

Eternal Sunshine #142

March 2021

By Douglas Kent - 911 Irene Drive, Mesquite, TX 75149

Email: dougray30@yahoo.com

On Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/270968112943024/> or on the web at <http://www.whiningkentpigs.com/DW/>. Follow on Twitter at @EternalSunshDip. Also be sure to visit the official Diplomacy World website at <http://www.diplomacyworld.net>.

Sign up for the Eternal Sunshine Mailing List at
<https://mailchi.mp/45376bbd05df/eternalsunshine>

Check out my eBay store at <http://stores.ebay.com/dougsrarebooksandmore>

Quote of The Month – “Wouldn’t this be a great world if insecurity and desperation made us more attractive? If needy were a turn-on?” - (Aaron Altman in “Broadcast News”)

Welcome to **Eternal Sunshine**, the only Dipzine published by a guy who has scars all down his right calf, caused by over a decade of a cat coming up and scratching at his leg whenever she wants attention. It’s sort of like being married, but with less hitting and blaming. I’ve actually started noticing some of the scars have formed a larger blotch, which is a way similar to the large scar on my left calf from my melanoma surgery. I almost have a matching set. So, perhaps Sanka isn’t being a jerk, she’s just a fan of symmetry.

It has been a long, long month since the last issue. First there was the deep freeze here and Texas (along with some pretty snow and plenty of ice). I won’t bore you with details, as you’ve already seen or read plenty about it elsewhere. As you’d expect, a lot of the media coverage was sensationalized, at least in terms of bothering to explain the real circumstances and how widespread they were. Some of it was a bit mean-spirited, but I doubt they realize it as they write it. It’s no different than the way anything else is covered. Social media only exacerbates the problem. I now have to add weather and power grids to the list of topics everyone on the planet seems to be a certified expert in. That’s something I still let bother me, which of course is my own fault. It’s one thing when you have an intelligent debate about a given topic, where sometimes it is a simple difference of opinion and other times a full-on clash in belief systems. But it’s another when you try to discuss a topic and it’s nothing but a contest of who can yell loudest and throw the largest quantity inane “facts” into the fire. I just had this kind of debate with someone over the decision to stop publishing six Dr. Seuss titles. They were stomping around decrying “Censorship” and proclaiming that “nobody will stop me from enjoying Dr. Seuss.” I tried to explain to them that a) it’s the estate of Dr. Seuss doing this, not the government or some social media mob; b) it’s only six books; and c) if they are truly outraged, running online and buying a bunch of Dr. Seuss books from Amazon “in protest” is only giving money back to the very people who made the decision in the first place. Granted, I do agree that the decisions of eBay and Amazon to not even allow the buying and selling of *used* copies of these books smacks of censorship, uneven treatment, and outright idiocy. **That** is the only decision I have an issue with.

That’s when the guy started doing the thing I hate most: arguing with me about things I know to be untrue. You can have any opinion you want, that’s up to you. But don’t come at me with “facts” which are simply wrong. This fellow started lecturing me about why things go out of print. “The only time books go out of print is if they don’t sell.” Ignorance is a difficult thing to work around. It reminds me of how, on the Mesquite Facebook group I am a part of, everyone tags the Mayor in discussions that have nothing to do with the City or its government. Complaints about power being out? Tag the Mayor. Someone starts a discussion about how we “need” this restaurant or that business to open a location in our town? Tag the Mayor. There’s such an odd dichotomy in many parts of this nation; people say they don’t want a dictator, don’t want government intruding in every avenue of their lives, but they look to government to solve every single problem that comes up (and 95% of the time, the Federal government).

It isn’t just this kind of thing that gets my blood boiling a bit, but any discussion where someone with less knowledge and less experience tells me things I know to be untrue and refuses to allow for the slightest possibility that they are wrong. I get this a **lot** lately from eBay, where I have a store with 1,300 items for sale (and where I’ve been a member since 1996, which is longer than some of their front-line Customer Service Reps have been alive). I’ll try not to get too technical with the details, but I’ve bashed my head against a brick wall three or four

times in the last year with them. First example: eBay created an eBay Shipping program. This was for international shipments, selected from the seller side. When you buy the postage for a package, instead of choosing USPS or Fedex or DHL for the shipper, you can choose eBay Shipping. Under this choice, you print a custom label which uses USPS to get the package to a distribution center in Kentucky, from which eBay then uses a carrier of their choice to complete the journey to the destination country. For a tracking number, eBay gives you an internal tracking number from their own system which combines all portions of the shipment into one place. You check the status, it combines the USPS portion with the DHL or whoever portion under one result. This internal tracking number is also on the label that you attach to the outside of the package. However – and this is the important part – the package also has a standard USPS tracking number on the label, necessary for the postal service to process it and get it from me to Kentucky. Here's where the problem comes in: eBay has no way or telling you THAT tracking number, even though their tracking system is using that number to pull tracking information from USPS. So when a package disappears between here and Kentucky, I have no way of getting the USPS tracking number to file a "missing package" complaint, or a "lost package" insurance claim. When I called eBay numerous times over this problem, they continued to insist ***no USPS tracking number was ever issued for the package***. I know this to be untrue for so many reasons, including the fact that I see such a number on every eBay Shipping label I print, the fact that USPS won't accept a package without a tracking number if it can be tracked, and most importantly because they're pulling the tracking information on the eBay website directly from the USPS to begin with. It isn't that these CSR's were telling me they couldn't GET the tracking number. No they insisted there wasn't one to get in the first place. (They also had a very annoying habit of answering my questions with things related to the eBay Global Shipping Program, which is an entirely different service that the buyer selects, not the seller). I think after six hours and eight phone calls, I found a person who actually understood the problem, and who called me back two days later to confirm that there simply was no way for anyone to access the system in a way that allows them to see the number. This response was miraculous in two ways: first, someone decided to look into things to realize I was correct (which simple knowledge and logic should have made obvious); and second, that someone at eBay actually called me back as promised. (As a workaround to this problem, I now print a pdf copy of the label for every international package, so I have a way to find the number if I need it).

My latest argument with eBay is a similar clusterfuck of uninformed CSRs locked up in a room in some foreign country, reading from a notebook with canned responses. I bought a book at auction and put it up for sale on eBay, as usual. It was up for five months or so, and had a few buyers "watching" it as they considered a purchase. Then out of the blue I get a message from eBay: they removed my listing because it violated community standards, and needs to be listed in the Adult section (which is next to impossible to find and hardly anyone can see or search items in). I call to ask why it was removed, spend twenty minutes with a CSR who knows nothing about my problem despite my explaining it in detail, and then spend twenty more minutes with someone in the "appropriate department" who seems to at least understand I am looking for a better explanation of how a book with no sex, no photos, and no drawings violated community standards. (It's actually a respected satire of erotic literature, in its own way, and the mass market edition of the book is now published by Penguin Literature Classics). I am promised I will be contacted again within 72 hours. Nearly an hour down the drain, but at least I can get some kind of answer.

As you probably guessed, I hear nothing. I wait a week and call back, starting the whole process again. (There is no longer live chat help available for sellers, and the "email a problem" choice is basically the same as yelling out the window). So...call, explain it to a CSR who knows nothing, and after 20 minutes they connect me to the "appropriate department" again. Turns out this department doesn't have (or doesn't know how to access) a way to see the notes from the person I spoke to a week before. I'm getting pissed now. Not just because I am wasting time and energy. Now just because I have to start at square one over and over. And now just because I can't figure out why they removed my listing. But on top of all that, I can see 18 listings in the U.S. (and more internationally) of the same book in the normal category area (which is where mine was), including ***two of the exact same limited-edition version that I was selling***. It's bad enough that eBay has cancelled my ability to sell this book, but it appears I am the only one being treated this way. So another forty minutes of explaining, waiting, complaining, demanding...with no result. All they can tell me is they THINK the book was removed because the title includes the word "spanking." And that I need to list it in the Adult section. And that they will send this on to higher-ups for a better response within seventy-two hours. I'm not shy at this stage, and I offer to wager any amount of money the CSR wants that I will not hear back from anyone, at any time. "I'm taking full responsibility here sir, I will be the one calling you back within 72 hours, even if it is just to say it's still being investigated." There's no direct number to call their department, and no way to directly contact this CSR again, but I should supposedly be satisfied.

This doesn't even get into the other problems. First, I can't just relist the book in the normal book section, because they could suspend my entire account over it. Second, if I did list this book in the Adult section, hardly any normal book collector is going to see it in their search results. Despite the fact that my copy was offered for 50% less than the other two listings of this edition, it won't be noticed. Third, if someone unfamiliar with the book

decided to buy it from the Adult area, odds are they're going to want to return it because ***there is nothing adult about the book!*** And since in order to get the best ratings and lowest fees on my listings, I have to offer 30-day returns at MY expense. Third, and most important: I am part of the new eBay Managed Payments program (which everyone is eventually being pushed into). Under the terms of that program, ***I am not allowed to list anything in the adult section at all.*** They don't want to process payments for adult material. But when I tell these CSRs that, they argue with me, tell me I am wrong, tell me I don't know what I am talking about, and I need to just list my book there. (I did call the Managed Payments program a few days ago..they confirmed I am 100% correct. Not only am I not allowed to list it there, but with my participation in the program, it will automatically be blocked. I couldn't list it there if I wanted to).

After no response, again, I went through the same routine a third time. And again, no response even after my complaint was "escalated." I can't relist my book, I can't list it where they tell me to, nobody else has had their books removed, I can't get a straight answer as to why they removed mine (except that it was NOT in response to a complaint from an eBay user). I've got a book I want to offer for \$180 that is going to be collecting dust for a good while. At this rate, I'll be dead by the time things are resolved or I get a definitive answer.

But through the whole mess, I could handle my emotional response better if – just once – I found a CSR with a touch of empathy or simply one who understood why I was frustrated. But they don't. They have all the answers...they think. They just read what's on the screen, without thinking, and that's the gospel. I've only been on eBay for approaching 25 years, how could I possibly know what I'm talking about? It's the refusal to listen, think, or consider that gets to me. And the insistence that they know what they're talking about (up to and including the guarantee someone will contact me after escalation, within 72 hours). I don't like being lied to. Empty assurances are worse than none at all.

I got way off track there. Where did I start? Oh yeah, the winter storm. It was stressful, triggering a lot of anxiety for me (mostly over whether I could keep pipes from freezing). But I've made it through, with (knock on wood) little or no measurable damage. My shrubs are not in great shape, but that's about it. Even the feral cats that sometimes hang out in my back yard (I have GOT to catch them and bring them in for TNR, but I haven't been able to do that when it is cold outside) all made it through. The hardest-hit seem to be apartment dwellers, some of who went without water for two weeks. The problem is the water lines are just not deep enough (or insulated enough when in the walls) to withstand that much cold for that long. Pipes delivering the water to the various apartment buildings – privately owned pipes, not city pipes generally) – freeze and crack. Then they have to shut the water off. It takes time to repair. And once it is repaired, you turn the water on...and discover cracked pipes in the building walls. Now you shut it off again, find the leaks, repair them (time consuming again), turn it on...and find burst pipes feeding individual apartments. Wash, rinse, repeat.

One thing I do want to say about the City of Mesquite water department: they recognize that having residents drip their faucets during the freeze was a positive for everyone. (Although that term isn't really a good one; I think a very slow stream is much better in the kinds of long freezes we saw than a faucet dripping every three seconds). It may have "wasted" water but it kept the number of city water main breaks down, and also kept the number of frozen pipes in private homes down. That, in turn, reduced the amount of water which would have been wasted when they unfroze, and the heavy damage a burst pipe in a wall can cause. So they sent a notice out late in February to say that whatever your next water bill reads, you'll be charged the lower of the prior bill or the new bill automatically. If you used a lot more water in an effort to keep your pipes safe, or if you had a burst pipe and that dumped hundreds of gallons, it won't cost you anything from their department. That's both intelligent and clever...it's good PR, makes sense, and the fact is they would have been inundated with people asking for adjustments because of the burst pipes they suffered (which the City routinely grants anyway). Better just to avoid the whole mess and do it across the board.

Once the weather issues were behind me, I was back to focusing on a problem I first developed in late January and which I mentioned last issue: some kind of inner ear thing. I had a terrible ear infection back in August and September of 2019. When I saw the PA at my doctor's office for that she told me I was within 48 hours or so of a ruptured eardrum. (She also wondered how I could be walking around given the level of agony I was most like suffering, to which I jokingly replied "it's nothing compared to my last marriage.") Steroids and antibiotics cleared that up after a few weeks. Since then, I've had occasional bouts of vertigo, especially when at work (on the 13th floor) during times when new weather fronts are moving through. I guess the sudden change in barometric pressure triggers it. I saw the PA again in October 2020 for this issue, and a physical, and she didn't see anything wrong with me. So for the time being she agreed with my assessment and said if it became a real problem I needed to see a specialist.

