



LICKS #2 (May 1991) is written and produced by Rob Hansen of 144 Plashet Grove, East Ham, London E6 1AB, UK., for FAPA.

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I'd originally intended to have an issue of this zine in the last mailing, one I was going to start doing on receiving the November mailing...only I never received the November mailing. Seth has since remedied this by sending me a replacement, so some of the following comments will have been sparked both by the November and the February mailings.

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A fanzine a day keeps gafia away.

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SYNAPSE (Speer): The difference between a midget and a dwarf is that midgets, though shorter than normal, are perfectly proportioned, while dwarves aren't. One of the most common forms of dwarfism is achondroplasia (shortness of the long bones - i.e. those of the arms and legs). I know that dwarves dislike being called midgets, and assume that midgets feel the same way about being referred to as dwarves, because that's not what they are. Since you have a reputation for liking correct usage I know that you will support anyone who asks that the correct terminology be used when referring to them. Or maybe not. Referring to all Britons as 'English' is as incorrect as referring to all Americans as 'Nebraskan' yet my pointing this out elicits from you the comment that: "The distinction between Welsh and English may be important to you. From this distance, it seems as ridiculous as Texas nationalism seems to a foreigner". And, since you ask, Hansen is not a Welsh name. I came by it because one of my eight great-grandparents was Norweigan. What is your point? // Your response to Mark Richards' comment "is somebody born in London or Manchester any less English for having a dark skin?" was "our Welsh members should say so". I don't know about any other Welsh members FAPA may have, but this one doesn't say so. If they're born and raised in England, of parents who are British citizens (a qualification put in to pre-empt any smartass comments about the status of US 'service brats' born on American bases in the UK), then of course they're English. Same goes for Wales. One of Wales' favourite daughters, who seems quite proud in her turn of being Welsh, is Shirley Bassey.

NOTES FROM ARINAM (Tackett): ct. Rodgers: I'd always assumed they were called fundamentalists because they talk through their fundamentals. // Another death you may not have heard of was that of Sadie Shaw, wife of Bob Shaw, one of those who featured in the wonderful stream of anecdotes and fable that Irish Fandom produced in the 1950s. She passed away in March.

DETOURS (Chauvenet): My personal philosophy can best be summed up the phrase "do unto others as you would have them do unto you", a 'commandment' which encompasses all of the biblical commandments that are worth bothering with (most of which were lifted from Greek moral philosophy anyway) and which I try to live up to. Born of a Catholic father and Protestant mother (a match which caused quite a fuss at the time, with my father's parents essentially disowning him), I'm a lifelong atheist. I decided as a fairly young child that the concept of 'God' was absurd and fully expected that my parents

would eventually reveal him to be a hoax just as they'd earlier spilled the beans on Santa Claus. The realisation that they weren't going to remains one of the great shocks of my life. // Yes, despite all the aggravation the US Customs Service gave me, I have indeed kept my beard. Bearded and proud of it, that's me. I first grew my beard in 1978, right after leaving the parental nest. I could claim that I grew it to mark my newfound independence, but if I did I would be lying. No, it was more a case of realising that I could spend an extra five minutes in bed every morning if I didn't shave. Nevertheless, I grew quite attached to it (now there's a dumb phrase to use in this context) and in all the years since I've only once shaved it off. I grew it straight back. What I'd seen in the mirror was not the face I remembered from my pre-beard days but one that was both older and pudgier. Still, one thing I did learn from that brief encounter with a razor was that a beard can hide a multitude of chins.

FAPAMENTARY (Brown): In fact, though the story of 1960s UK fandom has taken me two years to research and write, it wasn't the intractability of the subject matter that made it such a difficult task so much as actually laying hands on copies of the major fanzines of the period. British fandom may be almost as old as American fandom (the Ilford Science Literary Circle which Walter Gillings formed in October 1930 is generally regarded as marking the start of organised fandom in this country) but it expanded a lot more slowly. The growth in the number of conventions being held, and in the attendances at those cons, didn't start in Britain until the 1970s and it was the mid-1980s before fannish fans were finally marginalised by the newcomers. I gather that this situation came about in the 1960s in America, which is presumably why Harry Warner thinks it would be such a difficult period of American fandom to write a history of.

WELL MEANER (Bowen): I keep a diary, too, and have done since 1983. With me it's more a record of what I've been up to, a memory jogger, than a repository for more personal stuff. Asimov apparently kept similarly prosaic journals, yet he was able to transform them into a humongous and strangely compelling account of what was hardly the most interesting of lives. Compelling to Ted White and me, at any rate, since he once revealed to me in conversation that he had read it straight through as well. // Vicki Rosenzweig, who's in town at the moment, rang while I was typing the last para. Eerie. She was arranging to meet us at our regular Thursday night session tomorrow evening. Strange to think that she will probably have told you all about it long before you read these words. Also in town at the moment are Bay Area fans Allen Baum and Donya White, who are over for the Eastercon (our national convention) and to look for a house in Cambridge. They'll be returning to the UK in April to start an eighteen month assignment here. Allen works for Apple and will be overseeing one of their UK operations during that period. Next weekend (it's Easter weekend as I write this - we couldn't afford to attend the con) we'll be seeing yet another US visitor, Whit Diffie. It sure does get busy here sometimes.

