

# PROCRASTINATIONS THREE

## TOP BANANA

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.

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Future issues may be published. You have been warned.

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After a very positive response to my first issue, I bring you the third issue. I didn't set out to write this fanzine around any theme, but eventually I wound up with two articles on comics, so that can be the theme. Wahey!

This time around, I have been sent LOCs by quite a few people. I very much like receiving LOCs from readers (and I will try to publish as many as I can), but I'd also like to receive articles. If you've got an idea for an article or you might like to write one (you crazy person, you) just drop me a line. Or, just wait until I come up with one and hesitantly ask if you might possibly consider writing it for me.

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## XIII.

By John Coxon  
 johncoxon

As anybody who was at the Day of the Teledu in February knows, I am running a comic group (opposite a rather intriguing programme item by Abigail entitled “What’s Up My Arse”) which will, in theory, be based around the comic *XIII*. I received the first issue of this comic yesterday and it’s very good, but bears several interesting differences to the video game. This article is an attempt to provide some sort of introduction to the series and to illustrate just why you should come to my item.



The above are effects from two screenshots taken from the videogame. As you can see, the graphics are rather stylised (although quite jagged on the PC demo I downloaded to take the screenshot – I have no idea whether this carries into the final PC version, but the GameCube game is fairly smooth). It uses cel-shading to make a world that looks and feels like a comic book. It also uses sound effects from comics (seen above) in conjunction with effects such as the one below (whenever you knife or shoot somebody in the head, panels appear showing you a close-up of the implement going into the victim).



I like this game for several reasons. The first is, obviously, the style in which the graphics are done – they fit the game extremely well and give it a unique selling point which has undoubtedly contributed to sales. The second is the plot.

The plot is rather good – similar to such films as *The Bourne Identity*, some of my friends have been known to criticise it for plagiarism – ironic, considering the original comics on which this was based were written and published before I was born.<sup>1</sup> I won't spoil anything but the very first part of the story – essentially, you are alleged to have killed the president of the USA, but you can't remember anything about who you are. This is the main thing that the comic and the game have in common – however, they start off differently and the plots, although bearing similarities, are markedly different from one another.

I think it will be interesting, at Teledu, to gather a small room of people who have read the book, played the game or both and discuss what we liked about each version, what we disliked about each version, and whether things that changed between the two should have stayed the same. If you've not read the graphic novel, you ought to be able to get it from your local dealer or just surf onto Amazon and get it online. Alternatively, prod your library until they buy a copy and then borrow it.

Oh, and if you don't come to the comic group, I may have to consider running my item involving Speedos instead. You have been warned.

Oh, and come to the Year of the Teledu ([www.yearoftheteledu.org](http://www.yearoftheteledu.org))!



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<sup>1</sup> The comics are only now being translated from their original French into English by Dabel Brothers Production working with Marvel Comics, and it is the first volume of this translation that arrived earlier today.

# What Is That?

By Chris Garcia  
👤johnnyeponymous

I'm not a father. I often have to make that point because, at 31, I probably should have a kid of my own. No, I do not own a child... I lease.

My ex-girlfriend is a lass who had a kid when she was 22. I started dating her about four years later and for a while I lived with her and Evelyn, her daughter. The three of us were something approaching the quality of a family, right up until the moment when Gen and I broke up. At that point, I basically became a slightly more familiar baby-sitter for Evelyn, picking her up from school and watching her while Gen was off at work. It's not always easy, but it's always interesting to have The Little One around to play with and to use as an excuse to buy toys and pick up on women. Trust me, it never hurts to have a kid and a good story when hitting on woman.

Evelyn has a thing for stuffed animals. I'm not sure why, other than the fact that her mother works at a toy store, but she'll do anything to get a new stuffed whatever and will take it to her room and bury herself in a pile of animals before she goes off to sleep. I've been told that I am no longer allowed to buy her any wee things of stuffed persuasion nor to allow my Mother, a relentless spoiler of children, do the same. I made the mistake of leaving Evelyn with my Mom one afternoon when I had to go to BayCon, the convention in San Jose where I was acting as Toastmaster. Mom agreed to drop Evelyn off that night so she could watch Shrek projected on the side of the hotel from my room. She was very excited.

After I'd done my panels for the day and had spent a little time writing, I arrived back at the room to find my little Evelyn's obvious tracks. There was a small trail of dropped popcorn leading to the room. The Little One loves popcorn, and when she's with my Mom, there's no way she's not getting any. I opened the door and there was my Mom and Evelyn sitting on the bed. Well, Mom was sitting, Evelyn was jumping around like a mad thing on too much sugar and caffeine. In fact, I wouldn't be

surprised if Mom had given her a pot of coffee mixed with gummy bears just because she bumped her knee or pouted a little. I noticed in the middle of that buzz was a colourful piece of something. Green it was. Dark green. I thought maybe they'd bought a crocodile at a store of something, but once Evelyn saw me she ran over and clamped onto my mid-section hugging me.

“Chrissy, Chrissy, Chrissy!” she screamed, nearly knocking me through the door. I saw that she also had a new shirt on.

“So, what’s your shirt say?” I asked.

“I don’t know.” She answered. She stepped back and pulled the front taut so I could read it. There were three anime-type goth girls flying through the air with a slogan reading PowerGoth Grrls on it. I’ve been forced to watch enough Cartoon Network to catch the reference.

“So, you took her to the dealer’s room, eh?” I asked my Mom.

“Well, we were early and she wanted to get a stuffed animal.”

Evelyn suddenly started bouncing again.

“Lookylookylooky!” she screamed, running to the bed and grabbing the thing that she had dropped when I walked in.

“What is it?” I asked her.

“It’s a stuffed Cat-u-lu,” she said.

I looked at the thing and indeed it was a stuffed Cthulhu, all green with its many little fuzzy tentacles.

“And do you know what Cthulhu is?” I asked.

She nodded her head like a smart girl in a dumb kid’s class.