In late January the constant low-level ringing in my ears suddenly became demonstrably louder. My vertigo was back, but more frequent and stronger. I could feel definite pressure in my ears and on my eardrums, and I had

developed a metallic taste in my mouth. If you've ever had a tooth abscess, it tasted a little like that but not as bad. I ignored this, as usual, for a few days. But when nothing changed, I made an appointment with my doctor. Unfortunately, the PA I like was out that week, and the doctor I've been seeing for seven years had decided to semi-tire, relocate out to Marfa, TX, and work on a limited basis there. A new doctor had taken over the practice, and I'd be seeing him.

I don't like this guy. He reminded me of the "the Doctor is God" types that Mara would bump into before she was diagnosed with Crohn's Disease. I know we'd never met before, but the least he could have done was look at my chart. He looked in one of my ears (not the other, not up my nose, nothing) and declared he saw nothing wrong except what might be an excess of ear wax. He suggested an over-the-counter treatment for that, but also said he'd prescribe me some ear drops (a combination of Cipro antibiotic and steroids) just in case. They must have been made from the tears of angels, because a generic, tiny bottle of this stuff costs \$180 after insurance. I wound up using an internet coupon to get them for \$110 with no insurance filed. A lot less, but considering I know what Cipro as an oral pill costs this seemed stupidly expensive on its own. As for the metallic taste in my mouth, he explained it had no connection to the rest of my symptoms. It was acid reflux. He began to explain to me what Prilosec was and how I should buy some at the pharmacy. I tried to interrupt, but he just talked over me. Finally, I was able to get a word in edgewise, and said I already take something for reflux. He just brushed me off and told me I needed to try Nexium instead, and maybe go to 40mg. I just sighed at the smug look on his face, and pointed out that if he just looked at the screen in front of him (which the tech who took my blood pressure and stuff confirmed and updated) he'd see his predecessor had been prescribing me that for five years now. I'm not an idiot, I know that this metallic taste was a result of whatever was going on with my sinuses and ears, whether it was an infection or not. It emanated from the upper edges of my mouth, between my gum and cheek, not up from my esophagus. And it increases in strength momentarily if I rub my sinuses or along my jaw line. But he wasn't interested, and I wasn't going to sit there fighting with the guy just so he could charge me more for the visit. He suggested if I wasn't better in two weeks, maybe I should see an ENT.

The drops were almost useless. And a good deal of them would drip back out of my ear no matter how long I tilted my head or laid on my side, and regardless of how much pressure I used to try and get some through my ear drums into the middle or inner ear. I found an ENT and made an appointment, because I knew I wasn't likely to improve anytime soon, and there is always a wait to see a specialist as a new patient. Luckily, I was able to get an opening about a week later...which was then cancelled because of the storm. My new appointment had to be pushed back to March 12. I was determined to stick it out until then. The vertigo was no fun, and the pressure in my ears and pain in my sinuses was seriously trying my patience. I've been crabby and short, while still recovering from all the stress of the winter storm. I tried treating things the best I could with the antihistamine nasal spray and pills I had on hand, plus OTC decongestants. But those decongestants make my heart feel like it is pounding, a problem I already face when I am overly anxious. Inevitably I would look on the internet for possible other medical problems that might be causing these symptoms. My blood pressure at the doctor's office had been unusually high for me, over 140 (but the cuff was put over my sweater sleeve, which I think makes it useless). Was I developing high blood pressure? My tongue edges and lips felt tingly sometimes, were there mini strokes? I also worry about hydrocephalus because my Dad had it and needed a stent put in his spinal column, but I can never remember the symptoms and when I look them up, they don't match. My anxiety was growing, my symptoms were getting worse, my sleep was there but light and easily interrupted. Add to that the fact that I have been slowly weaning off my anti-anxiety meds for the last year. I've gone very slow...could that be making any of this happen? At the very least it might be increasing my anxiety, so I decided to take a small step back and up the dose to what I was taking a month or two ago.

Friday March 5th was a bad night. I had been hit with a migraine that day at work (the first time in six weeks), and took an Imitrex to combat it. Imitrex is a weird drug; it helps most of the migraine symptoms but makes you feel like shit on other ways. It's the lesser of two evils by a large margin. My sinus and ear problems get worse as afternoon moves into evening, so I was feeling doubly like crap. And then as I sat at home trying to relax (after laundry and dinner) my vision got blurry and I saw rainbows...always my first sign of a migraine. A **second** damn migraine? That hasn't happened to me in forever! So another Imitrex, and off to bed. But I couldn't really sleep. And I was feeling worse. And worse. And getting anxious. Racing thoughts. Was I going to have a stroke or an embolism or an aneurism and just drop dead? The only symptom I **didn't** have that so many diagnosis websites list for a lot of problems is shortness of breath. My lungs were good, my breathing was good. Sure, I felt like my heart was banging like a drum, but the pulse was not rapid. I even thought about finding some 24-hour place I could go, or – ugh – an emergency room. But for what? I finally decided it could wait. I probably would wake up in the morning, alive and miserable...but alive.

I knew what my plan was going to be. Go back to see the doctor I used to see up to 2013 or so. It's one of those family health places where you never, ever see the doctor, just PA's and NA's. I did see the Big Man once though: he is the one who performed the original excision of what turned out to be malignant melanoma in 2000. He sliced

it off, sent it for testing (despite both of us acknowledging that it didn't look at all like the pictures in the skin cancer warning pamphlets). He figured the whole thing was a "waste of time" but a necessary one, just on case. And then a few days later he was the one who called me personally to tell me it was melanoma, and malignant. "Okay, but you cut it off, so we're all good now right?" No, not exactly...it turns out that's not how things work.

I've always gotten good care at this office though, for general health problems. Mara went a few times, and I even had Heather go for a while. Funny, I just mentioned this to her via text a month ago; one time she did something to her back and couldn't walk without being in terrible agony. We went to this doctor, and she was one of the PA's. It took her five minutes or limping and resting to make it to the exam room. The PA had her lie on her stomach, and manipulated the muscles in her back for about one minute, and then told her to get up and walk and see how things were. Heather looked at her like she was crazy, but reluctantly tried it. And it was sore, but she was able to walk (gingerly, but nearly normally). It was like magic. The PA explained the muscle had actually gotten twisted in some way and then stuck; she just untwisted it.

I knew they might have an opening at some point on Saturday, but I wasn't willing to wait and find out. They open at 8am (I had to look that up on the web, and then called to be sure they didn't have some recording about being closed due to storm damage or something). So I was there at 7:45am, already third in line. Two of those people were walk-ins, which I remembered this office always allowed. Anyway, I only had to wait about 45 minutes, and then in I went. Blood pressure good (my boss has a cuff – that he never uses – so I'd checked mine a few times a week since the appointment with the jerk and it always reads normal, but I was glad to have a professional reading confirm that). I was seen by a very nice NA who understood not only my symptoms, but who listened to hear my complaint about my other doctor (and my explanation for why I was probably going to switch back to their clinic despite it no longer being that close to work or home). She looked in both ears and told me the left one was worse. She also said I didn't have any wax in my ears to speak of, actually less than normal, and suggested that other doctor was just lazy or had some kind of preconceived notion about my issues. And that the drops he gave me were mostly effective for outer ear problems, not much for inner or middle ear. But she wasn't just trying to appease me. She explained that most ear issues are viral in nature, and antibiotics are obviously useless for that. But if the problems persist, bacterial was either the cause all along, or had jumped into the pool for some fun. "After three weeks of this stuff, you're a done deal." A cortisone shot, a round of antibiotics, and some prescription cough syrup (no codeine, just stronger than OTC and with the evil pseudoephedrine as the decongestant) were the treatment prescribed. And, of course, I'm keeping the ENT appointment just in case there's a larger issue at play causing this to happen more than once.

24 hours later, as I write this part of the zine, I'm feeling a little better, certainly no worse. The syrup and cortisone shit are helping, and I figure in another 24 hours the antibiotics will start to kick in. Oh, one word of advice: when your doctor gives you cough syrup, don't screw up and swallow a spoonful the wrong way. It burns like acid, and kind of defeats the purpose since you'll be coughing for hours because of it. I'm so suave and debonair.

It isn't just the medicine though. I also feel better because at last I had a professional examine me and tell me yes, you've got an ear infection and a sinus infection. Because in all likelihood, that's ALL I have. But when medical professionals don't bother to diagnose you, don't listen to you, and don't intelligently explain what they think and why they are recommending a given course of treatment, you're left alone to figure things out by yourself. In my opinion, the least the first guy could have done was to say "if you're not better in a week, call here and I'll prescribe you something else." Of course, my notoriously bad timing added to the chaos. The winter storm put my appointment with the ENT way in the future (and I have to imagine that doctor would have given me something). It reminds me of that first ear infection. It took me a week to get in and see the PA that time, because there was a holiday (I think Labor Day) and then they were closed for a week while they changed over to a new computer system as they joined a different medical group. When I finally got in the door, they were just starting to learn how things worked, so they had to go off of paper charts and spend extra time typing stuff back into the system that hadn't been ported over. Oh well. On Friday the 1th I saw an ENT, who felt my infection was clearing up and that the tingling in my face (and other symptoms) that were aggravated by the infection might actually be caused by TMJ issues and teeth grinding (I have a long history of grinding my teeth while I sleep). I suppose that's good news, because face tingling is always mentioned as a symptom of Multiple Sclerosis and I'm not really interested in being diagnosed with that. I'm to finish up the antibiotics, look into getting a grinding appliance from my dentist, and report back in a few months. Sigh, and then on deadline day I wake up with a migraine. I need to see a neurologist. I'll give you an update on how I'm doing in Eternal Sunshine #143.

Speaking of which...**look carefully at the deadlines listen in this issue!** Normally the deadline is on the second Sunday of the month (with Acquire the night before, and subzines earlier). This month we're deviating from that schedule by one day. I've signed up to play in the Virtual SF Whipping Diplomacy Tournament (my first such attempt, although I think I signed up for Virtual DixieCon and had to cancel due to las-minute work that was

dumped in my lap). I really enjoyed watching the Diplomacy Broadcast Network's live coverage of the DBN Invitational 2021, which Peter McNamara took the top spot in. You should subscribe to the DBN Youtube channel at https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCj88H0KNyakiUXuN7jSz_EQ although I decided to watch the Top Board on their Twitch stream at <https://www.twitch.tv/diplomacybroadcastnetwork>. It was the same live stream both places, but the chats don't intermingle. Jack McHugh and I debated moves and positions in the Twitch chat through most of the game, mixed with our twisted sense of humor. Anyway, that inspired me to go ahead and get my ass kicked in the Whipping tournament, which happens to fall on the normal deadline day. Rather than try to do everything at once, I pushed the ES deadline back to Friday night at 7pm my time, with Acquire a day earlier. I expect the deadline in May will go back to the normal schedule. I have no illusions about doing well at Whipping. I've never played a virtual tournament like this, I have barely any experience with Discord (where the players will talk to each other...I don't even have a decent set of headphones and mic yet)...and most importantly, I am simply not a very good player. My midgame and endgame is weak tactically, and I doubt my lack of ftf or virtual negotiating will be a plus. Add to that the fact that I am Lead Editor of **Diplomacy World** and my name is recognized by a lot of people in the hobby? They most likely think I know what the hell I'm doing. I predict two quick eliminations. So be it. Regardless, I'll do my best to remind everyone as the month goes on about the different deadlines. Not really interested in dealing with a slew of NMRs or late orders.

Oh, and just a plug: the deadline for **Diplomacy World** is April 1. I'm desperately looking for articles, letters, humor, convention reports, variants...anything you feel like writing, or just as importantly anything you can get OTHERS to write. There are also a number of open positions in the **Diplomacy World Staff** list. The Co-Editor position has been empty since Jim Burgess died in 2017. No *wonder* I feel like I'm just treading water. **Diplomacy World** needs your help, your input, your contributions and submissions. And it needs you to spread the word! When you subscribe to the DBN Youtube channel, maybe you'll see an interview with yours truly about the past, present, and future of the zine? If it isn't there yet, it will be soon, so keep your eyes open. David Hood is trying his best to get more of the hobby involved with the zine again.

I guess that's it from me for now. See you in April!

Game Openings

Diplomacy (Black Press): Signed up: Brad Wilson, Paul Milewski, needs five more.

Gunboat (No Press): Check out the opening in Andy York's subzine. **Only one spot left! Sign up through Andy York ONLY!**

By Popular Demand: Ongoing. **Join in the fun! You can join at any time.**

Where in the World is Kendo Nagasaki?: Ongoing. **Join in and play NOW!**

Also in Andy York's Subzine – You can find his ongoing "Hangman, By Definition" and Facts in Five, plus an opening for Breaking Away.