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Ink before you dupe

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OF CABBAGES & KINGS (& BABY TURTLES): So you want to what know what the SF Foundation is, do you? Well it's an invaluable resource, an SF research library attached (loosely) to the Polytechnic of East London. It also publishes the thrice-yearly academic SF journal, FOUNDATION. The polytechnic provides it with space and pays for the part-time services of a single employee, so the

Foundation relies mainly on donations of material and money and on volunteer labour. Within the last year or so, apparently sparked by a suggestion in my fanzine THEN #2, a number of fans got together and formed 'Friends of Foundation' as a fund-raising group and source of said labour. Any and all help the Foundation can get is always welcome. The address is:

Polytechnic of East London, Longbridge Rd., Dagenham, RMB 2AS, UK

HORIZONS (Warner): ct. Vijay: Your suggestion as to how "today's young people could make the transition from pop to classical most easily" presupposes that they want to. Or, rather, it presupposes that they should want to, a proposition I have to take issue with. They should certainly be exposed to classical music, no doubt about it, since if they're not then they'll never be able to decide whether or not it interests them; but then, isn't that one of the things school music classes are for? It certainly was when I was going through the schooling process. If they're exposed to it and don't much care for it, that's fine. There's nothing morally reprehensible in preferring rock over classical music, and I'd argue long and hard with anyone who blankly asserted the elitist view that the greater complexity of classical music necessarily makes it superior to rock. And, lest you get the idea that I only listen to rock, I should point out that my last major musical purchase was a 5-CD boxed set of the Beethoven symphonies and that the first LP I ever bought was also an album of classical music. Whether I play rock or classical or blues depends entirely on the mood that I'm in at the time. I have to say, though, that while I might find something like Beethoven's sixth a deeply moving piece of work I've been more deeply moved still by some of the classics of rock. To paraphrase an ad for lager beer shown on TV over here, they refresh the parts that other music cannot reach. Frankly, I value my own responses to a piece of music far more than I do any reputation that the years and generations of cultural commentators may have brought it. That will always be more important to me than fulfilling any expectation that I should genuflect at the altar of High Art. // The only sports I ever watch on TV are snooker (which is to pool as checkers is to chess) and the annual Five Nations Rugby Union Competition. This is fought out between France, Wales, England, Scotland, and Ireland (which, unlike in most sports, fields a team drawn from both parts of the island). Wales, I'm afraid, did abysmally this year. Worst of all was losing to England at Cardiff Arms Park, the Welsh national stadium. The last time a Welsh side lost to England there, JFK was still President. May they hang their heads in shame....

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The fanatic that fan do lives after them

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SWEET JANE (Eklund): ct. Vijay: Hoo boy! I bet you're letting yourself in for a few broadsides with your comments on obesity. Avedon maintains that most fat people eat fewer calories than most thin people, the difference in fat level being due to different metabolic rates, and that going on a calorie-reduced diet only has the effect of throwing the metabolisms of fat people further out of whack (i.e. if they stop dieting it will take even less food to make them gain weight). Could be - unlike Avedon, I haven't researched the subject, so I don't know. What I do know is that your metabolism changes as you get older. I've always eaten as much as I wanted of whatever I wanted and yet, until fairly recently, I've also always been the weight those actuarial height-to-weight tables have said I should be. To the pound. Varying the amount I ate seemed to make no difference so, in my case, diet didn't appear to be a big factor. However, within the last eighteen months, despite there being no change in my eating habits or in the amount of exercise I do (none) I've gone

fifteen pounds over my 'ideal' weight. I'm not too concerned about this as yet, and no one has noticed any difference, but it does go to show that diet isn't everything when it comes to weight. There was an interesting piece in TIME a few weeks back about a scientific study confirming the observation made by innumerable ex-smokers that when you quit you gain weight. It also confirmed that this weight gain is greater for women than for men, and managed to pretty convincingly demolish any cultural explanations of this difference by pointing out that the same is true with test animals, the females gaining more than the males. The corollary, naturally, is that smoking will keep you thinner than you would otherwise be. (Though you should still quit, of course, since smoking a pack and a half to two packs a day is reckoned to be at least as damaging to your health as being seventy pounds overweight.) This is not a result that will reduce the smoking rate among teenage girls, who already smoke more than their male counterparts and who in fact are the only section of the population, both here and in the US, in which the numbers smoking is actually increasing. If that trend continues we could see a future in which smoking is a predominantly female habit, which is one in the eye for all those old time SF writers whose futures portrayed smoking as a macho trait.

WISCONSIN YANKEE (Feller): ct. Speer: You're quite right to point out that DR WHO was always intended to be a children's programme. I remember, as a nine year-old, watching the very first episode when they aired it in 1963, the day after Kennedy was shot. The BBC now appear to have decided to kill the show off which, given how rotten some of the Sylvester McCoy episodes were, may be just as well. // I was disappointed with the American MAX HEADROOM, possibly because I was so impressed by the original one-off drama made over here, which they re-made as the first episode of the US series. After that first episode it seemed to lose its hard edge. // Avedon and I are also big fans of TWIN PEAKS, and never miss an episode. Our favourite character is Albert, the pathologist, who hasn't been seen recently. His confrontation with Sheriff Truman was definitely one of the highpoints of the show.

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Faint repro never won fair artist

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INTERJECTION (Chalker): Watching the war in the Gulf unfold on TV was a strange experience. I was watching every report and newscast when it started, but within a week I'd settled back to my pre-war pattern of news watching. And what an odd war. The low allied losses meant that more British troops were lost to 'friendly fire' from American aircraft than were killed by the Iraqis. This was the first time UK and US forces had been in action together since Korea (Johnson wanted us to send a token force to Vietnam to show support but the British government, showing unusual good sense, decided that that was one war they wanted nothing to do with - unlike the Australians), and because we were very much junior partners in the enterprise any political advantage that accrued to the Tories from the victory evaporated pretty quickly. It doesn't look as if John Major will be able to use the victory in the Gulf to his advantage in the way that Margaret Thatcher used the 'Falklands Factor' to assure her victory in the General election of 1983. Good thing, too.

30/3/91.

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A zine in the hand is worth two in the mail

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