

# PROCRASTINATIONS FOUR SQUARE-EYED

Procrastinations is written (or, in some cases, merely edited) by John Coxon. Credit is given to material that is ~~ripped off~~ gratefully accepted from others. Issue 4 published Thursday 6th September 2007. Future issues may be published. You have been warned.

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This is the first issue of *Procrastinations* that has been published in the proper order, in that it actually comes after all the issues that preceded it. I've got some really good people writing articles for me this issue and I'm ecstatic that they were all foolish enough to say yes.

Just one thing that it is very important I mention at this point: Vote Chris Garcia for TAFF. Chris is a real asset to fandom, both in the US and to anyone who's ever had anything to do with fanzines. He's one of the most active members of fanzine fandom I know, whilst being very nice, to boot. The man's a legend and I'd love to have the opportunity to meet him at Orbital so please vote for him to come over next year.

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# Giant Transforming Robots!

By John Coxon  
Editor

So, the new version of *Transformers*, then. I actually took some time out of a convention to go and see the film at 10:30 on a Saturday morning. I am thoroughly glad I did, because this film is brilliant. However, I must warn my readers that spoilers are to be seen in this here article.

The first thing about the movie I liked was the beginning. It focuses on a group of US Air Force personnel, who are about to return home after a tour of duty. The base at which they're stationed suddenly detects a bogie, who, as the audience realises near instantly (or at least, they do if they're me), is a Transformer, in fact a Decepticon by the name of Blackout. Eventually, Blackout lands in the middle of the air base. And then, well, he transforms.

It was at this point that I knew we were in for one hell of a movie. The transformation sequence for this Transformer was legendary. First, the rotor blades stopped, and we're not talking the motor turning off and the blades coming to a standstill – we're talking the rotors suddenly just stopping, sliding back, and then the transformation beginning until suddenly, Blackout is standing there and all hell breaks loose. This is one bloody good action scene – we get a good look at the Transformer and he begins to fight the people at the base, five minutes of mayhem and human slaughter, with the group of men we met right at the beginning being (you guessed it!) the only survivors.

After the end of that sequence, it abruptly cuts to a school, where the main character, Sam, is giving a presentation on his great grandfather, and eventually this is over, and he scores the grade he needs for his father to buy him a new car. This is our first encounter with Bumblebee, the main Transformer in the movie. In a nice homage to the original, in the first scene in which Sam sees him he is parked next to a yellow Volkswagen Beetle, the car that Bumblebee originally transformed into.

I could go on all day about how funny the one-liners were, about how cool the action sequences were, and about how awesome the CGI was, but ultimately, I just want to say this.

I go to the cinema to be entertained. I've seen films that made me sit up and think before, and whilst they're good, they usually feel like one point in an argument that the director wanted to make over two hours, when he could have just, you know, said what he wanted to say. As Douglas Adams once said, and I paraphrase from memory, "If I'd wanted to write a message, I wouldn't have written a story." The main film that I can think of that fits this bill is *The Interpreter*, starring Nicole Kidman, which was very good but also not something I wanted to spend two hours of my life on.

*Transformers* was the most entertaining film I've seen all year, with the possible exception of *Hot Fuzz*, which is similarly brilliant. I happen to really, really like films that aren't comedies but which happen to be funny in places, which this film managed with flying colours. For another instance of what I mean, try watching the TV show *NCIS*, which I've always thoroughly enjoyed, because it's not focused on comedy or being funny but still manages to make me laugh every episode.

Having said that, I want to spend a little time talking about the actors. Shia LaBeouf was cast in the leading role, and ever since seeing *Holes* (another film that starred both Jon Voight and LaBeouf in leading roles), I've been watching for him to do a film as a lead actor. He was good in both *Constantine* and *I, Robot* but he played a very similar role in both of them, so *Transformers* was, for me, a chance to see some more of his acting, and he didn't disappoint. He's also one hot guy, which never, ever hurts a film.

With the addition of Josh Duhamel (the captain of the Air Force crew we meet at the beginning), Megan Fox (Mikaela, Sam's love interest) and Rachael Taylor (the Australian hacker working the case of the Secretary of Defence), the eye candy in this film is absolutely superb. Duhamel and Fox also, as it happens, gave excellent performances – Taylor did not really have enough material to shine in any way, and

since I'd never seen another film that she played a role in, I was unable to gauge how good she was as an actress, but she was definitely not bad.

And then, you have the actors that make the film funny. Anthony Anderson (the hacker to whom Maggie turns when she needs help with the signal) and John Turturro (the man from Sector 7 who arrests Sam's family alongside Mikaela) were hilarious (although, as with Taylor, Anderson did not have nearly enough screen time), as were Kevin Dunn and Julie White, who played the Sam's parents (the scene in his bedroom was *brilliant* and made me laugh really very hard).

There are a couple of things that annoy me about the reset we see, though. The first thing is the wave of toys that have accompanied the movie. Not all of them transform. If you are going to put a Transformers logo on a toy, it should transform into something, in my humble opinion. I refuse to buy any toy called a Transformer that doesn't transform (and have only found, so far, two that actually do). The second thing is the prequel comic, which could have tied into the movie in a better way – certain parts of the story just jarred, although it does paint a very nifty picture of Starscream and his attitude towards Megatron as opposed to the other Decepticons.

But these are minor points. The film has encouraged a new wave of comics from IDW publishing (we'll leave the prequel comic out of this and focus on the new comics) who have also republished the *Generations* comics from the previous publisher. The new comics are very good, I think, although if you're expecting anything similar to the movie, don't – the new comics had begun to be published before the movie was completed, unless I'm very much mistaken.

It's a good film, and it's prompted a revival of the franchise, and for both of these things, it deserves praise and applause. By chance, both my half-brother and I acclaimed it as the best film of the year before we realised the other had done so, which must say something (perhaps that the Coxon family are too easily led by shiny things blowing up). At any rate, it is the film that now holds the record for the highest amount of money taken at the US box office in the opening weekend by a non-

sequel film, and there are two more coming out after it, so I'll be going to see them, and reporting back to my readers about the experience.

## No, We Don't Have A TV.

By Flick

I have a routine, when people say, "Oh, did you see that programme about X on TV the other day?" I shake my head, slightly, and say, "No, I didn't. Sounds interesting..." I used to say, "No, we don't have a TV," but that leads to bemused looks, which leads me to say, "Well, we **do** have a TV, but it's not set up to receive TV..." but then I realised that that just lead to even more bewilderment [*I may follow this routine when the same sort of thing is true of me during my stay at the University of Leicester – Ed*].

We used to have a TV-as-a-TV, before we moved house. Mostly, we used to turn it on every few days and see whether there were any good episodes of *Futurama* on the Tivo. The Sky subscription ran out, about two months before we moved, and I didn't notice for several weeks.

Then we did move, and we thought about getting a TV-as-a-TV again. We live near to Canary Wharf, which royally buggers up the TV reception, but we're not allowed a dish, where we live, and there's no cable, so it would have had to have been Freeview, and that would have required going out and buying a Freeview box, and, well, we're a bit disorganised and crap, really. Every few weeks, then months, one of us would mutter about getting one, but we never seemed to get around to it.

And, anyway, all the good stuff comes out on DVD, and you can watch it when you like and don't have to wait a week for the resolution of the dramatic cliff-hanger, or make sure you remember that it's on, or stop playing *Zelda* while you watch it, and so on.

