

SIDDHARTHA 3:6

AN E-ZINE FROM
IAN WILLIAMS



Please note that there is no religious content in this fanzine.
I just thought that after nearly twenty issues it was about time there was a picture of
Siddhartha the Buddha (about whom I have good thoughts) on the cover.

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An Interesting Fact About The Cover.

When looking for an image, I typed in 'Siddhartha' into Google Images. There, on the very first page, included among a variety of pictures of the Buddha was the 32 year old cover of an issue of **my** Siddhartha drawn by **Harry Bell**.
Go check it out for yourself.

A Few Last Words.

Six issues in about seven months is a record for me in terms of pubbing my ish, even if some of them have been a bit odd (a novel in 4 parts, a 30,000 word novella, and a 16,000 word recap/essay on a British tv series about mid-teenagers) even by fanzine standards. Of course it helps not to have to do that tedious stuff like actually printing it all out, collating the damn thing and then, what I hated the most, compiling an address list, writing them all out and posting it.

Cheaper too. Rob Jackson told me in an email that an issue of Inca with colour photos cost him £3.00 each. All this costs me is the electricity.

It's been fun to even though I've had very little feedback. What I have had -the locs- appears here.

And if you think I'm leading up to telling you that this is the last issue, then I have to tell you that this is the last issue.

Of Siddhartha series 3.

It isn't that I'm bored with it rather that I've discovered something more interesting to do with my time.

Hallelujah, brothers and sisters, I have been born again!

Reborn pure, new, in the sacred light of the blog.

I, and I am unashamed to admit it, a blogger. You can find my blog at -

<http://freethinkingajournalofpopularculture.blogspot.com/>

It may come as no surprise to learn that it's called -**Freethinking: a journal of popular culture**. Here's the introduction-

Welcome to Freethinking which basically covers anything I want to write about but will include dvds, rock music, graphic novels, science fiction, horror, politics, animal rescue, cats, etc. Freethinking supports anything which promotes true equality irrespective of gender, race, culture, sexual orientation, etc. Caution: contains the occasional rude word and will probably upset those of an intolerant disposition. Intolerant cat lovers may find themselves in a quandary

I've been blogging since June 3rd and amassed a fair amount of content to date. Admittedly, large chunks of it have been edited from material which has appeared here, a review or two from Amazon, plus odd bits I found in My Documents which seemed to fit.

