

This Here...

"...what a ripe piece of shyte..." (M Glycer)

EGOTORIAL

"I fuckin' hate August."

(James Michael Kerns)

Me and fellow cabdriver Jimmy the K (he's probably going to have something to say about me calling him that) were bullshitting at length (as we do) at the numbers, McCarran Terminal 1, since we'll often get there of a morning an hour or so before any flights are landing on the assumption that fuck-all else is moving anywhere, and at least we know that rides are coming out, eventually, thus having time to bemoan our sorry lot, when he comes out with the above quote, pithily summarizing the general desperation that accompanies the hottest month of the year here in The Meadows, one when we also expect monsoon storms (so far curiously absent), rotten slow days and low book as well as a need for anger management dealing with both the more cutthroat elements among cab drivers as well as a recent reluctance on the part of our cab company to allow 10 rather than 12-hour shifts as they have done in previous years in slack times such as this.

Cab stands are full of rumors and bollocks, as is any given drivers' room, and the latest is that our firm is getting tight for money, which James sarcastically observed likely means that the owner will be down to making \$13 million instead of \$16 million this year. I merely note that the presence of a goodly number of brand-new Camrys and Cherokees in the fleet might just give the lie to the claims of hard-up.

It's a fact, though, that in previous years the company has allowed drivers to work a 10 rather than a 12 at certain

known slow times of the year (late summer being one of them), with night drivers allowed to come in 2 hours early and day drivers to start 2 hours later (Tuesday-Thursday). That always seemed to me to be a weird arrangement, potentially meaning there might be none of our cabs out in that four-hour period, and in any case I never took advantage of it since I found it more prudent to keep the same sleep/wake schedule rather than dick about with it.

James, by the way, is the type of bloke that certain knee-jerk leftist elements might suggest that I shouldn't even talk to, since we're on fairly opposite sides of the political divide.



J M Kerns (philosopher)

Not that I'd draw any direct comparison between the two situations, I recall a story recounted in Patrick Marnham's history of *Private Eye* in which he related the tale of Paul Foot returning from interviewing Enoch Powell, putting his head in his hands at his desk and saying, "My God! I liked him..." (which did not prevent Foot writing a savage piece thereafter). My oldest US friend Pat Plant, best man at my wedding to Bobbie, was and still is my polar opposite politically, and yet we could and did discuss issues of the day from our different perspectives over beers, oyster shooters and the chessboard without resorting to fisticuffs.

My point here is that *few* people are so monomaniacal as to be simply dismissed by lazy epithets because of something they may believe in, however much I or anyone might disagree with a particular belief they may hold.

I showed James' photo (above) to Jen, who commented: "Yeah, he looks like someone who'd be your friend..."

What do me & James mostly talk about when we're not moaning about the taxi business? Music. He does try to impress me with his knowledge of old cars and their capabilities, but being no gearhead, all that goes "woosh"

straight over my head to rest somewhere in the middle distance.

Will Durst once said “Racism is so stupid. There’s more than enough reasons to dislike people on an individual basis.” That applies to any other “-ism” you care to think of. Like, or dislike people on an individual basis, do not necessarily pre-judge them because of some gang they might misguidedly be a part of.

In deaf news (wot?) I *still* haven’t heard from the audiologist, so no hearing aids yet.

And I also fuckin’ hate August, although three paychecks this month might make it bearable...

It’s all good.

Nic Farey, late August 2019

IS THIS JUST FAANTASY?

(5)

Now we’ve all had a good moan about the 2019 travesty, it still falls upon the substantial shoulders of John Purcell to steer the ship on a new course. I’d like to offer some discussion points.

I see it as a serious problem that (despite an attempt at walk-back) it’s implied that Steve Stiles and Bill Burns would not be considered for future awards in their respective categories, on the basis of 9 voters, not even a majority of the 19 total, suggesting that votes for either could be rejected. Department of the Blindingly Fuckin’ Obvious says that those nine, however great their eminence, is far too small a number to validate such a major change - it’s the Boris Johnson “election” writ even smaller.

My suggestion is that this “result” be ignored, even as I duck missiles thrown from various quarters accusing me of a double standard when it comes to “the will of the voters”. By my logic, though, that’s still going to be heeded. Let’s charitably assume that the nine who agreed to exclude Steve and Bill from future contention are sincere in their agreement with the Dobson Proposition. Therefore, in any future ballot, they logically *would not* vote for either of them anyway. Given that John Purcell has clearly stated (locs, *TH...#19* and elsewhere) that his intent is to promote broad participation, larger voter numbers would give a truer indication of whether the concept of retirement of multiple-time winners from contention finds any general favor.

Stilesy has been very vocal about his desire to not win another FAAn, Bill not so much, and really not at all, other than displays of embarrassment when collecting. My argument prior to stepping down as administrator was that Steve is at liberty to either encourage people not to vote for

him, more positively to campaign for votes for someone else, or at a last resort to refuse the award, that latter most drastic action, I would contend, pretty much guaranteeing that future voters would not want to vote for the ungrateful sod, thus achieving his aim. To be perfectly clear on this, I’ve got no problem *per se* with someone not wanting the honor for whatever reason, but what I *don’t* like is that this gets codified to the point that votes get rejected. This was again an area where my opinion changed, since I had thought of a method (deliberately made not *too* easy) where someone could put themselves out of contention (at the time driven by Graham Charnock’s avowed disinterest in getting another award for *Vibrator*), but thought better of it, persuaded more toward Andy Hooper’s “all votes will count” philosophy.

I still feel that the “online” stuff is a distraction from our core interest in actual *fanzines*, and would still lobby for its discontinuation. I also idly wonder what the reaction might have been to suggesting that Robert Lichtman should be excluded from future consideration for the Harry Warner, Jr. award, since he’s had so many of them, a point I also made last year in discussion.

Categories: I actually believe there is merit in Dobson’s concept of subcategories and vote aggregation, but *only* in the Best Fanzine category, and obviously at a much reduced level. Apart from that, I’d keep the set we had in 2018 (except for “online”). Even though it still has a bit more complexity than we might want, I could conceive of the ‘Fanzine’ votes organized as “Best Overall”, “Best Genzine”, “Best Perzine”, “Best Special Publication” and a catch-all “Best Other” which we would presume to include newazines, clubazines, even APAazines if you like. “Overall” could include titles also voted for in the other three subcategories, whose scores would be aggregated to produce the big winner. I’m on the fence with this somewhat, but it seems like an incremental point between broader recognition (which Mike’s efforts *were* intended to achieve) and more simplicity.

Vote counting: I was rather taken by Jerry Kaufman’s suggestion of simply counting all ballot slots as 1 vote, rather than grading the 1-2-3 choices by allocating (as I did) 5-3-1 “points”. Jerry did some math on the 2018 voting, and the results by his method weren’t much different from the points count and importantly perhaps, the winners were all the same), and it has the advantage of being a little easier to total up, and perhaps more importantly doesn’t require the voter to think about ranking their choices. I might have still given any first choice a “bonus point”, but the idea of not ranking is a good one.

John Purcell writes:

The humble editor of *This Here...* fanzine was kind enough to share his thoughts about the FAAn Awards for the 20th issue

with me ahead of time, and this has resulted in the two of us nattering back and forth in an effort to figure out a possible solution.

Generally, my thoughts run similar to Nic's. First off, my goal is to increase the number of voters for the FAAns; when that happens, the ensuing higher numbers give the results more validity. More on this in a bit.

I like the categories Nic spells out, and do like that catch-all "Best Other" for APAzines, etc., which should help separate the wheat from the chaff, so to speak. In the lettercolumn of the 19th issue of *This Here...*, Jerry Kaufman's single vote idea simplifies things a bit, and might even spread the wealth around more, especially if the FAAns go with a "write down four or five titles/names" single point tally system for each category. Since there will no longer be another issue of *The Incomplete Register* to help voters, a fill-in-the-blank ballot becomes necessary. How well fans remember who and what to vote for falls on them, and we know how well our aging memories work these days.