Then New *Who* started, and, well, we wanted to watch that. As it happened, we saw the first episode at a con, and it was pretty good, so Mike went out and, experimentally, bought a Tesco Value TV aerial. It

made very little difference. We thought about getting Freeview, again, but, well, it didn't really seem worth it.

So we just downloaded Season 1 of *Doctor Who* and watched it on the laptop. We bought the DVDs, when they came out, so it's probably morally OK, even if it's not strictly legal.

Then *Life on Mars* started, and we did the same thing. *Life on Mars* was much better than *Doctor Who*, which we rather gave up on at the end of the first season.

Every so often, a little man from TV Licensing comes 'round to visit. If Mike answers the door, he gets to come inside and has the TV, complete with lack of reception, DVD player, and various games consoles, demonstrated to him. If I answer the door, he gets sent away with a snarl, because, frankly, it really bloody annoys me that they pretend they have any right whatsoever to come and check up on you, in a guilty-until-we-decide-otherwise kind of way. Neither reaction makes much difference, though: he still comes back again, six months later.

Really, it all works out very well. Right now, we're working our way through *Star Trek: The Next Generation* because, well, the DVDs were on offer and we felt like it. The only real problem is the US shows: we generally still see them before they air over here, but the pile of DVDs that arrives every autumn is a bit daunting, and leads to us having to actually make decisions about what to watch first. And, well, we're a bit disorganised and crap, really...

## **Through The Small Screen To The Future.**

By Claire Brialey

It started, in a way, with *Heroes*. We heard fan friends talking about it last year after the first few episodes had been broadcast in the US; they'd been watching them on download, of course, which was a technological marvel still beyond us, but what was more remarkable was that everyone we knew who was watching it seemed to really like it.

Since this was a set of people who are more than averagely didactic, even for fans, including some contrarians who can usually be relied upon to dislike anything that other people like – sometimes simply *because* other people like it – we figured that this was a series we should keep an eye out for.

Then some friends came to stay and in return brought us a number of shiny things to watch – including the first eight episodes of *Heroes*. And after we'd watched some other things we were partway through we looked at the box of delights that represents our unwatched DVD collection, and decided that *Heroes*, thanks to Martin and Margaret, would be a good place to start. Inevitably we got hooked. Which left us, after eight episodes, rather stuck – until we found out that another friend had also been downloading them, and still had the copies. So every Sunday evening we'd come back from the pub with another two episodes, and on Monday evening we'd watch them after dinner, and eventually we caught up, so that for the last few episodes we could watch them and page back only a few days in LiveJournal to click on cut tags and find out, for instance, that young people these days apparently really don't understand the tropes of time travel [*I think I understand time travel, but frankly, what the hell is a trope? – Ed*]. To be completely honest about this, though, it wasn't our first time.

Because it started, in a way, with *Buffy The Vampire Slayer*. We'd not been early adopters of *Buffy* at all; having missed the first couple of series both on satellite TV and (poorly cut, I gather) on its terrestrial airing, we accepted that we'd missed the boat and stopped trying to avoid *Buffy*-related conversations on the grounds that very few spoilers would stick in our minds for long enough to cause problems if we ever got round to it later. After about four years of hearing everyone tell us how very good it was, we cracked one summer and borrowed the first season on DVD. Since we didn't have a DVD player at that stage either, we had to use someone else's living room to watch it in as well. The rest is kind of predictable.

We found that another friend had the next few seasons on video, and also the beginning of *Angel*. We only saw this friend every couple of

weeks rather than weekly, but that was fine because he could lend us 11 episodes (a boxed set of half a season) every time. Well, it was fine in theory. What would usually happen is that by Sunday we'd be conscious that we only had another three episodes left and wouldn't be seeing Tony again for ten days, and also that we hadn't really managed to get very much done over the weekend, but would then watch an episode after lunch and somehow fail to turn the video off. There was a reason we failed to produce many fanzines in the first couple of years of this century, and it's not the one that most people were thinking. Well, not just that anyway [*My innuendo circuits are resolutely remaining switched off, damnit – Ed*].

And so we steamed ahead, carefully alternating episodes of the fourth season of *Buffy* with the first season of *Angel* for the intertextuality, and by the time season five of *Buffy* was being shown (still poorly cut) on BBC we were starting to catch up. By the time season six was ready to air, we were more than ready for it, and due to a couple of very good people, it turned out that from a very late start we got to see the final season of *Buffy* before most people in the country.

But it started, in a way, before all that. In the late '80s – before John was born, in fact [*I was born in early December, 1988, stalker-fans! – Ed*] – I started watching *Star Trek: The Next Generation* [*That's been mentioned twice in the first eight pages of a fanzine that I produce – Ed*], despite the fact that I hadn't been much of a fan of the original series and despite the fact that many of the episodes and much of the acting wasn't very good. But it seemed like the only SF on TV at the time (and I say this in the conscious knowledge that there seemed to be endless reruns of *UFO*; Gerry Anderson's visions of the future have never done much for me, and the fact that this one had been set in the futuristic world of 1980 didn't help); although the original *Doctor Who* had another couple of years to run, the growing darkness of Sylvester McCoy's Doctor couldn't get over what struck me as poor scripts, unconvincing sets and effects, and a general feeling that the BBC regarded it as a kids' programme which didn't need to conform to the usual high standards of BBC drama for children because it was science fiction. (Sensitive readers may consider that the new *Doctor Who*

continues in some of the traditions of the old, and wish to discuss...  
[*Not that you're trying to provoke a flame war in my LOC column, at all – Ed*])

And it's a significant point that not all fannish television actually involves science fiction. It's arguable that lots of TV shows are fannish because a significant proportion of fans not only watch them but are inclined to discuss them afterwards. This can include US drama series, homegrown comedies and apparently also the sort of real people/human interest shows that I personally find extremely irritating but which quite a few of our friends evidently find interesting, such as *The Apprentice* or the inevitable *Big Brother*. But inevitably the biggest community connection centres on SF.

As well as the community that exists around discussing these shows, it's because of the fannish community that we've seen most of them at all. Not only the initial recommendations but often the actual means of watching them have come from fandom. We'd probably never even have heard of *Dead Like Me*, never mind seen it, had it not been for Max; and Max and Tobes showed us the first couple of episodes of *Lost*, which we then stayed hooked on for a couple of seasons until it migrated to Sky and we lost the will to believe it would ever reach a conclusion within either the suspension of disbelief or our natural lifetimes. We were only convinced to watch the new *Battlestar Galactica* after a succession of fan friends assured us that it was not only much better than the original [*I wholeheartedly back this opinion – Ed*] but, given that this was a rather low bar, actually genuinely good in its own right. The same thing applied to the new *Doctor Who* and, although I'm not sure overall that this is a good thing particularly when you consider that *Doctor Who* has clearly been a gateway drug to *Torchwood*, it has included several really good episodes in each of the three seasons so far, not all of which have even been written by Steven Moffat.