Standby List: HELP! I need standby players! – Current standby list: Andy York, Andy Lischett, Paul Milewski, Harold Reynolds, Jack McHugh, Brad Wilson.

Meet Me in Montauk The Eternal Sunshine Letter Column

George Atkins: I read your last editorial (#141) with great interest and sympathy. Your "reunion" experience is one reason I avoid going to school reunions (class of '69), especially as I moved out of my home state back in '75, losing touch with virtually all of my old friends. I suppose it is the case that some relationships exist only in a limited space and time and are not meant to be trifled with. It is, indeed, bittersweet to look back. My wife gets

together every year with several of her childhood friends, but has maintained a regular, close friendship with at least one of them. But then, she is still living in the same area in which she grew up.

I can look back on my childhood (and early college days) and recall fun (and not-so-fun) times I had with my friends. I also had some good friends in my early years in college, and we remained friends for several years. But when I moved away, that all changed. When I go back home now, they are distant (some literally distant, having also moved), though still polite. Either the joy of old friendship seems more on one side than the other, or the sides no longer line up. I don't blame them, after all; I am the one who moved away. Memories are best kept as memories, I suppose. <Feel free to insert wistful thoughts here.>

[[I was sort of amazed at the number of kids I knew who elementary school who have lived most of their lives in that same area (except perhaps leaving for college). My High School classmates, by contrast, are spread all over the globe.

As things worked out, after we spent time sharing those memories many of us have kept to ourselves for years, we haven't had much to say to each other. With one or two exceptions, I am sure that's the way it will remain.]]

Andy York: Hope the ear issue has been resolved and you're back to your usual slightly surly self (can't quite say "normal chipper" self). Sorry the doctor was so distracted and aloof.

[[Unfortunately, as you'll read, things haven't gone as well as I hoped. But I'm not dead yet.]]

Cool that you reconnected with someone from your elementary school days It's great that it brought back good memories and recollections. Also, that you were able to revise your negatives thoughts about the time into something positive!

[[It really was a treat (in some ways) to reconnect with a few of them. We don't have a lot to talk about, but I do plan on meeting up with a couple if I ever drag my sorry ass up north again.]]

The Dining Dead – Eternal Sunshine Movie Reviews

As you can see, I haven't been watching nearly as many movies the last month. Instead, I've spent time catching up on the documentary submissions for my friend's annual documentary film festival. I am gaining ground at last, but I still have about 45 submissions to get through (plus whatever gets submitted between now and June). I also began watching **Twin Peaks** again, which is something I seem to do annually around February 24th (the day Laura Palmer's body was found, and the day Special Agent Cooper arrived in Twin Peaks). These days I have **Twin Peaks: The Return** to include in that ritual too.

The Ninth Configuration (Shudder) – A film written and directed by William Peter Blatty, who wrote *The Exorcist*. This is not a horror movie at all. It's more like two movies in one. Half farce, half drama. Stacy Keach stars as Colonel Kane. As the film begins, he has arrived at a military asylum housed in a castle in the Pacific Northwest. It's used to treat Vietnam-era soldiers who may or may not be suffering mental breakdowns; it seems to be accepted that some are truly suffering while others are faking it. Ed Flanders plays Colonel Fell, the other head psychiatrist. Among the patients are Billy Cutshaw (Scott Wilson) who refuses to be sent to the moon, or discuss openly his reasons. Cutshaw is Kane's special focus.

There are a number of other patients who move in and out of scenes, including Jason Miller who played Father Karras in *The Exorcist*. Here he plays Lt. Reno, who is trying to organize a group of dogs to perform Shakespeare's Julius Caesar. The first half of the film is sort of a mixture of **Catch-22** and **One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest**. But soon it starts exploring deeper themes through conversations between Kane and Cutshaw, such as the meaning of life, the existence of God, and whether man has a divine purpose or plan. The movie starts kind of slow, but just when I was going to give up it finally got its legs. It's not a great film by any means, and the plot twist is painfully obvious. But how things play out is not at all obvious, and that helps elevate the film as a whole. As I say about a lot of these movies, I wouldn't spend a lot of energy searching this out, but if you happen across it, I'd say it's worth a watch.

The Dark and The Wicked (Shudder) – Bryan Bertino (who wrote the 2008 thriller **The Strangers**) wrote and directed this Shudder exclusive. Louise and Michael (Marin Ireland and Michael Abbott Jr.) are two grown siblings

who return to their rural sheep farm because their father is dying, against the wishes of their mother. And...stuff happens. That's about all the description you need. The first third of the film has some decent eerie tones and a few less-than-effective jump scares. But after that, the plot loses all focus and I was just left wondering how it was going to end. I almost jumped ahead just to find out rather than finish. In truth, there's a scene just after the halfway point – I'll call it the bonfire scene – where the film completely peaks. From there on you get nothing new, nothing meaningful, nothing scary...just stuff. The last fifteen minutes are a major disappointment. I've seen worse, of course, and as I said the early part of the movie is generally effective despite borrowing from other films. But that's not enough to warrant spending the time to watch it. Pass.

Fury of the Demon (Amazon) – I kind of liked what writer and director Fabien Delage did here. Positioned as a documentary about a lost short film entitled *Fury of the Demon* (or more accurately **La Rage du Demon** as it was a French film), what we get is fiction mixed with fact. That makes the whole a lot more interesting. As explained, *La Rage du Demon* is a short film made in France around 1897, and which causes audiences to go berserk and attack each other while watching it. Sort of like the lost film in John Carpenter's effective **Cigarette Burns**. But this "documentary" (nearly all in French with French subtitles) starts off addressing the question of who might have created this film in the first place. The original "suspect" is the legendary French filmmaker Georges Méliès, who invented many of the first special effects and superimpositions used in film, and basically created the horror genre entirely. It was this focus on the true history of Georges Méliès and his films that made the documentary interesting and enjoyable to me. Because I love film history, the way Delage chose to build his story around the truth of French filmmaking in the late 19th century made it a lot more fun. Soon we're introduced to Victor Sicarius, a friend of Méliès who was heavily into spiritualism and witchcraft. And he becomes the more likely filmmaker for this elusive and dangerous movie. Delage also managed to get a few real film historians and filmmakers to "discuss" **La Rage du Demon** and the mystery that surrounds it. As a bonus, the whole documentary is only an hour long, so it never has a chance to really drag. If you like film history and can appreciate some fiction mixed in with the true facts, it's a good time.

Older Movies Watched on DVD (that I've seen many times) – American Splendor, The Blair Witch Project, Twin Peaks (the original two seasons, the TP Revisited season, and Fire Walk With Me), A Dog Named Gucci, Psycho, Gandhi.

Octopus's Garden

Issue Ninety-Five

12th March 2021



Sub-editorial

HELLO, good evening and welcome to Octopus's Garden, the subzzen with its very own Railway Rivals game. It is a subzzen to Douglas Kent's [Eternal Sunshine](#). It's produced by Peter Sullivan peter@burdonvale.co.uk. It's also available on the web at: <http://www.burdonvale.co.uk/octopus/>.

Round 2 (RR 2473 B) — "Garrett Hobart" — Railway Rivals Map "B" (Lon&Lpl)

JGL black (John David Galt)

2a) (Wolverhampton) - K20 - Birmingham [+6] - M22 [-4 H] ;

2b) (M22) - N22 [-3 H] - Coventry [-1 H] - C63 [-3 H] ;

2c) (C63) - J66.

=46+12-11{H}=47

AYUP yellow (Mark Firth)

2a) (C50) - C54 - Nottingham [+6] ;

2b) (Nottingham) - F55 - F57 ;

2c) (F57) - Peterborough [+6] ; (A44) - Bradford [+6].

=32+18=50

HJA red (Hank Alme)

2a) (Coventry) - N22 - Birmingham - J20 ;

2b) (Coventry) - D60 - Leicester [=6] ;

2c) (Leicester) - E59 - I61 - Peterborough.

=37+6+11{J}+2[B]=56

BASH sky-blue (Bob Blanchett)

2a) (Gloucester) - I28 - I24 ;

2b) (I24) - I23 - J22 - J21 - Birmingham ;

2c) (Birmingham) - I20 [-2 H] - Wolverhampton - L17 {one short}.

=21-2[H]=19

Rolls for Round Three: 6, 7, 6. Orders to me, Peter Sullivan, at peter@burdonvale.co.uk
by WEDNESDAY, 7th APRIL 2021.

The payments around Birmingham - L21 - Coventry are tricky; the sort of thing where a GM ends up plotting it half-hex by half-hex in order to check that he's got it right! Remember you only pay 1 point per half-hex for parallels in the same round, but 2 points for parallels against track built in a previous round. Also, you do not pay for either parallels or connections inside a city hex. (The way this was explained to me long, long ago is that it provides a mild incentive to do your junctions at cities, which reflects 'history' better – as well as making for a neater map!.)

*Roger Ebert wasn't a fan of actor/director Vincent Gallo's 2003 movie *The Brown Bunny* – a fact that he made no secret of in his zero-star review of the film, which ignited a very public battle of words between the film critic and the film's star and director.*

*"I had a colonoscopy once, and they let me watch it on TV. It was more entertaining than *The Brown Bunny*," Ebert wrote. When Gallo responded by mocking Ebert's weight, Ebert said, "It is true that I am fat, but one day I will be thin, and he will still be the director of *The Brown Bunny*."*

– 'Movies Roger Ebert Really Hated'

That was Octopus's Garden #95, Startling Press production number 391.

Find!

Out of the WAY #31

by W. Andrew York
(wandrew88 of gmail.com)

Howdy!

Busy month for me, and good news – beginning Monday I’m eligible for a C-19 vaccine (opens up for the 50-64 crowd). So, guess what I’ll be doing much of that day, and Tuesday and Wednesday. Actually, I’m hoping it won’t be that difficult to go through to my doctor/insurance (both Baylor Scott & White). I called a couple times this week to see if they were already scheduling my group for next week, but they weren’t ready to. The calls each last less than 30 minutes including hold time. Also, this new group isn’t as large as the previous two so should be less competition (though holdovers from the earlier groups will also be trying).

The other big news from the past month, which I hinted at in my previous column, was the expected snowstorm. More about that in WAYward Thoughts. Also, no Texas Talk again. I’m demoting that column to an occasional feature rather than a monthly expectation as probably the way to go. Trying to find the time to do the proper research and finish it to my satisfaction hasn’t been easy.

Plus, I need free up time to start an apartment search. My lease is through mid-September and I will have to vacate as it’ll be one of the last apartments in the complex to be upgraded. I’m not thrilled with some of the upgrades (cold faux wood floors instead of warm carpeting, stainless steel appliances, etc.) plus the jump in monthly rent. Though, I might stay elsewhere in the complex just for ease of moving. Fortunately, I still have the materials from the last time I considered moving (two years ago) that’ll give me a jump start on finding a new place. Also, I REALLY have to start getting rid of a bunch of stuff in boxes I haven’t opened in over a decade, clean out files and deal with all that other detritus that I’ve accumulated since moving to Austin.

Enjoy what’s below and I look forward to hearing from you!

=====

WAYward Thoughts

As teased last issue, a snowstorm was coming to Texas and the first flakes were reaching me as that issue went out. It actually turned out much worse than folks predicted and, again, highlighted some things that still need attention in the State. Unfortunately, it also brought some unwanted and unfortunate publicity to Texas (for one example, I’ll just mention – Cancun – and I’m sure all will get the reference).

For me, it wasn’t too bad. Growing up in Michigan, I’m used to heavy snow and winter storms. I was in my apartment with plenty of food/supplies/etc. Fortunately, when the Texas electric grid froze up (pun, there), I was somehow on an “essential” grid which meant I didn’t lose power. I still haven’t figured out “what” would have been on the grid that was essential, no close fire/police stations, hospital, etc. But, I’m not complaining. Some of the folks in the complex did lose power and were miserable.

What I did lose was water. The snow started on Friday night, power started going down on Monday (as I recall) and water was lost on Wednesday. Fortunately, the apartment complex sent out a notice on Tuesday night that they may have to shut off water to the complex due to the number of broken pipes in the unheated units. So, I filled a number of pots for drinking/cooking purposes and a tub for flushing the toilet. I’m not sure if it was the complex or the City who first shut off the water – it would have been roughly the same time period.