I'm not sure about the subcategory concept, but am always receptive to other voices and ideas. We have a bit of time to figure this out, and I will be using my thoughts here in PR#2 later this month. I also prefer to keep the "Special Publication" category; there are enough good one-off projects each year to maintain it. Besides, Noah Ward is always a voting option across the board. Hopefully by Thanksgiving this year all the kinks will be worked out. Or a bunch of them, at least.

[[I'm curious as to how you think 'No Award' is even a possibility for the FAAns, as antithetical as it is to the simple concept of honoring those in the field. The closest brush it's had is Dobson's threshold of "insufficient voting" in a given subcategory, which seemed to be applied haphazardly...]]

Nic and I agree that the two-tier nominate/finalist voting system of the Hugo's does not really work for the FAAns. Nic's question "what do we do with the votes (Steve Stiles) may receive?" is a bugger, for sure. The concept that underlines the FAAns is that "Everyone is a nominee." Perhaps if we use something like a one point per vote system, and people can name up to four or five fanzines, writers, artists, etc., per category, this might help resolve the problem.

For example, in best fan artist category a selection from the ballots might run like this:

Fan A: Steve Stiles, Brad Foster, Grant Canfield, Noah Ward

Fan B: Teddy Harvia, Stiles, Foster, Ward, Mo Starkey

Fan C: Stiles, Ken Fletcher, Foster, Ward, Harry Bell

Fan D: Harvia, Canfield, Stiles

Fan E: Bell, Foster, Stiles, Bill Fischer

The vote tallies here would be Stiles 5, Foster 4, Noah Ward 3, Harvia 2, Canfield 2, Bell 2, Fletcher 1, Starkey 1. Fischer 1. The 21 votes cast here get spread out a bit over these seven (not counting our friend Noah Ward) fan artists, and if we toss out those 5 cast for Stiles, since he says he don't want the ball, the five fan who voted in this scenario each still have impacted the final outcome. It's not perfect, but it decreases the need for voters to rank their choices 1-2-3-4-5 and assigning points based on rankings. What needs to be done if this is the way votes are counted, the methodology to determine voting should be clearly stated up front. So if Steve Stiles says "don't vote for me," then PR's and the FAAn ballot should plainly state that any votes for him will not be counted; better yet, the actual wording should state that "votes for a candidate who withdraws his/her name from consideration shall not be counted." That's a workable idea, at least.



So the upshot is that single vote=single point system does sound good, with four or five open slots (NA always an option) per category. At least Nic and I agree on that. The question is, how about everybody else? Here is your chance to weigh in on the discussion. I am listening.

I think most of us agree that the FAAn "rules" are a year-by-year determined system. Each year's Corflu chairperson (s) can pick and choose what works or doesn't work and modify at will, so to speak. Oh, and to repeat something previously mentioned, I do find this

message of Nic's relevant:

I did originally conceive of a method by which [withdrawal] could be justified: any person not wishing to be considered should formally notify the administrator with a statement to that effect which would be published both in the Corflu PR and on the ballot form instructions. This notification would need to be received by the administrator in ample time for this to be properly disseminated.

Like I have said, this is worth serious thought. Putting such a statement in the FAAn Award section of the last two or three PR's and the final FAAn Ballot to drive this point home would help, as would reminding everybody that, since we are all potential candidates for FAAns, if you don't want to be considered for an award, remind that year's Corflu chair/FAAn Administrator of your intentions. That would at least match the ad hoc nature of these awards.

As far as the status of Steve Stiles and Bill Burns (see ...*This Here #19*), I recall that back in the 1970s, Tim Kirk and Dick

Geis voluntarily withdrew from future consideration in the fan artist and fanzine Hugo Awards. The earth didn't stop spinning and those fershlugginer awards still get handed out every year, albeit to people I haven't heard of before and podcasts that I don't listen to. But they were withdrawing their names from the Fan Hugo awards, which is a major difference. Anyway, my point here is that Steve is voluntarily withdrawing his name from future FAAn award consideration. Messer Burns hasn't done this (yet), but he might. What Bill does for us here in the fanzine business is phenomenal, and he is greatly appreciated.

I like Steve, I really do, and respect his opinions, decisions, and adore his talent; but if he doesn't want to be considered for an award, well... it's up to him to get that word out and keep reminding us.

[[I'm still uncomfortable with the idea of votes not being counted, which doesn't sit well with "everyone is a nominee", does it? My only strictures for the 2018 awards were that votes should reflect published work from the previous calendar year, and that they should be within category, but also requesting a citation to be given for anything not listed in TIR. The "citation" requirement was the subject of criticism from A Hooper, who else, but in fact turned out to be a very minor thing - I had stated right up front that, since I couldn't possibly be aware of everything, citations given would generally be accepted at face value. Only two individual votes were rejected for lack of citation (which was requested from the individual voters, but not provided). One other vote was rejected for being out of category, and the voter in that case was notified but declined to change their vote.

I'll return, again, <groans from anyone still even reading this> to the point that a mere 9 voters agreed that Steve (and Bill) should get the "enough, already" ribbon. What if your hoped-for increased number of voters majorly decide "nah, fuck that, Steve" and vote him a win?

Let me also clarify my own position as a faned and fanwriter: I'm not going to shill for votes for This Here..., nor am I going to suggest or request that any such votes should be rejected. I will, however, note that my ballot in the Perzine category will likely include The White Notebooks, Opuntia and Lofgeornost (the latter of which may also be "other", being an APAzine), and maybe even Askew if you're nice to me, John...]]

RADIO WINSTON

A TOPIC FOR HOOPER

OK, how does Pandora's algorithm work?

I recently had to replace my iPhone because the old one actually warped into a banana-like curve, likely due to being confined in various not-quite-air-conditioned spaces of the taxi during the day.

I had a Pandora channel set up ('Skatalites Radio') which provided my background music for the workday, but that didn't transfer to the new device (at least not with the previous playlist intact) and I found that I had to start over. Not being new-teck smart-savvy (no, really) on my original channel I indiscriminately liked just about every track that came up, which ended up creating a mix of the Skatalites (of course), associated players such as Tommy McCook and Don Drummond, subsequently branching out into decent quantities of Toots & the Maytals, Peter Tosh and rather too much Bob Marley while including more recent practitioners like the very fab Aggrolites.

This go around I tried to be a bit more judicious in my "likes", and the playlist became quite different as a result. I got a lot of Jackie Mittoo (which, as a keyboard player myself I did appreciate), and quite a bit of King Tubby (completely absent from the previous playlist) although he's now all but disappeared from the mix. Giving thumbs-up to any occurrence of Toots or Tosh has brought them in at perhaps better than previous levels. While I was getting a well good amount of Maytals deep slices (and still am), W McIntosh is also better represented at the expense of Marley who, when he does pop up mercifully tends to be of Wailers vintage rather than any later output. Coxsone Sound, Lee Perry, Soul Vendors/Sound Dimension (the Studio One house band) all drift in and out with their classic contributions to the riddim.

Formerly an occasional participant, I now seem to be getting the entire oeuvre of Nicky Thomas, all the way back to his first single, 'Run Nigel Run', which I posted to the RW group and which Jamesy observed sounded "like it was recorded in his shed". Thomas was a successful interpreter of others' tunes (which sounds a lot better and is more accurate than demeaning him by the descriptor "cover artist"), notably for me the Bill Withers-penned 'London', a poignant slice-of-immigrant-life conveying both the joy ("the parties are all outside") and desperation ("I don't care if I die or not") of that existence. Borrows of, for just two examples, 'Lola' and 'Let It Be' are charmingly done.



Oddly, the Aggrolites (of the later practitioners) seem to have gone away completely and have been replaced by The Slackers, who I'm maybe getting a bit too much of since they

have such a substantial catalog. I won't complain too much though, since they're typically tighter than the proverbial nun's chuff on a holy day...

