



VIBRATOR 2.0.3

This could well be the third issue of the new-look VIBRATOR (“The new focal point fanzine” – Andy Hooper). Dive into its murky waters, thrash about a bit, come to the surface and gulp for air, then go down again, investigate that small piece of kelp being nibbled by a fish that strangely resembles your Aunt Peg. Adjust your goggles, give a kick with your flippers, groan as your chest tightens with an imminent heart attack, head for the sandy shore, and lay prostrate under the noon-day sun. Don’t wait for a sultry maid to come up and rub you all over with sun-tan lotion. It won’t happen. Look up at the seagulls wheeling overhead. Splat! Oops, sorry about that, borrow this tissue. Soon a man will come along and try to sell you real estate or at least a new pair of swimming trunks and a snorkel, or perhaps a piece of metal formed by sintering. He will be called Peter Weston and you should listen carefully to everything he says, for he is truly a God who moves amongst us, albeit in a strange shambling way because his plimsolls don’t fit. Should you recover sufficiently from all this trauma to want to write a letter to the editor you could try contacting him at graham@cartiledgeworld.co.uk. This issue was produced sometime in April 2014.

THAT’S WHAT ROBERT LICHTMAN DID, SO WE’LL KICK OFF WITH HIS LOC

Thanks for sending *Vibrator* 2.0.2, which was much harder to read than the previous one because the copying is Very Faint. Were they all like that? It reminded me of my own dittoed fanzines of the ‘60s, which I ran off on my own, rather lame machine which I bought for a whopping \$7 in 1960 from a fellow fan. It had an interesting print cycle: first 30-35 copies *great*, next 40-50 copies acceptable, and then a great fade-off. Fortunately, except for the final issue of my first genzine, *Psi-Phi*, this wasn’t a problem because my print runs (for my apazines) topped out just once much above 110—and distribution was calibrated according to print quality: the best copies to contributors of articles and artwork and the Most Important BNFs (a little redundancy there), next best to LoC writers and people with whom I traded fanzines, and then the worst copies in descending order of legibility to people who were on my mailing list because they were active fans but not necessarily beloved by me or others. I guess this reflected the “meritocracy” fandom proclaims itself to be. For my part, when I started another genzine in 1963 I arranged to have it mimeographed so that this sorting wasn’t necessary.

For me Rossgate was something that happened in passing on the e-lists, nothing that affected me personally. I’m not coming to London for the worldcon, I know Farah Mendelsohn only as a name-with-attitudes-attached, and Seanan McGuire I’d never heard of previously. Since all the participants in the tussle posted under easily-recognizable subject headings, it was easy to go through the day’s postings and delete nearly everything unread after a while—saving only a few to read from people with cooler heads who provided information on how the fight was going. It made me once again happy that I’m not involved in any up-close way with the people who are Serious About Conrunning, and I was glad to see it eventually fade away.

Love your riff about the 1:1 map!

Apparently in his dotage Joseph Nicholas has lost the ability to suss out issue numbers. It was clear to me when the previous issue arrived that 2.0 was a riff on Webcrap, and the 1 that followed indicated the first release. If one thinks of it as a 21st century equivalent to the older “volume” and “issue number,” it works perfectly.

That aside, I think I’ll pass over his comments about your remarks in the first issue about Andy Hooper and his

attempt to improve on the unimprovable, i.e., Arnie Katz's fan chronology table in *Fanstuff*, which in turn was an attempt to get past the "numbered fandom" syndrome that has plagued some of us since Jack Speer's invention of it in the first *Fancyclopedia* in 1944 and Bob Silverberg's later supplement in an issue of *Quandry* circa 1951 or 1952. I think there was some validity to the concept back in those days, when fandom was much smaller and more fanzine-oriented (that is, just about everything was recorded in fanzines), and thus easier to quantify. It's been pretty useless since at least the '70s except as a means to delineate movement in the Our Part Of Fandom circle, since otherwise fandom exploded and atomized into bunches of sub-fandoms and could no longer be neatly summarized. Because I've been around for a lot of it and read up in detail about the parts that I missed (the thirty years before I got involved), I can understand discussions of fan history; but there are other things I'd rather talk and write about if and when fan history discussion becomes obsessional. Alternatively, I can just leave the room.