The reason the City lost water is, in Texas, when it freezes you drip water from all your taps so the un/lightly insulated pipes will be resistant to freezing due to the moving water. So, the entire City doing that coupled with the water leaking (or shooting in some cases) from broken pipes made a heavy demand on the reserves. Then, after most of the water department’s electricians were out on calls, one of the main water treatment plants lost power. The back-up power didn’t automatically cut in, so a 60-odd year old manual switch had to be thrown...but all the electricians who know about it were out on calls and, due to the weather, had difficulty returning to do so. Thus, a perfect “storm” rapidly drew down the reserve and caused the outage.

So, to me, it was an inconvenience and was even able to give a neighbor a case of bottled water that I had in the garage and didn't need. It took about five days before water was restored, though the apartment maintenance had a lot more work to do to recover (including ice-downed tree limbs and other damage to fix).

In the end, we had the new records for (these are by memory, so may be off):

Longest period under 32 degrees – 5 days, would have been 6 but it briefly went to 33 at one station
Longest period with more than 1" of snow on the ground – 5 ½ days
2nd in amount of overall Snowfall
Record Daily Snowfall for January 10
Plus some daily temperature records

And, of course, by the next week we were back to 84 degrees. It's been a decade since the last heavy winter storm, and the Texas electric grid didn't correct anything from the lessons back then. I'm hoping that they'll do so this time.

**Late note on a fundraiser that was just announced to help those severely impacted by the storm and its aftermath. Austinite Matthew McConaughy has organized an online fundraiser scheduled for March 21 and viewable for free on YouTube and from the Just Keep Livin' Foundation website at 7pm CDT. As noted, the music is free though donations will be requested throughout the concert.

Already scheduled to appear are Willie Nelson, Don Henley, Kelly Clarkson, Post Malone, Lyle Lovette, Gary Clark Jr., George Strait, Miranda Lambert, Woody Harrelson, Kacey Musgraves and many others. Listen in to enjoy the music and, if you're so inclined, donate to help out Texas – 100% of the funds raised will be spread over a number of charities including Team Rubicon, the Salvation Army, Meals on Wheels and others.**

Letter Column

(always welcome, send them in!)

(if something shouldn't be included here, clearly mark it as a personal comment)

[**Matt Velentgas**] – Just read the zine you write for. Had to say I really liked the book reviews so I hope you continue with those.

[**WAY**] – I certainly will, it's a staple that I do for every book I read though, now that they are published, they are more lengthy than a couple of sentences that I'd do for my own recollection. I've never really thought of them going away, but I can see the confusion about them due to my comment last issue.

To clear it up, two issues ago I'd tossed out a suggestion that I'd give the readers a "heads up" on what I was reading and which issue I expected to print the review. That way if folks were interested, they could also read the book and submit their reviews to run along with mine. However, I had no takers and that was what I was announcing last issue. I hope that removes any confusion I may have caused.

[**MV**] – I just finished the Sharpe book. I kind of just loved reading it and looked forward to reading it every day. I was close to finishing the book and had the thought that I can't wait to finish it so I can move on to another good book. I haven't had that feeling about reading in years, and I like it. I hope I'm back into reading again. [**WAY**] – You are always welcome to borrow my copies and I can hand them off next time we cross paths. Can you believe it's been a year since we've shared a meal or played a game together?

[**MV**] – I'm moving on to a book about the Stainless Steel Rat. I was wondering if you heard of that series and have read any of the books. I think it may be up your alley and I hear they are really good. [**WAY**] – Harry Harrison was the author, if memory serves. I've not read any of the books, though I think I may have one or two, but I think I have read several short stories many years ago. Another in a long list of books/book series I want to read...someday.

[**MV**] – We just made a Spanish tortilla today. I bought a pan that allows you to flip the thing easier than using a plate on the top of the pan and flipping and hoping you don't spray boiling olive oil everywhere. It has worked well this time and the one time we have used it previously. Spanish tortilla if you don't know is mainly quite a few cooked sliced potatoes and onions, mixed with egg and cooked like a frittata. I can't tell you how amazing just the basic recipe is. And in Spain it's as common as tacos are here in Texas. We added some ham and some Spanish cheese to it for the first time. I've been making it for years and always just kept making it with just potatoes or potatoes and onions. The ham and cheese is good, but not needed. I've just decided. I'm going to make you one next time I make one. [**WAY**] – Sounds good, and I'll look forward to trying it. And, if you're so inclined, submit the recipe to run here. I'm sure some other folks would like to see your version of it!

[**Richard Smith**] – I do look at your reviews even though I only read 2 or 3 books a year myself. I'm currently enjoying *Doors of Sleep* by Tim Pratt. [**WAY**] – feel free to submit your review of the book, or other reading recommendations, for the readership.

[Dane Maslen] – I hope you and your water pipes, and your electricity supply came through the big freeze unscathed. **[WAY]** – A longer bit in WAYward Thoughts, but in short no issues with electricity and water pipes in my building; however, a deep drain of the City water supply and other burst pipes in my apartment complex led to a five day outage. So, overall, minor inconvenience to me.

[DM] – I’ve just read your comments about retirement and lockdowns. Yes, after retirement I rapidly came to the conclusion that I must have previously been hallucinating about going to work, given that I clearly couldn’t possibly have had the time in my schedule to do so. Then during the last year I’ve found myself struggling to find time to do things that were previously part of my regular routine. Partly it’s because new activities, e.g. online gaming, have barged their way in, but alas I suspect that gradually slowing down as I get older is a significant factor too. **[WAY]** – I agree new activities have replaced other things, for me especially walking. Pre C-19 I was going to the gym 2-3 times a week for 60-90 minutes each (plus travel) – say roughly 4-5 hours. Now, I’m walking 6 days most weeks (not during the snowstorm though!) for 90-120+ minutes each (longest walk was about 200 minutes) - a total of roughly 10-12 hours. I’m also involved in more “by Email” games, though I don’t use any online platforms. And, of course, I’ve added putting this thing together...

[Walt O’Hara] – Your opinion, kind sir. Say I had a Facts in Five category of “Periodical, News”. The letters contain P. One person answers: The Philadelphia Inquirer. Another person answers: Washington Post. My inclination is this: Philadelphia modifies Inquirer, but Washington modifies Post. I would say the Washington Post answer is correct but Philadelphia is a strikeout. Do you agree?

[WAY] – In this case, as the category is looking for specific items and the answers are names of newspapers, so they are taken as one. So, Philadelphia Inquirer would work but the Washington Post wouldn’t. However, if the category was “Generic Term for a Newspaper” you would be correct.

[WO] – (later note) I’m glad I got a second opinion. I was taking guidance from the main name has to match the letter. In this case both are real periodicals. I drew the card “periodical”, and chose “News” as the modifier from the right side. I just started a game where I film myself drawing the cards from the historical FiF Boardgame, and some of the cards seem vague to me.

[WAY] – As a caveat to keep in mind, this is how I’d GM the modified version of the game running here. I don’t know that it is directly translatable to the published game rules, which I haven’t read in years. So, take it with a word of caution. And, yes, the categories in the published game can be a bit vague or questionable. But, remember, the game is roughly 60 years old and we’re looking at it with different eyes and mindsets than someone back then (no “phone app” category!). And, my version, his significant modifications such as research versus “you have 5 minutes to answer”.

[WO] – (even later note) I agree and I have been inspired by your version, and will use a very similar processing framework – it’s very streamlined. **[WAY]** – Thanks for the vote of support! **[WO]** – I only use the cards as a means of selecting topics (broadly) and the answers so far (this is turn 1) have been obviously researched. I assumed that would happen. We’re still getting a nice distribution of scores and I like the simple scoring method. I’m not sure I would have liked the original version of the game much either. I don’t think I could have easily come up with a single “Asian leaders starting with ___” in the time it takes for a sand timer to finish! I think the use of visuals of me selecting the cards makes the players feel the connection to the older games, which works for me.

[WAY] – Great, glad you are running/playing the game! I always enjoyed it when I was growing up, but as designed for an analog 1960s decade, if issued today there would have to be a significant upgrade in the playing structure. Also, the categories/classes would need a good scrubbing to take into account today’s world with the world’s knowledge available from your phone and all of the new possibilities that didn’t exist back then (“Cryptocurrency Name” anyone?).

=====

Random Review

A couple months back my regular grocery store, HEB, had a deal – “By \$5 of Product, get a Free Sweet Earth Item” (from a list of options). I chose to try the “Awesome Bacon Burger with bits of Benevolent Bacon” – the package consisting of two 4oz quarter-pound plant-based protein patties (26g protein in each). About a week ago I decided to thaw the package and try it out.

The patties, in size and shape, resembled a decent burger patty. However, the color was a bit off and the look was more towards the veggie burger than a beef burger.

I prepared one each of two nights in the same basic manner, baked at 325 degrees in a toaster oven for roughly 15 minutes the first night, and 10 minutes the second. Once cooked, an American cheese slice was placed on top and put back into the oven until melted. They were served on a single slice of wheat bread, with Dijon mustard, chopped red onion, lettuce leaf and tomato slice. They were eaten with a knife and fork.

Neither patty had the usual “shrinkage” that beef (80/20 mix) generally does while the amount of “juice” was much less than what I’d expect from a beef patty. Basically both were the same shape and size as they were pre-cooked. The first patty developed a slightly tough skin that required a knife to easily get a bite. The second didn’t need the knife, though I did use it.

The taste wasn't "beefy", though not unpleasant. The mouth-feel wasn't the same as ground beef, to me still on the veggie burger side of the line – detectable, but not crumbly as some as the veggie burgers I've eaten. I'd say if I was given a blind taste test I might be wrong, but I'm sure I could identify it was different when compared to a beef burger. Compared to a traditional veggie burger, I might think it was beef.

On significant drawback to using it is that whatever form it is in that's the way it will be served – a burger, as a burger (or hamburger steak). Ground beef can be burgers, meatloaf, part of a casserole, etc. I doesn't appear you could use one of these burgers to create a meatloaf (well, I suppose with enough fillers and binders you might be able to).

Another negative aspect is the package I had the chance to sample runs \$5.98 – or \$12.96/lb. A chub of 80/20 store-brand ground beef runs \$3.88/lb. Even the store-brand, 85/15 Grass Fed Ground Beef is only \$5.99/lb. with 75/25 Mishima Reserve Ground Wagyu Beef coming in at \$6.99/lb.

So, would I eat this product again – yes. Would I buy this again – likely not unless it was discounted or I had a coupon (or another freebie offer, though I'd likely try a different Sweet Earth product). It is also something I'd consider if I was hosting a vegetarian friend for a cookout or burgers. The cost/benefit to me is not significant enough at this time, as well as it isn't quite close enough to beef to satisfy. Also, the inflexibility of the product makes it something I'd buy for a specific purpose, rather than a versatile ingredient to keep on hand as a pantry (or in this case, freezer) – see my WAYword Thoughts last issue for the first stab at developing my philosophy towards cooking.

Mini-Book Reviews

(finished since last issue)

The Dhammapada edited by Jaroslav Pelikan (1987; 416p).

Comprised of sayings, purportedly originating from the words of Gotama Buddha, The Dhammapada's origins mirror that of many of the ancient books undergirding many of the older world religions. Originally passed on orally, they were eventually written down by various scribes, each with some variation from the others. The translators and compilers of this edition consulted many sources and came up what they feel is the best version, though as discussed in the introduction, they were still unsure with some passages.

The book consists of 432 sayings or verses, divided into 26 chapters or themes, most consisting of 4-6 lines, over 70 pages. Taken solely on their own, they would be difficult to understand and contextualize without previous experience with the religion and the society in which it formed. Fortunately, the editors included annotations to help the reader – 328 pages worth. However, though providing much valuable insight, some of the sayings are still a bit unclear. Having a Buddhism 101 briefing or crib sheet of terms and hierarchies could have helped.

Overall, if comparing to the Christian/Jewish scriptures, I'd liken it to the book of Proverbs. Most of the sayings give examples of right living, proper respect to others, moral teachings, For example, in the 4th chapter - "Flowers" – the 50th saying is:

Let one regard
Neither the discrepancies of others,
Nor what is done or left undone by others,
But only the things one has done oneself or left
Undone.

This easily parallels lessons in other major religions – basically, be concerned with your achievements and growth, not concentrating on your perception towards others actions.

Overall, it was worth a read to me. However, before I would read it again I would delve into learning more about the religious structure and practices and how the religion interfaces into that society so that I can gain better insight into what is presented. Recommended for those would like to learn more about Buddhism's foundational texts, though I would also recommend getting a basic understanding of the faith and culture before doing so. [February 2021]

Eating in Season by Carol Ann Sayle (1999; 116p).

Carol Anne, and her late husband Larry Butler, founded Boggy Creek Farm as an urban farm in Austin. It is coupled with a larger, rural, farm in Milam County. They've provided vegetables to local groceries, host a farmstand market several times a week where you can check out the chickens in the coop and see the fields. In strawberry season, they allow you to pick your own. It's truly an Austin institution!