“And what is Cthulhu?”

“Cat-u-lu is a Great Old One who is sleeping on Ry’leh until the city rises up and he devours for his own delight,” she said, an adorable six year old recitation of lines fed to her by my fifty-year-old mother.

“Well, that’s very good,” I said, “but do you know who thought-up Cthulhu?”

“Yes, H.P. Lovesalot,” she said.

I stared at her and I had to fight the urge to break down in a very strange sort of laughter.

“It’s Lovecraft, dear,” my mom added.

“That’s right. H.P. Lovecraft,” Evelyn said.

“Mom, I don’t mind you teaching her about Lovecraft, but she doesn’t need any more stuffed animals.”

“I’d be careful around Cat-u-lu,” Evelyn said, “He might wake up and the stars will be right and he’ll eat you up!”

I stared at her for a minute, trying to figure out exactly how much my Mom had managed to stuff into her about Cthulhu mythos. The two of us played Cthulhu for a while that evening. So long that we actually missed Shrek.

Sometimes it takes a stuffed fuzzy Great Old One to make you appreciate the slippery Little One all the more.

# **Gee Whiz Garth: Confessions Of A Fanboy.**

By James Bacon  
jamesb

*A Note from the Editor: In order to tie into my rather short article about XIII I asked one James Bacon to scribble something onto paper about comics – in particular, about Garth Ennis. I wound up with what can honestly be termed an epic journey through James' introduction to comics, and I think it's an interesting read. A heartfelt thanks goes out to him for bothering to write so much to my prescription.*

In 1991 I forever changed the way I would see comics. I met Garth Ennis, John McCrea and Steve Dillon.

I had been reading comics since I was four and had trodden the well worn path of many others, going from boys' comics such as Battle and Warlord to the science fiction anthology and home of such greats as Judge Dredd and Rogue Trooper – 2000AD.

By 1989 I was definitely a devoted reader of this British weekly comic that was made up of 6 stories, some ongoing starring characters that at that stage were eleven years old such as Judge Dredd, other characters had been around a while, and interspaced were the stories that came and went and the one off future shocks to fill up any gaps. I often felt that, just as a character or story was really coming together, it would end too quickly and my buy in would repeat itself. This wasn't always true I suppose, but it was sometimes annoying, and, well, I was a teenager, we get annoyed when we're having lots of puberty.

I was so, so disappointed in the way that 2000AD killed off Johnny Alpha, and will never forgive that flawed editorial decision that led to dozens of crap stories starring his sidekicks that were so paltry in comparison to the great Stronty Dog himself. Sure, kill off characters if you want, but at least have some sort of contingency plan. If you create a science fictional world the greatest part of it that it is your world, endless and the possibilities will never run out.

So I was a 2000AD fan. I loved it. My favourite character had to be Judge Dredd. I just loved the future he inhabited and the Judge's militaristic and technological world appealed to me somewhat. This was juxtaposed by the military man Rogue Trooper who was essentially a mutinous loner with 3 bio chips for buddies and he was hunting a traitor within his own ranks. These characters were added to by the likes of Halo Jones. How a teenager couldn't fall for this girl from the hoop is beyond me. Hoop means something else in Dublin, as well.

Then good old Johnny Alpha, the mutant, whose back story was fascinating and who despite being the lowest of the low had a moralistic fibre than any good parent would be proud of. Well once they saw past the guns and spaceships I suppose.

So I loved 2000AD. They were great, cheap and plentiful. I had the best second hand comic shop in the world, well in a teenager's eyes, anyhow – now in true reflection it was perhaps not as shiny as I would recall. Better this comic shop was my D-Jump into the world of adult science fiction and comic readers who banded together and did stuff like socialising and drinking and talking about comics, and even though I was fifteen when I walked into this dimension jump and it took me a while to realise that I had fallen in with a bad lot of good folk, it was this second hand shop and most of all the man behind the desk (they didn't have a counter as such, although it depended – the furniture changed) that took me from the day in day out of shitty school and introduced me to a place where you didn't have to be an A-grader to have an intelligent conversation or score goal on the pitch to be respected.

I started to do more than read comics. I started to offer an opinion on them, to learn who wrote what and who drew what. I hadn't much time for American comics and definitely had a bad opinion of Marvel comics, no one really argued, but some people did say that some comics would grow on me with time, and I remember sage words from Mick along the lines of each to their own and horse for course and Jesus would you have a look at that...

Anyhow, my friend knew I enjoyed 2000AD. I had posters in my room, I was buying Crisis the mature offshoot I had a letter in the comic yet



and would you believe I actually complimented briefly the story that John Brosnan was writing.

Time for a tangent.

John Brosnan was an interesting man, he wrote *Night Zero*, *Beyond Zero* and *Below Zero* – altogether about 37 episodes of a futuristic science fiction adventure story. I later met him at The World Fantasy Convention in Docklands, where Kim Newman kindly introduced me, but John was wasted and it was a rather wasted introduction, but Kim was gracious and I wasn't too upset, I like a drink myself. But there is more to John Brosnan. I asked Mark Plummer to airship away:

*“A year or two back there was a good deal of attention given to an environmental activist from the UK who travelled to Australia for a wedding and did so over land. Somehow I think the media didn't make quite such a big deal of it when John Brosnan did the same thing, only coming the other way. It's true he cheated a bit but still...*

*“Brosnan was originally from Perth in Western Australia, and was an early member of ANZAPA, the Australian and New Zealand Amateur Publishing Association. He joined a party of Australians travelling to Europe by bus in 1970, and arrived in London where he fell in with 'Rat Fandom', one of the major British fannish groups of the time whose members and associates included Greg Pickersgill, Leroy Kettle and Robert Holdstock. In the UK he published a number of fanzines -- almost always tagged with the label 'scurrilous' -- and was joint winner of the second Nova Award with *Big Scab*; he also wrote several sf and horror novels (some pseudonymous) as well as much non-fiction for books and magazines, often on the subject of film. He was one of a number of author residents of the legendary Ortygia House in Harrow. He died in April 2005 at the age of 58; his ashes were scattered in an Australian vineyard this year.”*

I got a mug for my letter. Chuffed. I was buying back issues to beat the band, I knew the history and stories well, I would doodle for hours

drawing helmets and chins and I had a number of mates in school and in scouts who were also avid readers.