Well, I didn't exactly pass over them, did I? In what Joseph wrote, I resonated most with his pointing out "the central, unavoidable ideological error which attends all attempts to construct inclusive chronologies: the pretense that what is happening in one location, amongst one group of people, is replicated and shared by others elsewhere." I wasn't around in 1975 when Arnie proclaimed the "Trufannish Rebellion," but I'd be willing to speculate that I wouldn't have been part of it.

"Don't Rock the Boat" made me consider, as I suppose was your intent, how good I am at arguing. I think that to some extent it depends on who it is I'm arguing with, how hot the subject of the argument, and how invested I am in my point of view. I'm at my best when I'm discussing something with a friend of long standing—where we know each other's long-held positions on various subjects including the one under discussion and can both in reasonably polite fashion present our points of view on whatever precipitated our argument in hopes but without attachment of moving the other's position to whatever extent possible in whatever direction possible. One friend, an old-time fan, is a staunch climate change denier, and it could get hot between us except that neither of us wants to destroy the friendship over something that's not central to it. We make our points, parry around a bit, and then let it go until the next time. I can't say I'm always that good—sometimes the person on the other end/side turns out to be unmoving, sometimes it's me.

Murray Moore holds the view that although he may live to 90, he may not be able to see by then. He bases this on his father's and mother-in-law's experiences in not being able to see well enough to safely drive. I think that's an over-generalization—that the experiences of family members older than you is no indication of your own. (Especially in the case of the mother-in-law, where there's no blood relation.) In discussions such as this, I'm always reminded of Elinor Busby's constant amazement (as she writes in her apazines) that although most members of her family died young, she's 89 going on 90, still in good health, and judging from her writing in her several apazines, still of sound mind. Since I've always liked Elinor and her writing, I'm glad about this.

As for there being no "dislike" button on Facebook, when I'm faced with something there for which "like" is totally wrong and I feel I *must* express something, I'm not above posting a short comment of disapproval. Occasionally this has led others to "like" my comment.

"Hands up anyone who owns a monkey." Not me, but back in the '60s the couple who gave me my first peyote trip owned one—not at the time of my trip, but later when they moved to San Francisco from Los Angeles and set up house in a rather large Victorian flat that turned out soon enough to be on the inner edge of the Haight-Ashbury scene as it developed. It was a small, wiry creature, female, that had a whole range of activity. Rather like a cat, it would sometimes come up and sit on my lap when I visited. It didn't smell or bite or piss on me, so I rather liked it. And when I would get high after smoking one of the terrific joints that were a feature of those visits, we would "eye vibe" in a most satisfying way.

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ON THIS DAY IN HISTORY

On this Day in History, in 1741, Miguel Tosca Porres, an itinerant lemon picker from a small village in Spain, which I can't be bothered to Google, taught frogs how to dance. This took him several years because the frogs kept inexplicably dying, and being served up on his plate for lunch. So perhaps we should be talking about 1743 or possibly 1734. Eventually a frog called Giuseppe managed to do a passable Pasa Doble, thus ensuring his trainer's place in the history books.

JOHN NIELSEN HALL ACCUSED ME OF NEVER PUBLISHING LOCS. SO NOW HE CAN EAT HIS OWN WORDS

An entertaining and surprising issue, I thought. Entertaining is something I doubt you could ever fail to be, and surprising because, as indicated by my last LoC, I never thought to see a second issue of this new revitalised fanzine with the old obsolete buzzer on the front.

I thought your remarks, if I may call them at that, on the subject of argument required response, even though I think you let your typing fingers get ahead of your brain in the formulation of them:

There is arguing and there is debating. Debating need not be confrontational, but arguing, by its nature, often is. Moreover, arguing is very seldom about matters that require critical tools, but much more likely to be about two sides of one coin, one often irreconcilable difference between the two positions, no advance to be made by either side, but despite that an escalation of volume and intemperate expression is still resorted to. If one is a lawyer, arguing in court, the matter upon which your arguments devolve are finally decided by a judge and/or jury. In most arguments you come across there is nobody to fill that role. Small wonder then that some people, among whom I broadly number myself, would prefer to avoid arguments, not solely out of a desire for a quiet life or to avoid rocking the boat, as you put it, but also to avoid saying things that ever after they will wish they had not said, because those angry and intemperate words offended and disappointed, and changed absolutely nothing.