ALT.FOOTY

20,000 LEAGUES OVER THE PENNINES

by GRAHAM JAMES

Toronto are doing well in the championship and look like they are going to be promoted to Super League. There's considerable excitement over this prospect in Northern Territories as the prospect of an away trip to this venerable city could turn from having a few bevies on the way to the ground to 'you mean we are actually in Canada?' after stopping off at the newly opened cafes. All will be revealed.

There's also moves to establish a franchise in New York which would add to the international flavour of the expanding British super league which also has teams in Perpignan and Toulouse. In fact 'Les Catalans' played a game recently at the Nou Camp in Barcelona and won the British Challenge Cup final. I shan't even begin to attempt a tour around the emerging hotspots in the states which include The Jacksonville Axemen, curiously not a direct reference to the aforementioned Yankee/Confederate cauldron.

Of course all Australians, especially in New South Wales and Queensland (imperial currency not cultural heritage), know what their most popular spectator sport is. Nope it's not cricket, but if you're thinking "Aussie Rules Football" you certainly qualify for a consolation prize for even being aware of such a phenomenon in the myriad of planetary variations of what you can do with a spherical object, especially the oval variety. I believe there's something that Americans do with such geometric objects. Things that are round tend to roll as every fan of The Rolling Stones will tell you.

Sometimes you can put these objects under a steamroller and hit them with a stick along an icy surface. Sometimes you can make them very hard and small and hit them towards the outer reaches of the cosmos. Bent sticks or batons are best for doing this.

But the oval ball is one of the very first examples of artificial intelligence. When in flight or especially when hitting the ground, it has a mind of its own. There's just no way you can predict how or in which direction it will bounce after its been kicked. Sometimes it even has the qualities of a boomerang and it bounces right back to where it began. You see, the oval ball also transverses time.

Did I mention that Toronto is known as The Wolfpack? By now you may have realised that I might be discussing sport, something which at one time was an anathema to fans, alongside politics, babies and even music. Furthermore, it's

not ice hockey, football, baseball, American football or even rugby union football.

It's something which, in the U.K. at least is largely confined to what is known as The M62 corridor. Doesn't quite have the same ring as Highway 61 or Route 66 but it is Britain's highest motorway, weaving its way from the East Coast of Humberside (aka The East Riding of Yorkshire) through the West Yorkshire heartlands, across the Pennines and well into the Red rose of Lancashire.

The oval ball was launched as a professional sport In Huddersfield in 1895 as a Northern Union breakaway and became known as Rugby League as opposed to Rugby Union. This was largely because 'union' was played entirely by public schoolboys with rich parents in the south of England and those northern flat capped proletarians who indulged had to work 7 days a week down the pit or in the clothing factories for virtually nowt and they wanted to be paid when they took time off to play sport. Cue Monty Python sketch.

Solid working class reasons then to have this as your sport. Not that it started out like that for me, having been born in North London to parents who were both born a stone's throw from Highbury. A-R-S-E-N-A-L.

For me, rugby league had amounted to a guy called Eddie Waring who I was barely able to comprehend commentating on a Saturday afternoon on a game played by rather large rotund men wallowing around in mud and occasionally slogging each other. The conditions may have been because the game was largely played in the winter along said M62 corridor either side of the Pennines. And when you are either side of the Pennines it rains a lot. That's why there's a lot of hills and grass and sheep and why the mills of Yorkshire and Lancashire once clothed the world, along with a little help from Southern Union cotton.

I found my way to Yorkshire in 1978 and for the first 10 years was happy enough to travel round the county watching the odd game of footy with fellow fans Mike Dickinson and Alan Dorey although this waned as fandom ascended. Then came the time when as a father I had to think of what sport I would take my eldest son and daughter to. Leeds united was, well, Leeds and therefore out of the question. Football itself was witnessing racism in some parts and seeing violent clashes between rival 'supporters' so I looked elsewhere. As it 'appened, as they say in Yorkshire, a few friends went to see Leeds Rugby League (RL) so I first gave it a go in 1989.

Now RL is know as a 'full contact' sport but it wasn't this aspect that struck me. It was actually the grace and elegance of movement, the artistry and skills and the pace and individual flair. It was, and still is for the most part a very fast paced game. There were some pretty big guys but size isn't everything of course and several of the 'half-backs' were quite small and the game wasn't solely about collisions. It

was about how you handled the ball and the team tactics with all the hallmarks of a strategic encounter. Two people I watched who were particularly enthralling were Martin Offiah and Ellery Hanley. Whilst being able to tackle and be tackled is pretty vital, so is guile and foresight and one of the most successful players in modern times is one of my team's recent stars, Robbie Burrow, all of 5'5. It's interesting to see how Women's Rugby League has taken off in the last few years although this is part of wider positive moves in Women's sporting participation.

Even though the game had been a breakaway from Union to professionalism it was still not a full time professional sport until Sky TV backed it in 1996 and the 'Summer era' began. Since then, my team, renamed Leeds Rhinos has been the most successful in Super league winning 8 Grand Finals out of 9 and three Challenge Cups all of which I've seen. RL has been one of my passions and I've travelled widely to see the sport, met new friends, met players and seen some of my former pupils take up the game. My eldest son and I have been going for 30 years.

So, I'm chatting with your editor on Friday afternoon, as you do, and I have to end the chat due to human contact in the non virtual world. I'm then off to Huddersfield in the evening, the 'birthplace of Rugby league' to see my team with Jonathan. He and his dad, Brian, and me and my son had been going to games for a long time, home and away. This will be the first away game I've been to since Brian sadly passed away last year. It's an emotional journey and our team has been in rock bottom form for 3 of the last 4 years since our Golden Generation of players retired. We're flirting with relegation which for the biggest club is unthinkable since we've just finished a brand new shiny upgrade to our stadium in Headingley, Leeds which is also home to Yorkshire Cricket. We've been playing poorly and it's been depressing to watch. Neither of us hold out much hope. So, it's just before kick off and I message Nic to tell him where I'm at and we chat a little culminating in 'hope you do well and write us an article on Rugby League then'.

Hmm, well it's played by 13 players on each side with 4 subs. You pass the ball backwards and try to go forward and 'touch down' the ball behind enemy lines. That's called a 'try'. If you succeed in this you are allowed to attempt a conversion by kicking the ball above a bar between two very long upright posts. There are scrums and all manner of rules but who really wants to know about these? And, what's more the game is showing some signs of emerging in the US and it wasn't very long ago that 'soccer' wasn't hardly even heard of stateside whereas now, the US men's team can play a bit and the women's team are the world champions. Who knows? There are few pro teams in the UK due to its small geographical coverage but it is very widespread in schools and the amateur game through Yorkshire, Lancashire and Cumbria with many leagues. It's played in very few

countries although it's hugely popular throughout the South sea islands and New Zealand and Australia who host the best sides. It was banned in France under occupation in WW2 but has since re-emerged.

For me it's not so much a full contact sport but more a 'First contact' sport. I've met new people from parts of the world I would scarcely have trod; I've visited places in the deepest parts of Lancashire and Yorkshire and in the process I've become, virtually, a Yorkshireman. My flat cap, clogs and braces await. An away trip to Toronto is a weird prospect, not the kind of thing you'd contemplate on your day off.

Eh, up then. Next issue sees an explanation of Aussie Rules Football followed by the even more mind bending sport known as Gaelic Football. Truly amazing the range of options what us primates have learnt to do with a spherical object.

And, oh yes, the game. We won, away from home 44-0. Get in there.

FOOTY

Just having endured the 3-1 home loss to Wet Spam, it's not the best of starts for my Hornets, is it? 3 losses to start the season is a bit of a contrast to last year's four wins on the trot to open proceedings. Typically, many "fans" who aren't the owner or the manager are immediately prophesying gloom, doom and relegation.



Admittedly, we were rubbish in the opening loss to Brighton (Brighton?! Yes, fuckin' *BRIGHTON*) but much better in the away loss to Everton the following week. Today was a lot of "same old story" in that if our finishing had been up to the standard of a lot of the rest of the play we'd have thumped them by a street or several, with 23 shots but only 3 on target compared to the Hammers' 16 and 10.