But the discussion was never the same, except with Des who was well more intelligent than most people I know and someone who was always ahead of the game in fashions, hairstyles and music, let alone under current things like 2000AD.

Anyhow, I was really into 2000AD and I had started to go to Irish Science Fiction meetings following encouragement from Mick and generally meet many good people, like Padraig, Anna, Peter, Danny, Jonathon and others. At this stage someone had mentioned the first Octocon to me, but for some God awful reason that I will always pretend I regret I never listened, or took it in, or paid attention and actually missed out on what could have been my first convention.

That's fairly OK though, I don't regret or miss what I couldn't have had. So I was into the scene and Trincon was on the horizon, it looked brilliant to me – perhaps not from the conrunner's view point but definitely from my perspective.

So I was prepared for Trincon. This was a convention run by The Dublin University Science Fiction Society, DUSFS – pronounced Duss-Fuss. Trinity College in Dublin was celebrating their 400<sup>th</sup> birthday and all the societies were getting a higher capitation and huge grants were available to do extra activities. DUSFS saw an opportunity, had seen what Octocon was made of and went hell for leather as one might say (but, in those days science fiction was more parkas, black jumpers, docs and combats than leather). So the flyers were really professional and the guest list tremendously impressive. Unlike the logo:

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My friends in Phantasia primed me for Trincon. There was much furore in the run up to Trincon. The students had unwisely called the dean an old nob or some such in their promotional flyer (I still have one somewhere) in the usual studenty attempt to be rebellious. Initially those of us who were just looking forward to a convention were worried it would be cancelled, but an apology was made.

The craic in Phantasia was great, it would be like some sort of Mecca to go to in between ISFA meetings and everything was discussed, and many of my opinions in life for the better or worse were nurtured into being in this small shop. I had such a great time here mostly doing hat people call retail therapy now, but back then it was feeding my reading habit.

So it was shortly upon us, and it was £15, which was a shed load of cash to someone whose bus fare was 30p, and a batter burger and chips 80p in Bruno's takeaway on Liffey St. Second-hand 2000ADs were 20p on a good day – 25p on a Terry day. So £15 was a big deal, but when I registered cause I was still at school and had a school bus pass id thing they gave me a student rate, although made it clear I wasn't a proper student, yet, I didn't care as I was too busy looking at a girl who seemed pretty. That's another story, of course, but I must admit I had a likening for college girls when I was at school.

So I went along and there was a book launch on the Friday night, I hung out a little bit, had a drink and was with the boys, Mick and co. but I eventually made my excuses and went home, which in retrospect was for the best.

It appears the book launch reception thing was funded and that funding was spent on booze, and led to some calamitous actions. The worst was that a mate of ours Danny was thrown out of his flat because of the activities of his friend who was so inebriated he decided to urinate throughout the place, all very grim.

So when I arrived on Saturday morning all chipper and such, a number of people were under the weather and one or two smelled a bit bad as

well, but that was the way. They were older teenagers – I was younger. I was included in the gossip and felt like I was part of something, offered whatever condolences I could.

So who was at the convention? Well here is a list:

Iain Banks, Stephen Gallagher, Peter Morwood, Greg Bear, David Garnett, Terry Pratchett, John Brunner, Mary Gentle, David Pringle, Ramsey Campbell, Katherine Kurtz, Nicholas Royle, Storm Constantine, Anne McCaffery, Bob Shaw, Diane Duane, Ian McDonald, David Wingrove, Harry Harrison, Geoff Ryman, Elizebeth Scarborough, Steve Baxter and Michael Marshal Smith, with special comics guests Steve Dillon, Garth Ennis and John McCrea.

Ok, that's a shit hot list in anyone's SF book. It's quite possibly a who's who of SF writers of the early nineties in the Ireland and the UK. Greg Bear was huge at the time, and it was a killer list for all concerned. I of course didn't get to meet Bob Shaw, but John Brunner had an absolutely beautiful wife with him and I noticed him therefore. But I didn't meet Bosh, or other UK people who I would later get to meet, who were at the convention.

There was much laughter at David Wingrove, he had explained what his books were about, but had done so in a rather unfortunate manner and we all sort of took the piss for the rest of the weekend. Every time I hear Chung Ko I have a little inward laugh. It's like a Japanesey blade runner apparently.

So the con was upon us, and the way it worked was badly. This was after all a student con.

The main talks were in the college itself, in the lecture halls, and there was also some evening activity in some of the more salubrious of locations. The dealer's room and convention bar and some of the smaller reading rooms was in the Powers Hotel on Nassau Street, which is the southern side of Trinity. It's very close by, but the split in activities was unfortunate.

Not as unfortunate as the mistakes the con committee made as there was a bit of a hoo-ha about the Table Quiz, which although was meant to be open to all, was then deemed a residents only affair – anyhow, it got messy, but that’s all to the good, I didn’t mind and it just seemed that more people hung in the Powers Hotel bar and had a good time.

The boys I was with decided the place to be was the bar, this was also the hotel where all the guests were staying, the dealers room (where some of my friends were working) and there was a quiz and other activities planned for the bar.

John, some things don’t change – can you see any parallels to this year’s Picocon? [*Er, yes, I can – Ed*] Although, in fairness, the Imperial boys do a decent job, but you can see certain shared characteristics.

So I was in the Bar. I was 16.

My main mission of the weekend, apart from checking out chicks, chatting to mates and perhaps blagging some booze, was to get my comics signed. I was prepared and had a small selection for the aforementioned comic guests to sign – not too many, mind, just key favourites.