Debating, however, is a different matter, and in a formal debate, there will be a vote, giving a decision, and then everyone can move on. Some arguments can never be moved on from, and it is better, at my time of life at least, to keep moving.

Peace & Love,

John Nielsen-Hall can be found at johnsila32@gmail.com

GARDENING NOTES

Spring has sprung, a bit like Zebadee in Magic Roundabout. Time to put on your corduroy trousers and that comfy jacket with the leather elbow patches and go out into the garden, take a deep breath, sniff the air, or at least the fumes from kebabs cooking door, get out your trusty trowel, ask yourself if you have lost your mind, and go back indoors to watch TV, after all, you are missing Gardeners World. The London Open Gardens season is currently underway. I turned up a booklet listing all the gardens which are open to the public. We're not talking huge stately estate gardens here but mainly local, small-scale residential gardens. They usually have brief but glowing descriptions along these lines:

"An unexpected primeval grove lies behind a traditional Victorian facade offering a host of delights. The dramatic heart of this surprising and totally original garden consists of a grove of 25 tall tree ferns clustered on a carpet of

lush, low-level ground cover and surrounded by a host of exotic and dramatic large-leaved plants. A labour of love - and watering! Featured in Garden News. Access is via a side gate with one step.”

I wondered how our own entry might read if we joined the scheme:

“A tiny, untidy patch, overlooked by unkempt and unproductive trees and shrubs and visited by every cat in the neighbourhood. A small lawn with unsightly patches of clover. Various pots mingle with general garden debris, old bricks, slates, and such-like. Two robust plastic dustbins contain compost. At the end a crudely paved area is surrounded by borders with an ill-assorted variety of largely colourless planting. In one corner is a pussy-cat graveyard. Several hanging bird feeders are on prominent display but do not be worried that you will ever be disturbed by birds actually using them Admission £3.50. Tea and home-made bread.’

Actually the garden is largely Pat’s domain, although Daniel has been persuaded to occasionally help out by cutting down trees and mowing the lawn.

AMOEBA RECORDS, SAN FRANCISCO

(EDITOR: Whenever I go to San Francisco, which I seem to manage to do quite often, a toddle up Haight-Ashbury to Amoeba Records is always on my itinerary. I think the place used to be a bowling alley, but it is now given over to a selection of largely second-hand cds and vinyl (plus an annexe for videos if that is your bag. Being a Limey I am usually on the look out for obscure UK cds and vinyl and these are well-represented in Amoeba, far more so than in any UK store I have ever come across. Of course the idea of an old bowling alley totally given over to largely second hand music would be a non-starter in the UK, and I sometimes wonder how it survives in a place like San Francisco. Here my old buddy RICH COAD gives an account of his latest visit to this holy site)

Parking in the neighborhood of Amoeba Records on Haight Street is not easy to come by. I had circled the block a few times and was about to give up when I spotted a space on the opposite side of Page Street, the street I had just turned on to from Stanyan. Three cars were travelling west on Page, towards the space, and were too close for me to cut in front of them. I had to watch them go by with a gnawing feeling in the pit of my stomach that my space - MY space, dammit, I had spotted it first! - was about to be stolen. But sometimes karma is good and the cars all passed the empty 16 feet of curb without a second glance. I made my three point turn and pulled up beside the carless chasm. Now my car is about 15 feet long; the space was perhaps 16 feet long. Once upon a time, when I lived in San Francisco, this would have been no challenge at all; but after 8 years of suburban living and rarely, if ever, needing to parallel park, it definitely looked difficult. I drew up parallel to the Ford Fiesta in front of the enchantingly empty stretch of curb; I shifted into reverse; I backed up, angling towards The curb, then shifting the steering to keep the rear tires from hitting the sidewalk. As the Chevy behind crept closer and closer and closer in the rear view mirror I carefully braked just as it appeared I might be about to hit its bumper. I pulled the steering wheel all the way clockwise and crept forward; I turned it counter-clockwise and backed up a few inches. I was in with a few inches to spare on either side. The curb was two inches from my tires. I had my mojo back.

