

Friday, February 26, 2010

Still Having Fun with Google Voice

Got this one today. Unfortunately, I can't even tell by listening what the guy is trying to say:

Hey Joey, this is carl from fast now. This call about getting screwed. I couldn't find one that that's exactly but I think. You, hey, there's a way to make a Marge and if you any questions, give us call back.

Posted by Ancient of Days in Gathering Darkness at 13:18

Monday, February 22, 2010

Podcast 54: Let's talk about Sex

With the help of Listener Jim, Joey and I stumbled through this weeks podcast. And since I have to be up at 5am Monday morning (an hour after our podcast gets published), this is all the intro I am going to write. This podcast covers the episodes 13-16 of The West Wing, Season 1.

Various topics discussed in this podcast include:

- Principles of an American Life: The 4th Amendment
- PBS is great - Ethics in America
- Sex Education issues
- Hate Crimes
- Death Penalty
- Marlee Matlin is totally hot!
- Should the President of the US seek advice from religious leaders?
- Breathalyzer tests
- Joey retracts some of his erroneous comments
- Flag Burning
- I Fight

Dragons

Direct MP3 Download

RSS Feed

Subscribe Using

iTunes

Here are the ratings that we gave for each show: Take out the

Trash day: 1hr 17min 24sec

Peter: Television - 7

Joey: Television - 7

Jim: Television - 7

Take this

Sabbath Day: 58min 2sec

Peter: Television - 7

Joey: Television - 9

Jim: Television - 8

Celestial

Navigation: 24min 37sec

Peter: Television - 8

Joey: Television - 5

Jim: Television - 6

20 Hours in

LA: 18min 53sec

Peter: Television - 5

Joey: Television - 4

Jim: Television - 6

If you have something to say then we welcome your comments below, or feel free to email us at trekwest5@thehomestarmy.com, twitter us at hashtag [TrekWest5](#), or leave us a voicemail at 801-788-4913.

Posted by Radar in Podcast at 04:00

Friday, February 19, 2010

Weekend Reading

I'm reading Compensation by Ralph Waldo Emerson for the first time and I'm super impressed at what he has to say about life and what you get out of it. You can read a copy here.

Here's an excerpt:

This is that ancient doctrine of Nemesis, who keeps watch in the universe, and lets no offence go unchastised. The Furies, they said, are attendants on justice, and if the sun in heaven should transgress his path, they would punish him. The poets related that stone walls, and iron swords, and leathern thongs had an occult sympathy with the wrongs of their owners; that the belt which Ajax gave Hector dragged the Trojan hero over the field at the wheels of the car of Achilles, and the sword which Hector gave Ajax was that on whose point Ajax fell. They recorded, that when the Thasians erected a statue to Theagenes, a victor in the games, one of his rivals went to it by night, and endeavoured to throw it down by repeated blows, until at last he moved it from its pedestal, and was crushed to death beneath its fall.

This voice of fable has in it somewhat divine. It came from thought above the will of the writer. That is the best part of each writer, which has nothing private in it; that which he does not know; that which flowed out of his constitution, and not from his too active invention; that which in the study of a single artist you might not easily find, but in the study of many, you would abstract as the spirit of them all. Phidias it is not, but the work of man in that early Hellenic world, that I would know. The name and circumstance of Phidias, however convenient for history, embarrass when we come to the highest criticism. We are to see that which man was tending to do in a given period, and was hindered, or, if you will, modified in doing, by the interfering volitions of Phidias, of Dante, of Shakspeare, the organ whereby man at the moment wrought.

Still more striking is the expression of this fact in the proverbs of all nations, which are always the literature of reason, or the statements of an absolute truth, without qualification. Proverbs, like the sacred books of each nation, are the sanctuary of the intuitions. That which the droning world, chained to appearances, will not allow the realist to say in his own words, it will suffer him to say in proverbs without contradiction. And this law of laws which the pulpit, the senate, and the college deny, is hourly preached in all markets and workshops by flights of proverbs, whose teaching is as true and as omnipresent as that of birds and flies.

All things are double, one against another. -- Tit for tat; an eye for an eye; a tooth for a tooth; blood for blood; measure for measure; love for love. -- Give and it shall be given you. -- He that watereth shall be watered himself. -- What will you have? quoth God; pay for it and take it. -- Nothing venture, nothing have. -- Thou shalt be paid exactly for what thou hast done, no more, no less. -- Who doth not work shall not eat. -- Harm watch, harm catch. -- Curses always recoil on the head of him who imprecates them. -- If you put a chain around the neck of a slave, the other end fastens itself around your own. -- Bad counsel confounds the adviser. -- The Devil is an ass.