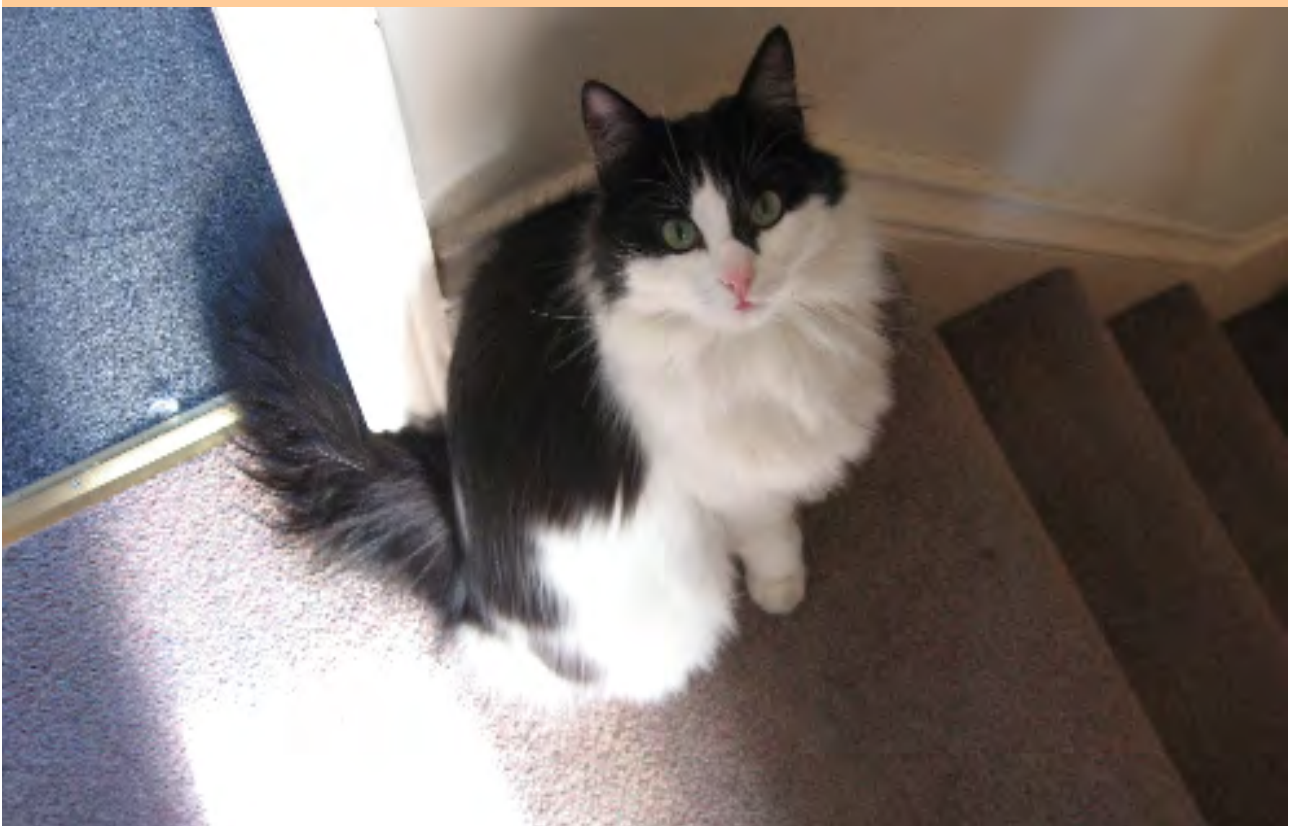
But since June 14th it's been all new material and it does indeed cover everything listed in its introduction. I'm really quite pleased with it so far insofar as it's a fair reflection of my interests and attitudes and I think I've done it reasonably well.

Whether anyone other than a few friends have read it I don't know. But that's the next stage, figuring out how to get it noticed. If anyone out there has any tips, please let me know.

The title probably isn't the best but I had to think of one on the spot when I was signing up for it. Still it is an accurate one. I believe my views have changed and shifted over the years as I've grown older, and in a positive way, becoming more open, flexible and less dogmatic. This in itself is a highly debatable statement and I'm not sure it's true. Maybe I haven't phrased it very well, but I think you get the gist of what I'm trying to say. I believe that a mind that doesn't change is a closed mind.

I remember giving my opinion of a book in the course of a conversation with some Gannets (the local fan group which went the way of most local fan groups -everything changes) when one of them, a trifle irate, accused me of contradicting myself as it wasn't what I'd said about the book a year ago. Of course it wasn't, but I wasn't contradicting myself; I'd just changed my mind. And long may I continue to do so.

This is Blossom. Cute, isn't she?



"I want to eat your face."

Letters.

The first loc should have been from Mary Reed but to my shame I seem to have mislaid it. Sorry, Mary

Mike Meara
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Hi Ian!

Bill Burns announced the arrival of Siddhartha #9 on eFanzines, so I thought I'd have a quick look. I hate reading things on screen, so I'll probably print it out later, but I got the gist of some of it. I hadn't seen a recent photo of you, but I recognised you straight away. That fish looked tasty!

I was interested to see that we're the same age, the difference being that I was able to retire (or rather, persuade them to make me redundant) six years ago. I've relatively recently got back into fandom, after a long gap; this happened through the good offices of Uncle Peter Weston and Prolapse. As a result, Pat and I went to Cytricon V and Novacon 38, our first conventions for twenty years. Although I have no plans to pub my ish again, I am writing locs and contributions for a few fanzines, and I've joined the fmzfen and inthebar elists.

Apart from the odd email and loc, this will probably be my last direct fanac for a while, though material of interest will be appearing in my blog which is basically Siddhartha anyway, but without any structure.

John Sila
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Hello Ian my old china plate!

