

PUNK IMPLOSION: Identity as Bad Religion

By Brett

From the ashes of phony Beatlemania, punk has long been a spectral beacon beckoning those disillusioned with the preconstructed identity categories available in their specific situations. Needless to say it's generally been a privilege of those whose social situation allows them the time and comfort for pondering that invitation to wave a black flag against the establishment that not coincidentally enables their enlistment into the genre in the first place. But punk can never realize itself. As a token of anti-establishment, its reification as category signals its own inefficacy in enacting its own claims. One can't assert one's own punkiness, since this act would require recourse to an accessible category, and that category will have had to become mainstream in order to be recognized as signifying punk, and punk as an ideology constantly seeks to escape the mainstream. Hence punk is always slipping out of reach. It constantly teeters on its own annihilation and anyone who truly considers himself punk is quite possibly the farthest from it. Rob Gordon needn't be ashamed or worried about getting caught posing as punk, since the act of posing itself uses the same symbolic gestures to convey punk as those supposedly genuine ones, hence the conundrum. Who is the arbiter of punk? No one. For who would dare accept the mantle and erect a fundamental punk fiefdom that in essence would defy punk's anti-establishment roots? Certainly neither Joey, Johnny, nor Dee Dee. Now given that "posers" must brandish the same stylistic and aesthetic markers of the ideology as those apparently "genuine" members and given the assumption that no one has the authority to declare who is real punk and who isn't, then we reach the conclusion that all punk is posing – a void category constantly performed. The emblems of its identity are resurrected vestments persistently pointing towards its own impotence by nature of their having paraded at all as punk.

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Seeing the Moon on a Hot Summer Day by Helen Frankenthaler

Review: Halo 3 Beta for Xbox 360

by James Schneider

originally posted 4:06pm EST Thu May 17 2007 on Geek.Com

The day has finally arrived, and after some issues (see today's coverage), I was able to get into the Halo 3 Beta. After 7 hours of straight play, I ripped myself away from my Xbox 360 to give the good news: Halo 3 is going to be awesome; there's no doubt about it. The game looks remarkably polished, and Bungie has four months to make it even better.

The Beta gives players the chance to play through three multiplayer maps, with a number of Team Slayer and Team Skirmish gametypes, using most of the weapons and gadgets that will show up in the final product. I took on the Beta with a buddy from my Halo 2 days, and for the most part, we mopped up.

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Newsletter Ideas

I'm looking for writers for the following topics:

1. An academic review of Harry Potter
2. Compare/contrast *Lost* and *Gilligan's Island*
3. Debate the best John Williams movie score
4. Wikipedia: Good or Evil?

Send your article ideas in today!

editor@babbleonline.com ☒

Citrus House

From Menton.Com

Contributed by Elizabeth Carlson



Letter from the Editor

This issue is quite the treat. I always look forward to articles and fiction that have been born purely out of creative thought. I think you'll find such features in this issue. Enjoy the summer, and keep the submissions coming!

Dan, editor@babbleonline.com ☒

Tower of Babble-ON's

'Before-and-After' Corner

By Susan Fritz

"Sugar Ray Romano's Macaroni Grille"



Another entry in the annals of Business Vernacular

By Dan Fritz, PM

Welcome back to adventures in Business Vernacular. If you find these terms very natural to use, it could mean you have worked in the business world too long. Take deep breath, do a downward dog, and continue your daily business.

Entry 1: Done and Dusted – used to describe a project/situation that has been fully completed and is presentable.

"Now that we've grabbed the low-hanging fruit, let's put together a project plan and get this entire thing done and dusted by the end of the fiscal year. I don't want to just throw it over the fence when we transition out of the interim process."

Entry 2: Throw(n) over the fence – used to describe some work that has been handed off to another person/group without making it easy for the other group to pick up the task. See example above.

*Also: "She keeps throwing sh*t over the fence without any indication as to where the data is coming from. I'm going to be out of pocket next week and won't be able to find a knowledgeable resource to react to her requests."*

Entry 3: Out of Pocket – used to describe a time when someone is out of the office/unable to find access to easily communicate. See example above.

Also: "Sorry I didn't get back to you sooner. I was out of pocket all last week in Hawaii, and didn't get your messages until this morning."