Garth Ennis had started his comic career while still at college, he was 19 and started writing *Troubled Souls*, a cracking story about the troubles, at their height, for *Crisis*.

By Trincon he had gone on to do a large amount of other work, including the Irish version of a Judge in Judge Dredd’s world (Judge Joyce from the Emerald Isle), and also the contentious *True Faith* for *Crisis*. I was a reader of these stories and wasn’t at all taken aback by their maturity of the issues or the writing. I really enjoyed them; yet even at this stage I hadn’t actually looked across the pond towards American comic writing, somehow perceiving those stories as being more juvenile somehow not worthy of my time and effort.

John McCrea was drawing Judge Dredd stories as well as having been the artist on *Troubled Souls* and Steve Dillon was an absolute God of art, having drawn some of the greatest 2000AD characters from Judge Dredd to Rogue Trooper.

So I had my few comics ready.

What I wasn't ready for was the idea of getting a sketch.

Now forgive my naivety, but I just hadn't thought that would be something they would do.

So, I was nervous and with Mick we approached the lads, the 3 of them looked more like my friends than the rest of the guests, the leather jackets and drinking aspect that they shared seemed to speak quite loudly to me. They were gentleman like and immediately welcomed me and offered to sign anything I had.

So I got my comics signed and in no time I was as chuffed as you can imagine. I was quick off the mark and although I hadn't got much in the way of spare cash, I immediately offered the lads a drink, if they would buy it themselves, and they of course they gratefully accepted this offer.

I didn't realise that at that stage I had committed the best drop goal any comic fan can ever learn – get 'em signed and buy 'em a drink.

Then Garth suggested I get a couple of sketches. I was a bit flabbergasted. He suggested I get some decent paper, and the lads agreed, so I got some from the reception.

Steve immediately drew a cool looking Judge Dredd, it took him no time at all, and I was transfixed. He offered another, and he kindly drew an Irish Judge in my guise.

Meanwhile John McCrea had offered to do a normal judge in my guise, this following on from a wonderful piece from *Troubled Souls*.

John and Garth were from Belfast although John was thinking of moving to Birmingham and Steve was living in Raheny, near where Mick lived on the north side of Dublin.

This was like some sort of comic orgy for me, it was beyond my wildest dreams that I could get artwork like this, so quickly so easily, and I was immediately addicted. The lads would later regret this, as I would always ask Steve for a sketch, but he was always kind to me, and these days I suppose I am calmer and just buy artwork.

The guys did a couple more, I have them still to this day, and the Powers Hotel-headed paper on the rear. So the weekend continued, and it got a bit blurry as it went. I chatted at length with the lads, and they chatted with me, and they talked shop and didn't mind at all that I was eavesdropping or worse added my tuppence they didn't dismiss me out of hand or ignore me, but made encouraging or discouraging noises as required.

Things got a bit strange. The lads decided I should have a couple of drinks, so I did, and then things get a bit blurry, and time and activities seem to drift into one another and then the lads are off for a meal or something and I am with Mick and the boys and I am drinking more. Its getting grimmer now that I think about and activities bleed into one another like some sort of Scooby Doo moment.

I know that I was brought over to meet Harry Harrison as I love Jim D'Griz, I am not sure Harry thought much of my appreciation for his comic version of his well known science fictional character but I was too young to show true disdain to and too drunk to know if Harry was just surprised to find a boy babbling about comics at a science fiction con. I think its best put he was very tolerant. Today I would say he is a true gentleman of science fiction and god knows how he put up with oiks like me.

Then there were more drinks, in a different part of the hotel, maybe this was the next day, I don't know, what I do know is that I didn't go home, which was a bit like a good idea as I was drunk, I think I ended up in

Padraig's and Anna's but that's OK, cause Anna was like a big sister – well, a beautiful big sister, who everyone in the world would like to go out with – but I definitely behaved myself, cause she always kept me in line and out of trouble, and noticed nice girls I should pay attention to, and slapped me when I was up to no good.

I was continuing to drink. I have no idea how much or what kind of booze, but I know I was at times with the comic lads in between their official engagements, which I opted out of. They were at the hotel a lot and I was in their wake like a true fanboy. I know this for sure because a couple of times Noreen Monahan, a stalwart of Irish conventions, came over and mentioned to the lads that I was only a young fella and that I wasn't used to drink. Initially, because she wore glasses, they thought she was my ma, which was pretty funny and sorta cool at the same time, but she was upset by this in a tongue-in-cheek sort of way.

I remember Helen Ryder taking me for something to eat with a big tall man, who was a writer, he was a nice fella, even if he was Canadian – as I explained to him, I had no inhibitions about him being gay, and I think I may have impressed him by explaining that he was OK in my book for being gay, tall and Canadian. Or, maybe I said it to Helen and she shhhh'd me, I can't be sure. I know I was either in trouble or he was also tolerant and smiley, and I remember a sandwich.

Then I was asked by the Trincon people to find the comic people who were meant to be on a panel. I said I knew who they were and must have been sober enough to actually seem like I knew what I was doing, and I was sent around to Keogh's pub to let them know they were required. Keogh's was bustling rammed to the gunwales, but in a snug the lads were drinking and they welcomed me. They agreed to come back to the con, as long as I joined them in some drinks and toasts. Were they doubles, were they triples, could I care? I was having a great time on some sort of strontium mission to consume any free booze that came my way, and if this was entertainment to all and sundry, like I cared.

I remember eventually getting home and having to go straight to bed, so my parents wouldn't find me, or that was the plan, I am pretty sure Mom



directed towards my room. I know I had a special bag for my artwork and comics, which was reinforced and looked after and I still have those pictures today.

Was I on a high? Oh yes, I was, it was an amazing weekend. I hadn't missed anything I had arrived at something that was to have great importance in my life.

You see through all the drink fuelled kaleidoscope memories to this day I can vividly remember Garth calling me to one side to show me something he had rolled up in his long coat. He took out a beautiful piece of Glenn Fabry artwork.