It was a lovely spring day in San Francisco. I'd driven south expecting fog and a fierce chill wind from the Pacific Ocean but it was sunny and warm and calm. Many people seemed to be out enjoying the weather. I walked down Stanyan towards Haight noting that the meadow at the park entrance across the street seemed to have far fewer of the shady characters that used to make it a place to avoid, even in the daytime. The old Cala Market was now a Whole Foods with a sign telling shoppers not to block the street while waiting to enter the parking lot. The Whole Foods near Bruce needs one of those signs. The Haight Ashbury is an odd neighborhood these days; the residents, the homeowners and renters of the area, are generally quite wealthy - it's become expensive, like most of San Francisco - but the reputation of the place, stretching back 50 years almost, still attracts young street people,

most of whom are much more hard-boiled than the hippies were. Mean dogs, large knives, and aggressive panhandling are common. Today, though, everybody must have been mellowed by the sunshine. I did see a guy walk by with a potentially mean dog but they both seemed happy at the moment and the other guy, the one with the nine inch Bowie knife dangling from his belt, kept the knife sheathed.

At Amoeba I had some specific items friends had asked me to look for. Johann Johansson seemed unlikely to be there and, indeed, he was nowhere to be found, although I may have missed the correct section. The Deep Fix must surely be available, though. No it must surely be not. Nor was Billy Strange, which I found strange. Plenty of Hawkwind options, but only two on vinyl. I've not cared for Hawkwind in the past, though, so I thought I'd better check them out on Spotify first.

Moving out of the rock, and over to world music, I thought I'd find Dr. Didg. There was a section of didgeridoo music but no Dr. Didg. I did find an album of Turkish pop from the 70s which I very much hope will be as good as the cassette that Jay Kinney brought back from a visit to Turkey many many years ago.

So, defeated by the obscurity of the requests made by my friends, I started to trawl the store for other stuff I might like, to accompany the Istanbul 70 record. This is what I found.

1. Beat from Badsville volume 3 - Trash Classics from Lux and Ivy's Vinyl Mountain
2. The Best of Repent Records: The Winners of the Vincent Price Beauty Contest (with a cover featuring stills from VP movies - sometimes a cover is enough)
3. Cloud Nothings - Here And Nowhere Else - punky neo-psych bought on spec and sounds pretty good
4. Lake Street Dive - Bad Self Portraits - surprised to learn this group has been around for 10 years but this seems like a breakthrough album for them
5. King Khan and the Shrines - Idle No More - I'd been thinking about getting some King Khan for quite a while and I was pushed over the edge when the Black Lips thanked him for helping out and not fucking things up like he usually does
6. The Oh Sees - Drop - more speculative neo-psych from a San Francisco based band who apparently change their name frequently
7. Black Lips - Underneath The Rainbow - have to thank Bruce Townley for letting me know about this band I really liked Good Bad Not Evil
8. Black Lips - Arabia Mountain - Thanks, Bruce
9. T. Rex - The Slider - On 180 gram vinyl replacing a very old used copy I have.

MANY PEOPLE WERE DISAPPOINTED NOT TO SEE BRAD FOSTER'S COLOURED IN SHREW IN THE LAST ISSUE, SO HERE IT IS



CAT STUFF

Yesterday, late in the afternoon, Pat went out to do the rubbish. She left the door open for what seemed to me an inordinately long time, so long in fact it began to get bloody cold. The days are warm here during the day this Spring, but they get cold fairly early as the evening sets in.

After a while she scuttled inside (still not closing the door) muttering 'we've got a problem, we've got a problem.' She did not seem to be referring to leaving the door open for so long. In her arms she was clutching something small and furry.

Apparently a neighbour had found a young kitten roaming about in the middle of the road, dodging traffic and looking lost and had somehow managed to palm it off onto Pat. We put it in a catbox and locked it away from Dougal, our sturdy regular Norwegian Forest cat while we considered our options.