Entry 4: "We don't know what we don't know." – typically used as a qualifier to set expectations that a project cannot be easily defined ahead of time.

"How long is it going to take to complete phase 1?"

"I'm not sure yet, because we don't know what we don't know. Once we do the analysis, we'll have more confidence in our estimate."

International Website Hits

Over the past year, Babble-Online has been viewed by people around the world. International website hits have come from the following 30 countries:

Argentina	Japan
Australia	Mexico
Belgium	Netherlands
Brazil	Norway
Canada	Poland
China	Romania
Colombia	Seychelles
Czech Republic	South Korea
France	Spain
Germany	Sweden
India	Switzerland
Indonesia	Taiwan
Ireland	United Arab Emirates
Israel	United Kingdom
Italy	Venezuela

A special greeting goes out to our fans in Germany and Seychelles who consistently view the website. Keep the submissions (and the web hits) coming! ☒

...Halo 3, from p. 1...

Just like in Halo 2, there's a matchmaking system, and just like Halo 2, the system improves with each gaming session. It was kind of funny how fast I leveled up; it's possible many of those who bought Crackdown for the Beta, never played Halo before.

For the most part, everything was pick up and play. New maps, so I had to learn the locations of the power weapons and good places to hide and shoot from. Otherwise, though, I found myself right at home.

All the weapons look, feel, and shoot just as fans of the series expect. The starting assault rifle is pretty much a clone of the Halo 1 starting weapon, so it's a fairly average up-close weapon, and below average ranged weapon. The SMG is also back, but I didn't see many people picking it up. The two most common weapons of choice are still the Battle Rifle and the Covenant Carbine.

Power weapons are still an important aspect of the game, and there's no more powerful weapon than the Spartan Laser--theoretically.

The weapon packs about 5 shots, takes a long time to load, and is easily defeated up-close. When you do get it working, though, it is pretty cool. For anyone who hasn't watched the videos or played the game, think Gears of War's Hammer of Dawn. It has a long sighted laser beam and clicks when you press it.

The Rocket Launcher is back, too. As is dual wielding. You can dual wield SMGs or the brute equivalent, which is pretty sweet. Grenades now come in three varieties--Human, Covenant, and Brute. The Brute 'nades stick to walls and people for particularly nasty kills.

The other new addition weapons and gear-wise that should make a major impact is tied to the X button. You can pick up and deploy portable gravity lifts, power drainers, the bubble shield from the trailer, trip mines, etc. It adds another interesting dimension to gameplay, and fits perfectly in the Halo Universe.

So, what do you reload with? The right bumper and left bumper reload. Anyone who has played Gears of War will not have many issues getting used to it. The right bumper button also controls getting into vehicles and performing most of the other actions that were formerly linked to x.

There is once again a Warthog and a Ghost, but now there is also a Mongoose ATV.

Even though Bungie has always wanted to put this into its game, and it's now here, most people will probably not see what the big deal is. It's not that it's particularly bad; it's just not mind-blowing.

The three maps included in the Halo 3 Beta are High Ground, Snowbound, and Valhalla.

High Ground is a perfect mid-sized map, which reminded me of a sassier Zanzibar. There were more locations to hide and do interesting things, but once again there was a beach and a base. It's good for one flag CTF, and it's the best of the three for 4v4 Team Slayer.

Snowbound and Valhalla are large maps, and are perhaps too big for a 4v4 match. I could see them being really fun for 8v8 Big Team Battle games, particularly Valhalla. Valhalla reminded me of the classic Blood Gulch, with a hint of the second level of Halo 1.

And it all looks outstanding. It's so easy to get sucked into playing the game--just like learning a new button, a few new weapons, and new maps for Halo 2. But step back for a moment, and take a look around at the details.

The grass looks as good as any game I've ever seen--on par with Call of Duty 3's grass that blows in the wind. The water, ohmygosh, the water. It's almost worth getting killed in the water just to get the water kill camera. And watching the water cascade over rocks and ripple; it's a good thing. Rocks, moss, mountains--it's a futuristic real-life world.

But we really care about how fire, explosions, and technology look. Fire

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Out the Window

By Garrett Calderwood

Awesomely Crappy

Joke of the Month

Contributed by Garrett Calderwood

Have you heard the one about the magical tractor?