'Have a look at this, it's an American comic I am writing for, I think you'd like it, it's called Hellblazer.' He spoke to me about it, how he was writing and how Will Simpson from Northern Ireland and who had also worked on 2000AD was the artist at the moment and how Steve would shortly be taking on some of it as well. Garth Ennis and Steve Dillon, the Irish Judge team, that was nearly too much. I wasn't so much as sold, as bought.

It was the cover to Hellblazer #52. His Belfast soft accent and charm, and that's before you consider I was standing next to someone I literally considered as an entertainment god. This guy wrote comics I loved. It wasn't pretentious bullshit, I loved his writing and here he was, giving me, a feeble fanboy a moment of his time to recommend something, that, by the way he concealed the artwork, was very important and not to be known publicly.

I was on my yellow brick road, at other times Garth mention other American comics. My usual disdain and negativity discreetly decided that it should scurry away, not shunned by Garth, but my own respect for this man, who was advising me what to read, how could I object. No whoer like a converted whoer.

I went out the next week and found issues 41 upward of Hellblazer and was totally mind blown. Here was a comic that I could understand that

was dark, that spoke to me, that was set in Ireland and that had a in your face arrogance and humour about it that just said farewell runners, hello doc martins.

That weekend I got turned onto American comics. That weekend I met comic people, who were cool to me. That weekend I learned that I could enjoy myself at conventions, and be among people who would look after me. That weekend I realised that a science fiction convention was more than just books, but that it was possible, just maybe, to have people like Garth along as guests, who spoke directly to me.

The importance of having a guest who excites the person who is running the con has never left me.

Jeez, I wonder if Garth, Steve and John have any idea. I suppose they do. I met John last year at G-Mex, I give a hand with that, and he drew me a nice sketch. I invited all three to as many conventions as possible, and Garth and Steve were both special Comics guests at Octocon, as was Will Simpson, also from Northern Ireland. Robert Holdstock, who gets mentioned in connection with John Brosnan, was also a GOH at an Octocon, as was Kim Newman. It's an amazing circle – we are journeying in a strung out counter-central whirlpool of connections mixed with splash of booze and energetic organisation.

I met Garth Ennis in New York while on my TAFF trip, the guy is such a decent chap and has produced such an amazing body of work, I just can't get over how much of his work I really enjoy. I got a mention in the Preacher letters column, I have bought artwork and paraphernalia.

I have gone on from looking at that picture by Glenn, to bringing Glenn Fabry to Ireland to be a GOH at They Came and Shaved Us. I review comics now for the BSFA, I have ensured that any kids programming I am involved with always have comics panels and I always feel that these comics lads gave me some sort of extra love for the mixing of my hobbies which I am fortunate to achieve. The importance of that weekend should not be belittled. Mick had already set me on a path, but the burning lights that shone along the way were so important.

I have enjoyed so many comics, and soon after reading Hellblazer I came into possession of a full run of Warrior and Epic and then that just lead to so much more.

They only thing missing was girls, but I am sure I ogled at them a lot and probably blushfully chatted up one or two in moments of drunkenness, but I don't think that's what the weekend was about, it was about a bunch of Boys and a Bunch of Comic Professionals.

Thanks, lads.

## **Review of *The Dresden Files***

By J.G. Stinson

### *The Dresden Files*

Based on the novels by Jim Butcher

SciFi Channel, Sundays

Premiered Jan. 21, 2007

Harry Dresden (Paul Blackthorne) is a private detective, with the familiar on-again, off-again relationship with his local law types, the primary one being female Detective Lieutenant Connie Murphy (Valerie Cruz), and a special skill. Dresden is, and advertises himself as, a wizard in a contemporary America where magic is still mostly confined to Las Vegas stages. But Harry Dresden really IS a wizard; he has a doomed soul in the guise of a ghost for an advisor named Bob (Terrence Mann), of all things, passed onto him from his uncle whom Dresden later eliminated in self-defence; he can cast spells, and he has a protective bracelet given to him by his wizard mother (interesting that the magical heritage is maternal and obviously so; point for Jim Butcher and for the producers who kept it that way). His father was a stage magician who tried very hard to keep Harry from turning into a wizard, but of course failed. Good thing, too. Dresden uses a hockey stick as a wizard staff, which is pretty funny until you think of how much power a hockey player can generate when swinging one of them at a puck (or another player).

The series seems to be getting off to a good start. Episode One, "Birds of A Feather" (the first aired, though the third produced), introduces Dresden, Detective Murphy, and what isn't their first case together (nice that there's past history which isn't blatantly slathered throughout the dialogue in the first episode) -- a little boy comes to Harry for help (and he's even brought money to pay the wizard), claiming he's being chased by monsters. Dresden is no creep, and kindly but gently refuses to take the case, even though he's been having dreams lately that are causing him to become warier than usual, and Bob keeps telling him there's something going on. Dresden gives the boy a protection charm, just in case, and sends the boy on his way,

Meanwhile, Bob is trying to reconstruct the spell calculations from the grimoire he wrote while alive (and which Harry destroyed, thus saving the world from nameless evils, surely) to build a Doom Box. Bob lets his irritation show at the frequent interruptions in his work, but this is also a good thing, as we see later in the episode. Then the boy turns up missing. Now Dresden has to take the case, and finds out that there's more than monsters in the boy's closet. There's a skinwalker on the loose, and Ravens are involved, and people are lying left and right. Just the kind of sleight-of-hand needed to keep a viewer glued to the TV, and it works quite well thanks to writer Peter Egan and director Michael Robison.

Episode Two is "The Boone Identity," wherein Dresden meets an antiques dealer and his daughter's ghost, learns about an ancient Egyptian artefact called the Lock of Anubis which belonged to the antiques guy, and sees the girl's murder through her eyes. Time to find the bad guy, fix the lock, and give Dad some closure. Not the greatest episode I've ever seen of series TV (too easy to guess what was going to happen), but not the worst, either. Of the three so far aired, it was the least memorable to me; while writer George Mastras turned in a credible script, it just felt too familiar.