Experienced men of the world know very well that it is best to pay scot and lot as they go along, and that a man often pays dear for a small frugality. The borrower runs in his own debt. Has a man gained any thing who has received a hundred favors and rendered none? Has he gained by borrowing, through indolence or cunning, his neighbour's wares, or horses, or money? There arises on the deed the instant acknowledgment of benefit on the one part, and of debt on the other; that is, of superiority and inferiority. The transaction remains in the memory of himself and his neighbour; and every new transaction alters, according to its nature, their relation to each other. He may soon come to see that he had better have broken his own bones than to have ridden in his neighbour's coach, and that "the highest price he can pay for a thing is to ask for it."

A wise man will extend this lesson to all parts of life, and know that it is the part of prudence to face every claimant, and pay every just demand on your time, your talents, or your heart. Always pay; for, first or last, you must pay your entire debt. Persons and events may stand for a time between you and justice, but it is only a postponement. You must pay at last your own debt. If you are wise, you will dread a prosperity which only loads you with more. Benefit is the end of nature. But for every benefit which you receive, a tax is levied. He is great who confers the most

benefits. He is base --and that is the one base thing in the universe -- to receive favors and render none. In the order of nature we cannot render benefits to those from whom we receive them, or only seldom. But the benefit we receive must

be rendered again, line for line, deed for deed, cent for cent, to somebody. Beware of too much good staying in your hand. It will fast corrupt and worm worms. Pay it away quickly in some sort.

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 16:01

Thursday, February 18, 2010

June 3

Section N27 Row
28

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Group Activities at 10:34

Tuesday, February 16, 2010

This Too Shall Pass

From the people that brought you treadmill dancing, I present for your viewing pleasure "This Too Shall Pass" by Ok Go.

Unfortunately, embedding was disabled for this video. Here's the link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UJKythIXAIY>

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Oddities at 10:05

Monday, February 15. 2010

Podcast 53: Sick Conversation

It was a bit of a miracle that we even had a podcast this week because Joey was sick. But we pumped him full of medication and just plowed right through everything. He sounded much worse than he actually was. The discussions this week were fairly tame since not a ton of controversial political topics came up in this weeks episodes. Many thanks to all the people who sent in comments. This podcast covers the episodes 10-12 of The West Wing, Season 1.

Various topics discussed in this podcast include:

- Principles of an American Life: The 3rd Amendment

- "Your supposed to be the good guys."

- Joey continues to defend ambassadors

- Can you work for competing companies?

- Hiding a disease or addiction from your employer

- Get to the point

- Brief discussions about the NEA

- I Fight

Dragons

[Direct MP3 Download](#)

[RSS Feed](#)

[Subscribe Using](#)

[iTunes](#)

Here are the ratings that we gave for each show:In Excelsius

Deo: 47min 59sec

Peter: Television - 6

Joey: Television - 6

Lord John

Marbury: 37min 19sec

Peter: Television - 6

Joey: Television - 4

He Shall

From Time to Time: 54min 50sec

Peter: Television - 8

Joey: Television - 8

If you have something to say then we welcome your comments below, or feel free to email us at trekwest5@thehomestarmy.com, twitter us at hashtag [TrekWest5](#), or leave us a voicemail at 801-788-4913.

Posted by Radar in Podcast at 04:00

Thursday, February 11. 2010

The Blight of Suburbia

This morning it is snowing, already four inches or so on the ground, and my two school-age children have been outside romping through the drifts in the front yard for 15 minutes, waiting for their walking buddies to show up. (This means that my previously pristine, smooth front lawn is now a riot of paths and bumps, and the trees have deliberately had all their snow shaken down upon young heads. What will the neighbors think? Gasp!)

I sent them to school by themselves when it became clear that the walking buddies weren't going to show, and not thirty seconds later the very thing I had feared occurred - a neighbor mom in an enormous SUV saw them, pulled over, and offered them a ride.

I am outraged.

First of all, it's five blocks to school. Six if you go the long way. It's not hard for elementary school age kids to walk five blocks - in fact, they burn more than that amount of energy just zipping around getting ready in the morning (colliding, panicking, playing, hysterically laughing, and in the case of Preston RIGHT NOW, cuddling three light sabres and tucking them into bed.)