It was driving down a country road and turned into a field. ☒

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looks like the real thing. Exploding barrels and plasma grenades look decidedly next-gen, but they don't go so far as to ruin the worlds built in the previous two Halo titles. And the bubble shield, trip mines, and other X-mapped gear all look amazing.

Medals are back, too, and there are some new ones, such as for lasering foes or for breaking up someone's killing spree (killjoy). You can also get a medal for killing someone from beyond the grave.

The best new gametype is V.I.P., which is basically a team-style Juggernaut dual. Each team has a V.I.P. who has an overshield and must be guarded. It's basically Team Slayer besides that. It's good to see that Bungie is allowing its gametypes to grow, but not diluting it.

If Bungie did happen to make a really horrible map and gametype--one that all gamers hated--the gamers could veto it. In the gaming lobby, you get a few seconds to decide if you'd like to play something else. And if a majority vetoes it, you will play something else.

All told, I couldn't be more excited about this title. I'm eager to see more weapons, maps, and gametypes, because from what I've been able to play, I'm confident that Bungie is improving on its formula. Now, I have to get back to playing. I've only got a few more weeks of Beta bliss. ☒

...*Punk Implosion, from p.1...*

Punk as an aesthetic is also nigh impossible, especially once it has been designated thusly. I may grant that in a few brief moments, particular aesthetics may effectuate punk, but their essence as such disappears as soon as it is realized. New shit turns to stone. Subversion is always fleeting. Even the race to balance on this cutting edge mocks itself as clichéd since it mirrors the efforts of all the other conformist cohorts who believe that naming 30 ambiguous punk bands on their MySpace profiles somehow attests to their genuine punk natures. Anywhere punk is witnessed, it must vanish immediately. But there I go talking as if one could actually apprehend genuine punk; as if I would know real punk if I were to see it. See how easy it is to get caught up in adjudicating meaning? This slippage proves punk's arbitrary nature. It constantly contradicts itself. For example, punk sometimes becomes pompous through exclusive practices of social interaction and affiliation. Each time these groups police their membership criteria, they undermine their own stance on authority. This paradox attests to punk's problematic issues as a delineated category capable of bestowing any identity at all.

Punk may exist, but it precludes signifying or acknowledging any allegiance to it. All the major artifacts that convey punk as identity are purely ornamental and only distract, or perhaps more insidiously, invalidate the desire to enact the type of negation that punk requires. Simply, anything recognizable as punk betrays punk and undermines it. But some might argue that certain bands filed neatly in the "punk" section of the store accomplish real political work or espouse stances in defiance of dominant political structures. Surely some do, but their message as such is constituted by this authority they rely on to rebel against. It's complicit in punk's production as a social category and shares the same structure. And even if somehow punk aesthetics were to succeed in instigating political change, wouldn't they simply be substituting the work of one demonized ideology for their own preferred one? I won't argue that some ideologies rank as more unsavory than others, but this seems unfitting for a supposed authority on anti-authority (punk's paradox). It is also fair to ask if some punk paraphernalia has been so divested of its previous punk identity that it can once again serve "punk" ends. The mohawk, briefly punk but quickly appropriated had experienced a long death, and perhaps via its superficial nature can be ironically revived as punk since one may perhaps deem it insignificant now. But in the current social climate, it still counts as counterculture, and all countercultures are comfort zones for identity and community. If you belong, you're not punk. Therefore the mohawk may be situationally punk just as Huey Lewis and the News circumscribe hip with a square and perform punk only amongst those who claim to not want to fit in. Hip and punk are equally impossible.

All things considered, punk may be redeemable to the extent that it illustrates the essential nothingness of all identity categories. Punk provides a perfect example of superficial salvation for anyone enduring an identity crisis, because it ostensibly rails at these categories while providing one of its own. One lends punk as an idea a possible significance and goes a step further and invests clothes or art with the same energy, but then it flips and these signs assume the meaning we want them to give us every time we put on that Sex Pistols t-shirt. So, cut off from its affect, turned to cultural currency, we borrow it unaware that in the exchange it loses credit and becomes bankrupt. This wouldn't appear so outrageous if it weren't for the fact that punk strives precisely against such a situation. Punk's contradictory nature allows us this exemplary insight into the hollowness of all those constructed categories of identity appropriated by those incapable of embracing life's radical contingencies: all those ever shifting possibilities opening worlds to alternatives that may for brief moments enact a punk always escaping you, but perhaps provoking you out of stagnant familiarity.

