Coad ; Dave Cockfield ; Eugene Doherty re: mobility scooter access at Reconnect ; Tommy Ferguson ; John Hertz with more of his typical passive-aggressive incoherent tosh that I won't burden you with ; Perry Middlemiss ; Karen Schaffer ; R-Lauraine Tutihasi ;



FANZINES RECEIVED

With gratitude as always...

PERRYSCOPE 51 (Perry Middlemiss) - ...

THE TYPO KING #96 (Bob Jennings) - ...

THE STF AMATEUR #18 (Heath Row) - ...

AUSTRALIAN JOURNAL OF FANNISH RESEARCH Vol 1 No 1 (Leigh Edmonds) - ...

YOU'RE STILL ON MY MIND #8 (Rich Lynch) - ...

LOFGEORNOST #158 (Fred Lerner) - ...

FADEAWAY #68 (Bob Jennings) - ...

WINGNUTS IN TIME AND SPACE (Teddy Harvia) - ...

CAPTAIN FLASHBACK #76 (Andy Hooper) - ...

INDULGE ME

✘ **WORD?** : From a *ScreenRant* bit on the upcoming season of 'Doctor Who', positing the Valeyard as the next antagonist, "ominosity". Er...

✘ **AGELESS BEAUTY (1)** : **Jerry Kaufman**, already miles away, undoubtedly would remain unimpressed by **Vicki Michelle**, were he close enough to notice...



✘ **SHOW ME THE MONEY FOLLOWUP**: I got the WEP "backpay" as a result of the Social Security Fairness Act, so just hoping I don't get some notice to give it back from the clown show in charge. There's a new House bill which in part says that you'll have to be a citizen to get your Social Security, Medicare benefits ect, although it's been given only a 1% chance of becoming law, thank fuck...

✘ **POSH NOSH** : We were treated last Monday (by **Jen's** sister Kelly who's in for a visit with some other nice ladies) to dinner at Gordon Ramsay's Hells Kitchen at Caesar's Palace, the treating being DoBFO necessary because of the eye-watering bill - the mere three drinks I scoffed added up to over \$100. In case you're wondering, a pre-nosebag old fashioned (Buffalo Trace bourbon, not bad though possibly needed an extra pinch of brown sugar), a glass of Argentinian Malbec (very acceptable), and a Whistlepig 10-year old rye whiskey for afters (exceptionally smooth). As far as the actual grub, about the only main dish on the menu I could tolerate was the Jidori chicken which was sadly flavorless, although the accompanying bits (artichokes, olives, pee wee potatoes, lemon butter sauce) were all right. I'm also not good at the engineering required to find the actual meat in an on-the-bone serving - I'd remarked to **Jen's** son Bill (a picky eater) beforehand that we should order the chicken then request its return to the kitchen with the ask that could they please form it into McNuggets. He ended up having the Beef Wellington though. In fairness, I shall report that the heirloom tomato salad was very good, as was the "Chocolate Delight" dessert.

The Wellington was generally well-received by them as had it, but Nancy, **Jen's** stepmother was unimpressed by her braised short ribs. The desserts got passed around for tasting, and the signature sticky toffee pudding was certainly up to snuff. The group is pictured below for the **Archbishop** to guess at...



✘ **TERRIBLE SCIENCE "JOKE" FOR ELI** : Eli worries that his chemistry jokes aren't funny, but he'll keep going until he gets a reaction...

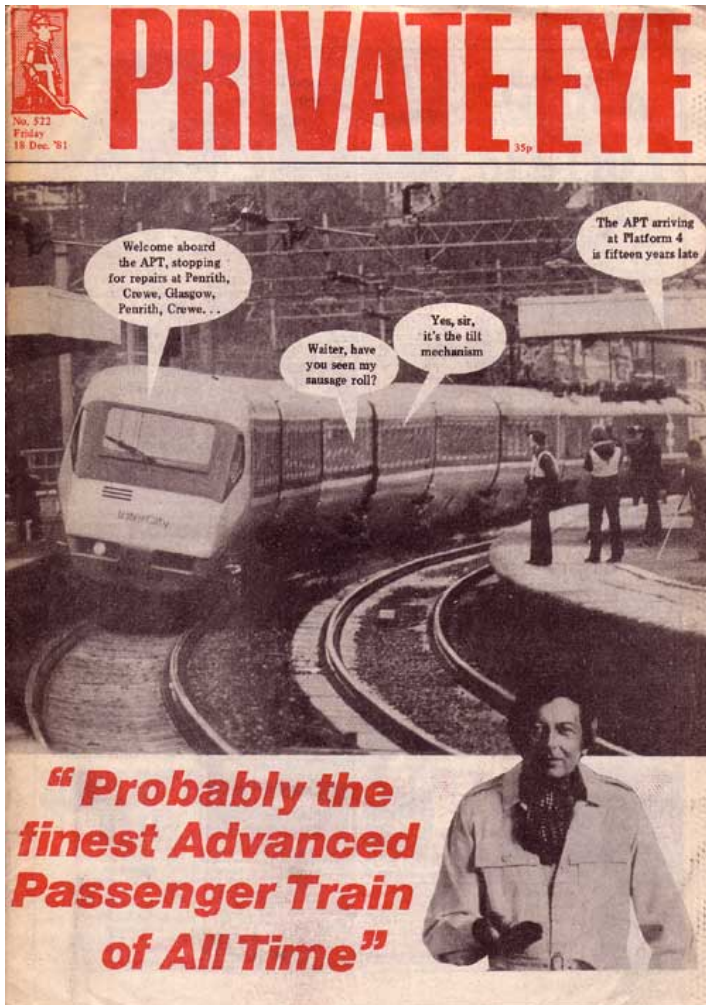
✘ **WITH A BANG...** : I never knew that there was any dispute about this, but the actual identity of Nevada's "Miss Atomic Bomb" has always been subject to speculation (not unlike the bird in the Men Without Hats "Safety Dance"). The *Las Vegas Review-Journal* has the scoop: <https://www.reviewjournal.com/local/local-nevada/who-was-miss-atomic-bomb-historians-finally-know-the-answer-3316299/>



✘ **PHOTINO BIRDS ON VACATION?** : The "dark energy" in the universe is weakening, say results from Kitt Peak observatory in Arizona. This could imply that the end of everything may now come as a "big crunch".