Secondly, KIDS LIKE SNOW. I know this comes as a surprise to those of us who don't remember childhood. But I can guarantee that my kids, upon looking out the window this morning, did NOT think to themselves, "dammit, now I will be forced to frolic my way to school while pelting my siblings and friends with snowballs and sliding on the sidewalk in my snow boots." They LIKE walking those five blocks in a magically transformed, white-purple world (which has miraculously become wholly edible overnight.)

And thirdly, and most outrageously, does that SUV mom actually think my kids are SAFER in an SUV which will go join a queue of a hundred other cars and SUVs, sliding on the slush with kids dodging before and behind as they unload? My kids are much, much safer walking to school than driving. Period. But most especially, they are safer in crappy weather like this. What to a driver is a harrowing death journey is to a child an enchanted wonderland. And yes, I am aware that my children probably won't be injured because of that sheltered, heated, crowded SUV, but that doesn't change the fact that they would have been better off outside of it.

When did Suburbia become like this? When my grandmother raised her children, she sought out a suburban neighborhood.

The kids roamed in packs, playing night games and raiding fruit trees. Now, my children play outside alone unless a neighbor invites them in to watch TV or play video games. And in this lovely, soft snowfall, all the children in my neighborhood can only watch through tinted windows as they join the endless queue to drop them off immediately in front of the school doors. Heaven forbid they have to walk down the school sidewalk. They might have to do something inconvenient, like enjoy themselves.

Posted by Daboo in Personal Entry at 08:37

Monday, February 8, 2010

Podcast 52: A Shrine to Sandra Day O'Connor

We had high hopes for being able to record all 4 episodes this week, but the first one took us nearly 2 hours. So our verbosity is your gain because we have another podcast that is under 2 hours!! The reason it went so long is because we had a great time discussing the 2nd Amendment and the Right to Privacy. My Friend Jon Madsen joined us to help round out the discussion. This podcast covers the episode 9 of The West Wing, Season 1.

Various topics discussed in this podcast include:

- Principles of an American Life: The 2nd Amendment

- Joey is ok with citizens owning rocket launchers

- Joey worships Sandra Day Oconner

- MFJM is True Neutral

- The

- Circle 8 blog

- Is there a Right to Privacy?

- Joey and I are too afraid to look up information on child pornography

- Jephthah

- Josh

- Woodward's track Morning Blue

[Direct MP3 Download](#)

[RSS Feed](#)

[Subscribe Using](#)

[iTunes](#)

Here are the ratings that we gave for this episode:

The Short

List: 1hr 44min 32sec

Peter: Television - 4

Joey: Television - 6

Jon: Television - 7

If you have something to say then we welcome your comments below, or feel free to email us at trekwest5@thehomestarmy.com, twitter us at hashtag [TrekWest5](#), or leave us a voicemail at 801-788-4913.

Posted by Radar in Podcast at 04:00

Wednesday, February 3, 2010

Site Maintenance: Cleaning up Categories

I am cleaning up our list of categories. Due to under-use, the following categories (each of which has fewer than 10 posts) will be removed unless someone speaks up in the next 48 hours to object.

- Birdwood, NE
- Book Club
- Fantasy Sports
- Soccer
- Snowshoeing
- Poetry
- Perplex City
- Fullness of Times
- Lies, lies, lies
- Star Trek
- Quick
- Gifted And Talented
- Nilsson's Web
- Stories
- OotS
- Alpha Shade
- Veronica Mars
- Lost
- Rock Band

Because uncategorized posts are unreachable, I will attach the posts to an author-specific category instead, as best as I can, and file the remainder under "Personal Entry".

Posted by Ancient of Days in Ooops at 15:05

Monday, February 1, 2010

Why Twilight Isn't That Bad

Joey, just stop reading now. Just kidding, it's not really about vampires.

This is a post I've been meaning to write ever since I first read this blog post by L.E. Modesitt Jr. My view on this has been further solidified by the defensive nature the authors of the tor.com blog take when discussing the "elitism" of so-called literary magazines while simultaneously slamming the Twilight series of books and movies.

One person I know dismisses the Twilight series out of hand because it deals with vampires. This person would also willingly admit to avoiding Buffy the Vampire Slayer, Interview with the Vampire, Dracula and basically any media involving vampires. This post is not about that. I think I may have already mentioned that.