It was also because of the fannish community that I started to watch the SF TV show that had the biggest impact on me as an SF fan, on my overall viewing habits, and on my attitudes towards SF on TV. I'd made

the mistake I was to repeat over the years of letting an SF TV show get started without properly getting into it or keeping up with it (it was probably the first experience for me of this being the fault of work, in fact), and although a number of my friends were raving about it, I didn't want to come in halfway through the series and try to make sense of it – especially as it seemed to have a wide cast of characters and a number of different cultures and relationships to assimilate. In fact, for TV SF it sounded remarkably complex and intelligent, and I was really kicking myself for missing it. Fortunately I got ill, and while I was lying on the sofa recovering I had the opportunity to watch a friend's copies of the first season. Seeing episode after episode over a few days rather than the odd five minutes every few weeks proved to be the right way to experience television. You can, I'm sure, guess what happened next.

And over the next few years it got better. A lot of fans in Croydon were watching it too; we progressed from merely talking about it down the pub after it aired on TV to watching four or five episodes together when Jim came back from Manchester every month with a new video tape from his friend Keith, who had video recorders that could play NTSC tapes as well as PAL and, just as importantly, friends in the US. And there was a lot to talk about. Its influences came from history, legend, and SF – written SF, not just other TV shows, so it had a story that was spread out over the episodes as it would be over a novel or, rather, a series of novels. It looked like the future: as well as having really cool spaceships that looked like good SF art, CGI meant that the action wasn't all confined to sets that screamed of being part of a studio lot. It wasn't perfect – there are legitimate criticisms to be made of many of the aliens, some of the dialogue, and above all the enduring influence of the studio system that not only forced the story to be wrapped up, at speed, a season early but then decided that there should be a final season anyway despite there being little plot left – but it seemed like the point when SF television grew up.

So that's why, in fact, for me it really started with *Babylon 5*. It demonstrated to me that it would be both possible to catch up with *Buffy* and probably worth doing so; it opened up the shared experiences of communal viewing and of intensive discussion of plot developments and

story arc significance; it even prefigured with twentieth century technology what all the cool kids would be doing once we could get downloads; but, above all, it proved that science fiction on TV didn't have to be crap, or something to be embarrassed about watching. It proved, in fact, that science fiction on TV could be just as good as science fiction in books – something which I don't think is even an issue for John's generation [*I think it could be argued that the reverse is true - do people of my generation think that books are inferior to TV SF? Anyone care to argue the point in a LOC? – Ed*].

Doubtless at some point we'll work out this downloading thing for ourselves, and there will be yet another new beginning. But at the moment our DVD machine has broken – with a *Buffy* disk trapped inside it, which I'm trying not to think about – and so we've had to fall back on video. And, because Mark missed out on that whole fannish TV experience the first time around and because I realised a few months ago how much I want to see it again, we're watching *Babylon 5*. I'm still not embarrassed about it. And it still looks like the future.

## **Heroes: A Comic On TV.**

By Chris Garcia

*Heroes*. It's a TV show. Sometimes you have to remind people in comics fandom about that matter. The folks I work with on FanboyPlanet.com all have that issue. They recognise *Heroes* as a comic book without the spandex clad heroes (which would make it an Indy book, I guess). I don't. In fact, I don't much care for *Heroes*.

Why?

Because it can't hold a candle to the other two great TV shows that were really comic books: *The Greatest American Hero* and *Misfits of Science*.

Now, I can hear the young editor of this fine fanzine saying 'what the hell is this guy talking about?' when reading those two names [*Well, yes, because they're obscure and they're old – Ed*]. It is true, both of these shows were prior to the date of his birth, so you can't really blame

him. The early 1980s were a great time for television. There was an air of whimsy, and with VCR and Cable starting to slowly chip away at the audience share, just enough desperation to keep them coming up with interesting ideas. There's nothing like the clinging to hope of maintaining an audience to force entertaining TV onto the masses.

It was 1981 and I was an impressionable lad of six years. I had already learned that TV was good and that ABC television was the best in the world. To this day I'll put any ABC line-up from 1979 through 1984 up against any network's ever and still say ABC's was the best. Stephen J. Cannell, the guy who created *The Rockford Files*, was the mind behind the concept. While you can say a lot of things about Cannell shows, they all feature a huge level of character. Plot may take a hit here and there, but you'll always get entertaining character stuff from these guys.

It was your basic Green Lantern-style origin story. William Katt's character teaches hard-up youth and after a school bus breaks down in the desert while he's taking them on a field trip, he gets to steppin' through the dark and desolate Earth. He meets some aliens who give him a super suit. That's all it takes. It basically turns him into Superman, more or less. He even has some mind-reading (or maybe it's mind-control).

The best part was he was a bumbling fool trying to use the suit for the greater good. I can remember going to a con at the time it was out (Westercon in Sacramento?) and folks were mocking it with my Dad. I thought it was genius. Later, when I was talking with a bunch of folks in the early part of this Century (let's call it the Chris for TAFF Century [*Did I mention that all my readers should be voting Chris for TAFF? – Ed*]) I brought it up and no one who was older than me had any appreciation for the show. I bought the DVD set for Evelyn, who was exactly the same age as I was when I first saw the show, and she was excited once she watched it. She went around for the next week in her pyjamas saying that it was her super suit. Luckily, she didn't try to fly.

Now, there was no real *Greatest American Hero* comic. It was created out of the mind of a TV writer. Folks complained that they had stolen

the comic book ideal and then made it into a TV show for the average home viewer. They complained that it was watered-down and weak for the masses. But it worked for those of us who could still muster a bit of that famous sense of wonder. I never would have recognised that was the fact since I grew into a sarcastic media worshipping bastard, but Evelyn, as she always seems to do, brought me to the Truth. It was a show for adults, but now it's really a show for kids.

And then it went away. There were a few other comic book moments in those days, but they all dealt with real comics. They did a *Human Target* TV series and that was a bust, but when 1986 came about, there was a great series called *Misfits of Science*.

You see, an original creation in the style of comic books will always beat out adaptations. Without a measuring stick to live up to, you've got free reign to enjoy it without trying to pick it apart. You can go into the story and not care that they didn't call it Crime Alley or whatever. *Misfits of Science* was a fun show about comic book characters who had never appeared in a comic book.

The story behind *Misfits of Science* is that there were super-powered people and they formed a team. One of them was a guy who couldn't come to a temperature above freezing or he'd die. That's why they had an Ice Cream Truck. The frozen guy was only in the Pilot, but he was on the cover of the VHS tape they sold of it, and so was one of the images I will always remember about the show. There was the required institute, in this case Humanidyne, and a bunch of whacky adventures. Before Courtney Cox was on *Friends* or in *Ace Ventura* but after her stint in the Bruce Springsteen video *Dancing in the Dark*, she was on *Misfits of Science* as a telekinetic.

The show was brilliant, but it also failed to catch on. It wasn't badly written for an eleven year old, but I can see that it was a little silly. They had everything from casting to script problems and the show only ran fourteen episodes. They've never released it on DVD and that's a crime. I'm hoping that we're only years away from all these old shows coming on to On-Demand.

Here's the thing: I don't like *Heroes* and I don't think I could possibly. Why? Because it's too real. That's right; too real! The thing about *The Greatest American Hero* and *Misfits of Science* is that they were cartoonish worlds, strange and foreign that these superheroes were living in. *Heroes* is our world and I can't stand it. I want that Superhero world, or something like it. In the greatest comic of the last decade, *Powers* by Brian Michael Bendis, we're given superheroes in a noir universe. In *Batman* from 1989, it's a world where post-modernism has taken hold. There's no real world in the worlds I love to experience in TV or movies. *Lost*, another show that I was slow to pick up on, wins with the contrast between the real world of the flashbacks (or forward, as it were) and the fantasy of the Island. I don't want the real world in my comic books.