It was a well open game, though, with a lot of space given by both teams. The Minnie Moaners are out in force complaining that we didn't shore up the defence in the transfer window and scapegoating Dawson who we got off Martin Tudor's team West Brom, suggesting that we should chuck him back at them with alacrity. This isn't at all fair to

the lad: there aren't many players who come in and make an immediate impact, and they need to settle in to both the system they'll be playing and cultivate the instincts they'll need to work effectively with the squad. Dawson's no donkey, and showed signs today (to me, anyway) that him and Craig Cathcart can do us a solid at the back. He's also a useful back-post target man, but he'll need to adjust both his runs and positioning given Holebas' unfortunate tendency to overhit his corners.

Our midfield is a good'un, despite the inconsistencies of Tom Cleverley (in for Pereyra today, who is injured but then again can be equally hot-and-cold). I liked the shape today as well, sort of a flattened diamond 4-4-2 or 4-4-1-1.

I'll agree with the match commentator, who opined that despite our recent run of losses (continuing from the end of last season) we'll be all right, probably headed for another mid-table finish.

Away to Newcastle next week (never an easy proposition, although they're pretty fucked up and we should be looking for our first points up there), but after a Tuesday League Cup game against the Cov', then the Arse at the Vic, after which me & Tommy Ferguson may be glaring at each other, but at least that'll make Hod-me-son and Amanda Epstein give me a "COYH" for the day. After *that* it's off to the Etihad for another presumed battering, but ey, you never know!

LOCO CITATO

[[Editorial comment still looks like this ...]]

From: phillies@4liberty.net

August 3

George Phillies writes:

You refer to the N3F zines, so I thought I should bring you up to date. We have two sets of zines, both dating back to the foundation of the N3F in 1941.

Readers interested in obtaining our zines can join the N3F as public members. Just send me your name and email address; public membership is free. You will receive all our zines by email. Voting memberships are also available for a small yearly dues payment. See N3F.org/join.

The set of zines *This Here...* interacts with directly refers to the original purpose of the N3F, which was to take advantage of period postal rates such as the one-and-a-half cent stamp (or so the financial records in *Bonfire 3* say). Folks would mail all copies of their zine to a central point. The zines would then be reshuffled, and people would be sent in one envelope all the zines to which they were subscribed.

This scheme would save people money and increase readership. For the folks in the middle, it was a lot of work.

That scheme seems to have faded rapidly from club operations.

The Franking Service was recently revived, because thanks to the internet you email me one PDF of *This Here...*, and I retransmit *This Here...* to our entire membership. We will do this for almost any other fanzine, subject to a practical limit--our email transmission limit is a total of 8 Mb per transmission. Just send phillies@4liberty.net your zine, as a PDF file, and we will do the rest.

The other set of zines is the zines we publish. We are about to add our ninth of these.

Our original zine was *Bonfire!*, first published in 1941. It has since been renamed *The National Fantasy Fan*, just as our fan and pro awards, the Neffies, were renamed from the Laureate Awards, which originally appeared in 1943 (or 1941; definition question). *TNFF* is again our news zine; it publishes an occasional review. Current issue: Volume 78, Number 7.

Tightbeam (originally *Hyperspace Tightbeam*) has at various times been a letterzine and a genzine; it currently only publishes reviews, including anime, novels, shorter works, films, videos, graphic novels, and of course Food of Famous Writers. The issue now in preparation is #299; editors are Jon Swartz and myself.

N'APA is our APA. The current collector of issues is Jefferson Swycaffer; the recent issue was 241.

Ionisphere was revived after many years of silence. It publishes interviews with fen and with pros. *Ionisphere* just reached issue 17 of the current series. The Editor is John Thiel; he also edited the original series of the zine. The supporting group is the N3F Fan-Pro Coordinating Bureau.

Origin is the other zine John Thiel edits; it publishes fannish history and research. The current issue is 17.

Eldritch Science is our fiction zine; it publishes one or twice a year.

Mangaverse is our anime/manga/comics zine, focused primarily on anime reviews. It was originally published in the mid-naughts, and has now been revived. Editrix Jesse Silver also has a web site S1E1.com, which publishes a set of anime reviews not the same as the ones found in *Mangaverse*.

Films Fantastic is our occasionally-published zine on older, notably pre-WW2, stfnal films.

Our newest planned zine is *The N3F Review of Books*, Including Prose Bono, which will publish book reviews and articles on writing, making art, and marketing. The Review of Books is being prepared because there was a feeling that *Tightbeam* should be held to 30 pages, while the number of available book reviews is much larger. In addition, there has been a foofaraw on the internet as to whether or not SF authors are real, based on whether or not their books are

being reviewed, as opposed to whether or not their books are being published.

[[Thanks for all the info, George...]]

From: jtmajor@iglou.com

August 3

Joseph Major writes:

"I can't imagine, for example, Andy Hooper avidly reading anything from the N3F stable any more than than I could envisage the readership of Alexiad being engaged by Askance."

Far be it for me to speak for Hooper, but I find *Askance* quite interesting, and our zine has occasionally been the recipient of a loc from ye ed Purcell (who, in the latest issue, also praised *Alexiad*).

[[I'm aware that John locs your zine, of course (as I have myself when our interests align eg James Bond). I admit to being guilty of enjoying the vowel harmony of *Alexiad* and *Askance* without due regard to the accuracy of the statement...]]

A more serious problem is the shift to "Best Fanzine" becoming an award given to minor pros with blogs. The blogger says, "Hey, guys, wouldn't it look great if I got a Hugo?", commenters swarm the ballot, and the minor pro gets to have "HUGO AWARD WINNER" stamped across all his covers.

Ted White managed to find a solution to the problem before it was ever conceived. Back in the sixties, he wanted to change the name of the fan awards to "Pong", in honor of Bob Tucker (there's a story behind that).

Somehow having Minor Pro have "PONG AWARD WINNER" on all his covers wouldn't have the same, er, cachet.

As for Corflu, there's an

involved reason why I haven't gone, no money . . . well, that and the Corflu host who said there was no fandom in Nashville, Tennessee. I could repeat what Khen Moore said about that but I don't like to spread bad feelings.

[[More eye-roll about some of the shit that gets said...]]

From: mikeglyer@cs.com

August 3

Mike Glyer writes:

You should thank God you have finally stumbled onto the solution -- pissing on my fanac. I stand ready as always to supply the bad example pointed to by your forefathers brown, Katz and Hooper. Fandom could not have a Core were there none of us to be outside it.

[[brown, Katz and Hooper cannot be described as "forefathers", not least because there's only three of them. Sarcastically though it may be intended, your point about "Core Fandom" is well taken. I think that the term was coined by Katz (and yes, I do have the t-shirt), and as I later came to realize was another go at inflating his self-importance. It's quite arguable that Gen-F(iler) might also

consider themselves a "core", albeit of a different apple. These days I much prefer "fanzine fandom" to more accurately describe "us", though admittedly my conception of that is a bigger tent than some might like, and yet hews to an old-fashioned definition of "fanzine"...]]

The vision of endless lettercols devoted to the FAAn Awards reminds me so much of the Doré engraving of Noah's flood, a handful of people clambering over each other to be the last to drown. "No, I deserve to be on the pinnacle of this unsubmerged rock!" "No, ME, you unlettered oaf." "Well, at least I'm still publishing Graham!" "And what a ripe piece of shyte your zine is!" *glub* *glub*



[[Department of Pedantry points out that the actual title of the engraving is 'The Deluge', but nevertheless I'm always grateful for a decent hook for a loccol illo. Don't you really think, though, that the Raft of the Medusa might be more appropriate? I'm well aware and have frequently stated that detailed discussion of the FAAn awards causes many to flee in terror, but there are some who have an interest in the topic, and also in having discussions out in the open. As I have also remarked (in BEAM), we get to ride our own hobby-horses, and This Here... is inevitably going to have a stable of mine...]]