She finally started collecting her recipes, recipes from friends and farmstand visitors to make this book. It is divided into two basic sections, The Cold Season and The Hot Season featuring recipes using vegetables generally available during those times. And, yes, it is a vegetarian cookbook, though many recipes could be modified to add meat. The recipes are very approachable, simple to make and, of the ones I've made/had, very tasty. Some have uncommon ingredients, such as the "powdered Soy Milk" in the Strawberry Shortcake recipe and Nutritional Yeast in several others (the latter as more of a supplement to a vegetarian diet rather than an integral part of the recipe).

Written in a folksy manner, with many asides and stories, it is a pleasure to enjoy. But, being that style of a cookbook, some of the recipes list ingredients without amounts. An example is the "Vegetable Soup of the Cold Season" recipe that lists potential vegetables, greens, rice/noodles and garnishes to inspire, rather than a rote list of specific items. Also, some of the directions can be imprecise, such as "cook until slightly tender" or "cooking for a few minutes" which involve some personal choices to decide what works best for your taste.

As an example, I've included "Hilton's Okra Fritter" as this month's recipe. I've cooked this a number of times, especially when I'd have a large bag of okra in my weekly CSA box. Always a nice pleasure to eat, and a great way to use up okra not destined for another use. The folks I serve them to always come back for more.

Very much recommended for the home cook who has access to, and enjoys eating, a wide variety of vegetables from American farms. There is a slight preference for southern style cooking ("Fried Green Tomatoes"!), but should be approachable anywhere in the country, and many foreign ones, though sourcing some of the specific vegetables might be problematic. [February 2021]

The Man Who Would Be King and Other Stories by Rudyard Kipling (1994; 102p).

Five stories by Kipling comprise this volume, centered around his early life experiences in British Raj (India). Written very much from a colonial perspective, they provide insight into the culture of the time and the British attitude towards the native population.

The first two stories are of the thriller/eerie genre involving a haunting and an unexpected imprisonment. Each gives the reader a look into the life and hierarchy of the time. The last story also shows aspects of that, folded in an interpersonal story of a double life.

"The Man Who Would Be King" is likely somewhat familiar to most, involving grifters and scam artists in a morality tale about living an honest life. This, and the remaining tale, starkly reveal the perceived superiority of the British ruling class over the unenlightened native population. The last story is reflective of British honor, respect for women and the ability of youth to achieve difficult goals.

Overall an entertaining collection, though through 21st century eyes and mores it is very dated. However, because of that, it give good insight into the mindset of the time and in that of the British Empire system. Recommended for those interested in this time period, colonial viewpoints and perspectives as well as adventurous escapism. [February 2021]

Self-Reliance and Other Essays by Ralph Waldo Emerson (1993; 117p).

Included in this book are six of Emerson's essays and the text of an address he made to Harvard Divinity School. The essays are quite heavy and should be read when you have the time to think about what he has presented. Also, time later on to reflect on his positions is almost needed – in retrospect, I would have appreciated a friend or friends reading it at the same time so that we could exchange thoughts, discuss points and debate meanings. I think I would have gotten much more out of it if I'd done so.

In general, the essays were on:

History – what to make of history, how to learn from it and its relevance to that period's life and times.

Self-Reliance – on personal responsibility, an individual's relation with society and how society/technology/progress changes individuals. For instance, he writes:

"He has a fine Geneva watch, but he fails of the skill to tell the hour by the sun. A Greenwich nautical almanac he has, and so being sure of the information when he wants it, the man in the street does not know a star in the sky... His note-books impair his memory..."

Sounds much like the discussions of the easy availability of information on the Internet and how it is effecting schooling and learning in today's society

Friendship – pretty self-evident

The Over-Soul – dealing with Supreme Beings and belief

The Poet – an inquiry into the creation of poetry and how it reflects perception, beauty and one’s perspective

Experience – how living made you, makes you and will continue to make you who you are

Recommended only if you want to contemplate and consider these works, or better yet get a small “book club” of friends and acquaintances to read and discuss. I would certainly like to tackle this again with the small group approach. It is definitely not a light night’s reading or a time filler. [March 2021]

Babylon 5 Quote

In “The Illusion of Truth” – Randall – “Can I sit?”

Garibaldi – “That’s between you and your chiropractor. I don’t get involved.”

Source: But In Purple...I’m Stunning! by J. Michael Straczynski, edited by Sara “Samm” Barnes, copyright 2008.

Recipe of the Month

Recipe Philosophy: Except for baking, recipes are only suggestions. I rarely precisely measure, eyeballing most everything. The listed measurements, for the most part, are estimates from the last time I made the recipe. Feel free to adjust to meet your personal tastes – and remember, it is easier to add “more” of something than to compensate when “too much” has been added.

For ingredients, if you don’t like raw onions, omit them or replace with celery to retain the crunchiness. If you like food with more spice, add an extra jalapeno or use habaneros instead. On the other hand, if you don’t like spicy food, replace the jalapeno with a bell pepper. Optional items are used when I’m looking for a variation or making it for individuals with specific preferences or allergies.

NOTE: For background, see Book Review that this comes from. Also, back when I was getting weekly CSA box, I had an abundance of okra for many weeks in late summer and needed some way to use it up. This was my “go to” recipe.

Hilton’s Okra Fritters
(page 88, from Eating in Season ©1999)

6 tablespoons Cornmeal
2 tablespoons Flour
Salt/Black Pepper to taste
1 Egg (beaten)
½-1 cup Milk or Buttermilk (enough to make a loose mixture when the dries are combined with the wets)
2 tablespoons Olive Oil (plus more for frying)
1 small Onion (chopped fine, ¼” dice)
2 cloves Garlic (chopped very fine)
1 cup Okra (chopped in thin rounds – ¼” thick)

Combine the dry ingredients together in a small bowl. Mix the Egg, Milk and Olive Oil together in a medium to large bowl. Add the Onion, Garlic and Okra. Stir to coat the veggies.

Add the dries to the wets. Combine to make a loose “pancake batter, “ adding more milk if needed. Heat additional Olive Oil in a big skillet over medium heat. Drop by spoonfuls to make 4” sized circles, like pancakes. Brown the fitters on the bottom, then flip over to brown the top.

Serves? Maybe two, but it depends on if they are okra lovers, or fried lovers, or both. No matter; it won’t be enough.

Notes (from Andy:

- I usually sprinkle the hot fritters with salt immediately after cooking.
- As I recall, I usually cooked these on medium but used Grapeseed Oil (my go-to frying oil) instead of Olive Oil. However, each stove top is different, so you should likely drop a bit of the wets into the heated oil before combining to get the right temperature for your stove. I have inadvertently blackened some of these in oil that's too hot.
- If you'd like a bit of heat, consider adding cayenne, dried peppers or diced fresh jalapenos into the dries or serving with hot sauce (my go to one is Cholula).

=====

Game Section

Everyone Plays Games: Hangman, By Definition; Facts in Five

Game Openings: Breaking Away (Kent, Burgess, Smith; Firth, minimum 6 players needed)
No-Press Gunboat Diplomacy, sans preference lists (6 Players)
Standard Choice (Smith, minimum 4 players needed)

Possible Game Openings: Breaking Away Variants
Suggestions accepted for other games to offer.

Standbys: Breaking Away (x1); Gunboat Diplomacy (x1)

Rules for Breaking Away. Breaking Away Variants and Choice available on the Variable Pig website (variablepig.org)

+++++

Hangman, By Definition

This is a five round game, with each round consisting of a variable number of turns. The winner will be the person who wins the most rounds, with a tie breaker being fewest total number of turns in those winning rounds. Second tie breaker will be the most number of letters guessed (by total count revealed, not by individual letter).

Each round will consist of identifying a word of at least six letters. Along with each word will be the first definition given. All words and definitions will be identified by blank spaces. Words and definitions are verified in a dictionary that was my high school graduation gift (slight hint to those who might want to find the edition).

The goal is to guess the word in as few turns as possible. Each turn, all players will submit one letter to be revealed. The letter submitted by the most players will be the letter revealed in the next turn. Ties will be broken by a randomized method. Additionally, each player should submit a guess for the word. Once the word is correctly identified (spelling is important), that round will end and a new round will begin. All players who guess the word in the same turn will share in the win for the round. If the word is not guessed by the end of six turns with no letter being revealed, no one will win the round.

Along with revealing letters in the word, letters will be revealed in the definition. There are no bonus points for guessing any part of the definition, it is only there to help players figure out the word. No guesses about parts of the definition will be confirmed or displayed except by the letter revealed in that round. The letters "E" and "S" can never be chosen as the letter to be revealed.

Game 1, Round Three, Turn 2:

Letter Votes: B - 1; E - 1; G - 1; L - 2; M - 1; R - 1

Revealed: L

Words Guessed: (Firth) Geegaw; (Kent) United; (Lischett) Realty; (Maslen) Broken; (O'Hara) Victor; (Smith) Wibble;
(Wilson) Submit

Solution:

Word: _____ (6)

Definition: _____ (8); _____ L ____ (8); _____ L ____ (8).

Never Revealed: E, S Already Revealed: L

Game Words Correctly Guessed: Infinitesimal (David-Gardner, Firth, Kent, Smith, Wilson);
Triclinium (Firth, Maslen, Smith, Wilson)

Player Comments:

Kevin Wilson – Uh oh, going to be tougher this time with a 6-letter word. That should make learning the letters more critical. But, if we hit a letter, may move things along quickly. We'll see.

+++++

FACTS IN FIVE

Rules Revision in **Bold** below

Rules: There will be five rounds, the cumulative high score at the end of the fifth round will be the winner. Anyone may join anytime with a starting score matching the lowest total from the previous round. Anyone missing a round will add the lowest score of that round.

Each round will consist of five categories and five letters. Each player submit may an entry for each category which has a key word that starts with each of the letters (twenty-five total entries). Key words are generally the first word; however articles (the, a, etc.) and modifiers ("red" in red bicycle for "R" in "mode of transportation" or "general" in General Lee for "G" in "Military Leaders") are not key words. A word in the category may not be the key word ("bank" in "Bank of America" for "B" in the category "Banks"). For given names, the last name is the key word, if married it will be their post-marriage last name. However, in the case of commonly used stage names, that name should be used (in a category of female singers, "Q" could be "Queen Latifa" and "Cher" for "C"). An entry may only be used once per round. **Please clearly identify which individual you are using as your answer if there are multiple potential people with a given name. For instance, if the category is American Presidents, answering Washington is fine as there is only one; however, if you decided to use Bush you need to indicate whether you are submitting the father or the son. Unclear answers will be matched to score the least points. Using the Bush example, if one person submitted "Bush" and three people submit "George W. Bush" the latter would score 2 points and the former 1.**

One point will be scored for each entry that unarguably meets the letter and category. An additional point will be added if anyone else also uses the same valid entry for the same category. Maximum possible score in a round is 50 with a lowest possible score of 25, presuming an individual submits a valid entry for each category and letter in that round.

Research is allowed, collaboration between players is not.

Game Two, Round Four

Bolded - Scores 2 points for matching another entry; **Crossed Out** - scores 0 points; otherwise scores 1 point.

REMINDER - Last names are generally the key word, not first names.

NOTE: discussion in the Letter Column that touches on a scoring discussion, background on the original Facts in Five game and related items.