And so there you have it. I'm against *Heroes*. I know it's a good show, and I watched the episode where LA fan and good pal of mine Todao Tomamatsu appears, but other than that, I'm just not interested. Now if the cheerleader chick got naked... [HELL YES. *This is why we should vote Chris for TAFF – the man's on the ball – Ed*]

## **Island Ahead!**

By Lee Lavell

Recently, when I received an email requesting an article on SFnal TV for this zine, John suggested that I write about *Firefly* (which I have never seen) or *Battlestar Galactica* (which I gave up watching after a couple of episodes, finding it boring as hell). So I started ruminating in my so-called mind as to what TV series I *could* write about.

I considered going back to the really really early days of TV science fiction but there I also came a cropper. This would have been in the early fifties and back in the days of few stations and “rabbit ears” antennae. There were three kiddie shows on at the time: *Captain Video*, *Space Patrol* and *Tom Corbett, Space Cadet*. Of the three, only *Space Patrol* was carried locally. It was awful and that's about all I can say about that. *Captain Video* I could once in a long while drag in with lots and lots of snow from an outside of town station (if weather conditions

were just right). I couldn't get it often enough for any continuity, but it did seem to have some decent writers such as Damon Knight. The one I really liked was *Tom Corbett, Space Cadet*. However, this wasn't through the television series, which occasionally showed up with almost impossible snow, but through its two other incarnations: a radio series and a book series. At the time Juanita Coulson (then Wellons), who was in the same boat as I, had our own private fan club for Roger Manning, one of Tom's sidekicks. At any rate, I couldn't write much about early television.

So, where to from there? John indicated that *Doctor Who* was taken, so that knocked that idea out. (I once wrote, just for myself, a long essay after the TV movie appeared concerning the relationship of *Doctor Who* to classical mythology. I have no idea what I did with that, anyway.)

Then it occurred to me that two of the series that I did watch had something in common: islands. So, here I go.

The first series I am going to write about may not have technically been on an island, but it might as well have been. The series is *The Prisoner* and it has been a cult favourite since it first appeared back in the late sixties. There has never been anything quite like it before or since. Although made in Britain, it appeared here in the US on Public Broadcasting Stations.

The arena of action for *The Prisoner* was The Village. This location may or may not have been on an island. It was in an isolated area with a lot of beachfront. It was filmed at the resort town of Portmeirion in Penrhyndeudraeth, North Wales. At first the place seems idyllic in nature but there is one drawback. Its inhabitants (save for the various keepers) are all political prisoners of some sort or other. It is into this environment that Our Hero is thrown. The limited series (of seventeen one hour stories) recounts his attempts to escape and also to resist the Keepers' attempts to learn why he resigned from the British Secret Service. This is, however, just a framework for a series of allegorical episodes reflecting the establishment of the times.

Much has been discussed as to exactly who The Prisoner was (since he was only referred to as Number Six), although it is really quite evident (though Patrick McGoochan denies it since he doesn't own the rights to the character) that he is John Drake of McGoochan's previous series, *Danger Man* (UK) or *Secret Agent* (USA). Even the chorus of that series' theme song ends with "They've given you a number and taken away your name."

I am making some assumptions that the readers of this have seen *The Prisoner*, and if you haven't, do so!

Although it isn't really important in the long run, much discussion has been engendered concerning the identity of Number One (considering the ending), what exactly The Village was in a realistic sense and what the hell did that damn bicycle have to do with everything. So saying, I shall present my own theories, not that they are really worth anything. (These may have been presented before but I don't follow the different internet things so they are original with me, if not original elsewhere.)

First, from the very beginning, with each opening, you are told that Number Six is Number One: "Who is Number One?" "You are (,) Number Six." So, in the end, we find that Number Six is Number One. What does this mean? Let me propose one solution. Drake has had a mental breakdown and has been committed. The Village represents the hospital in which he is a patient. All the Number Twos are doctors. "Rover", the large white balloon-like things that act as the guards of the island are interns, nurses, security and anyone else who wears uniforms. It is only when Drake recognises that it is he, himself, who is the root of his problems can he escape. Oh well, it's just an idea...

The important thing to note about the series is that it simply doesn't seem to get old. It can be subject to as many interpretations as one wants, despite what McGoochan intended in the beginning. It does what science fiction does when it is at its best: it makes one think.

*The Prisoner* was the first of only three SF TV series that I instantly became hooked on. The second was *Aeon Flux* which I was enchanted

with from the time she was nothing but an eyelash catching a fly. I shall eschew writing about that.

The third series I intend to discuss is *Lost*. Like the other two, from virtually the first few moments I became addicted, and have remain loyal through three seasons so far. A lot of people became disenchanted, thinking that the producer-writers didn't really know where they were going with the story. These people obviously have never watched soap operas.

The construction of *Lost* is the same. You have a general "book" with a beginning, various points in the middle which must be established, and an ending. The problem with *Lost* is that until very recently, they didn't know how long the series was going to last and therefore they have had to peddle in place in this middle part for far too long and it has slowed the series. Now, finally, they have managed to get the network to limit it to three more seasons of sixteen episodes each and they can get moving again, and move they seemingly did in last season's finale.

The premise of the show is simply that there was a plane crash on an unknown island with some survivors, some of whom we get to know quite well. The show is very character-oriented and most of the people have some or many flaws. Our heroine, Kate, for instance, is a murderess, Sayid is a tortured Iraqi torturer, Charlie is a drug addict, and Locke is a walking paraplegic. A lot of the characters have father issues.

The island itself has very strange properties. There are smoke monsters. People who are injured heal quickly and, like Locke, incurables are cured. On the other hand, women who conceive on the island are not only unable to carry their babies to term, but die themselves. And at the heart of the island is a very strange magnetic anomaly. A research group has been on the Island, most of whom have been killed off by internal strife.

The format of the show features flashbacks in the background of the various individuals before they crashed on the island. The final one for

the ending of season three was something different. I shall discuss that in a moment.

I am aware that those who have stuck with the series have been trying to explain it in various ways, such as it being that characters are in Purgatory. All these speculations have been rejected by the creators of the series. I haven't checked recently to see what anyone has been saying. Instead, I shall offer my own theories.

Up until recently I had considered the idea that all the characters were actually one person à la the film *Identity*. That is, they were parts of a person with alternate personalities and this was a kind of therapy to unite them. Thus, as each character came to terms with their own demons they "died."

However, with the recent season ender, I have begun to think in another way. The island has this strange magnetic anomaly. Who knows what it can do beside blow up or cause planes to crash. There have been some strange hints recently. The castaways have been told, when recently contacted by the outside, that the wreckage for their plane has been found and there were no survivors. Yet the wreckage and the survivors are on the island. When being rescued, they get word that the ones who are saving them are not the ones who first contacted them. The "flashbacks" for this finale turn out to be what some fans are calling "flash forwards" instead, happening after they have been rescued. But I am not so sure of that. Certainly something is entirely different. Someone has died, but we don't know who and none of the characters care. Jack and Kate are apart. Jack's father is alive and Jack's beard is not grizzled, which implies it is a flashback, but Jack and Kate did not know each other before the island and they certainly do here. What I am proposing is that this is neither a flashback nor a flash forward, but instead a flash sideways. What do I mean by that? Perhaps the "anomaly" has breached a rift between universes, and we are looking at one of those, perhaps one in which the former castaways are now existing. Maybe those black smoke things are probes from other universes that are inspecting the island, which may be a doorway between various existences.