I was all in favour of turfing it out to take whatever risks it happened upon, but the others were having none of this. Pat went up and down the road knocking on doors and had several long and interesting conversations with neighbours but none resulting in anyone admitting they had lost a kitten. We gave it food and water and shut it in my old studio, that being the only reasonably uncluttered room. It seemed friendly enough, although as nervous as you might expect any underaged cat to be. Pat printed out some notices and put them up locally, to no immediate response. We took it down to the Wood Green Animal shelter the next morning where they confirmed it was a female about six months old, which was older than we had originally thought, although they later revised the range down from 4 to 6 months. They checked in case it was chipped, but unfortunately it wasn't. It seems healthy enough and appears to have been looked after so they were fairly confident the owner would eventually be found. They had no immediate vacancy for it, but they took our details and put us on a waiting list warning it might be several weeks before they are able to take it in. So we seemed to be stuck with it for the duration.

Pat doesn't want to introduce it to Dougal in case he packs his bags and moves out because he feels he is being usurped as a pack-leader, so for a while it remained the nameless horror locked away in the attic.

The latest development is a neighbour has offered to take it off our hands, so it may well have a home eventually, although not ours.

LOST STUFF

I don't know about you but I really hate losing stuff. I lose stuff quite a lot. This is mainly because I drink a bit and that not only confuses the memory but frequently renders it useless. I sometimes go out with a wallet in my pocket, and when I come home, fearing for its safety, take it out of my pocket only to put it somewhere I'm sure I will remember but often don't end up doing. Usually I find it on an obscure shelf somewhere. Frequently I panic and cancel all my cards, although Pat raises her eyebrows in a *not again* situation. Losing something does give you a severe shock to your ontological security. You scrub about in your mind and in reality for hours, invoking memories of the last time you saw the thing. When I was in San Francisco walking around with Bruce Townley to see the Columbarium, I hunted for my newly acquired cell-phone but had to accept it had dropped out of my pocket somewhere. It had lots of photos stored on it, which was a major sense of loss. Recently I lost a notebook I record all my passwords in. I didn't sleep for several days, and became obsessed with finding it, turning over piles of junk more or less constantly. Pat eventually found it because it had slipped down a worm-hole in the back of our dining room table. You can't account for worm-holes.

DAVE LANGFORD SNATCHED A FEW MOMENTS FROM RE-WRITING JOHN CLUTE ARTICLES TO SEND A LOC

Thanks a lot for two Vibrators in rapid succession. They gave me a flashback to my days at that ghastly Ministry of Defence hostel, Boundary Hall in Tadley, where I'm pretty sure you sent me at least one issue in 1975 or 1976. With the same classic graphic, and POSTMAN! RUSH THIS VIBRATOR TO ... alongside the address on the back. I tried to hide it but it was too late. Weapons physicists taunted me and kicked plutonium dust in my face. H.M. Bateman drew a cartoon of the scene, "The MoD Man Who Was Sent A Vibrator". Eventually the humiliation became too great and I gave up mighty phallic nuclear warheads in favour of freelance poverty. I owe my career to Vibrator. You're not believing a word of this, are you?

Good stuff. It took me back (nearly) forty years. I suppose I should have said it sets back the progress of fanzines by forty years, but that would require the legendary wit of Roy Kettle. Or maybe just the legendary nose of Roy Kettle. What next, True Rat Revived With Added OBE?

Dave Langford can be reached at drl@ansible.co.uk

WILLIAM BREIDING WROTE TWO LOCS, ONE OF VIBRATOR 2.0.1:

As I slipped *Raucous Caucus* #3 from its sheath there came atumbling two sheets of fannish propaganda. To my knowledge, and I'm rarely drunk, I have never voted in the Fan Activity Achievement Awards. I'd admit to corrupting influence, though, by donating to, and voting in, the TAFF and DUFF races once, long ago.

Along with these broadsides I espied a familiar form atop the third flimsy enclosure. I refer to the delightfully curved *Vibrator*.

There were far too many repulsive images incurred by your fanzine. The vision of Andy Hooper getting on your tits is not something I appreciated, my friend.

It's typical of the UK nanny state to offer you a pill. Here in God-fearing America we believe in exercise, abstinence and a proper diet. If you were to follow this simple formula you would have avoided your imbalanced blood sugar. And then to put a cherry in your beer you later go on about wanting to live forever. You are a real head shaker. Boomers really have defined the word selfish. Just remember, Graham, God has always had you under surveillance.