From: penneys@bell.net

August 4

Lloyd Penney writes:

Either I have fallen way behind (there's always that), or you are putting out *This Here*... a lot faster than you used to do. Either way, or both ways, I find myself three issues behind. I have here issues 17, 18 and 19, and I will try my best today to get myself caught up with all of them.

[[I'm planning, or at least trying to sustain a monthly schedule. Previous series were in fact technically "irregular", and I recall at least one ish being only two or three weeks on the heels of the previous...]]

17... [...]

The FAAn Awards... I couldn't possibly have gone to *[Corflu]*, and with the revised categories, in most of them, I didn't feel I was knowledgeable enough to vote. I lost track of time, and did not vote at all. I think John Purcell and team might bring the old categories back to see if the past FAAn Award voting numbers can also come back. A question... how many wins is enough? I think Robert Lichtman has won Best Letterhack 8 times, and I have won it five times. Is that enough? I freely admit that I enjoyed winning those awards; I am not doing this to win, but it certainly fun when I do.

[[As they say on NPR's 'Marketplace': "Let's do the numbers". In true Sainted Strummer style, I've compiled what I think are lists of individuals who've won three or more FAAn awards in the categories of Fanwriter, Fanartist and Letterhack:

Fanwriters: Andy Hooper (6), Claire Brialey (4), Mark Plummer (3), Bob Shaw (3).

Fanartists: Steve Stiles (12), Dan Steffan (5), Jim Shull (4), Alexis Gilliland (3), D West (3). Note that Shull and Gilliland's wins were during the period when the fanartist category was divided into "humorous" and "serious".

Loccers: Robert Lichtman (8½), Lloyd Penney (5), Harry Warner Jr. (5), Paul Skelton (4), Mike Glicksohn (3). Note that Lichtman's tally includes five in a row (2010-14), which

by Dobson's original proposition should have subjected him to an exclusion vote...]]

Given current events (mass shootings in El Paso and Dayton, plus Orange Monster cheering the burglary at Elijah Cummings' home), I will withhold any commentary on Graham Charnock's column until the end.

The loccol? I may have said this before (I can see I mentioned it briefly in the locol for issue 18)... Yvonne worked for Diageo Canada some years ago, so we got a tour of the Crown Royal bottling plant in the town of Amherstburg, not far from the bridge to Detroit. I think the purple Crown Royal bags gamers have enjoyed for years go on the American product only; we never saw them at the Amherstburg plant.

18... All Fandom? It's just a memory. I know lots of enthusiasts of the newest popular interests, names, anime, comics, gaming and Dr. Who. They don't call themselves fans, for they know that it is short for fanatic, and they aren't about to call themselves that. Many of them are friends of ours, and they recognize the fact we've been around since the glaciers were advancing.

[[What do they call themselves, then? I dispute that they don't consider themselves "fans" of whatever...]]

Getting hot and bothered in the discussion on the FAAn Awards... they have never been mine to change, and never will be. All I can do is hope for the best on them, and hope they get back some of the lost lustre. With teams that compete in sports leagues that are generally American-team-dominated (MLB, MLS, NHL, NBA), a championship is something to rave about and enjoy.

[[<sigh> "never been mine to change", "hope for the best" ect is tincture of pure bollocks. If you're unwilling or unable to contribute to the discussion on the topic, then that's perfectly fine, you have a lot of company, but platitudinous shrinking violet excuses contribute precisely 0...]]

[...]

19... [...]

Bless your heart, Nic, and thank you for a little egoboo. I write about 200 letters every year, and have written as many as 315 in one calendar year. That may be all the brag I am allowed, but after so many years of people like Mike Glicksohn telling me that the heart of the hobby is the loccol, I have taken that to heart, and no one will ever know all the letters I write unless they see all the zines I receive, and I do get a lot.

The promised comment on America the Damned/Darned/Doomed... it's looking more like the last one now. I think their democracy is in danger, and fascism looms in the current management of the country. Canada is looking at the same kind of fascist movement with the current right-wing Conservative Party lying and lying some more in order to

kick out the current Liberal Party, that seems more intent on getting things done for every day Canadians, including middle-class and indigenous people. Our federal election is coming up in October, and we as always must get the vote out.

I have been asked if I will be going to the next Corflu in Texas. As much as I would like to say yes, the answer must be no. The new job will possibly replenish my bank account a little bit, but right now, Yvonne is the main breadwinner, and I don't want to be spending her money. The safest thing for me to do is simply say no, thank you, and as usual, live vicariously in the trip reports.

With the smiling Buffy at the end of things here, I will give you my thanks for this issue, apologize for letting things go, and try to promise that it won't any more, and who am I kidding? We will see you again with the 20th issue.

From: tommy@tommyworld.com

August 4

Tommy "Stavros" Ferguson writes:

Bloody hell – still haven't replied, let alone acknowledged, that I got and enjoyed #18!

The footy stuff I love – an as an Arsenal fan may have more to contribute – but how does that play over there (pardon the pub!)?

Gearing up for WorldCon and EuroCon – so unlikely to have another missive yet – but will print out and read...

[[The 'Footy' columns are pretty shamelessly geared toward Brit lads and ladettes, and cause bewilderment (at best) among the colonials, complete disinterest in others (including some Brits). Then again, what will they make of Jamesy's contribution?...]]

From: jakaufman@aol.com

August 5

Jerry Kaufman writes:

Sorry to hear you can't hear this here now reply. I sympathize, maybe even empathize. I got my hearing tested last year, suspecting I have some loss in the higher registers. My suspicion was confirmed, but I didn't take the next step of getting aids. So I'll have to go through the testing routine again, and plan to do so later this year. Meanwhile, we turn on Closed Captioning for almost everything we watch.

I almost always get a couple of votes for my letter-writing in the FAAN Awards, so I wasn't especially surprised or satisfied by the votes I mentioned. My whole point in talking about them was that I thought I was essentially being voted out of any further chance of recognition. And this was

entirely based on my complete misunderstanding of the process and purpose of the category in which the votes appeared. So I am not a good example to use in urging others to vote.

[[You're a good example in a lot of ways, Killer, perhaps even that...]]

The Zombies and Brian Wilson on a single bill? That should be worth seeing.

I think both Bernie and AOC identify as Democratic Socialists, so I think it's fair to call them small "s" socialists. I agree that the right uses "socialist" as a hammer, but younger folks of a progressive bent see it as a compliment. We have one socialist on our city council, and the rest of the councilors are only a little to her right. Business associations are putting money into the upcoming election (7 of 9 seats are being voted on), so this could change.

Steve Jeffrey points out that sometimes terms reverse in meaning. That's happened even to fannish jargon. I've always heard that "gafia" was originally intended to imply that mundane life was the thing being gotten away from, but even when I got into fandom, fandom itself was what one escaped. (I gafiated for the first time in 1969, and wish I could get back the fanzines I gave away.)

I read Graham's final paragraph about our US culture "too embroiled and embedded in their own problems to find any solutions." I inferred from this that Graham had been trying to lead us Americans to solutions in his 'America the Damned' columns. I went back to the one Ulrika and I critiqued, but couldn't find anything like that. But I agree that we are embroiled and embedded in our problems, sure. And if Graham wants to point those problems out, okay. I was just asking, as was Ulrika, I think, for Graham to be a bit less casual about the details.

Leigh Edmonds provides you with a report on a footie game and stadium, and I wonder (without looking it up) whether this is the same stadium in which I saw a game back in 1983, as the guest of Irwin Hirsh and his father. I took an entire roll of film of the game, trying to capture the kicks and jumps, and devoted some space to it in my DUFF report.

I ran across the Fancyclopedia 2 definition of a fake-fan the other day. That's a person with no interest in sf but who likes hanging out with fans. Then there's the fringe-fan, who likes sf and hanging out with fans, but isn't interested in getting involved with fanzines or conventions. Randy Byers called himself a fringe-fan as he slowly slid into the swamp, but finally had to admit to being one of the swamp critters himself.