Whatever, I am hooked on *Lost* and shall probably be until it concludes forty-eight episodes from now.

## **Battlestar Galactica: Old & New.**

By James Bacon

Back at the tail end of the 70s, Dad thought we should watch a new TV programme. We always got the TV listings from the local newsagent and it was Dad's job to see what would entertain us. He had already scored well a couple of times and to be honest he never put a foot wrong in recommending TV and movies. At first, I thought *Battlestar Galactica* was a movie and was rather impressed that this was to be a series.

The roguish Starbuck, who even I, at a young age, figured was dating two girls [*Why do I remain unsurprised by your observation, even at an early age? – Ed*], was brilliantly portrayed by Dirk Benedict. He struck a cool pose, drank, smoked and womanised and was a superb pilot with a healthy fear for his own skin which came across slightly cowardly – just the way you want your heroes – not perfect. Apollo was clean cut and parts were a bit lame but it was OK because there were always Cylons ready to attack. I watched every week and loved it, but then it just disappeared, and with no way of finding out why I started watching something else.

I met Richard Hatch ages ago, and he had some plan to bring back BSG. He is a clever man and obviously saw something to it. I suppose he would – it was what he had, he loved the whole thing, and I never really saw him in anything again. So when I heard of the release of a new miniseries, I was really impressed and got the DVD as quickly as I could. It was great, it was just fantastic and Olmos is such a cool Adama.

Now, fear no spoilers here [*unless, like me, you haven't seen the second season yet – Ed*]. I am well behind on BSG, still plodding my way through the second season, but even so, I take my time and enjoy the

series. I was so impressed with most of the military hardware and technology, the noise of the guns. People who know their science seem to appreciate Newton's laws and the reality of vacuum in space seems to be actually applied.

I got my brother and Stef to watch it and it was good. Then the first series came and it felt like ages afterwards, again, and it didn't disappoint. I have come to really enjoy it a lot, and although I am a little behind, I reckon I will love the series. It's got so much going for it so far, especially the whole way Cylons also come as skinjobs – that's inspired. I really thought that at some stage when they were looking to find out who the skinjobs were that the Voigt-Kampff machine would appear, either in response measuring machine or in just as a remark [*I admit that would have been a nice tie-in, and they have done a couple of other SF references, notably to Firefly but there may be others – Ed*].

So, I really like BSG. Just like with the previous series, I like Starbuck and Apollo. From word go the chemistry between these two characters is brilliant. Jamie Bamber is a good actor, and a nice chap. I happened to meet him, and he is much smaller than you would imagine, but he is very English and a real gent. I like Apollo and the various quandaries he is faced with in regard to constitutional issues between the government and the military – with his father in charge it all makes for a good story, and that's before we even remember Zak. I love the messiness of it.

As for Starbuck, she's not so much a mess as a full-on traffic incident. This girl has a similar problem to Heathrow, with a couple of tons of baggage out there on the runway being rained on. I just love her, I really do. I have always had a strange affinity with troubled girls, mostly without my prior knowledge – similar to how I don't advertise my oddness on my sleeve [*That's one hell of a comment hook – Ed*]. So, when Kara Thrace turns up, well, I just fall in love. She is so awesome, such a lads' girl, who fucks hard and fights harder. How couldn't you love that character? At the same time, one is left hoping that she finds her happiness, and if she isn't happy at the end of it all, I will be angry. I like her style, her quick mouth, dirty fingernails and

smart shiny eyes, and her anger is just superb. The story is going places that make my brain at least think a little.

So it was a stroke of luck when I got the chance to actually meet Kate Sackhoff, who plays Starbuck. Now she may be twenty-five, but she appears and dresses younger, although in a pair of heels and a skirt she just looks stunning. She is also a very clever person, beyond her years. I was working at an event where she was participating and ended up spending time both working with and just chatting to her after the events. In real life, she is not as tough as Starbuck, she is the embodiment of the sweet girl next door, well-mannered, relaxed and down-to-earth. I was impressed by her laugh and smile, there is a lot about the TV character that is also intrinsically her, yet all the character's violence, anger and past are, I think, the very antithesis of who she really is. She is a bloody good actress as well as everything else.

As soon as I met her, it was like I didn't care about Starbuck. Mentally for me the line was suddenly clear. This lady was not Starbuck, she can be when she wants to be, but she isn't. Sure, some things, like her tats and the way she gave up smoking, are common to both actress and character, but I immediately saw a distinction. To be honest, and it sounds terrible, I think Kate was perhaps just that bit more attractive – she is very beautiful and charismatic, and of course nicer than the slightly unfortunate Kara Thrace, who has been through the wars.

So, it was a nice weekend, I worked hard and spent a few hours chatting with her. I was polite and mannerly and mostly talked about books of course. I had a drink with her in the bar, as did many other people – she is, after all a famous actress.

She must have had some sort of effect I hadn't really noticed, but when she was leaving she spoke to me and the guys running the event. She gave me a cool signed picture and I gently kissed her on the cheek. There were some girls there who know me as Tartboy [*I know what you mean – Manwhore*] and they just pissed themselves laughing. One quickly explained to Kate, as only girls can, that I normally would never

be that restrained, and she looked at me. I perhaps was a little embarrassed and may have blushed. She asked if I was blushing, I said I was and she was impressed as the girls mentioned that I am normally the one who kisses every girl and is always up for a bear hug. She smiled more and was all pleased with herself, and I was a bit more uneasy, I suppose. So she turned and said, “Is he usually more like this?” She jumped up, wrapped a leg round me, threw her hands round me and gave me a huge hug and a big kiss on the cheek. I, obviously, smiled. Once she stopped all I could do was laugh – it was truly very sweet and I thanked her and she ran away, which was what should happen.

But then that’s because I fly a Viper, don’t I? [*You so need to lend me it if that’s true – Ed*] I have my own controls, my own cockpit, my own maintenance team and my own mission. At the end of the day I come home, and I know why I like Kate and Kara. I realise, after a late shift, as I throw my uniform onto the hook on the locker and I slide into bed, that I have my own Starbuck. My own, sweet, warrior. I will keep her happy and safe, that’s for sure. No combat, no sadness, no horrors, not for that girl, and definitely no Cylons, no sir.

## **Imagining The Future.**

By Max

I used to imagine a future where you’d walk up to a hole-in-the-wall like an ATM and download new software for a pocket computer. I saw it as something like the Nintendo Game Boy, but more fully featured. People scoffed when I suggested it, said that nobody would bring a wire and plug their machines into random hardware, they’d just keep discs off the shelf.

I also thought that one day we’d be able to turn on our televisions and connect to a central bank of video machines, watching the programme we’d chosen at our convenience, without all the hassle of remembering to set something to record, or having to look up times in some listings magazine. People told me that that one wouldn’t be worth the effort to implement.