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Excerpt from a novel,

The Betterment of Kate

By a new novelist, Regina "Reggie" Pritchertt,
Ph.D.

"But, Catherine, why must you block every attempt at happiness? Why do you allow rubbish from the likes of Edgar to create the bricks that form a wall between you and reality?" replied Mary in a most exasperated tone. It was clear that my dear friend had been storing these feelings behind a wall of her own but could hold it no longer. While I felt the kindred notion behind it all, I did begin to blush.

"My word, Mary, such venom could scarcely be considered a whim. Have you proposed this silently in your mind during past conversation, for I know not how to take your forceful reply." We walked arm in arm throughout the marketplace, but nary a cart interested us on this day. I played with the fringe of my dress in the hopes that Mary would not detect my sidestepping maneuver and press me further.

Of course, Mary, being Mary, would never have an outburst out of turn –it was not in her gentle nature; therefore, her thought would find its way to completion. "Kate, I love you as my own sister. We grew up together. As far back as I remember, I have memories of us at Mirabel, running, hiding, finding ourselves involved in intrigues and machinations that drove your poor father to distraction. I remember that you taught me French that you learned in your private sessions, since my father deemed it, 'a vile tongue.' You helped me choose a gown for my debut when I scarcely thought my knees would stay locked. When Simon offered his hand to me, it was you to whom I turned when I thought that I would not make him a happy home – you who convinced me that I was not only worthy, I was a prize to be had. I owe you my life," she offered. She stopped walking and turned to look at me. The servants holding our parasols behind us came to a halt as well. Their eyes never met our gaze.

Mary grabbed my hand. "Kate, it is now my turn to repay the favor. You are letting Edgar mean something, anything. He, my dear sister, is nothing. If you continue to let him vex you, you will not prosper, and, I dare say, it will destroy you."

I looked into her blue, pleading orbs and smiled. What a good friend to forgo the pleasantries of ladylike conversation to come to my assistance. Though I still looked for my knight to come and save me from the doldrums of Mirabel, Mary was a suitable temporary substitute.

I put my hand on top of hers. "You are an amiable and pure friend. I do trust your counsel. Your account is true. Therefore, I will try to conquer my quarrel with Edgar and put him out of my mind forever."

Our ride back to Wethington Hall was silent, as Mary allowed me a still moment to properly ruminate on her words. When she stepped out of the carriage she turned to

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me. "Will you not join us for the evening?"

I nodded to the driver to close the door. "I cannot tonight, for Martin is in town and mother is insistent that we all be there for supper. You know how it is; Martin is to take over Mirabel when father passes. We must all treat Martin as though he were already lord of the manner." I rested my hand on the door and leaned my face gently against it.

Mary shook her head. "Once you are able to conquer your demons, every man in the county will ask your hand and you will be free of these familial ties. I fear, though, that, at present, you still hold back the best that is within you."

It was now my turn to shake my head. "Oh, Mary. I save that for our intrigues. Just because we are not seven any longer does not mean there is no trouble behind our eyes."

The horse started with a jolt. My head bobbed back slightly, and a brown ringlet fell into my eyes. Mary waved as she left me with, "Those intrigues you seek are best targeted to suitors. Mind what I said before and be diligent to your spirit!"

The crisp spring air filled my lungs as I sighed and looked out at the fertile green fields of Wethington, twinkling with the arrival of the spring insects that light up the night. It was but dusk; still the night was fast approaching and I had to make some swift choices.