Episode Three, "Hair of the Dog" (and that title could have used some more imagination, I mean, really!), brings on lycanthropes and Detective Murphy's experience as a blood-thirsty shapechanger. She doesn't like it.

Being a strong woman and a cop, the loss of control in becoming a werewolf bothers her mightily, but Cruz and the script's writer, Laurence Walsh, show admirable restraint and consequent character depth in the way this is depicted. There's the possibility of a more intimate involvement between Dresden and Murphy growing by this ep, but it's not developed here; I have to say I hope it never is, because once a romantic connection is drawn between two series stars, the show is pretty much over unless the scripts are absolutely first-rate. This is a very rare occurrence.

The "villain" of the ep is shown not to be completely evil, more points for the writer and producers -- it means they understand that villains have to have at least one redeeming quality in order to be interesting and believable. The bad guys this time turn out to be people caught in a struggle for self-redemption, and that's hard not to like.

This is certainly a watchable series for fantasy lovers and probably for fans of the Butcher novels on which it's based (I haven't read any of them, but now I'd like to). The cast was well-chosen, the scripts are at least logical within the framework of the imagined world, Dresden isn't an all-powerful wizard (that gets boring real fast), and he's got dimension, as do the other characters. It's more interesting to watch than the latest incarnation of *Doctor Who*, and I'll be tuning in weekly to see where the series goes.

## **Letters Of Comment.**

Let me start by saying I love the font you use for your title. I must know what it is so that I might use it pointlessly in my feature issues of The Drink Tank.

I'm fairly certain I've run across you on LiveJournal in the past (my handle is johnnyeponymous) or at least have read threads that you've commented on. Of course, I could be wrong.

Everyone seems to come from one section of fandom into the wider pool in strange ways nowadays. Harry Warner Jr. Award Winner Lloyd Penney came through Star Trek Fandom (and has promised me an article on it Real Soon Now) and I've met people who came through comics and Star Wars and even wrestling fandom (that's a long story). H2G2 fandom seems a great way to come into the world of the Fanzinistas!

I love T-shirts. In many ways they eliminate the need to be funny by being an instant piece of quick comedy you wear. I have a huge collection of T-Shirts (about 400, 50 or so I wear at least once a year) and I love the ones with the clever sayings. Hoax shirts (like those for Hoax WorldCon bids or for Bands that never existed) are my faves.

Doug Spencer's 'well-adjusted pervert' line describes my dear friend (and often co-conspirator in The Drink Tank) M Crasdan to a tee. I love people like that because at times, there are things that I love to write about that I know aren't for a majority of my audience. Earl Kemp and eI helps, because I can comment on my connections with the things he writes about.

Max makes some wonderful points. I liked reading Young Adult novels as late of Senior Year in high school. What did I do with that? I majored in Creative Writing with an emphasis on Young Adult Lit. Yeah, I know I made a terrible choice, but what else was I to do?

Nice entry into the world. I can't believe you're only seventeen! I used to be the young guy, but you got me beat! (although I conveniently forgot about folks like Geneva Melzack and Niall Harrison who are both at least five years younger than me). If you'd like another article or two, I'd be happy to give you one.

Good stuff,  
Chris Garcia ([@johnnyeponymous](#)).

In an email exchange about eFanzines and British fans, James pointed out that another British fan pubbing zines there was yourself. So I took a look. I enjoyed what I saw there, and hope you continue.

We don't have ZZ9 clubs in the US, so far as I know. I remember when the books were first coming out and people saw the television show (carried on public television here, as so many British shows are), there were folks at conventions carrying towels around. But Hitchhikers' following didn't seem as dedicated as in your country, and I'm sure there weren't fans who connected with mainstream fandom the way you and Claire Brialey have. Lucky British fandom – Claire's wonderful. (We'll see what to think about you after a few years.)

I don't wear T-shirts too often, which I think is a way of staying in the closet about being a fan. However, I wreck my good impression on non-fans by dropping references to SF cons, SF books and movies, and the tale of how I met Suzanne Tompkins, aka Suzle, to whom I have been married for quite some time.

Doug and Max both had some interesting things to say, while in your article on Lucifer you've got some arguable points. I can't see how the passage you quote from Isaiah can be construed to represent Lucifer as Babylonian Royalty. I have seen translations of Job that calls the Satan figure 'The Adversary'. This may have been in translations meant for Jewish congregations. I've just looked at Wikipedia, and it appears to support my memory that 'Satan' means 'adversary' (or 'accuser,' which I didn't recall).

Anyway, I'll have to keep an eye on eFanzines.com for your second issue.

Jerry Kaufman.

P.S. Suzle and I have a fanzine called Littlebrook, which you can find at eFanzines.com if you're so inclined.

Read your entry into the fanzine world with interest. Getting one started is always the hardest thing to do and you seem to have done admirably as far as beginning content goes.

I am an old time fan – and old old old time fan (Just call me Rip Van Wrinkle.) so I have seen many phases that fandom has gone through, but now I'm sort of back to the beginning, having been GAFIA for around twenty-five years. I also just got my very first computer only a few months ago so I am just learning about online fandom. However, despite all the time that has passed, still much seems familiar.

From its very beginning fandom seems to have had a blind eye toward the ages of its 'members'. What counted was their intelligence, enthusiasm and all that sort of rot. I imagine this is because fans were mostly faceless to each other, communicating by mail, fanzine, etc, and it just carried over when they got into clubs or went to conventions.

T-shirts. Ok, if you like 'em. I tend toward hats myself.

In the bible, the purpose of Satan, as in Job, is as the (if you will pardon the expression) Devil's Advocate, there to test things to make sure they are valid. The bad reputation seems to have come from legend and from the Apocrypha.

As for the overall appearance of Procrastinations, it is quite readable (a plus since I can't say as much for some zines) but the format is sadly lacking in interest. But, perhaps that's not your thing. It's up to you.