[[Without having looked up anything, that's also been my interpretation of those terms...]]

Buffy Sainte-Marie was such a huge musical presence when I was a teen. The kids I hung out with in high school were primarily folk music fans, with classical, jazz, and band

music leanings, so I heard her a lot. Her versions of "The House Carpenter" and other Childe Ballads raised the hair on my arms, and so did her originals about Native American culture and history, (Rhiannon Giddens does a version of another Sainte-Marie favorite, "Lady Margaret", only hers is called "Little Margaret".)

From: srjeffery@aol.com

August 11

Steve Jeffery writes:

Thanks for *This Here... #19*. Apologies for the delay in getting round to a response but it's been a weird week, with no less than six fanzines all arriving on top of each other, including *Banana Wings 74*, *SF Commentary 99* and *Inca 16* dropping though the letterbox and Skel's *All New or Reprint* (via Fishlifter Central) and Purcell's *Askance* queuing up behind *This Here...* (and a series of spam posts warning me of imminent deletion of my (non existent) PayPal account) in the email inbox.

Sorry to hear about the cellulitis (sounds nasty), tinnitus and COPD. Get well, and/or semi-cyborged, soon. Fandom needs all the argumentative Grumpy Old Fans it can muster. What ever happened to the promised influx of argumentative Grumpy Young Fans? (They got old).

[[I also suspect that whatever Grumpy Young Fan contingent there might allegedly have been took a clear-eyed gander at the State of Fanzines and perhaps sensibly decided that other pursuits might be more rewarding or representative, including in some cases abandoning "fandom" altogether. I'll wear the "Grumpy Old Fan" label, sure, and restate that my motives in reviving this title were (1) to allow me to cunt on (and on, and on, and on...) about the FAAN awards; (2) to provide a "rapid response" frequent zine in part, perhaps, as a replacement (if such it could be unworthily considered) for ultimate GOF G Charnock's 'SexToy'; (3) as a venue for musings on other topics of interest to me, inevitably music, but in this iteration also the footy...]]

So, backtrack to the Nova Awards of the mid 2000s and I remember there was a clause that you should have seen some six different fanzine titles in the year of eligibility. Not, in those, days, a particularly onerous task, especially since you could expect to be handed at least three of those by passing faneds during the Novacon weekend prior to the voting deadline. I don't think it was ever really or strictly enforced apart from you writing down a bunch of titles on the voting form. You weren't expected to have produced or contributed to any of them (although I'm pretty sure a high proportion of voters in those days did one or both.) The idea was that to vote knowledgeably you should have encountered a representative (if not a statistically

significant) sample of the field. In those days, and in the UK, six was probably a pretty reasonable and representative number.

I have no idea how many fanzines there are in each year now. Many dozens, if not hundreds, given a cursory scan on the efanzines "recently added" front page. No one can possibly expect to keep up with them all. Some of us, inconveniently, have a Real Life to content with. (Vikki has had the luxury of retirement for the last few years, but doesn't really do fanzines. I don't get to that stage, if I ever do, for at least another couple of few years (the Brexit fiasco looks set to wipe out a significant proportion of my pension investments), unless I look forward to spending my last few years eating cold beans from a tin in a dark and unheated house.

So, no one is or can be, expected to have read everything out there in order to vote. But they should have at least some engagement with fanzine fandom. Six seems a good number. It's not difficult over a year. As I said above, I've just got six different fanzines in a week. Granted that is unusual (anyone might think there was a major convention due in the next week or two. What? Oh.)

[[Agreed about six as a "reasonable and representative" if not "statistically significant", a quite arbitrary number, to roughly determine whether a potential voter has sufficient engagement with the field. N3F alone appears to be pubbing nine zines now (see George Phillis' loc above).

Possibly more ire and comment has been spilled now over this year's FAAN awards than is strictly necessary. It was an experiment. Experiments sometimes fail. That is the nature of experiments, and also counts as a useful result: Try. Fail. Learn. Change. Try again. Fail better.

Unfortunately it is sometimes easier to sling mud than to offer constructive improvements. I wrote elsewhere (possibly in this very organ) that I was reasonably happy with the first draft ballot printed in one of the early progress reports. I was less happy with my own lack of preparation in not noting down the names of articles, cover artists and writers that I particularly liked or felt important, and where I saw them throughout the year, so that I would not be desperately wracking a failing memory in a more-than-slightly hungover state scant hours before the ballot deadline. The fault, dear Horatio...

Learn. Try again. Fail Better.

[[There's been plenty of offerings in the "constructive improvements" department, and as I have previously noted, my own brief tenure as award administrator came about because I had suggested several, being tired of all the bitching from the usual professional complainers which never offered anything like possible solutions. "Rip it all the fuck up" wasn't one of my preferred options...]]

So apart from the FAAn awards what went well in Corflu 36? Pretty much everything. That certainly seems to be the consensus of the In the Bar discussions that are reprinted in Rob Jackson's *Inca 16* and it was also my own experience of the con. Granted I had my membership and attendance generously donated by the Corflu 50 fund, and once might expect me not to turn and bite the hand that fed me so well, but honestly, I can't think of anything I could or would do better. Well, perhaps a message board and marker pen outside the con suite for people to leave messages for each other for meet ups, trips and dinner arrangements, but I admit I may still be the last person in the world at the present time not to actually have a mobile phone and thus expect to be contactable any time, anywhere ["that's Martini." Sorry, bit of a flashback moment there]. Which is, in fact, part of the reason I don't have a mobile phone. (Or even, currently, a computer. I'm doing this on the work laptop which I've borrowed for the weekend.)

[[I can't comment personally on the running of the actual Corflu FIAWOL weekend (since obviously I wasn't there), but by all accounts it was very well organized. Andy Hooper had issues with the award presentation mechanics, although I note in the latest Inca that the approx. 2.7 billion "orange slices for everyone" were reportedly applauded...]]

Thanks for inviting me to Radio Winston by the way. I've been having some fun there. And no doubt confusing a few people along the way. You just wait until I find a link to the wonderful Androids of Mu. (I had a serious crush on their drummer, Cosmic.)

I don't want to go into the whole fan vs pro thing, but I agree with your comment to John Purcell that fanwriting should not depend on who you are (or we'd have Best Train Driver Artist awards) *but the context you are contributing to.*

[[Editorially added bold/italic, because this is so perfectly well put...]]

So yes, fealthy pros (who often started as fans themselves) like Colin Greenland, Rob Holdstock, Dave Langford, Storm Constantine, Freda Warrington, Ben Jeapes, if they write as fans, in a fannish context, in a fanzine or an apa, are perfectly eligible for a fan award. I don't think a writer's blog, especially if it's partly or wholly geared to self promotion and marketing (almost obligatory now given the lack of support for new and midlist authors) should really count as fanwriting. That said, I haven't read or followed many of these. They're interesting, sometimes opinionated and provocative, but while they engage with sf, they don't engage with fandom. I'm aware there must be a grey area in the middle: blogs that if printed and mailed for comment would look and feel like a perzine, and, conversely, zines posted on efanzines.com that I wouldn't recognise as having much to do with fandom.

(Perhaps the test should be if you can claim tax against, it ain't fannish.)

And there, perhaps, we should leave it.

From: leighedmonds01@gmail.com

August 12

Leigh Edmonds writes:

This Here ... 19 has been sitting around here for the past couple of weeks annoying me so I'm taking a couple of hours out of my busy schedule as a filthy-pro to take care of the things in this that sparked my interest enough to LoC you in response. No, I didn't read this on the train since I'm in the middle of writing another book and I have yet to discover how to write history on a train. Perhaps if I was a writer of stf I could do that, but historians tend to have to lug around great piles of reference material and sources as well, which doesn't fit readily into my back pack.