Players	F	M	U	Y	*(Wildcard)
Online News Website					
Mark Firth	Fox News	Metro	USA Today	Yahoo News	BBC
John David Galt	No Entry Recieved				

Doug Kent	Foxnews.com	msn.com	usatoday.com	yahoo.com	drudgereport.com
Andy Lischett	Foxnews.com	msnbc.com	upi.com	Yahoo News	wsj.com
Walt O'Hara	Fox News DN	MSN News	USA Today	YahooNews	CBS News
Kevin Wilson	Fox News	MSN News	USA Today	Yahoo News	CNN

Deceased American History Writer

Mark Firth	Sidney B Fay	W H McNeill	Steven Utley	Andrew York	Preserved Smith
John David Galt	No Entry Recieved				
Doug Kent	Fleming	Morison	Underhill	Robert Young	Kenneth S. Davis
Andy Lischett	Shelby Foote	Alfred Mahan	Adam Ulam	Robert M. Young	Bruce Canton
Walt O'Hara	D S Freeman	W Manchester	Adam Ulam	Marilyn Yalom	Stephen Ambrose
Kevin Wilson	Ben Franklin	Toni Morrison	<?>	<?>	WEB DeBois

Fictional Character on a TV Show

Mark Firth	Philip J Fry	Mork	Shelley Unwin	Yaffle	Augustus Hill
John David Galt	No Entry Recieved				
Doug Kent	Jessica Fletcher	Matlock	Andrew Underhill	Cristina Yang	Larry Dallas
Andy Lischett	Fred Flintstone	Mork	Felix Unger	Yogi Bear	Mindy
Walt O'Hara	Fred Flintstone	Mickey Mouse	Ultraman	Yoda	Dan Draper
Kevin Wilson	Huey Freeman	Maeve	Lt Nyota Uhura	Yosemite Sam	Tyrion Lannister

Living Music Composer

Mark Firth	Graham Fitkin	Sir James MacMillan	U-Roy	Ye Xiaogang	Carole King
John David Galt	No Entry Recieved				
Doug Kent	Fairouz	Dylan Mattingly	Unander-Scharin	Yiu	Dreyblatt
Andy Lischett	James Fei	P McCartney	C Underwood	Neil Young	Grace Slick
Walt O'Hara	F Ferandiere	Ennio Morricone	Jay Ungar	Teng Ye-Hsien	Philip Glass
Kevin Wilson	David Foster	L-M Miranda	Erich Urbanner	Yanni	John Williams

Computer Term

Mark Firth	Function	Megabyte	USB	Y2K	Baud
John David Galt	No Entry Recieved				
Doug Kent	Format	Memory	URL	Y2K	Drive
Andy Lischett	FIFO	Memory	Up	YMMV	Down
Walt O'Hara	Firewall	Mouse	User	Yobibyte	Hard Drive
Kevin Wilson	File	Megabyte	USB	Y2K	Memory

Note – for allowed and disallowed answers, please feel free to correct me!

Notes on **Mark's** Answers: Sidney B Fay is Sidney Bradshaw Fay; W H McNeill is William Hardy McNeill; Steven Utley was disallowed as I couldn't find any history writing by him, just alternate history – though it is possible there is a smaller work I overlooked; Andrew York is disallowed as I can't find one that's a deceased historian (if it was meant for me, as I indeed have written history/trained as a historian, I'm not dead yet – unless my consciousness hasn't caught up with the state of my body); U-Roy is disallowed as he died in 2021; Mark lists shows for each of the Fictional Character on a TV Show as from Futurama, Mork & Mindy, Coronation St., Bagpuss, Oz

Notes of **Andy's** Answers: YMMV (“Your Mileage May Vary”) is disallowed as, though it is a term used “on” computers, mostly in chat, board posts and messaging, it doesn't directly apply to computers themselves

Notes of **Walt's** Answers: Fox News DN is Fox News Digital Network, it was disallowed as I can't find a news website under that name and it appears it is an umbrella organization with subsidiaries having the actual websites; D S Freeman is Douglas Southall Freeman; W Manchester is William Manchester; F Ferandiere is Fernando Ferandiere, but is disallowed as he died in 1816; Ennio Morricone is disallowed as he died in 2020; Teng Ye-Hsien is disallowed as he died in 1944

Notes on **Kevin's** Answers: Ben Franklin is disallowed as I can't find anything for him; Toni Morrison is disallowed as, though some of her fiction was set in historical periods, none are historical works; Kevin notes Maeve is on Westworld; L-M Miranda is Lin-Manuel Miranda

General Player Comments:

Mark Firth: Regarding the Living Music Composer category, he notes that Weart Beckfrod was alive when you set the

questions but sadly died 21Feb. So here's a tribute.

Doug Kent: Does Wildcard mean we have to use one letter for each category, or we can use 5 different ones? [WAY] – either is fine, your choice of approach. [DK] – Does Category 2 mean the writers are American, or that they write on American History? [WAY] – again, either is acceptable based on how the category is written.

Andy Lischett: I'm not sure if "Bear" was Yogi's last name or a description, [WAY] – it's allowed as he's known by just the Yogi moniker [AL] - and I don't know if Mindy had a last name [WAY] – she did, McConnell, so it fits. [AL] - I suppose my M TV character could be Oscar Madison to match Felix, but Mork will get more points. Same with Fred Flintstone. I'd prefer Barney Fife, but Fred will get more matches. As for computer terms, "FIFO", "Up" and "Down" are all old hat, I believe, but legit. I must be a grumpy person, because forty years ago when I was a computer operator/programmer I hated the computer terms "up" and "down" as silly jargon intended to make computer people feel special. NOW, when those terms are rarely used anymore I wonder why. I really like YMMV.

Kevin Wilson: [Regarding] Deceased Historian: I searched, hard, but couldn't find anything for U or Y. I'm sure they are there and some will find names but I gave up. [Regarding] Fictional TV Character: A little bit of searching here too. Not that I couldn't think of names of find names easily but there were so many I wanted to find those I thought would be popular. We'll see.

Game Two, Round Five

Letters: A B C I S

Categories: Mythological Character; Mineral; Board Game; Living American Philosopher; Astronomer

Current Standings

NOTE: Last time Andy submitted "Plymouth" for the category "Artificial Satellite" which I disallowed as I couldn't find a satellite named Plymouth. However, he rightly pointed out that Plymouth produced a car model called a Satellite which, indeed, is artificial. His score has been modified appropriately.

Scores by Category	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	Now		Previous		Total
Doug Kent	9	6	5	5	7	32	+	103	=	135
Kevin Wilson	9	1	5	5	8	28	+	106	=	134
Andy Lischett	7	7	7	5	5	31	+	99	=	130
Mark Firth	8	3	6	4	8	29	+	99	=	128
Walt O'Hara	7	6	6	3	5	27	+	96	=	123
John David Galt						*	+	93	=	120

*NMR, receives lowest score from this round

=====

Deadline for the Next Issue of Out of the WAY:

April 7, 2021 at noon – See You Then!

Game entries, letters of comment and other material can be sent to:

wandrew88 at gmail.com; or by post to: W. Andrew York; POB 201117; Austin TX 78720-111

Eternal Sunshine Game Section

Acquire – "Blind"

Players:

Kevin Wilson – ckevinw@gmail.com; John David Galt – jdgalt@att.net; Mark Firth – mogcate@aol.com;
Andy Lischett – andy@lischett.com; Tom Howell – off-the-shelf@olympus.net

Turn Five

As reported via email, John David Galt bought 3 Continental for \$400 each last turn, instead of 3 Imperial for \$400 each as originally reported in the zine.

Turn Six

Wilson: Plays 1-G. Buys 1 Tower for \$500.

Galt: Plays 10-D.

Firth: Plays 4-I. Worldwide is merged into Imperial. Mark receives \$3,000 and Kevin receives \$1,500. Mark trades 8 Worldwide for 4 Imperial. Tom sells 1 Worldwide for \$300. Kevin sells 4 Worldwide for \$300 each. Mark buys 2 Festival for \$400 each and 1 Luxor for \$300.

Lischett: Plays 10-A. Starts Worldwide. Gets one free share. Buys 1 Worldwide for \$300.

Howell: Plays 1-I. Buys 1 Worldwide for \$300.

Wilson: Plays 2-A. Buys 1 Tower for \$500.

A	A	3-A	4-A	5-A	6-A	7-A	8-A	9-A	W	11-A	12-A
A	A	3-B	4-B	5-B	6-B	7-B	8-B	9-B	W	11-B	12-B
A	2-C	3-C	4-C	5-C	C	C	8-C	9-C	10-C	11-C	12-C
1-D	2-D	3-D	4-D	T	6-D	C	C	9-D	F	11-D	12-D
1-E	2-E	3-E	4-E	T	T	7-E	8-E	9-E	F	11-E	12-E
1-F	2-F	3-F	4-F	5-F	T	T	8-F	9-F	F	11-F	12-F
I	2-G	3-G	4-G	5-G	6-G	7-G	8-G	9-G	10-G	11-G	L
I	I	3-H	4-H	I	6-H	7-H	8-H	9-H	10-H	L	L
I	I	I	I	I	6-I	7-I	8-I	9-I	10-I	11-I	12-I

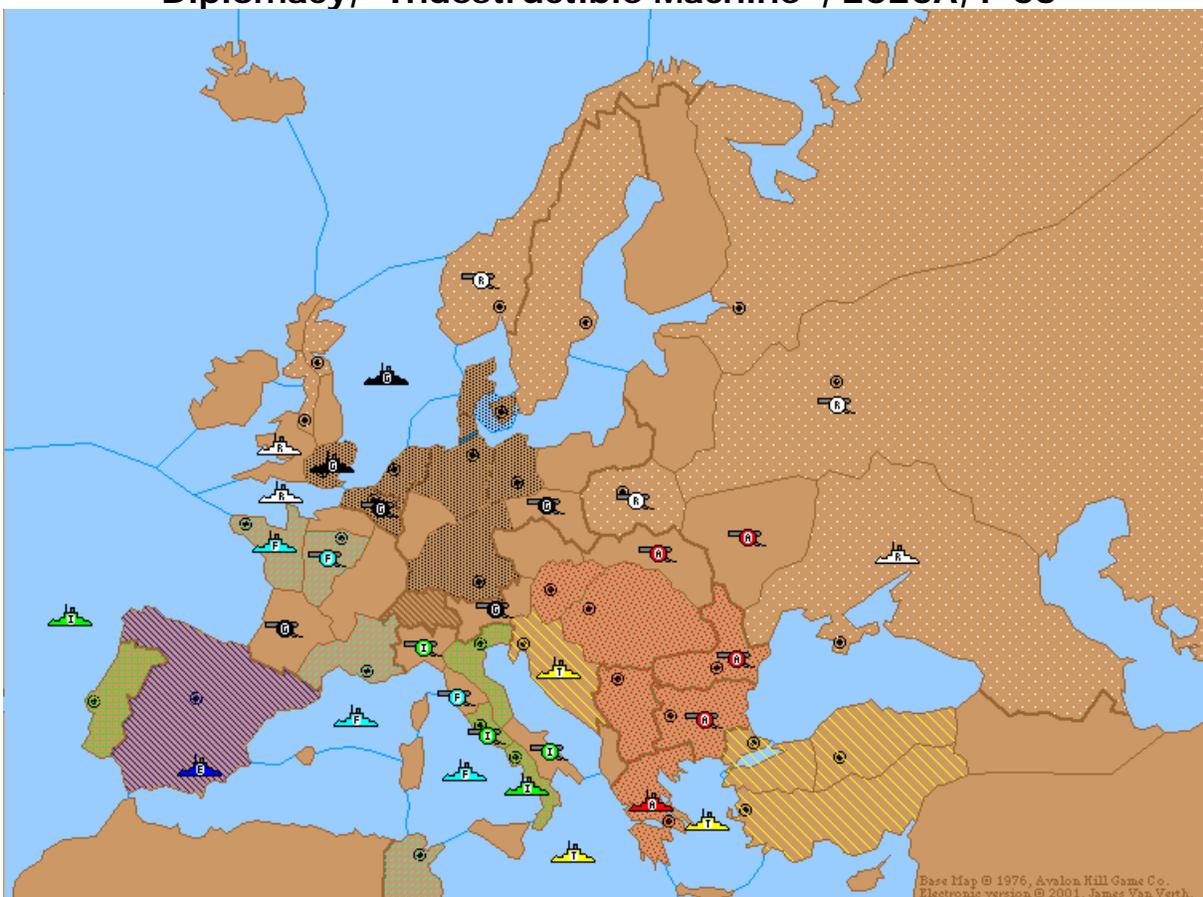
Player	Cash	Tower	Luxor	American	Worldwide	Festival	Imperial	Continental
Kevin Wilson	\$ 2,200	6	0	1	0	6	0	2
John David Galt	\$ 500	0	1	7	0	0	2	6
Mark Firth	\$ 2,500	0	6	0	0	5	8	0
Andy Lischett	\$ 200	4	2	5	2	1	3	4
Tom Howell	\$ -	0	0	4	1	0	11	1

Order for Turn Seven:

Galt, Firth, Lischett, Howell, Wilson, Galt

Deadline for Turn 7 is Thursday April 8th at 7pm My Time (24 hours earlier than the standard zine deadline)

Diplomacy, "Indestructible Machine", 2020A, F 06



Austria: Rick Davis – redavis914@aol.com – A Galicia Supports A Rumania, F Greece - Aegean Sea (*Fails*), A Rumania Supports A Serbia – Bulgaria, A Serbia – Bulgaria, A Ukraine - Sevastopol (*Fails*).

England: Mark Firth – mogcate@aol.com – F Spain(sc) Supports F Portugal (*Ordered to Move*).

France: John David Galt – jdgalt@att.net – F English Channel – Brest, F Gulf of Lyon - Marseilles (*Bounce*), A Paris Hold, A Tuscany - Venice (*Bounce*), F Tyrrhenian Sea - Rome (*Fails*).