Cheers,  
Lee Anne Lavell.



It's quite a helpful coincidence that you stopped procrastinating (or should I say started Procrastination?) about a week after I set up a LiveJournal. I did that because I thought there were fans on LJ – even some I've had contact with in the past, like Steve Green – but had no idea how to find them. And here you've confirmed my hunch and given me a whole list whose journals I shall now be able to follow.

Although I reduced my fanaticism after the mid-eighties and vanished entirely by the mid-nineties, I was active on the zine side from about 1972. One thing I loved, when I was 22, was the chance to talk on a friendly and equal basis with folks old enough to be my parents or grandparents, fans like Donn Brazier, Harry Warner, Buck Coulson, Terry Jeeves, Eric Bentcliffe, and John Berry. In most of my dealings with mundania, relative age was always apparent and always a factor in the communications. Not so in Fandom where what was said was the first thing that was noticed rather than who the writer was and how old. Now, I find myself on the other side of the equation and what's attractive is the chance to talk to people younger than me.

In some sense being a fan is childish. Too many people think curiosity, creativity and imagination are toys that we should put away when we head out to do battle in the adult world. But those are to me what make life worthwhile. I still write and my wife and I co-author mysteries. It is possible to learn to cope with all the crap life tends to throw at you – to mature in that way – without giving up those “childish” interests.

Not being overly familiar with the Bible I don't have anything to add to your article on Lucifer/Satan except I found it very interesting. To the extent I have dipped into the Bible, I've been amazed at what I'd expect to be there -- things people talk about and accept as part of their religion -- which seem to have come from somewhere else. Angels don't figure much either, for instance, or so I recall.

Since I'm not a congoer I don't have convention t-shirts but I pretty much live in the road race t-shirts I accumulated during my few years as a (very slow) runner and I also have a few t-shirts from orienteering meets. Mind you, no one trying to judge me by my shirt would mistake

me for an athlete, thanks to my sensitive fannish frame (i.e. scarecrowesque).

Although simple your design for this is very effective. Hope to see more up at eFanzines soon.

Eric Mayer (eric\_mayer).

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Greetings! I am Lloyd, WINOLJ. (I am learning more and more. Fandom is a never-ending correspondence course, especially when you're heavily into the correspondence.) I may be ending my WINOLJ status soon, you never know, but in the meantime, here are comments on Procrastinations One.

I am sure next issue will be sub-titled Revelations... there will be a lot to talk about. I am told by many, on LJ and not, that there is little of real substance on most LJs, and those that do come up are well buried in the mass of LJ posts. I am glad you are someone who cares to sum up your substantive posts and put them in a fanzine.

Fandom is not always friendly to strangers, and they certainly weren't when I first arrived. But, others eventually were friendly, and as written earlier, fandom always has something new for you to learn. Those unfriendly fans set an example not to follow, and I don't. Life is too short to deal with grouchy people who for some reason don't want you around.

Do the math...if you were 13 in 2002, that means you're 17 now. Few people at that tender age discover fanzines and how much more you can do with such a publication. I can understand that a blog would help you get in touch with others (although I haven't quite figured that part out yet), but nothing beats actually meeting others.

Sitting on my desk right now is a T-shirt I was given this past Friday. I work registration at shows for an outside company, and one of our best clients is Microsoft Canada. They stage shows all the time, and give us t-shirts to wear as we register people. Usually, it's white or black or grey, but this time, it is bright lime green. More and more, polo shirts are replacing t-shirts as general wear. T-shirts look fine on most people; I guess even if I have a fine collection of them, t-shirts usually do not look good on me. (Only redeeming factor of this lime green shirt...it says GEEK STAFF on the back.)

Douglas outlines how important the social aspect of fandom is. You need to be with people. Sometimes, I think I'm an addict. I need regular doses of fun, party, chat and cuddle, and overdoses feel wonderful. I do enough at a computer, so pub nights are great ways to get out and do all of the above and more.

Age keeps too many people apart. I have been told I look about thirty-five, and I don't discourage that, given that chronologically, I am forty-seven. (In terms of maturity, though...we won't go there.) I have been shunned because I am too old or young. Your age should not determine what your interest is. Some may see you as being childish, others would use the term child-like. I like neither, for both are based on the assumption that what your doing is not done by an adult.

I will end it here, and expect that issue two, when it arrives, will be much bigger. My loc for that issue should be, as well. See you then!

Yours,  
Lloyd Penney.

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I'd say the modern version of Lucifer has several origins:

1. Be careful of references to him as a King of Babylon as the name Babylon is often used metaphorically in the Bible as a generic word for

evil. I'm no Bible scholar, but I've picked up on that one, and thus, Lucifer could be Satan in this regard.

2. Look up Zoroastrianism. It's the oldest monotheistic religion and it is essentially dualist having both a good and an evil force (Ahura Mazda vs. Ahriman). Religions like Christianity, Judaism and Islam all have some roots in Zoroastrianism and doubtless draw dualistic elements from it.

3. Read *Paradise Lost*. Milton's version of Lucifer (and his rivalry with God) coloured a lot of modern versions/interpretations of Lucifer. It's pretty heavy going, but even reading the first chapter would give you some idea of the overall theme. Lucifer actually comes across as the good guy in some regards.

Judith Proctor.

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I have to admit, John, that I've been putting this loc off so that I can get other things taken care of first. So before I get back to setting up the quiz for the class I'm teaching tonight, methinks I'll take care of your zine.

A good first issue, and welcome to the broader world of SF fandom. I've read three of the Hitchhiker's novels, and enjoyed them greatly. I have heard of the sub-fandom that focuses on these books, radio programme, and now movie, and think that this link is a good thing. Look at you; HHGG got you suckered in, didn't it?