I agree that just because someone is dead it doesn't mean they deserve any more respect. Indeed, perhaps the opposite. You remind me that I can do better than Iain Banks, with or without the M. Thank you.

I congratulate you for taking a walk, Graham.

This frisky note has been written at 6:00AM over cold coffee. I was using *Warhoon* 28 (the Irish Bible) as a coaster. Obviously inspiration did not strike.

AND ONE ON VIBRATOR 2.0.2:

In your argument for argument's sake you leave out the important component of argument as emotional abuse for why some people (such as myself) will avoid arguing. I think you missed the point, entirely, of Che Guevara's statement that " Silence is argument carried out by other means," because you were grinding your axe (and I don't mean your guitar, leave that to Ross).

I hope Andy Hooper has gotten off your tits by now.

HE ALSO SENT A NICE LITTLE SONG WHICH I ASSUME HE WANTS ME TO SHARE WITH YOU:

<http://www.cartiledgeworld.co.uk/Devotchka%20-%20Dangling%20Feet.mp3>

"**DeVotchKa** is a four-piece multi-instrumental and vocal ensemble. They take their name from the Russian word *devochka* (девочка), meaning "girl". Based in Denver, Colorado, the quartet is made up of Nick Urata, who sings and plays theramin, guitar, bouzouki, piano, and trumpet; Tom Hagerman, who plays violin, accordion, and piano; Jeanie Schroder, who sings and plays sousaphone double bass, and flute; and Shawn King, who plays percussion and trumpet." --- William Breiding can be reached at wmbreiding@yahoo.com

MEANWHILE PAUL SKELTON IS DOING HIS LEVEL BEST TO ENSURE THE LAST PAGE OF THIS USSUE DOES NOT REMAIN COMPLETELY BLANK

“Someone says or writes something we disagree with and we argue about it with them. It comes naturally, surely”

Neat one Graham. Nobody can argue with that. Not without arguing with it, and thereby proving your point and leaving them without a logical leg to stand on. I actually do agree with you, in that it probably comes naturally...except to deviants like me. Personally I see no reason why, if somebody feels differently about something to the way I feel, the world would be in serious danger should I not attempt to convert them to my viewpoint.

“*Vive la Difference!*”, is what I say.

Then again, I **am** a complete wimp.

Excellent letters all round.

Paul Skelton can be reached at paul_skelton_yngvi@hotmail.com

EILEEN GUNN WROTE AN ARTICLE FOR THE SMITHSONIAN. YOU CAN FIND IT HERE:

<http://tinyurl.com/majpe8x>

I quite like the idea of science fiction writers influencing technological development and have explored it in one of my own stories:

<http://www.lulu.com/shop/graham-charnock/lake/paperback/product-20559900.html>

Trying to articulate what sf is, let alone what it should be, and especially what is was, seems a particularly thankless task. Eileen makes as good a hand of it as anybody, but none of it reflects my own impetus for why I write and what I write. I've always tried to find and exploit the *normal* that resides inside the fantastic. In fact my aim has been to promote sf as less fantastic and less mind-boggling and speculative than it is generally supposed to be, because that is what I recognize as part of the essential human experience, which is largely structured around the mundane and not the startling. H.G. Wells' War of the Worlds is not about the technology of the Martian invasion, but the way small puny everyday human react to it. Ballard dissects human emotions against a backdrop of disaster scenarios, but it is the everyday minutia that determines their responses. He never seeks to awaken a sense of awe in us about the backdrop, which is merely a frame for dissecting humanity.. I wish I was as good writer as Ballard, or as able to influence the field with my worldview the way he (and other new wave writers) did, but I fear I am not and don't seem these days to be able to sell anything to save my life, let alone establish a reputation.

NOW IS THE TIME TO SAY GOODBYE

This fanzine lark is easy isn't it? Ramble on inanely about nothing of importance, tell a few jokes, print a few letters from people who are easily pleased. The only thing missing is some photographs of my property in France, mainly because I don't have one. Easy Peasy. Even someone like Andy Hooper can do it after all. Why don't you try it yourself?

If you liked this fanzine and want to receive another issue, please let me know. Same goes if you didn't like it. There are no boxes to tick here like on Facebook; you will have to work to register your response. If you don't you may not get another issue, depending on my whim. That may just suit you fine and dandy, mind you.

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