

So, to sum my points so far:

They also have that afore-mentioned allegiance that supersedes (or so they seem to think) the laws of the United States. It's the vow they take when they dedicate their life to God and the Roman Catholic Church, his earthly HQ, embodied in the person of His Holiness, the Pope. The clergy are all considered God's "ambassadors," spreading his word to the untaught masses, to redeem souls for cash and valuable prizes.

It seems all these priests, when they get in trouble, run crying to Big Daddy for absolution...BD being my shorthand in this case for the Pope, God's personal switchboard. There's been a lot of legal action short-circuited by the Church's self-proclaimed authority to handle their own internal affairs, and deal with their own miscreants. If you've heard of a case where any priest has been faced with actual criminal proceedings, involving a court and a judge... well, it's news to me.

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Allegiance?

Gary Wilson 16th Nov 2003

"on Lorraine"

They're called the Roman Catholic clergy.

Before you think this is a Christian bash, let me finish. It all got started by the recent legal problems they've been having. It seems you can't open a paper without reading they've had another priest molesting youngsters, boys or girls. It all came to a head with the hit-and-run by the Bishop of Phoenix, Arizona. If you don't know the story, the nutshell is he hit a homeless man, and fled the scene, leaving him dead in the street. While the police pondered whether or not to charge him with anything, the pope recalled him to Rome, to dismiss him from his position. I don't know if he will return to face charges yet or not...but it does bring me to my point.

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odd.

I want to test this theory. I want to describe here the phenomenon I described to her in chat, and solicit comments about whether or not it's

from the rest of the planet's population.

There's a theory that this specific thing is bizarre, strange, totally alien from the rest of the planet's population.

I've just had another chat session with Susan.

There was an intriguing insight into part of what makes me tick. It never struck me as odd, this facet of the way my mind works – but

Just my opinion, I could be wrong.

I wonder how many of them would keep breaking U.S. laws and customs if we sent them packing like that?

them off to enjoy their life back home in Rome.

government can simply declare them "persona non grata" ...and ship think they have to begin with. The difference here is, if they act up, the

immunity for any crimes they commit here...something they seem to U.S. And, since they are ambassadors, they would have diplomatic

need both a passport and a working visa to let them live and work in the imposed by the Vatican, they should be citizens of Vatican City, and

human beings...but if they wish to follow their own laws, the same ones country in its own right! We shouldn't just kick them out, they are located smack dab in the middle of Rome, is a LEGALLY recognized

Okay, follow me on this. They've sworn to follow God, and his voice

considered American citizens.

- 2) They have sworn a vow, to God and his representative the Pope.
- 3) They've broken faith with the laws of their country of citizenship.

Sporting Section

Sometimes these poems keep you awake until you've written them. The identities of the two people in this poem shouldn't be hard to guess.

In a state called Old Dominion there's a girl who stole his heart,

And he'd gladly be her minion, if she'd only play her part.

And despite the wide Atlantic, and despite the aircraft fare,

She can't help but drive him frantic with his longing to be there.

In a Kingdom called United, where was born her mother tongue,

Stands a man who's so excited by a love that's newly young.

And despite the stupid distance, and despite the heartless facts,

He will overcome resistance for the girl that he attracts.

An American is longing, and a British guy is too:

Though the obstacles are thronging, they are sure to see it through,

And despite that stupid ocean, and despite their other trials,

They will test their strong emotion and they hope it ends in smiles.

Who said that?

No one guessed the source of the quotation "I'm a ..." in issue 1.

Nor, indeed, the quotation "I went to ..." in issue 2.

There remains a faint suspicion that you're not really trying. Here's a third quotation from the same source. Try again.

A few moments ago, I said to <name>, "Are we going to do any eating tonight?" and waited for some response. There was a pause. The bed shook slightly. I thought that I should clarify something. I added helpfully "... of food?"

Conversations 3

Third time lucky?

Conversations compiled by Douglas Spencer

Issue 3 published 1st November 2003

Future issues published when I feel like it.

Available for the Usual.

Because you helped.

Because of your LOC.

Because you found it in the bar.

Because you sent me yours.

Because you shaved someone.

Because you got shaved.

Because I love you.

Because.

And, inevitably, online.

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conversations@dial.pipex.com

<http://efanzines.com/Conversations>

Susan says "It'll be all foldable, like before, right?"

Douglas says "Yes, the same geometry."

The LOC Box

Erika Maria Lacey

12th August 2003

Upon reading a bit of the first Convers[at]ions it struck me that it seemed that your fanzine was all too familiar, then I realised why: you're one of those who put livejournal material into their fanzines.

Once that was all sorted out I could charge ahead with no worries, read on and understand that no, I hadn't read the fanzine before and forgotten.

Reprinting bits and pieces of livejournal entries is a great idea – there are some great pieces of fanwriting which get put online, and because a journal is kind of ephemeral once an entry gets beyond the front page, good writing can go by unnoticed.

Someone's livejournal entry pointed towards your September 2002 post about Anne, and I thought it was touching then. Didn't say anything in your journal, but your wife sounded like a wonderful woman – and the dedication piece you wrote just great. (Saw that in Ansible, too.)

It's rather unfortunate that bicycle parking is never under shelter over this way, at least in Brisbane. When one parks one's bicycle, it's under the weather. This makes things very interesting indeed. In rainy season it means you're going to sit your backside on a wet seat. In the middle of summer you're going to get a scorched arse, as black is not a very heat-reflective colour.