I mentioned the filthy pro business because the assumption I read somewhere in this issue is that fans become stf writers and therefore there is a ready crossover between being a fan and being a pro and, of necessity, a filthy pro. It may be that learning to write (or at least feeling free to splash words around) in fandom might create some kind of leaning towards writing, and the most obvious form for stf readers might be writing the stuff too. I seem to have missed that boat but found something else to write about instead. And it doesn't pay too badly either, for me anyhow. At the convention I went to back in June I noticed a lot of people are calling themselves 'published' rather than 'professional', which is a neat distinction and confers on one the status of being out there to be read without the benefit of getting an income of some sort from it. 'Filthy pubbed' doesn't have the same ring about it and, anyhow, I don't know if you can be 'filthy' unless a lot of cash is involved.

Perhaps I am a filthy pro, when I think about it. If people quote to me the little saying that 'the victors write history' I correct them and say that really the victors employ people like me to write history for them. Back many years ago when I was doing a history for the roads authority in Western Australia it came to my ears that some people I knew at university said I had 'sold out'. My response was that if they were to pay me rather than Main Roads I'd be happy to write a history for them about the evils of freeways. Strangely, no offer arrived. I would be an equal opportunity historian if I were an academic, but since I'm a professional (and have a certificate on the wall the prove it - Professional Historians Association) I have to go where the money is and that is usually where people have got some that they don't need for immediate purposes. This would lead readily into some musings on another topic in this issue, the rise of capitalism, etc, etc.

To me 'socialism' has something to do with the ownership of the means of production and the redistribution of wealth. The opposite of capitalism, one might say. Someone in this issue, I can't find it again now, seems to have mistaken the word 'liberal' for the word 'socialist'. I don't think there is anything nice about socialism the way there is little to recommend the kind of raw capitalism we see at the moment. Liberalism would be nice, if it didn't tend towards capitalism.

[[“Socialist” and “socialism” have become catch-all demonizing words in the political language of the USA (I wouldn't call it “discourse” by any stretch) used by the GOPzis to basically mean “anything we don't like”, and thus, like most of the shite that emanates from their gobs is devoid of all sane meaning...]]

On the topic of religion, I had one of those austere Methodist upbringings and find myself reverting to it as I get older. On the weekend I had go to a funeral for the last of my aunts who had converted to being a Catholic back in the days when that was almost a hanging offense. So I had to sit through the full Catholic funeral which went on for what seemed like an eternity and involved more standing up and sitting down than my legs were happy with. There was lighting candles and sprinkling water and other mumbo jumbo with the ritual being conducted by three men wearing white dresses. I felt like some kind of ethnologist observing an alien ritual but it then occurred to me that a lot of people in the church took this seriously and believed it. Quite amazing.

This made me think, what do I believe in? A lot of pondering on that one kept me from getting bored during the rest of the ritual. In the end I decided that what I believe in is J S Bach, Franz Schubert, the elegance of the English Electric Lightning *[sic]*, the fun of fandom and, sad to say, the Melbourne Football Club.

We don't talk about 'footy' around this house. Last year Melbourne made it all the way to the last game before the Grand Final and this year they are second bottom of the league ladder. On the way home from the funeral I turned on the car radio to listen to the footy and the match being broadcast was Collingwood humiliating Melbourne, again. The only thing that made the final score seem less than tragic was three goals Melbourne kicked in quick succession in the final quarter, but I didn't hear them because I was putting fuel in the car tank and paying for it at the time.



By the way, these days the Melbourne Cricket Ground accommodates just over 100,000 but only reaches capacity a couple of times a year. Back when there was still some standing room they could fit in 120,000 and for the 1938 Grand Final they jammed in around 130,000. I'm glad I wasn't there.

By the way, again, I'm tempted to agree that you may be an 'intellectual', or at least have a leaning towards intellectualism. At least you know your Marx better than I do. You keep a copy of *Das Kapital* in the taxi to read while you're waiting for a fare?

[[Heh, no, but I have retained some memory of my introduction to Marxist theory while pretending to be studying for a degree at the LSE (1976-79), and while I don't have instant recall of particular quotes, I do tend to know where to find them quickly...]]

Time to do some paying work.

From: dave_redd@hotmail.com

August 16

David Redd writes:

Hope your medical situation(s) improve. This response is late because I was regrettably slow about printing it out, but your contribution to the gaiety of nations is appreciated. Particularly as there's so little old-fashioned gaiety in life these days. World news: microplastic is polluting even pristine Arctic snowflakes and Alpine glaciers, so what's going into our soils, food and bodies is anyone's guess. UK news: Boris & Co are still steering the *S.S. United Kingdom* dead ahead at the biggest iceberg in sight. Local news: a proliferation of "Cofiwch Dryweryn" graffiti and rallies calling for Welsh independence, which might be good news except for a side notion that in any independence referendum incomers shouldn't be allowed a vote. (Hope Dominic Cummings doesn't notice that bit of modern democracy if he has to organise BrexitRef2.) Oh well, back

to *This Here...* for some sanity, and here's Graham Charnock.

[[Yes, I had to look it up: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cofiwch_Dryweryn; perhaps you'll chip in a 'Wales the Doomed/Damned/Darned' column...]]

I should just sit back, leave the Marxist-content analysis to Ulrika and simply enjoy the fun, but some of those itchy spots in "America the Doomed" need scratching. Take the assertion that "classes

would collectively act in their own self-interest". That certainly didn't happen in 2016, when many pro-Brexit votes came from areas benefitting from EU redistribution of wealth. Marx was closer to the truth with that bit about social existence determining people's consciousness – when people are overwhelmed by day-to-day stresses, there's little energy left for much more than us-versus-them. Or if the social climate favours weapons and weapon-users, you get armed gangs as the world's top predators - corporate or freelance - and armed individuals as rogue predators. This is as true today as it was when we were exterminating mammoths. We are what we have been made.

[[You've spotted my salient point, which I could or should have explicated more thoroughly, which is that the working class get bamboozled and distracted by the capitalist class into thinking that their alleged "self-interest" is supposedly much more along the lines of "Wogs Out", because that will solve everything, than it is in attacking the true cause of their misery. That and yeah, they're too knackered to do much about it. (I know I am.) I still have a reserve of astonishment (fading into dull resignation) that the right-wing batshits over here can still play merry tunes with the inherent racism of many Americans, to the extent that they'll vote for those who want to get rid of what little safety net they have (food stamps and the like) despite their obvious need, because they don't like people of other colors getting any of it...]]

And, socialism is about being *nice*? Come on, being nice was the principal message of Jesus Christ. His early followers shared everything for everyone's benefit, striving for considerate caring lives. Christianity as Christ preached it was so radical that for centuries the organised Church wouldn't let the common rabble read the Bible, too full of dangerous ideas like everyone is equal and love one another. (Worse still, he took direct action against the corrupt bankers of his day... no wonder he got crucified.) After World War II we here had a caring socialist government, which in half a century became neo-Thatcherism under Tony Blair. If only John Brunner had lived to comment on that shift. USA "ultra-capitalism" has of course been joined by an ruthlessly thorough Chinese version of exploiting everything to destruction for short-term profit, so there's a lot more than America to consider and no one article can hold it all. Nice try though.

[[There's some bitterly sarcastic commentary from time to time about 'Republican Jesus', a construct whom actual Christians should not recognize, since he's used to justify hatred, rather than promote those "dangerous ideas" to which you refer. Despite my own Methodist upbringing (see also Leigh Edmonds' loc), I came to conclude that the philosophy and teachings of Jesus Christ were co-opted and corrupted by the maniac St. Paul. The late, great Molly Ivins used to describe the uncaring religious fanatics as "Shi'ite

Baptists". Graham Charnock did make that point about their extremist nature, didn't he?...]]

I should quit now that I realise I'm not making any coherent argument, but those FAAn awards beckon so I can't stop yet. Your research on the Nova awards has convinced me: I see 6 titles, therefore I should vote. Good grief, you winning a debate by checking actual facts? How last-century. I still feel uneasy about the Good Stuff I'm failing to look at, but with more voters any blips should even out.