Downloaded your latest ish from eFanzines and read it voraciously. Sweetheart, there's so much we would never agree on, and yet I cant help thinking there is still more that we would. Mostly its the Buddhist thing and the importance we attach to life . Although you say Buddhism is an on and off thing and looking at that fish dinner on Lanzarote Id say it was pretty much off right now.

Vegetarianism is not a fundamental principle of Buddhism but obviously is highly compatible with it.

Sixty and retired eh? Lucky you, I shall be lucky to ever retire, the way things have gone with the economy and hence my pension plan. Still, I only sit here all day bashing a keyboard or , alternatively, go someplace else and bash a keyboard. Its not like

shipbuilding is it? Oooooer - sorry got a bit political. Speaking of which, as per your request, I attach my chart of the Political Compass site. You can print it- I should be glad to try and shake off this calumny that I am somewhere to the right of Goebbels, and I have no problems with being in the libertarian quadrant. Libertarians have a bad name, as usual, due to the excesses of some of our American members, but the idea of personal liberty is something I find noble and worth keeping hold of. But then, I would - I'm a Buddhist.

I hope to put out another ish myself sometime soon. I only do a limited number of hard copies, but I will put you down for one. Have a happy retirement and keep well.

Lloyd Penny

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Dear Ian:

Many thanks for Siddhartha 3:1. Even though it predates me, I know Siddhartha as your zine from the late 70s and early 80s; welcome back to you and your zine. I promise locs for as long as you care to publish, and I hope you'll enjoy this time around as much as you did in previous incarnations.

Purrrrrrr to Ted...as much as I like dogs, I do prefer cats. Strangely enough, we don't have any pets, mostly because our schedules are in such flux, we don't think we'd have time for them, and that's not fair to them or us. Instead, we spoil the dogs and cats of the people in our building, and we go to pet-oriented events.

I'd like to see Earl Kemp's reaction on the lesbian soft core you've been reading. I have many gay friends in local fandom here, and I've learned that in spite of public stereotypes, I believe it takes a mental toughness to discover and accept your sexuality, homosexuality in this case. It's tough to admit it to your family and your friends, but the ultimate tough job is to admit it to yourself in this very homophobic world. This is what I am, and now that I realize it and admit it, I will have to live with it, and I will. I find that many gays and lesbians find themselves comfortable within fandom because of that outsider mentality you refer to, and there is a higher level of acceptance in fandom that provides the GLBT crowd with a comfort zone they usually fail to find elsewhere. Good for them, and good for us, for fans find an understanding voice with the GLBTs we accept. Perhaps we've become each other's support group, and the lines between the two have substantially blurred.

Ann Bannon's books are not softcore by any means. In an email, not a loc per se, Earl told me he showed my review to the lady herself who, I believe, appreciated it.

I never had pets growing up, so I enjoyed the neighbourhood's animals; that explains our own petless but not animal-free existence today. And, while I grew up here in Canada, my Scottish grandparents would send our family newspapers and comics, so I eagerly read the Beano, the Dandy, the Rover, the Hotspur and the Wizard. The Wizard had interesting stories that they seem to recycle every generation or so, so I was enthralled by the tales of Wilson, who was taught to make a potion that greatly extended his lifespan.

I am all set to turn 50 in a few months, but because I've never been able to stay in a single job for more than 9 years, I probably won't have a corporate pension to draw upon, and so, even with investments in the bank, I doubt I'll ever be able to retire, and in some ways, I don't think I'd want to. Perhaps it's just the desire to feel useful and contributing. (Actually, I'm Thomas the Tank Engine, such a useful engine I am!) Throughout my working career, I have never had a going-away lunch; I've been uncomfortable attending them, and the same way getting them. I've refused them to avoid putting others through the same discomfort, and I consider not having them a clean break, with no emotional ties. I deal

with enough surly types at work (several times today, in fact), and most offices seem dysfunctional. I'd very happy to leave the office I am in now, but I have little choice right now, and I am looking for something better, if it exists.