I agree with your sentiment that SF fandom is getting more 'plugged in' through the Internet, which doesn't surprise me, because it gives us a wonderful means to stay in contact with each other. Fans have a long history of glomming together and nattering away about all and sundry shared interests, and the Internet seems to be a natural extension of this tendency. As such, I don't think SFnal clubs and societies are dying; in fact, they seem to be doing just fine.

T-shirts and jeans are the uniform of the young, have been for many a moon, and are not the sole domain of the SF fan. But you are right in that t-shirts do help in identifying fen. I once saw someone in a shopping mall wearing a t-shirt that loudly proclaimed "I grok Spock", and I knew immediately that this was someone who either 1) was a *Star Trek* fan, and maybe even 2) knew that the term "grok" comes from Heinlein's *Stranger in a Strange Land* and may have even known what that term really means. I didn't bother to strike up a conversation with this person since I was with my wife and kids at the time. Of course, there was the distinct possibility of 3) that this person simply wore that t-shirt because it was the only clean one in the drawer and he didn't care about the imprint. We shall never know the truth.

My students will be getting acquainted with Lucifer when we get into reading and discussing *The Divine Comedy* and Milton's *Paradise Lost*. I know, I know; this sounds like such a fun class, doesn't it? Fortunately, it's a World Lit Survey class, so they don't need to get bogged down in too much detail, just get the gist of what's being written. You ask "why Lucifer/Satan has been portrayed as an adversary to God in the way that he has," and the answer is that he is needed this way as an example of how *not* to live/be; exhorting folks to be good is fine and dandy, but it's more effective and memorable if you can show the error of living in sin, being cast out of heaven (as Lucifer was) because of desiring to be as great as God, and so on. Yeah, keeping peasants in line was one reason, but it goes much further back than that. The more Christian-educated fans reading this I am sure will provide much more in depth responses to this selection.

Max Hawkida makes a good case for why you need to stay involved with fandom: it will keep you sane. A caveat is in order here: don't let fanac get too much control in your life; you must control it. I know from personal experience that it is so tempting to try to Do It All that it is so easy to get overwhelmed by fandom and quickly burn out after a few years. Many years ago someone made the comment that a typical fannish career lasted something like three to five years. I don't know if that holds true anymore, but it sounds about right. Only those who find a happy

medium will linger on in this nut-hole we call Fandom. Sounds like Max has the right idea, too, and I hope you do as well.

A fine first issue. Solicit some drawings from artistically inclined fen to include – and/or import images from the Internet (lots of stuff out there) – and you'll have yourself a decent zine. You're already on your way with some wonderful written contributions. Keep them coming, get locs, and *voila* it is a zine.

Well, *Procrastinations* is a zine already, but you know what I mean. I look forward to seeing your next issue. My latest is attached in trade.

All the best,  
John Purcell.

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Welcome in, John, and congratulations on producing your first fanzine, and a very readable one too. It has a relaxed, breezy tone (which can be serious when needed) that suits a fannish fanzine well. Of course, you have the option, indeed the right to change that at any time. Pub as you please, your audience will find you; mine certainly did (plug for Peregrine Nations, also available at eFanzines.com).

Thanks to Douglas Spencer for his intimate revelation of how he got involved in SF fandom. There are a lot of people braver than I am, to be able to speak of such personal things to a readership larger than one. I've done so a few times, but that's it.

Your exploration into the Christian Biblical Lucifer and Satan was interesting in that I am unfamiliar with the passages you quoted, but then I'm not much of a Bible reader. I find it interesting that the phrase "Devil's advocate" refers to an alternate viewpoint (not always the exact opposite) for any given argument, and seems used most often to track all possible outcomes of a particular action, in order to be prepared for those

outcomes. In this sense, the Devil position is more of a help than a hurt, it seems to me.

May you continue to find fen willing to provide you with fanzine material as good as what you've already received. If there's a second issue, would you let readers know what sort of articles you'd accept as contributions?

Jan Stinson.

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I have heard about Procrastinations here and there, so I printed it from eFanzines.com. For a first fanzine it's very promising, and I hope you want to do more issues.

I agree about T-shirts. I always wear T-shirts at conventions, and they are the part of my wardrobe I give most attention to. And they can help you get identified, just as you say. When I went to my first US Worldcon (Magicon) in 1992, I did not know any American fans. My fellow Swedish fan, Mats Henrikson, knew some, so he asked Spike Parsons to look for me. Now, at Worldcons, even people who have known each other for twenty years have problems finding each other, so you can imagine trying to find someone you have never met among five thousand people. The only instruction Mats gave Spike was to look for a guy in glasses and a really cool T-shirt. But it worked: I was sitting in the fan lounge, reading something, when I heard someone say: "Lennart?"

So there you go.

Cheers,  
Lennart Uhlin.

## Closing Remarks.

I have a feeling that the publication of issue one of Procrastinations is responsible for my nomination for the 2007 FAAn Awards for “Best New Fan”. This makes me happy and is further proof that the first ish I pubbed seems to have been fairly well-received. Further proof can be found in the bordering-on obscene amount of LOCs that I received – many thanks to all you people who bothered to write in to me and give me more things to put in my zine! I would have written a response for the fanzine, but I ran out of room – maybe next ish.

This fanzine, originally, would have carried logos and plugs for Chris Garcia’s TAFF bid. Unfortunately, due to Convoy’s demise, the TAFF race for 2007 has been cancelled, and the plugs I had in mind won’t be appearing. Maybe next year, then.

The eagle-eyed amongst my many fans (ha!) will have noticed that they haven’t read issue two yet but they’ve got a copy of issue three. Issue two is on a certain theme and will be released when I have enough material to support it – so I have no idea when it’ll be released. I know you’ll all be waiting with bated breath.

Thanks and acknowledgements go (as well as the LOCers) to Chris Garcia, James Bacon and Jan Stinson, without whom I’d have had nothing to say. Thanks, guys!

Oh, and finally, an apology to John Purcell – I fully intended to have an article about the Beeblebears’ Picnic in this issue, but due to certain circumstances I find myself without one to include. This shall be rectified in the future!

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