And more voters are one of John Purcell's aims I see, in his valuable letter. Also simplifying the categories back down. He does mention keeping Best Cover and Best On-line, and if you want my opinion that sounds all right. Now, will I actually vote? I don't access the Corflu site (parental controls by others which I won't alter), so I expect it'll depend on someone more organised and energetic than myself actually emailing out forms. Will that happen? Not up to me, and I'm certainly not going to insist on anyone running anything to suit me. The Administrator's Decision will be Final.

[[Parental controls blocking the Corflu website? Wait, what?...]]

I applaud the Purcell fortitude in taking on the FAAns at a time of flux, more power to him, but still can't agree about professional writing being a disqualification. David Langford (to name someone other than John Scalzi) certainly belongs on any appropriate ballot for fan Hugo, FAAn or whatever. Would professional actors who do other things while "resting" be disqualified from acting awards on the grounds of other activities affecting their art? I offer the "If it quacks like a duck" defence. If a work is created with fannish intent in fannish spirit for a fannish medium, it's a fan work regardless of the other life skills which may have gone into it. If one of those life skills is professional writing, well lucky readers, that's all. Ah, disclaimer: I have occasionally written for money, so may be prejudiced. Back to The Administrator's Decision being Final, again.

No time to poorf raed. Thanks again.

From graham@cartiledgeworld.co.uk

August 22

Graham Charnock writes:

This is not intended to be about John W. Campbell and whatever his historical virtues and failings may have been. It is about Jeanette Ng, who until she scooped the Dell Magazine sponsored John W. Campbell best newcomer award at the latest Worldcon, I had never heard of.

This is substantively what Jeanette Ng actually said in her award acceptance speech as reported on her twitter feed: "John W. Campbell, for whom this award was named, was a fascist. Through his editorial control of *Astounding Science Fiction**, he is responsible for setting a tone of science fiction

that still haunts the genre to this day. Sterile. Male. White. Exalting in the ambitions of imperialists and colonisers, settlers and industrialists.”

That is the sum or her considered opinions. She didn't waste too many words. Maybe there were time restrictions imposed on her presentation

*Ng admits correcting her numbskull assertion that Campbell edited AMAZING. Without really explaining why she was so dumb.

Her choice of the term 'fascist' was embarrassingly inept, although it probably almost meant what she might have intended to say, sounding as if she had been schooled in the heady rhetoric of fashionable revisionist commentators such as Cory Doctorow

Of course, Ng offered no supporting evidence of Campbell's fascist tendencies or even any understanding of what the word actually means. But it is a fashionable term these days, so one can perhaps forgive her for plundering it (along with climbing on the Hong Kong bandwagon) in her youthful desire for universal acceptance among her peers (which apparently raised some cheers in the auditorium). Others before and since have dissected and attempted to deconstruct Campbell's character and Ng is obviously just lazily passing on received opinions. Whether Campbell was a Nazi Paedophile is irrelevant to anything except the current spate of Facebook Tennis. Campbell is dead and Ng is alive, for the moment.

But, of course, Campbell was obviously not the only editor working in the field at the time and yet suddenly, in her one-channel view, he is "responsible for setting a tone of science fiction which still haunts the genre to this day". I find this image of some menacing demonic Oberfuhrer unconvincing and further evidence of Ng's unthinking bigotry. Maybe she has been reading too much sf.

"Sterile. Male. White." No one would deny the sf field (and the one I grew up with and which spawned the 'fandom' I still hold dear) was once dominated by male white writers, but so was magazine and book publishing in general, as it had been since the turn of the century and beyond that to the days of Dickens. Was John Murray a fascist for suggesting Bronte novels were published under sexually indeterminate pseudonyms? Were the inter-war editors of mainstream magazines like the *New Yorker* and prominent publishers of people like Hemingway and Scott Fitzgerald also fascists, simply because their main market was white and male? With the unschooled arrogance of youth Ng betrays not only a lack of knowledge of the history of sf but of the history of C20th literature in general. Histories of colonials, settlers and imperial industrialists have populated sf, and general literature, since Jules Verne and Joseph Conrad. So has radical left wing thought in the hands of such as sterile white males such as Jack London and George Orwell. There is no case to be made for white or male supremacy unless

you want to rewrite the cultural history of the C20th. Which of course Ng wants to do. Ah, the vanities of callow youth.

I don't actually understand what 'sterile' means in the context she has quoted; it is pretty meaningless but it is probably intended as some offhand scattershot sleight, especially when linked to the keywords 'male' and 'white', which pretty much make her bigoted stance obvious.

As an old sterile white man who now finds himself without a voice in this genre, it seems to me that nowadays sf has moved away from being sterile.male.white to sterile.female.ethnic, Is that necessarily better, or how we really want the genre to develop?

I feel sorry for Ng. She is obviously far too young to become yet another blow-hard fugg-head so soon in her career.

[[You point out, correctly of course, that Campbell was "not the only editor working in the field at the time" but he is generally recognized as preeminent, at least enough to have an award named after him. I fully agree with your distaste at the inherent laziness that reflexively labels old white men as "fascists" or "nazis" just as much as I abhor the use of "socialist" as a bogeyman word coming from the opposite direction. Campbell was fond of being contrarian, ostensibly to encourage more interesting thinking from the authors he published, and arguably pushed boundaries in ways that ought to be admired rather than reviled, since in context these could be seen as precursor to later expansion of the field. It's perhaps arguable that the 'New Wave' authors, rather than engaging in a conscious rejection of old-school Campbellian tropes, were in fact seeded by his drive for original thinking (by the standards of the day), something which continues to develop to this day, and an ongoing development from which writers like Ng have undoubtedly benefitted...]]

WAHF

Bill Burns ; Guy Lillian ("Exceptional debate on the FAAns and the fan community") ; **Jim Linwood ; Sarah Mooring ; Denis Murphy ; Alan Rosenthal**

INDULGE ME

✓ Continuing to rewatch *Babylon 5*, now up to season 4 at the point where the Vorlons and the Shadows are induced to fuck off. Very keen to get J L Farey to write her impressions of it, as she's seeing it for the first time. She's as otherwise busy as ever, though...

✓ I thought ruefully of Graham Charnock when I rediscovered an old strip cartoon (Michael Heath's 'The Regulars') in *Private Eye* in which one character remarks: "I drink to drown my sorrows, but they've learned to swim" ...

✓ Alice Sheldon was born 104 years ago today (August 24, 1915). I'd bet real money that her legacy will remain incomparably far ahead of anything Jeanette Ng might achieve... ✓

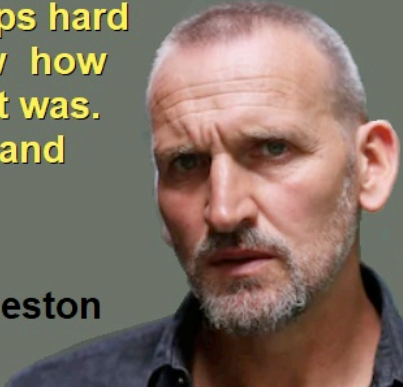
✓ I've always admired Eccles as an actor and as a top bloke. His recitation of Wilfred Owen's 'Dulce Et Decorum Est' is a required listen every Poppy Day, as is his intense rendition of 'Evidently Chickentown' at any fuckin' time at all...

Ageless beauty, **Julie Newmar**...



**"So I'll jug some water, bake some flour.
Store some salt and wait the hour."**

I was 13 years old when the Anti-Nazi League formed. I'm white and was raised and conditioned in an era of racism. The ANL was a beacon of hope, defiance and beauty. My young eyes saw black, brown and white people standing together in unity. It is perhaps hard to imagine now how inspirational that was. It changed lives and minds. We need it again.



Christopher Eccleston

✓ Via Reed Andrus: "I hate it when people act all intellectual and talk about Mozart while they've never seen one of his paintings..."

MIRANDA

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