I was very pleased to see the election of Barack Obama; to be honest, the election of a large rock would have been preferable to the past president. However...in the past 8 years, American was only too happy to treat every poorly, even its allies and friends. Obama says that will change, but now comes a reconstruction bill that says American First and Only when it comes to steel and other materials in that reconstruction effort, in effect breaking many agreements with its trading partners. This bill says that America is willing to rebuild, but at the expense of its allies and friends. This isn't change, it's business as usual. Mr. Obama, you know that when we work together, we prosper together. Reconstruction is great, but not at the expense of others. Please, don't be an isolationist.

There is left and right, but the centre line that connects them on a graph can be situated anywhere. A right-leaning politician in Canada would be considered far to the left in the United States. Same could be said for any given cause; a person could be left on one cause, and right on the other. I would consider Stephen Harper perhaps further to the right on the provided chart, but with the budget he just brought down, which is seen as a desperate attempt to cling to power, he might now be placed near the middle of the graph. There's plenty of conservative thinkers who are disappointed with Harper, especially for the fact that before getting into politics, he was an economist.

Weeks until the next issue, and not 14 years? May we hold you to that? Myself, I'd like more. Ta, and see you then.

Sam, a rescued fostered dog. Bonnie our eldest.



"I want to be friends."

"I want to eat your face."

Jim Linwood
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Hi Ian

I'm really pleased to see you back publishing *Siddhartha* - one of my favourite personalzines.

I took the Political Compass test and found that I occupied the same position on the graph as yourself - and I suspect most of your readers did too. The problem with the test is that the questions were so obvious that you could deliberately place yourself anywhere on the graph to project one's self image. Strangely enough I was involved in "play testing" the compass back in 1962. Dave Hale (editor of *Les Spinge*) was a first-year psychology student at Manchester University and one of his projects was to construct and test the compass. Among others the choose Ken Cheslin and myself - Ken went right off the graph as "Authoritarian Right" and I went off in the opposite direction as "Libertarian Left". Dave said "Aw, shit" and retired to his bedroom to redraw the graph.

Lloyd Penny

Dear Ian:

It's quite a day to be tackling this, and I may not finish it today because Yvonne and I are going out to a dinner theatre tonight...but I've got here the novel that is *Siddhartha* 3.2, and I am going to try to give you some commentary as I go through it. I've tried book reviews before, and I am not that good a reviewer, as witnessed by the fanzine reviews I give to John Purcell and Askance, but I will try.

I like the fact that so much is naturally introduced in the first few paragraphs, like the Shadows and nightmares and monsters. So many times, as are forced to plough through the book without having most of the information at hand to readily figure out just what's going on, and what the book's about. However, having a pretty raw love scene just past the opening paragraphs is a little much. I'd tone it down somewhat. But, it might be a revelation of the fact that the protagonist is female. The dawning of this will come at different times for different readers, but it does come, and figuring that out is an added bonus. Then we find out that she is black/Jewish/both?, too. Revelations do come gradually in a very natural introduction, but I wasn't sure about this. Might need a little more clarity on this.

We're in a more enlightened age where we know that when gay people seem promiscuous, it's probably because they are lonely, they feel they have to hide their sexuality away, and they get frustrated enough to blurt out their passions, more and more without shame. I guess this is Rachel's way of blurting out her passions, and her personal revelations. Coming out is all about personal revelations, after all. (We have friends who were a same-sex couple for many years, and we were looking forward to their wedding... shame they broke up, and I won't go into further details. They made a good couple.)

The parents scene where Rachel and Debra introduce their relationship to Rachel's parents is a little too natural, even for people who want to seem to be modern and accepting, even when they really aren't.

The change of narrator is a little jarring throughout this first .pdf, but this is at least a working introduction to the heart of the story, the Shadows, and perhaps how zombies are created, and what they really are. Again, quick and full explanation, and it does help the reader, especially when they don't realize this is what the author is doing.

I think that now, with the introduction of supernatural themes like werewolves and zombies and other preternaturals, this is where my own reading bogs down, no fault of your o This has never been an interest of my own.

A statement...I have read that it is difficult to be a male author and try to narrate a story from the viewpoint of a female protagonist. You're brave to take it on; other readers, especially female ones, may rip you over the coals. (This will happen after some who saw that you were putting a novel into your fanzine get finished with you.)