I was half wrong, but half right, on both counts. We're now, finally, getting TV on demand, and we can download whatever software we want to right in our front rooms. It's not a television and a video recorder, but it's similar in principle. The Internet excited me from the start, and marked my initial interest in computers in their own right rather than as games machines or glorified word processors. I wanted an email address from the moment I heard about them and I had nobody at all to contact.

What I didn't fully understand was the potential. I saw a limited number of software titles, the UK output of television. What's out there dwarfs these concepts. From the haughty new BBC iPlayer, to dodgy back street encodings of ancient video tapes, most things you want are out there to be downloaded if you know where to look, though not necessarily legally. Not only that, but talent is emerging in a new way as people produce their own content and upload it to the likes of YouTube.

We're changing the world, this way. Some stars are no longer talent spotted and honed, they might be known for singing along to a favourite band in an amusing way, or ranting evocatively on a regular basis. More than this, though, we plebs are being heard in ways that matter by the big entertainment companies and we're getting global release dates. The premature obituaries and tales of doom surround the music industry, but there's an equally active pirating game going on with video at its centre. This means that when the new episode of *Lost* or *Heroes* comes out, within hours it's gone global. Similarly, big movies are making it to the net, sometimes before their official release date. The studios are being forced to react and so when huge releases like *Harry Potter* or *The Lord of the Rings* go out, they have simultaneous worldwide releases. It seems insignificant – a few hours of entertainment with a few months' avoided delay – but it's the lifeblood of some global communities and it's exactly what kids are growing up with access to.

Shared entertainment is a stepping stone to that old 'global village' and it's a clear example, an easily examined slice, of broken borders and a different future. In the modern wealthy world if you want to find likeminded people, you just do. There are no barriers like slow

communication methods nor even not knowing where to look – everyone’s out there looking right along with you with screens and keyboards poised to interact.

Just as the world of entertainment is levelling out, everything else will follow. How fast? In what shape? We can't tell. All we can do is guess and our guesses will be as inaccurate as the idea of connecting to the internet via an ATM for a new game of *Tetris*.

## Letters of Comment.

**Claire Brialey, co-editor of *Banana Wings*, writes:**

*[Just before we get to the letter, Claire had hyperlinked, in her original LOC, what I can only assume are phrases she thought I needed extra help with. I may be young, but I have heard of the moon landings, the Space Shuttle Challenger accident that marked the first time NASA lost astronauts in space, and that little thing called the Berlin Wall (something to do with David Hasselhoff, wasn't it, that?) – Ed]*

I've been meaning to write to you for well over a year now, since I read your first issue and felt a rush of recognition. Actually I should feel probably more like the Ghost Of Fandom Yet To Come, and a dreadful warning to you and other teenaged SF fans about what it's going to feel like in about twenty years' time (those looking for a different sort of role model may be reassured by contemplating people like Flick or Pepper, who were about 15 when we first met them about a dozen years ago, or differently alarmed by the prospect of turning into James Bacon. But don't relax, because they've all got some more ageing to do yet too).

As I've written about too often in other fanzines – to the extent of being rather startled to find myself being referenced by Jerry Kaufman in your letter column in #3 – I got into fandom through ZZ9 as well. In my case it's all the fault of my school friend Corinne, who had joined the club when she was 13 and started corresponding regularly with all sorts of

unsuitable people like Wag (now, of course, both of them are semi-respectable members of society and responsible for offspring, although Corinne did have to emigrate to achieve this status). After being a member for over a year I decided that at the age of 16 it was time I had a proper social life and went off to London to seek ~~my fortune~~ a ZZ9 pub meeting. It all went on from there.

So I, too, had a number of years enjoying myself by making people feel very old, explaining when I was born relative to their cherished memories and reminding them what age I actually was – which, as you’ve probably found out already, is particularly good fun after you’ve been around for a few years so that people have forgotten exactly when it was you first appeared in fandom and have therefore mentally edited you into the average fannish age group, despite all fresh-faced appearances to the contrary. For me the obvious cut-off point to mention to SF fans was always the first moon landing, which happened nearly a year before I was born; I don’t know if you have a regular equivalent, although I noticed that in #3 you were able to make a perfectly legitimate reference to the original *XIII* comics being published before you were born, and I’ve done the same thing in my article. I was interested to find that it does make me twitch a bit to relate your age to the real world and realise that you were born more than two years after the space shuttle Challenger blew apart and about a year before the fall of the Berlin wall.

Only after a while it gets old, and unfortunately I hadn’t yet. The downside of starting out in fandom when you’re young is that people do sometimes remember, and pre-empt you by saying ‘You won’t remember this’ or ‘You weren’t there, of course; you weren’t even born probably’; or get all middle-aged and assume that you haven’t got enough experience or knowledge or sense to do things that were your idea in the first place. And then you might find yourself looking around for younger people to whom you can point and indicate that they are younger than you and thus almost make you feel old; this achieves a double whammy of making you seem experienced and worthy of respect while also making everyone else feel Very Old Indeed – which we are, of course – since you will be manifestly still youthful and vibrant.

I will now demonstrate my old-fartiness overtly by criticising your letters column, where you don't mention at the beginning of a letter who has written it, and I therefore have no idea whose voice I should be hearing as I read it. I know I can flick ahead to check, but it's an interruption to my reading; it's even more difficult in the online version since I can't hold my place... It think it's probably also a further demonstration that I'm an old fart that I find it odd that you don't provide contact information (either postal or email) for any of your correspondents or contributors, although where they have LiveJournals you do include their LJ identities. I'm happy to have my full name, and indeed the email address in the letterhead above, used in both print and online versions of your fanzine – as I've just written in a fanzine article myself, my name is already all over the internet in a fannish context so it's far too late to shut that particular stable door – but please don't associate our specific LJ handle with my name.

To return to your first issue, I should perhaps mention my own favourite Lucifer references which, like quite a few of the things I quote, come from Christopher Marlowe: in this case *Doctor Faustus*, in an early scene where the devil Mephostophilis is telling Faustus about hell. Lucifer eventually appears as a character in *Doctor Faustus*, as do Beelzebub and a variety of unnamed devils. Mephostophilis describes Lucifer as 'Arch-regent and commander of all spirits' and explains what happened to him.

Faustus:           Was not that Lucifer an angel once?  
Mephostophilis: Yes, Faustus, and most dearly lov'd of God.  
Faustus:           How comes it then that he is prince of devils?  
Mephostophilis: O, by aspiring pride and insolence,  
                          For which God threw him from the face of Heaven.  
Faustus:           And what are you that live with Lucifer?  
Mephostophilis: Unhappy spirits that fell with Lucifer,  
                          Conspir'd against our God with Lucifer,  
                          And are forever damn'd with Lucifer.

Except, of course, Mephostophilis is an intrinsically unreliable witness – although the power in this scene may partly come from the fact that he’s telling the truth, knowing that it’s no risk to do so since Faustus is predisposed to find it all glamorous rather than sobering. As you may know, during Marlowe’s lifetime he was accused of both Catholicism and atheism; the latter reputation is the one that has stuck, but whatever his own beliefs he was clearly a man who knew his Biblical references and other associated stories.