This post is about dismissing something because it's not cool or comes from a genre that is not cool. So I willingly admit that there are two things about me that make other geeks scream "TAKE AWAY HIS GEEK CARD." I don't like Star Trek. Seriously, I really don't. The best thing about the JJ Abram's Star Trek movie was that it made Star Trek watchable. For me. As a D&D-playing, computer-programming, video-game loving, comic-book reading, I-own-too-many-F&SF-novels geek, most people just naturally assume that I also love Star Trek. I have seen a large enough sample of episodes to know that it will never be my cup of tea. But I did give it a chance.

The other thing is that I love the Twilight series. There, I said it. I love it. It's not Tolkien, but if I were to compare it side by side with Robert Jordan's massive conglomeration of tropes from other stories and repetitive use of the phrase "tugged on her braid" I think Stephenie Meyer's "pushcart plot" holds up pretty well. Sure it's not for everybody, neither is Star Trek. But I'm getting sidetracked.

Mr. Modesitt's blog post was a defense of the "romance novel" genre of books. I was especially struck by this paragraph:

Romances happen to have some redeeming features, features often lacking in mainstream "literary" fiction, such as a belief in love and romance, and optimistic endings, and often retribution of some sort for evil. There's often a theme of self-improvement as well. Are these "realistic" in our world today? No, unhappily, they're probably not, but paraphrasing one of the grumpy old uncles in *Secondhand Lions*, there are some things, which may not even be true, that people are better off for believing in, such as love, honor, duty... And if romances get readers to believe in the value of such traits, they're doing a lot more for the readers and society than "realistic" novels about the greed on Wall Street or the narcissism of the wealthy or the depths of violence and degradation among the drug and criminal cultures.

I found this to be a strong argument in favor of the romance novel, even if I never take the time to read one myself. This reminded me of an op-ed column I read in the *New York Times* about the same time. The *Times* article was written by Gail Collins (who generally tries to find the humorous side in life.) She said this about the Twilight books:

Before you make fun of this, I want you to seriously consider whether you're interested in denigrating people who spend their leisure time actually reading books rather than watching *America's Got Talent*.

She then went on to describe the basic premise of the first novel, wherein Bella and Edward fall in love, Bella finds out he's a vampire, and he refuses to engage in anything more physical than "kissing and cuddling and talking about their feelings."

Then she unloads this kicker:

"Only a vampire, ladies," said Jessica Valenti, the author of *Full Frontal Feminism*. She worries

that in the real world, young men are spending so much time watching pornography on the Internet that they will never be satisfied with normal women and normal relationships.

This sure sounds like trouble to me: A generation of guys who will settle for nothing less than a porn star meets a generation of women who expect their boyfriend to crawl through their bedroom window at night and just nuzzle gently until they fall asleep.

Two of my favorite three characters from the Twilight series are Edward and his "father" Carlisle. They are the kind of characters I most admire. They have morals and they stand by them no matter the cost. They have struggles, but they rise against them. They are the kind of hero I want to be. They don't have to save the world, they just have to find it in themselves to say, "I choose to be a good person no matter the cost." And that's something I think is "virtuous, lovely, or of good report or praiseworthy."

Posted by The Mad Giggler in Personal Entry at 17:56

Forwarded without comment

<http://answers.yahoo.com/question/index?qid=20090815152830AAEQaml>

Posted by Ancient of Days in Gathering Darkness at 17:55

Podcast Movie Special: Star Trek II The Wrath of Kahn

What can you say about the Wrath of Kahn that hasn't been said so many times by other people? Probably nothing, but I think we found a few new things anyway. This is a much better ST movie than The Motion Picture, and Joey was not pissed at me this time. My Friend Jon Madsen came along to lend a proper TOS point of view, so our special thanks to him, and Aaron, who also joined us to share his demented view of life. As with any movie there are inconsistencies, but by and large this really is a good movie.

Various topics discussed in this podcast include:

- Kobayashi Maru - The No Win Situation
- My Friend Jon Madsen's Wrath of Kahn podcast
- Watch out for alien creatures in your ear!
- Kahn = Captain Ahab
- Aaron's unhealthy obsession with Ridley Scott
- The needs of the many outweigh the needs of the few, or the one.
- Scotty has no idea where sickbay is.
- I Fight Dragons concert tour

Direct MP3 Download
RSS Feed
Subscribe Using
iTunes

If you have something to say then we welcome your comments below, or feel free to email us at trekwest5@thehomestarmy.com, twitter us at hashtag [TrekWest5](#), or leave us a voicemail at 801-788-4913.

Posted by Radar in Podcast at 04:00