I think Rachel spends too much time telling the reader how shallow she is. I think most people, even those who really are shallow, would be so open as to describe themselves that way. Also, there's just too much money here. It's terribly British to be living in the manner to which you've become accustomed through an inheritance from a dotty uncle who just loved you so much... Add in the brain power, the athletic ability, the near-superhuman strength...all the main characters here are a little too perfect.

I've noticed lots of explanations in parentheses, and I think you may use them a little too much. I also think characters shouldn't break the fourth wall, and speak so much to the audience. Princess Bride is an exception... Now on with the show! is a little much. I think some readers would appreciate the suddenness of a change of pace and a disaster suddenly happening, instead of the overly-stated oh, oh, here comes disaster to ruin this perfect setting...

Off to part two...I'm not a prude, but the casual anal sex does little for the story, IMHO. Same goes for a purple 15-inch erection. Then letting the Man of Power narrate for a while is jarring again.

I will complement you on not making the Man of Power an evil entity; evil is often the word applied to something we don't understand or agree with.

Part 3...you've made reference to WordTM several times, and you know you'll get your ass sued by Uncle Bill and his band of lawyers. I'd change it.

It's become here almost biographical...this happened, then we had sex, and this other things happened, and then we had more sex. And of course, we got fabulous jobs and made scads of money...yes, they are story characters, because they couldn't be real human beings. It's looking to be some kind of wish-fulfillment story.

Stabbing right through a body, eyes being gouged out...ick. Not what I like to read at all.

[You haven't seen The Evil Dead I assume.](#)

I've tried to open the fourth section, and I have downloaded twice, and still, Adobe Reader 5.0 or 7.0 won't open it, so I'm going to fold it up here. It's not what I like to read to be honest, but I have tried to give you some critique for some rewriting I believe you have planned.

I have issue 3.3 and I will get things back to normal with a loc, real soon now. We'll see you then.

[Thanks Lloyd, you were the only one who commented and whatever I agree or don't agree with, I appreciate the time and effort you took.](#)

Lloyd again

Dear Ian:

Thanks for Siddhartha 3.3. This issue should be easier to respond to than 3.2. I hope my comments then were of use to you, and I hope the following will be as useful...

Lots of cult movies feature flesh eaters and zombies and the like. I don't mind zombies...but I can't eat a whole one. Old movies can be fun; they have great heckling value. Why watch MST3K heckle those movies when you can do it yourself? Much more fun that way.

I've never been much of a fan of popular culture, and a lot of that stems from what I see on American television. I'd prefer literature, discussions, the arts, etc., but television, often the conduit of popcult to the masses, offers up car racing, wrestling, UFC ring extreme fighting, and the oxymorically-named reality television. There, I've probably alienated a large number of people, so sad, ta for now, and don't let the Net hit you on the bum as you log off. As you say, Ian, if everyone else likes, I probably won't. Of course, there's exceptions, but while people rave about Battlestar Galactica and Lost and those aforementioned reality TV shows, it probably means that I couldn't be bothered. Doesn't allow for much conversation at the office the next day, but I'm usually too busy for that.

The list of DVDs, CDs and books I've purchased over the last few months would probably cover three or four lines. I'm picky, and besides, I don't have much money for these things. As far as interests SFish, I'm picky there, too. I don't read a lot of fantasy, am not interested in horror at all, and same goes for comics and graphic novels. Mostly because I have an evening job to go with my daytime job, I haven't seen evening television for about four years now, which means I've passed by the new Battlestar and the new Doctor Who, and to be honest, no regrets. I have plenty of fannish writing projects to keep me and my available time occupied. It does show that my interests have changed, that I won't read or watch soemthing just because it says science fiction on the cover. Saves time and money...

The Word...now you have my attention. Finished Wil McCarthy's four-book series on programmable matter and the Queendom of Sol, several anthologies of short stories from the 70s, and am currently reading Leigh Brackett's The Nemesis From Terra.

And again, Lloyd

(I know where Lloyd is. Where are the rest of you sods?)

Many thanks for Siddhartha 3.4. A quick scan here says to me that I may not be able to write much about the contents, with the show discussed being completely unfamiliar to me, but I will write what I can.