Oh, for a new bike. I have a wonderful little folding one at my disposal, but while this is good for when I don't have to do long distances (and have to go on buses or trains) it's a pain when my ride's over an hour long or if I want to go up hills or especially fast. The average on my folding bicycle's 12kmph! Just far too small and heavy for anything better. Along the lines of Max, I do like rain; if the weather's not too cold and I'm not shivering in some corner, that is. In summer it's nice to sit out and listen to the rain, and in days gone past I've been known to run out into it and just get sodden for the fun of it. If it's going to rain I sometimes don't bother taking my umbrella along – what's a bit of sogginess, anyway, when in the long run I'll dry off. If one's wearing acrylic rather than cotton one hardly gets cold at all!

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Tell Me If I'm Odd

It started because I didn't remember what Susan's favourite colour is, despite having read it in a number of surveys.

My favourite colour is green. Mountains are green and purple, woods are green and brown, water is green and blue. I associate the colour with pleasant things. That's *why* it's my favourite colour.

Susan's favourite colour, apparently, is purple. I didn't remember that – I said that it was because she'd never said why. There wasn't a hook for remembering. She said "To me, I've never heard of having a particular reason for liking one's favorite color. One just *likes* that color more than the others."

She asked me if I knew what colour her eyes are. I said "I haven't the faintest idea. I daresay you've said, I'm sure I've seen them. But I don't have a clue." I said "I know you describe your hair as strawberry blonde, but I can't visualise its colour, even having seen it." I'm not colour-blind. I have perfect eyesight, perfect colour vision. I'm just not interested in the colour of her eyes, her hair.

And it *never occurred to me* that this was strange.

She asked me what colour *my* eyes were. I said they were brown, I knew they were brown. I'd had to fill it in on forms and stuff. But I had no idea whether they were light brown or dark brown. I'd have to go and look. But *she knew*. She said they were "a beautiful medium brown". I said "really, this kind of detail is simply not important. I fail totally to see what difference it makes how people look. How people *feel* – that's a different matter."

A few lines later I said "I can't even visualise what Anne looks like." I lived with Anne for more than ten years, we'd been married for more than four when she died. I looked at her every day. But I can't bring her face to mind. I know her smell, the taste of her skin, its texture. The way she felt. Susan asked if I had photos – I'm sure there are some, somewhere. But I don't go back and look at them. I don't have to. I can feel, taste, smell Anne without a photo, and I was never fussed what she looked like.

And it *never occurred to me* that this was strange.

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I don't have much to say about religion – despite having tossed about in a few ever since a child, I'm pretty apathetic about it all. I keep searching for my "truth", which seems to be a bit of everything these days. As a child, I was a strong Christian; upon finding out how religion is perverted by politics I became less of that and more of ... else. That would be teenagerhood for me. I once had strong aspirations to nunhood, so I could help people. Now I just do volunteer work instead.

You're right about instant messenger, though – that is a dreadful waste of time. Anything can be, really; sometimes I feel that people on IM just talk because they've nothing else to do, while I'm busily doing something and feeling annoyed at interruptions of "I'm turning you into a pig now, hahaha!" Yeah, hahaha – click, piss off.

For a moment there I had no idea what James Shields was on about. "Predictive text entry values"? Then I remembered something from just a few weeks ago – someone I know got their hands on a snazzy new phone and was showing me just how nifty it was when they turned this option on; they didn't have to press every little letter, words just appearing. I'd wondered at the troubles of words with the same keystrokes happening, but since I don't have a mobile let it fade from mind. (Don't have a mobile. Yet. I shall get one by the end of the year; a headline is for the internet and making out going calls, but not good for getting in contact with me, not at all.)

I found the format of Convers[at]ions 1 a little difficult to read, with the lack of easy differentiation between paragraphs. Was glad to see this changed in #2, making it all the easier on the eye. Enjoyable to see these bits, things I'd not seen from people before and some I had.

Bests,
Erika

I also heard from Lloyd Penney, Janine Stinson, John Teehan, ... and the inevitable assorted collection of LiveJournalists. All of these people can be contacted via the email address on the front cover.

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Susan treasures up photos of me. She goes back and looks at them again and again. She loves to watch me on the webcam. She can picture me accurately, effortlessly, in her mind's eye.

And I don't – I *can't* – bring to mind what she looks like.

I can't picture *anyone's* appearance. I can't bring *anyone* into view in front of my mind's eye. I can describe people, how they look – but I'm *not remembering* how they look. I'm remembering *descriptions* of how they look. And there are people who I can't describe at all, people I know very very well.

Susan asked me if I remembered what my Mother looked like. (I visit her frequently – there are photos in earlier LJ entries.)

I have *no idea* what my mother looks like.

And it *never occurred to me* that this was strange.

I know what her glasses look like, because I've had to repair them. I know what shape the windscreen scars on her face are, because I was studying first-aid at the time of her accident. I know what shape her biopsy scar is, because it was me that sent her to the GP. But I can't visualise her face.

I remember bits of how she looks, because of specific reasons. But not her whole face. There's no reason why I should – I didn't become her son by *looking* at her, after all.

I take photos, and I link to them in my LJ. But the captions are often to do with what people are doing, what people are thinking. Who cares what they look like? What difference does it make?

People are the people that they are because of what they do, because of how they react to each other. It doesn't make a difference how people look. *Really. Really.* The difference is only in how people interact.

And yet some people make decisions about how to interact based on how people look. Now that is bizarre. I'm completely, totally baffled why it makes a difference. It *never did* to me.

And it *never occurred to me* that this was strange.

Is this strange? Am I odd? Honestly, I never realised.

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