Germany: Andy Lischett – andy@lischett.com – A Belgium Hold, F Denmark - North Sea, A Gascony Supports F English Channel – Brest, A Munich – Tyrolia, F North Sea – London, A Silesia Supports A Warsaw.

Italy: Toby Harris – toby@responsiva.biz – A Apulia - Venice (*Bounce*), F Naples Supports A Rome, A Piedmont - Marseilles (*Bounce*), F Portugal - Mid-Atlantic Ocean, A Rome Hold.

Russia: Bob Durf – playdiplomacymoderator@gmail.com – Retreat A Ukraine - Moscow.. F London - English Channel, A Moscow Supports F Sevastopol, A Norway - Trieste (*Fails*), F Sevastopol Unordered, F Wales Supports F London - English Channel, A Warsaw Hold.

Turkey: Jack McHugh - jwmchughjr@gmail.com – F Aegean Sea - Greece (*Fails*), F Albania – Trieste, F Bulgaria(sc) Supports F Aegean Sea – Greece (*Dislodged*, retreat to Constantinople or OTB), F Eastern Mediterranean - Ionian Sea.

Supply Center Chart

Austria:	Budapest, Bulgaria, Greece, Rumania, Serbia, Vienna=6	Build 1
England:	Spain=1	Even
France:	Brest, Marseilles, Paris, Tunis=4	Remove 1
Germany:	Belgium, Berlin, Denmark, Holland, Kiel, London, Munich=7	Build 1
Italy:	Naples, Portugal, Rome, Venice=4	Remove 1
Russia:	Edinburgh, Liverpool, Moscow, Norway, Sevastopol, St Petersburg, Sweden, Warsaw=8	Build 1
Turkey:	Ankara, Constantinople, Smyrna, Trieste=4	Even or Build 1

PRESS:

From Russia with Love: Playing your first game with 1-month deadlines after years of complaining that 48 hour deadlines are too short



From Mr. "Holy Crap its 1906 and everyone is still in the game"

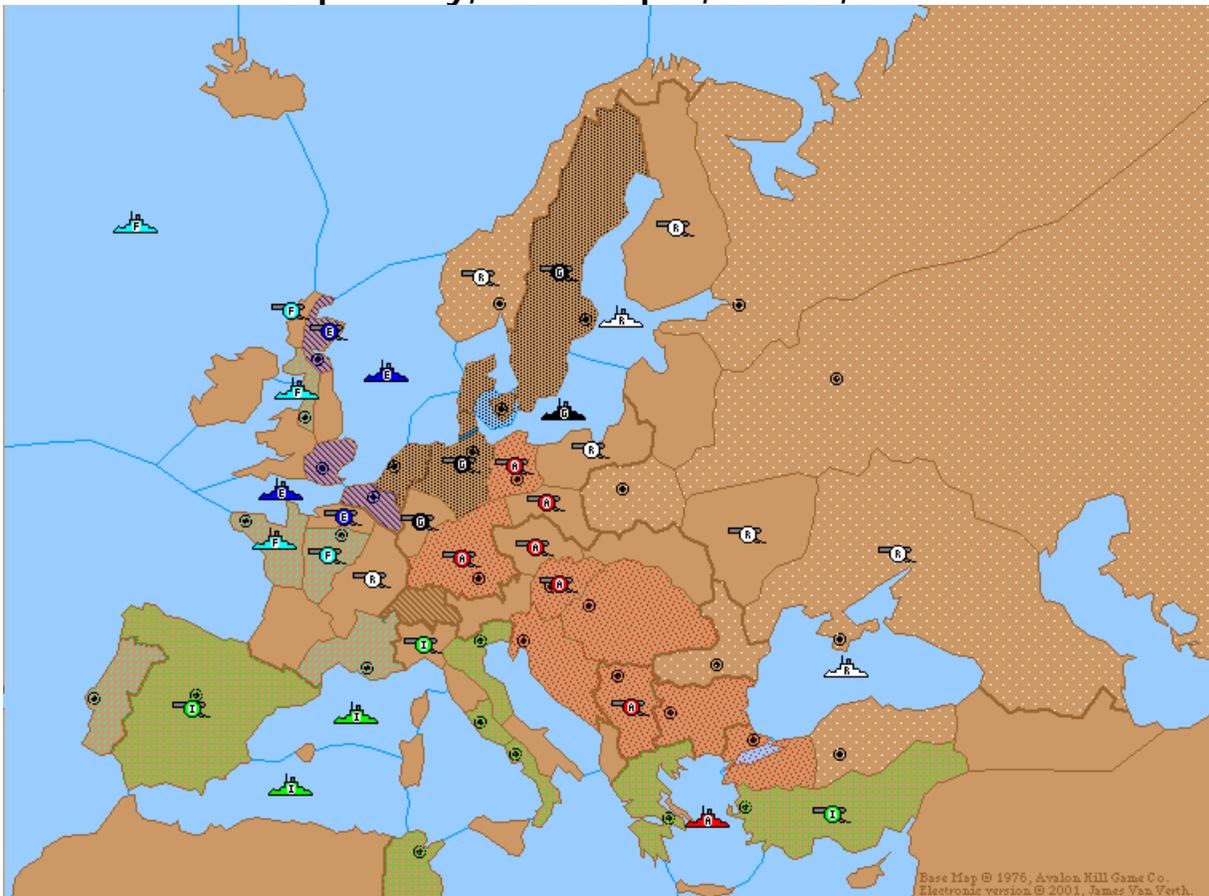


Live Reaction from Czar Bob when Kaiser Andy says he's looking forward to seeing the results of the next moves



Deadline for W 06/S 07 is: April 9th at 7pm My Time

Diplomacy, "Wine Lips", 2020B, F 04



Austria: Harold Reynolds – hjreynolds2@rogers.com - F Aegean Sea Convoys A Greece – Smyrna, A Berlin - Kiel (*Fails*), A Bohemia Supports A Munich, A Munich Supports A Berlin - Kiel (*Cut*), A Serbia Hold, A Silesia Supports A Prussia - Berlin (*Fails*), A Vienna Supports A Bohemia.

England: David Cohen – zendip18@optonline.net – F English Channel Supports A Paris - Brest (*Void*), F Liverpool Hold (*Dislodged*, retreat to Wales or OTB), F North Sea - Norway (*Bounce*), A Picardy - Paris (*Fails*), A Yorkshire - Edinburgh.

France: David Burgess – burgesscd@roadrunner.com – Retreat A Picardy - Paris.. A Clyde Supports F Irish Sea – Liverpool, F Irish Sea – Liverpool, F Mid-Atlantic Ocean – Brest, F North Atlantic Ocean Supports F Irish Sea – Liverpool, A Paris Supports F Mid-Atlantic Ocean - Brest (*Cut*).

Germany: Mark Firth – mogcate@aol.com - F Baltic Sea - Berlin (*Bounce*),

A Kiel Supports A Ruhr - Munich (*Cut*), A Ruhr - Munich (*Fails*), A Sweden - Norway (*Bounce*).

Italy: George Atkins - GeorgeWrites@outlook.com - A Greece – Smyrna,
F Gulf of Lyon - Marseilles (*Bounce*), A Marseilles – Spain, A Piedmont - Marseilles (*Bounce*),
 F Tyrrhenian Sea - Western Mediterranean.

Russia: Heath Davis-Gardner – heathdavisgardner@gmail.com – A Armenia – Sevastopol, F Black Sea Hold,
A Burgundy - Ruhr (*Fails*), A Finland Supports A St Petersburg – Norway,
F Gulf of Bothnia - Baltic Sea (*Fails*), A Prussia - Berlin (*Bounce*), A Rumania – Ukraine,
 A St Petersburg - Norway.

Supply Center Chart

Austria:	Berlin, Budapest, Bulgaria, Constantinople, Munich, Serbia, Trieste, Vienna=8	Build 1
England:	Belgium, Edinburgh, London=3	Remove 1 or 2
France:	Brest, Liverpool, Marseilles, Paris, Portugal=5	Even
Germany:	Denmark, Holland, Kiel, Sweden=4	Even
Italy:	Greece, Naples, Rome, Smyrna, Spain, Tunis, Venice=7	Build 2
Russia:	Ankara, Moscow, Norway, Rumania, Sevastopol, St Petersburg, Warsaw=7	Remove 1

PRESS

Anonymous:

<p>Adriatic Sea The Bora's a wind katabatic That blows to the Sea Adriatic. The roar and the howl Bring weather most foul And make us all hide in the attic.</p>	<p>Ukraine There's one thing we know of Ukraine That travelers find quite a pain. Although it's not daily, It rains ukuleles Which is why they call it Ukraine.</p>	<p>Albania An Albanian dinosaur Needs a name that isn't a bore. So Harold Munster, The awful punster, Dubs it Fred the Tiranosaur.</p>
<p>Venice To cook deer in Italy's north, To win first and not come in fourth, You put some menace in And call it Venice-in But you'll be an outcast thenceforth.</p>	<p>Sevastopol Sevastopol's no place for pity. Sarcasm's used by the witty. You got a sliver? Crimea River! It's a tough life in this city.</p>	<p>St. Petersburg In St. Petersburg, seat of the Tsars, It's too easy to get behind bars. One slip of the lip And it's a short trip To a prison more remote than Mars.</p>
<p>Tunis Tunis, on the Barbary Coast, Has a harbor admired by most. Carthage it once was, And made lots of buzz, Until Romans turned it to toast.</p>	<p>Helgoland Bight When you think of Helgoland Bight, It's seldom in terms of a fight. A small blob of water Is no place for slaughter Hostile forces: stay out of sight.</p>	

Deadline for W 04/S 05 is April 9th at 7pm My Time

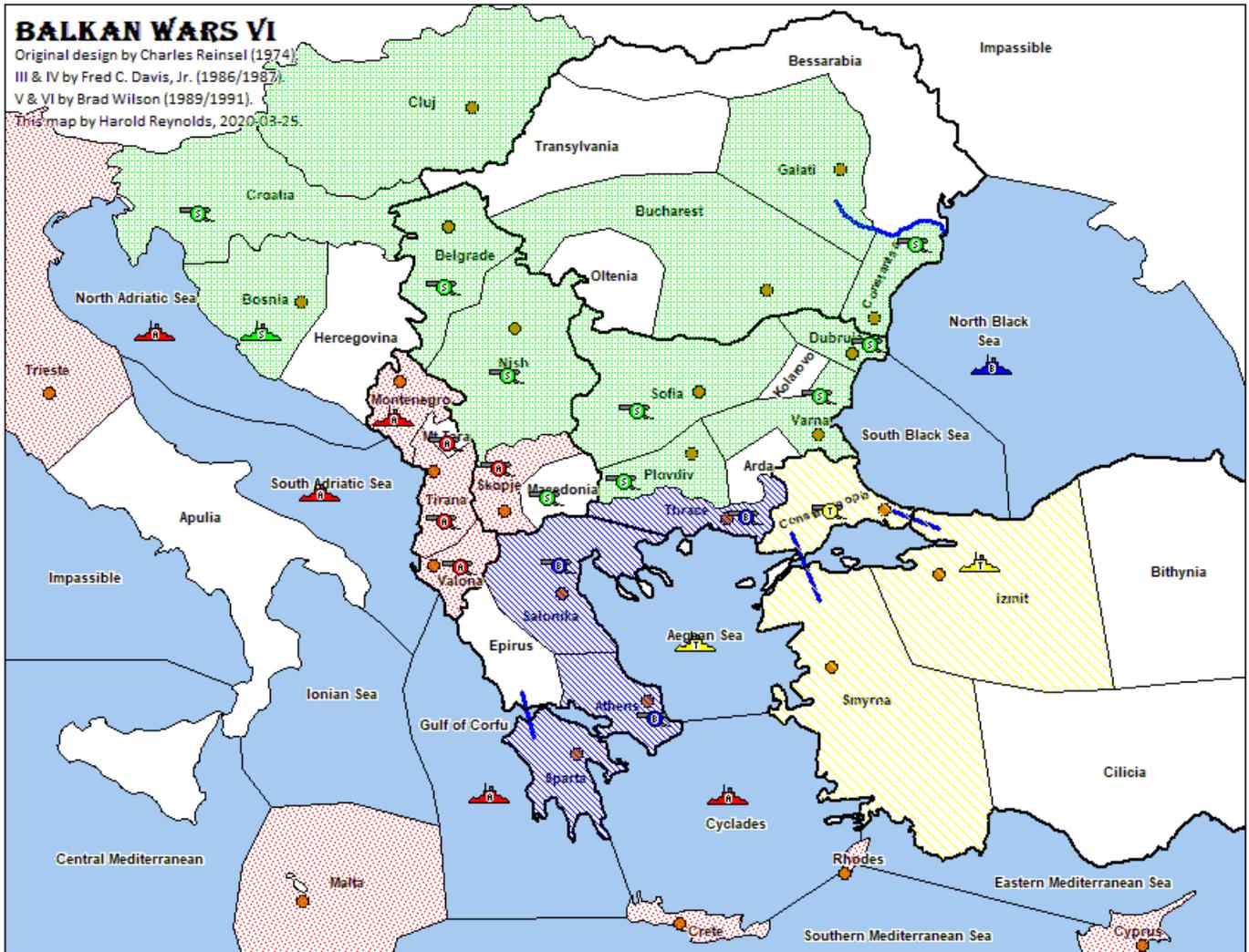
Balkan Wars VI, "Bad Way to Go", 2020Apb08, F 15

Albania: Mark Firth – mogcate@aol.com – F Cyclades - Aegean Sea (*Fails*),
 F Gulf of Corfu Supports A Valona, A Montenegro - Mt Tara, F North Adriatic Sea – Montenegro,
A Skopje - Nish (*Fails*), F South Adriatic Sea Supports F North Adriatic Sea – Montenegro,
 A Tirana Supports A Montenegro - Mt Tara, F Trieste - North Adriatic Sea, A Valona Supports A Tirana.