I think that last television show that caught my attention enough to want to follow it devotedly was Babylon 5, and that was more than 10 years ago. Some of my friends here rave over Doctor Who and Battlestar Galactica, but the latter never caught my attention at all, while working evenings has made sure that I've never seen any of the new episodes, and Matt Smith is all set to take over the TARDiS.

Nope, I've never even heard of Skins. It may be a while before it gets over to this side of the Atlantic, and then it may go onto a subscription channel. We watch so little television, and we don't subscribe to anything above the basic channels. If something special happens in the lives of the characters in this show, it should have a substantial audience. I

find one of the frustrations of modern youth is that very little happens in their lives. Their parents cannot relate to them because so much that their parents took for granted are not in the kids' lives. We bicycled, delivered newspapers, traveled at whim...today, bicycles are very expensive, and they need helmets, pads and licences; newspapers are delivered by adults only, and no one travels at a whim anymore, especially after 9/11. I think I'd be frustrated, too.

I'm not entirely unsympathetic to youth...because of diet and estrogenic chemicals in the environment, children are physically maturing earlier and earlier, but seem to mentally maturing a little later. That results in a child's mind in an adult body, and not knowing what to do with sudden curves and urges. It's also a time of self-discovery, to find out what turns your crank, to find out if you are homo- or hetero-. There's conflict between keeping such discoveries secret, or wanting to blurt it out to the world. (Yvonne and I watched both British and American versions of *Queer As Folk*. Not only was that a fine show, but educational for the masses, I'd hope. The American version was shot in Toronto, by the way.) Attempted expressions of love and other deep emotions are awkward, and we remember our own first expressions, but the deepest expressions are often pure words from the heart.

One other frustration for the youth of today is that they are hammered by the admonition to shape up, grow up and act right. Well, growing up is what they're doing, as fast as they can, and when it comes to acting right, their parents are providing some pretty poor examples to follow. Parents should be saying, "Act better than we do", but kids don't know enough to do that.

Should this show ever show up on Canadian television, and I expect that it will at some point, I'm not sure I'd watch it. Personally, I find that watching fictional problems in a movie or television programme simply allows you to ignore your own real problems, or keeps you away from dealing with the responsibilities of your own life. That may be the best reason I watch so little television.

Chris Garcia

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OK, I'm a big fan of Teen media. I wrote a book on the Teen Films of the 1999-2003 era that was accepted for publication as a Film Textbook which was then cancelled when the company went under. I also enjoy teen television, though it's harder to really come to grips with enjoying shows like *Gossip Girl* (HUGE in Japan, from what I understand) and *90210*. I've heard of folks talking about *Skins*, and while it's the kind of thing I'd certainly enjoy, I've never seen it.

Now, as for your claim that it's the best teen show ever, I can only point to *Veronica Mars* as my personal fave (and which I didn't start watching until recently when it showed up on *inDemand*). It's a lovely detective drama that really presses all the teen issues into these lovely nuggets that move along with the story and are more effective because they're not being fed to you heavily. It's also got the amazing Enrico Colantoni and Harry Hamlin, who are two of the most underrated actors in American television.

I love your recaps. Here, it's National Cheese Day, and the Computer History Museum staff is having a Cheese Party that I'm in charge of and I've spent an hour this morning reading about *Skins* and being unable to get to prep the room because I have to know more. Well done!

I have seen many of these actors in various things (largely short films, including one called *Defensive* which had Lily Loveless in it and was really good) and I will now be forced to

find somewhere that I can watch their other work.

So, you've hooked me. I gotta find the episodes (maybe they're on Hulu) and I can fully appreciate the series. From the recaps alone, it's something I need to see!

Thanks everybody, it's been fun. But don't forget, I haven't gone away and you can find me at-

<http://freethinkingajournalofpopularculture.blogspot.com/>

So far I'm managing an entry most days.

Below is Willow, a rescued dog owned by Susan's brother, and Bonnie our eldest and our favourite. Bonnie tolerates dogs as long as they don't get too close and Willow has more sense than to try.



"I'm bored."

"I want to eat your face."

Please read my blog.
And leave a comment so I know you've been there.