I’m not going to say anything about the length of James Bacon’s contributions to your fanzine because (a) people in glass houses shouldn’t wander around with no clothes on if they look like me and (b) neither you nor James need another feed line for cheap innuendo. Although I’ll forgive quite a bit in exchange for James’s run-on sentence in #3, ‘I was a teenager, we get annoyed when we’re having lots of puberty.’ And ‘lots of puberty’, or at least its aftermath, initially seemed like a fairly good summary of #2, although I appreciated the honesty of your contributors; I was amused by your iPhone lust article and also by Max’s liaison application form – although I can see that could serve a very practical purpose and I’d be interested to know if anyone has put it to good use yet. This may indicate it should have a question asking about whether the person/people concerned intend to (or can be prevented from) publicising any resultant liaison on their LJ, in their fanzine, on Facebook, during the rest of the convention etc...

Thanks for *Procrastinations*. I’ve enjoyed reading it – which I hope you can tell, since I’ve responded – and I hope you retain the time, energy, and fannish enthusiasm to continue the fanzine when you’re at university (on which congratulations, by the way).

Best wishes,  
Claire Brialey (banana@fishlifter.demon.co.uk).

*Thank you for writing, and first of all let me just say that I’m glad you enjoyed the first three issues of my humble little fanzine. It means a lot that such an eminent figure in the world of zine fandom has decided to write an article and LOC to me, who was naïve enough to be surprised*

*when I got my first LOC, over a year ago, and then made the genius move of producing what is, by all accounts, a rather crap letters column. It's now changed, but I'm still willing to take suggestions on how to improve it further.*

*I have included your e-mail address, and I've also included e-mail addresses for all those people who have written and who have penned articles, in this issue, to see what the reaction is. As I no longer have my LiveJournal handle in the issue, or not in the main contact details, I figure there's no harm in experimentation (but remember, kids, hard drugs are bad for you!).*

*Following that, it may be true to say that the reason I've heard of the Challenger incident is because I'm absolutely and completely obsessed with space travel. I'm unsure how many other fans my age would have heard of it, but since there's only one, I'll ask her next time I speak to her!*

*The rather long article by James Bacon in Issue Three, which has been remarked upon by more than one person, was due to two factors – firstly, I thought it was a good article, even if it was rather epic, and secondly, I was editing it in a rush on a Sunday afternoon and didn't really want to have to decide which bits to take out. Issue Two was edited at a more leisurely pace and thus I was able to trim the contribution for that one, but the full version has been made available on my website, because I enjoyed it, I just wanted to trim some of the parts that were digressions. Having said that, a couple of conversations I've had at recent parties and cons have identified you as being the Supreme Editor of James Bacon, so I bow to your superiority in this respect.*

*And, finally, the application form. The suggestion you raise about post-event journalism is an interesting one and you should talk to Max about updating the online version of the form to reflect that. I want to see the form included in Eastercon membership packs, damnit!*

*The Editor.*

**Chris Garcia, TAFF hopeful and (co-)editor of *Science Fiction/San Francisco*, *The Drink Tank* and *PrintZine* writes:**

So, a number of things have renewed my faith in the future of fanzine fandom. *Consonant Enigma*, a fine and very pretty zine from my neck of the woods, did it soundly a couple of weeks ago, but it was reading iPhone [*The leading article in Issue Two – Ed*] that really made my day.

You, you bastard, might be what saves us all!

I got the hard copy, and having skimmed it previously, I decided that I should sit down and go cover to cover. I read that first article on the iPhone and I realised that it was the type of thing that I love to read. There are a lot of zines out there and that one article made me laugh harder than any of the other zines. Maybe it was my own lust for the beast that I will never be able to afford, or it might have been the hilarious threesome supposition, but it was great stuff. I got to the BASFA meeting and shoved it into my darling Linda's face.

“You have to read this,” I said.

She did and she laughed like I did. Obviously great stuff. And you're what, eighteen? That's just not fair...

Anyhow, James article was interesting and sorta flowed together with Max's in a strange way. I had never had a con fling until the recent disaster that was known as Con-X-Treme (they were expecting 1100 or so and got 60 total attendees). It was a fun time and it made me appreciate the idea of such a thing, but it's not something I'd ever consider doing again. I'm much happier with a steady. Luckily, the lady of my eye is a fan too and we've got rooms for various cons already.

I'm not an atheist, so I'm a terrible judge of these things, but I'm also not religious (though I call myself Jewesque). I didn't want to wait until marriage because I was a big dumb male who thought more with his crotch than his brain. Would I have waited? Naw. It was fun, I was deeply in love with the young lady and we had a very good time. She

was a delight in the sack, and I had skills then!, but mostly it was a closeness that I can't really describe. Ever since those initial wonders, I've had to have a very strong connection with any woman that I sleep with. I'm not one for one night stands of a deeply sexual nature.

And so I sign off with the knowledge that fanzine fandom has another good one out there. Keep it up...and pun was only half-intended...

Chris Garcia (garcia@computerhistory.org).

*Chris, you are one of these people that makes me feel very, very good about the world, purely because you always say very nice things (I remember your recent LJ entry about my fanzine that described me as a 'star'). This is why, everybody else who's reading, you should **VOTE CHRIS GARCIA FOR TAFF!** Ahem.*

*Consonant Enigma, eh? Well, the last recommendation you gave me was From Alien Shores by Jack Avery and that turned out to be a very good read, so maybe I'll try to set up some sort of trade with the editor of this one. I'll have to look on eFanzines.com and see if I can spy any contact details and run off a couple of zines to send in trade.*

*I assuming that 'my darling Linda' and 'the lady of my eye' are one and the same person, so congratulations, you sly old dog, you! Will she be making a tour when you win TAFF? I must confess that I may, possibly, have had a couple of instances at conventions this year (and I've only ever attended three cons in my life), but I know what you mean about having a girlfriend as opposed to a string of encounters.*

*Con-X-Treme sounds like an... interesting experience. I hope you had fun. Is there a con report to be had?*

*I hadn't realised that James' article and Max's article went well together (I can now, of course, see exactly what you mean) – I should really have placed the article on atheism at the end, before the closing remarks, but I didn't think of that at the time. At any rate, I'm happy*

*you spotted it, because maybe it works even though I put them the wrong way around!*

*The Editor.*

**Lloyd Penney writes:**

It's taken some time, but I am catching up with what's in my inbox. Here's comments on *Procrastinations Three*.

You're another victim of the Great Fannish Article Shortage. It must be bad... fan editors are even taking articles and reviews from *me*. *XIII* might be likened to *24*, the Kiefer Sutherland series. I do not watch it, but it sounds like these numerically-named properties might be much alike. Coincidence? I think not...

Hi, Chris! Yvonne and I have been happy uncles and aunts, but already, the kids have grown up. My younger niece, Nicole, is almost 30, had a kid, and is separated from her second husband. You don't know how old that makes me feel. I am a great-uncle, and I turn 48 in about two weeks. H.P. Lovesalot? Now there's a cartoon series right there. Plush Cthulhu will makes appearances regularly, and will hug you and teach you valuable life skills before eating your brains...

Wonder who the big, tall, gay Canadian was? Yvonne and I are old friends of Peter Morwood and Diane Duane, and last time we saw them was literally at the tail end of Torcon 3, the Toronto Worldcon. So many writers of both SF and comics are fanboys at heart, so I think they were thrilled to be the fanboy at one point, and now they are thrilled to be the old pros for the current fanboys.