Are the Xeelee on the case, or what? Reporting from the dear old *Grauniad* : <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2025/mar/19/dark-energy-mysterious-cosmic-force-weakening-universe-expansion>

✘ ANORAK EXTRA: *Private Eye* cover from many years ago...



✘ AGELESS BEAUTY (2) : Annie Haslam...

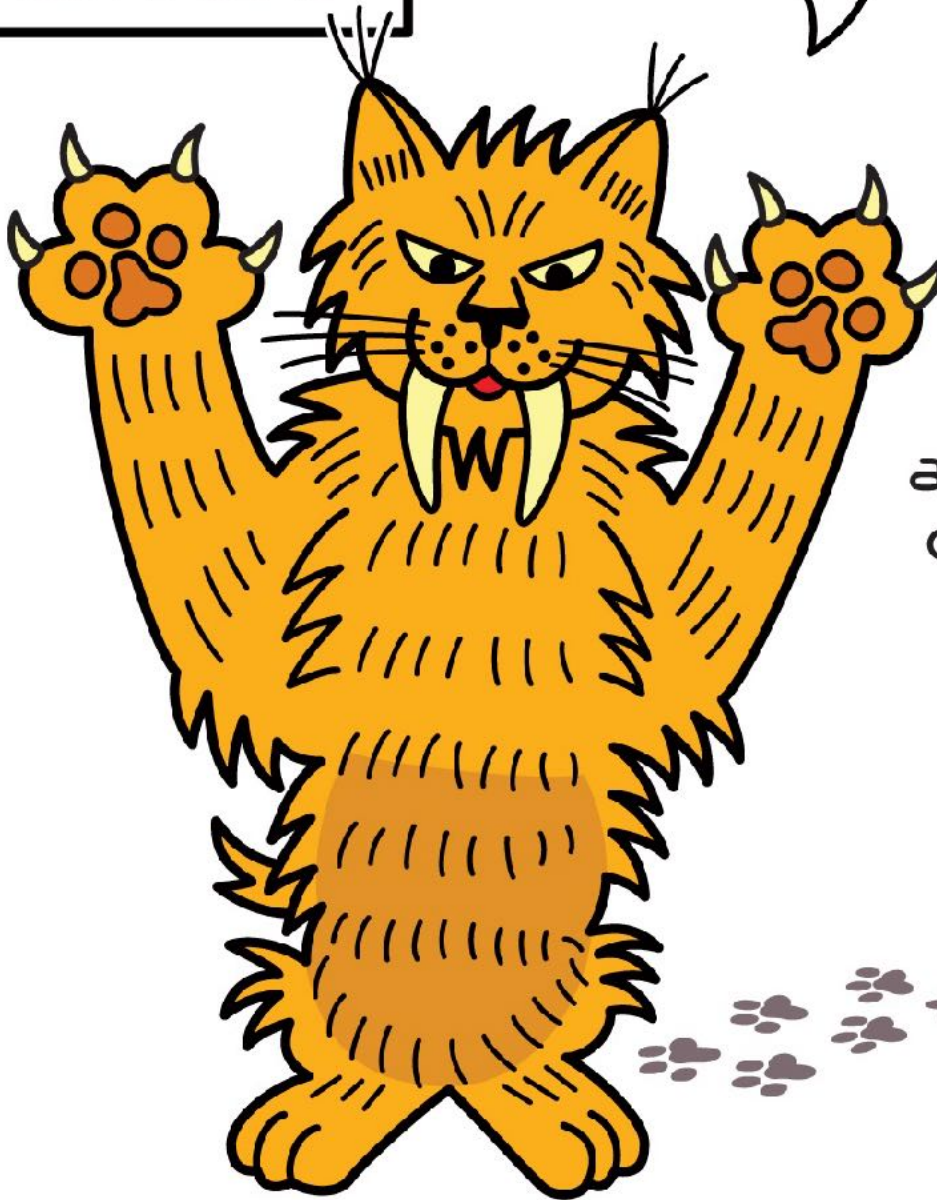


✘ NEXTISH : It's very slightly feasible that there'll be an "April" issue, which if it does occur would more likely drop May 5th or so...

Blank space for drawing willies...

Chat

I am no one's catspaw.



When I stalk, pounce, and kill, I do it for myself.

TEDDY HARVIA

MIRANDA

THIS HERE... is (mostly) written, edited and produced by: Nic Farey, published on efanazines.com by the Grace of Burns.

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Art credits: Ross Chamberlain (p17) ; Brad W Foster (pp 13, 14) ; Teddy Harvia (pp 12, 20) ;

**“What's that man movin' cross the stage?
It looks a lot like the one used by Jimmy Page
It's like a relic from a different age
Could be, ooh-wee”**