Bulgaria: Jack McHugh - jwmchughjr@gmail.com - A Athens Supports A Salonika,
F North Black Sea - Izmit (*Fails*), A Salonika Supports A Thrace, A Thrace Supports A Salonika.

Serbia: Andy York – wandrew88@gmail.com – A Belgrade Supports A Nish,
 F Bosnia Supports A Cluj – Croatia, A Cluj – Croatia, A Constantza Hold, A Dubruja Hold, A Kolarovo – Sofia,
~~A Mt Tara - Tirana~~ (*Disbanded*), A Nish Supports A Mt Tara - Tirana (*Cut*),
 A Plovdiv Supports A Constantinople - Thrace (*Void*), A Sofia – Macedonia, A Varna Hold.

Turkey: Heath Davis-Gardner – heathdavisgardner@gmail.com – F Aegean Sea - Smyrna (*Bounce*),
 A Constantinople Hold, F Izmit - Smyrna (*Bounce*).



A/S Draw Fails

Supply Center Chart

Albania:	Crete, Cyprus, Malta, Montenegro, Rhodes, Skopje, Tirana, Trieste, Valona=9	Even
Bulgaria:	Athens, Salonika, Sparta, Thrace=4	Even
Serbia:	Belgrade, Bosnia, Bucharest, Cluj, Constantsa, Dubruja, Galati, Nish, Plovdiv, Sofia, Varna=11	Build 1
Turkey:	Constantinople, Izmit, Smyrna=3	Even

PRESS

None.

Deadline for W 15/S 16 is April 9th at 7pm My Time

Where in the World is Kendo Nagasaki?

The Rules were in Eternal Sunshine #131, read them if you want a detailed explanation and examples. Basically, this is a guessing game, trying to guess the mystery person and their location (both chosen by me before the game started). Closest guess gets a public clue and notification they were the closest. Everyone else sees the clue but has to figure out on their own who was the closest that turn.

Turn 1

John David Galt:

Donald Trump in Mar al Lago, FL

Tom Howell:

Kamala Harris in Majuro, Marshall Islands

Kevin Wilson:

Mata Hari in Nome Alaska

Andy Lischett:

Churchy LaFemme in Okefenokee Swamp Park at Waycross, GA

Richard Smith:

Alan Turing at Bletchley, UK

Brad Wilson:

H.H. Asquith in Biarritz, France

Simon Langley-Evans:

Melania Trump in Atlanta, Georgia

Dane Maslen:

Kamala Harris in Oakland, California

Jack McHugh:

Robert E. Lee in Omsk, Russia

Mark Firth:

William Tell in Llanelli, UK

Hint to Person Placed Closest to Me:

We were born within 10 years of each other. Wrong nationality...but correct chromosome.

Turn 2

John David Galt:

Marie Curie in San Francisco, CA

Kevin Wilson:

Shohreh Aghdashloo in Manila, Philippines

Andy Lischett:

Henry Ford in Dearborn, MI

Simon Langley-Evans:

Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Dane Maslen:

Angela Merkel in Lhasa, Tibet

Richard Smith:

Edson Arantes do Nascimento (a.k.a. Pele) in Três Corações, Brazil

Brad Wilson:

Marie Curie in Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, Canada

David Burgess:

Donald Trump Jr. in Rikers Island Prison, Bronx, NY

Mark Firth:

Buster Crabbe in Cork, Ireland

Tom Howell:

General Sir William Keir Grant in Bhuj, Gujarat, India

Jack McHugh:

Joan Jett in St. Louis, MO

Hint to Person Placed Closest to Me:

Wrong nationality, wrong occupation...but correct chromosome.

Turn 3

Simon Langley-Evans:

Bernie Sanders is in Toronto, Canada

Kevin Wilson:

Whoopi Goldberg in Boise, Idaho

John David Galt:

Amy Coney Barrett in Wuhan, China

Tom Howell:

Haakon V Magnusson in Reykjavik, Iceland

Andy Lischett:
Herman Melville in Cardiff, Wales

Richard Smith:
Pope John Paul II at Wadowice, Poland

David Burgess:
Jim Morrison in Pere Lachaise Cemetery, Paris, France

Brad Wilson:
Margaret Thatcher in Rock Island, Illinois

Dane Maslen:
Boris Spassky in Reykjavik, Iceland

Jack McHugh:
Charles De Gaulle in Cleveland, Ohio

Mark Firth:
Kim Il Sung, in Gavle, Sweden

Hint to Person Placed Closest to Me:
Wrong occupation. You survived what I did not.

Deadline for Turn 4 is April 9th at 7pm My Time

By Popular Demand

I've run this game (or By Almost Popular Demand, a slight variant) a number of times in Eternal Sunshine. The rules are simple: I supply you with five categories. You send in what you think will be the most popular answer for each category. Research IS permitted. You get one point for each person who submitted the answer you gave. So, if you and two other people send in the same answer that's three points. You also get to choose a Joker category, where the points are doubled. So in the example I gave, you'd get six points in that category if you chose it as your Joker that round. If you don't specify a Joker, it gets applied to the first category listed (so you don't "lose" the Joker). Always answer for every category: any answer is legal, and will earn a point even if you're the only person to give it. High score after ten categories wins. Any player who joins after the first round starts with the lowest score so far; if you join starting in Turn 3 and the person doing the worst has 27 points so far, that's what you start with. Also if you miss a turn, you get the lowest score that round rather than zero. This makes the game more competitive and keeps you playing even if you arrive late or forget to play one turn.

Turn 3 Categories:

1. A Dan Aykroyd film.
2. A U.S. state that begins with M.
3. Something you mix with vodka.
4. A type of bush.
5. A brand of watch.

Joker category shown in **BOLD**. Most popular answer shown in *italics* (if I remember to do that part).

<u>Player</u>	<u>Aykroyd</u>	<u>M State</u>	<u>Vodka Mixer</u>	<u>Bush</u>	<u>Watch</u>	<u>Turn</u>	<u>Total</u>
Andy Lischett	<i>Ghostbusters</i>	Montana	Tonic	Raspberry	<i>Rolex</i>	25	86
John David Galt	<i>Ghostbusters</i>	Minnesota	<i>Orange Juice</i>	<i>Rose</i>	<i>Rolex</i>	29	86
Richard Smith	The Blues Brothers	Massachusetts	Tonic	Brazilian	<i>Rolex</i>	23	81
Kevin Wilson	<i>Ghostbusters</i>	Missouri	Tomato Juice	Paint	<i>Rolex</i>	22	77
Simon Langley-Evans	The Blues Brothers	<i>Michigan</i>	Tonic	<i>Rose</i>	<i>Rolex</i>	27	75
Andy York	The Blues Brothers	Mississippi	Soda	Oleander	Omega	13	71
Brad Wilson	Trading Places	<i>Michigan</i>	Tonic	<i>Rose</i>	<i>Rolex</i>	21	71
Jack McHugh	Coneheads	Maryland	<i>Orange Juice</i>	Mulberry	Timex	13	69
Mark Firth	The Blues Brothers	<i>Michigan</i>	<i>Orange Juice</i>	Mulberry	<i>Rolex</i>	26	66
David Burgess	<i>Ghostbusters</i>	Massachusetts	Orange Juice	Arborvitae	Timex	21	62
Mark Nelson	NMR	NMR	NMR	NMR	NMR	10	59
Carol Kay	<i>Ghostbusters</i>	Minnesota	<i>Orange Juice</i>	<i>Rose</i>	Apple	18	58
Walt O'Hara	Doctor Detroit	Mississippi	Cranberry Juice	Toilet	<i>Rolex</i>	14	49
Paul Milewski	Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom	Montana	Tomato Juice	Rhododendron	Timex	10	45
MOST POPULAR	Ghostbusters	Michigan	Orange Juice	Rose	Rolex		

John David Galt gets the high score of 29 for the round (out of a possible 33). Paul Milewski gets the low score of 10.

Comments by Category:

A Dan Aykroyd film: Andy Lischett – “Can I triple my bet on Ghostbusters? A while ago I went to a hospital for something and a nurse and I were both waiting for an elevator. When the elevator door opened there stood a maintenance man wearing coveralls, gloves and goggles, with a canister style vacuum cleaner slung across his back as he held the vacuum's wand. I immediately thought, and the nurse said, "Who ya' gonna call?" The nurse and I laughed but the maintenance guy must have been from Mars or something, as he just looked at us and said, "About what?"” Simon Langley-Evans – “I don't think I have ever watched a film with Da Aykroyd apart from Ghostbusters, so this is a complete shot in the dark.” Kevin Wilson – “So many DA films but you kind of have to think Ghost Busters will rate pretty high. I thought about the Blues Brothers as well. And, given it's February, Ground Hog Day but still settled on Ghost Busters.” **[[I don't recall Aykroyd being in Groundhog Day, nor in Indiana Jones in the Temple of Doom which Paul Milewski selected. Maybe he is one of those actors who get confused easily?]]** David Burgess – “Wow...Ghostbusters or Blue Brothers? This is a tough choice. I LOVE Blues Brothers more. But, I think Ghostbusters will be more popular.” Brad Wilson – “I suspect most people will say Blues Bros. or Ghostbusters, but Trading Places is an arch-favorite of mine. So, I'll take the hit.”

A U.S. state that begins with M: Simon Langley-Evans – “Too many US states begin with M, so it's impossible to decide what will be the most popular.” Kevin Wilson – “For “M” states, have to go with the home state of Missouri. I guess Michigan might be popular having been in the news so much in all the recent politics coverage but I'll go with MO.” Richard Smith – “Quite a few Ms to choose from for the US States. Both Mississippi and Massachusetts have featured in the You Spell Terrible game on the BBC's cheapskate-but-brilliant TV quiz show Richard Osman's House of Games (see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Osman%27s_House_of_Games#Pairs).

Something you mix with vodka: Kevin Wilson – “I'm more of a purist when I choose to drink vodka (bourbon is my spirit of choice) and don't mix anything except possibly a tiny little bit of vermouth for a very dry vodka martini. And I'm not a fan, at all, of bloody mary's but they do seem quite popular so tomato juice it is.” David Burgess – “Making this my Joker!!!! This has got to win!” Brad Wilson – “Personally, when I drink it, which is not often, it would be tomato juice.”

A type of bush: Simon Langley-Evans – “I'm very tempted to offer George as the answer to 'a type of bush', but there are no points for being clever.” Kevin Wilson – “For brushes just too many to choose from so I went with the first to pop into my head. Maybe others have similar synapses.” **[[Obviously there was a reading error here...]]** David Burgess – “This one was tough. The first thing I thought of was Rose Bush. But a Rose is really a flower? I will probably be the lone Arborvitae.” Andy York – “Considered Green and Burning, but figures wouldn't have many matches.”

A brand of watch: Kevin Wilson – “For watches, maybe Apple is popular but my first thought was to luxury watches and the most familiar there is Rolex although I'm more of a Breitling fan. We'll see. I suspect if it isn't Rolex it will be Apple.” David Burgess – “It takes a licking and keeps on ticking.”

General Comments: None.

Turn 4 Categories:

(Don't forget to specify a Joker category, or it will be applied to Category 1)

1. A nation in southeast Asia.
2. A button on a television remote control.
3. Something you regret.
4. An amusement park food.
5. A Paul Newman movie.

Deadline for Turn 4 of By Popular Demand is: April 9 at 7pm My Time

Deadline for the next issue of Eternal Sunshine is: Friday April 9, 2021 at 7pm My Time (U.S. central time) – some games and subzines earlier

See You Then!