An idea I've had, and maybe I can throw it at Chris Garcia, seeing he has the time and enthusiasm...a fannish directory of bloggers. You and I, John, seem to be among the exceptions when it comes to pseudonyms for LiveJournal. So many others, I don't know their LJ handles, so I might never discover them. As you can see, I dropped my WINOLJ

status, and you can see how it was dropped with a thud. Check it out and you'll see that I use my LJ account as an archive for my LOCs. One question... do you have a font that allows you to set the LJ characters? If I could do that...

I think I'm done...thanks for this issue, and I look forward to Issue Four. And, to Issue Two as well, whenever it sees the light of day. See you then!

Yours,  
Lloyd Penney (penneys@allstream.net).

*Thanks for the LOC, Lloyd. I don't mind that it took a while, I don't publish fanzines on any sort of (sane) schedule so I don't really expect LOCs to come in on any either, I'll just print what I'm given as I'm given it.*

*I don't think that there is any shame whatsoever in soliciting content from a fan who quite obviously keeps well up-to-date with the current state of fanzines. Your LOCs are, whenever I see them in other zines or on your LiveJournal, well written and elucidating. However, I'd argue that there isn't really an article shortage, just a perception of an article shortage. If you ask enough fans, at least one of them is bound to want to write you an article of some description. Maybe. I seem to have been lucky with content so far though!*

*The idea for the cartoon series is brilliant, and when I take over the world, I will make sure that someone produces it. Damn straight. With regards to the big gay Canadian man, I recommend placing an advert asking for him to step forward. Suggestions for the wording should be sent to the Editor using the details at the top of the page.*

*I think that a useful directory of LiveJournal handles would be useful, which is why whenever someone writes me something I make sure to include their LiveJournal handle, partly so that people have a place to go if they want to read more and also so that if people have seen that handle on LiveJournal they know who's writing. I got told off for this at*

*Contemplation, the last Eastercon, by a drunken man, but I ignored him. It was fine. When it comes to producing the little 'LJ man' next to people's handles, I just scaled down the image and then imported it into Word. It's useful but annoying – Word keeps wanting to make it into a bullet-pointed list, which isn't what I want it to do!*

*Issue Two has been published, now, and I eagerly await your LOC on its contents. I was quite happy with the way it came out.*

*The Editor.*

**John Purcell, editor of *In A Prior Lifetime* and *Askance*, writes:**

This time I am not going to put off writing this LOC mainly because I don't want to miss out on receiving the second issue, whenever the heck that is pubbed.

John – geez, sounds like I'm writing a LOC to myself! – putting out a follow-up issue is a good sign that you're going to be around fanzine fandom for a fair amount of time. I certainly hope that we old pharts don't scare you off. However, I do have some suggestions for you.

The first one is that you shouldn't be afraid to comment at the end of each LOC. Some of us – Chris Garcia and myself are two of the biggest culprits in this regard – insert comments *inside* the LOC, in addition to comments made at the end of that LOC. This is, as I am sure you have discovered, a long, time-honoured fanzine tradition, and so I encourage you to do so. It is all part of the fannish communication network, the dialog that we slosh along from zine to zine, issue to issue, con to con. Fans love to natter to each other. Do not be afraid to join in. More than likely, we will welcome you with open arms. Or – in this modern age – open keyboards.

I really enjoyed Chris Garcia's article about his little buddy Evelyn and her stuffed Cthulhu toy. Only in fandom. I have to admit, Chris's mother is definitely spoiling her grandchild in the right direction. Some year,

Evelyn is going to produce something really interesting. Can you imagine her writing an article about having Chris Garcia as your babysitter? Either she is going to grow up with one helluva complex, or she's going to be truly hilarious company. Keep us abreast of her development, Chris.

James Bacon's article about his development as a comics fan was very interesting. Unfortunately, I am not much of a comics fan anymore. My years of collecting comics were in the mid-60s and then again the late 70s, so the comics that James talks about are beyond my ken. Even so, his ability as a fan writer shines through in this article. I still enjoyed reading it, and that's the mark of a good fan writer.

Great LOC section. Like I said before, don't be afraid to comment on each LOC. Keep the dialog going, young man. We old pharts are out here listening and enjoying.

All the best,  
John Purcell (j\_purcell54@yahoo.com).

*I'm glad to know that your desire to receive the zine prompted you to send your LOC out quickly, but I'm unsure whether you did it out of a sense of completeness or because you enjoyed reading it! But seriously, I'm glad to hear that you're enjoying this humble fanzine, and even more glad to hear that you think I'm going to be around for a while. I'd certainly like to think so.*

*On the subject of the LOCs, as you can see, I've started responding to them! Writing comments in amongst the letters would feel a bit too much like Usenet for my tastes (maybe when I pub an ish that's written in Courier New and dressed up like a newsgroup... I could call it alt.fanzines.procrastinations!) but I've definitely made a mistake in not responding to the LOCs I received for Issue One. If I ever get around to writing responses I'll include a note in an issue as to how to read them – the advantage with having HTML versions of Procrastinations available on my website is that I can alter them from the original copies.*

*I liked Chris' article on the stuffed Cthulhu as well (my spell-checker corrected that to the right spelling for me – I've got it well-trained). It is very funny but also slightly worrying that the Old Ones are corrupting the young in such a brazen way! I must confess that I've never read anything written by Lovecraft – my total exposure to his world is Neil Gaiman's short story in Smoke and Mirrors and a roleplaying session a couple of years ago. I should really get around to playing some catch up.*

*James Bacon's enthusiasm for a subject can often be very infectious, which is why I enjoy soliciting content from him for my fanzines. I must confess that I've never watched The Dresden Files, not having the Sci-Fi channel. The article in Issue Three and your LOC are the only two places I've seen it mentioned – is there anyone else out there watching this that has an opinion? Not even LiveJournal seems able to provide one!*

*I hope you prefer this LOC column to the last one, and I'm happy to know that you're following the zine!*

*The Editor.*

We also heard from **Lee Lavell** (leelavell@comcast.net), **Eric Mayer** (maywrite2@epix.net) as well as **Lloyd Penney** and **John Purcell**, both of whom wrote in twice. Unless everything's gone very horribly wrong, the full compilation of letters and my responses should be available at <http://www.chickensin envelopes.net/zines/procrastinations/04.html>.

## Closing Remarks.

So, this is the end of the fourth issue, and probably the last issue produced until next year. Considering that the gap between the first issue and the next published was actually eight months, having published three issues in a year is a bit of a novelty. Perhaps next year I'll have something to distribute at every con I attend! (Or, then again, perhaps I'll just reprint the previous issue...)

This is a good place to mention Chris Garcia's TAFF bid for the last time. Please vote for him. I can't think of anything else to say that I haven't already said on that subject, so just vote for him. That's all.

On the subject of the articles I've got in this issue, I am hoping that there's a noticeable theme, and it should've been television. If you noticed, give yourself a pat on the back. And also, a noticeable theme is getting people who are very big in fanzine fandom to write me articles – Chris Garcia and Claire Brialey and Flick are all involved in fanzines in a big way.

I would like to thank everybody who wrote to me or wrote stuff for me, but two very important people in this issue were Steve Green and Max – Steve promised me an article on *Heroes* but his laptop died and hasn't recovered at the time of writing. As a result, he was unable to send me the article, which was 80% done. Max very kindly wrote a replacement article in its stead within the space of about three hours which was brilliant and meant that this issue actually runs to the anticipated length.

See you all next issue, I hope!

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