Why DID I let Edgar vex me so? He was of marrying age, no visible impediments to living alone, yet he still kept residence at Pemberton Cottage with his parents. He added nothing to conversation when given the chance, and he wrote nothing but drivel in his letters to my brother, William, who, for some reason or another, kept a loose kinship with Edgar. When he visited Mirabel, much against my wishes and desires, his drooping eyelids and sloping lips were a testament to the relative discord that took up residence in his none-too-swift mind. Though he is promised 1,000 pounds a year by birth right, this amount is not sufficient to sustain a wife and children, should he be potent enough to have them (and, I hate to think it as a lady, I have my doubts about that potency). Still, while he seems able (at least in body and breeding) to take up work as a barrister or a man of business, he dallies about town, fancying himself something of a man of whimsy, meaning that he does a lot of movement, a little business, and not much earning. In overhearing his complaints when in confidence with Wills (something that one can scarcely avoid, because the only thing he is forceful in is his hubris and tone of voice when angered), I know that he finds others to be rather the source of his failures, and he has nary a desire to "conspire with the proletariat," as he calls it. For someone who lives in a cottage, he acts as though he has the background of a true gentleman with 10,000 pounds a year.

As the carriage approached Mirabel, I attempted to finish my growing list of reasons why Edgar was insignificant in my daily musings. Almost as if my thoughts had summoned themselves, I noticed Sir Wiley's carriage in our turnabout. No doubt, Edgar would be joining his father, Sir Wiley, at our table tonight, for shame. Martin better have business with Sir Wiley, or someone will have to incur my wrath (perhaps there are other reasons I have yet to take a suitor, one being my fiery nature).

As the wind left the sails of my excitement, Victoria ran to meet my carriage. The baby of the family, she was never terribly content on meeting the pleasantries that was expected of her as a female. Though still a child, she was allowed these lapses in breeding as my

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father fancied her most of the five of us. Though it frustrated mother to no end, father ALWAYS had the last word.

Victoria came storming out of the large front doors and tripping over her underskirt. "Kate! Kate! Wait till you see!"

I put my hands on her shoulders. "Slow down, Victoria! You will crash right into the side of mother's carriage, and then where would you be? Upstairs in the chambers applying cold cloths to the welts that would surely streak your back."

Victoria ignored my warning and gulped to catch her breath. "Sir Wiley brought with him two gentlemen from his office in town, and I think mother has her sights on the older one for you as a husband." She smirked at me. "Who must avoid mother's intentions now?" she said, acknowledging that she, indeed, had heard my previous statement.

I creased my brow and looked up at the manor; mother always had in mind what sort of gentleman would be appropriate for my tastes, and, inevitably, her arrow scarcely grazed the target let alone hit the bulls-eye.

I fixed my gaze back on Victoria. "Well, Bobbles, I do thank you for the warning, and I will be sure to make it worth your while." Victoria and I had a special bond, as I was able to provide certain comforts that mother could not. Mother was a good intentioned woman, but I still don't see how a dashing, intelligent man such as father ever chose her as an equitable mate. Being the eldest daughter, I attempted to fill the gaps in Victoria's mothering. Victoria seemed to cling to me, and I enjoyed being a stand-in at times.

Victoria beamed proudly at her discovery. "I sat in wait at the study window, searching for signs of your carriage to inform you. Father told me my nose would be better suited in a book than smashed against the window, but I did not flinch."

I put my arms around her as I walked her back into the house. "And no doubt he thought wiser than to take up arms against the strongest soldier in his army, eh?" I teased putting my forehead to hers.

I took in a deep breath as I assessed the three wars that would be waged here: me versus Edgar the Dreary, me versus suitor number 1, and me versus mother's intentions. Who would I devote my strongest battles to? I had promised Mary that I would vanquish my "Edgar demons," but mother and unknown potential suitors are formidable opponents and serious roadblocks of their own.

I walked through the tall doors as Victoria went stumbling ahead of me to find her new pursuit. I strode into the sitting room with deliberate pace, to take in small breaths, hoping that my heart would match these breaths. I entered the room, and I saw mother, Mrs. Wiley, and Charlotte on the settee together. Victoria was standing behind them with her chin on the settee, her bow askew and her dark blonde hair tapping her back as it fell from the pins. Wills and Edgar were standing by the window and turned to bow (well, Edgar's bow was more of a petulant nod, the best he could muster, I suppose). Martin was sitting at the desk with Sir Wiley and his two young friends. They immediately rose to greet me.

"Ah, Miss Beckett! At last!" Sir Wiley boomed. He was a jovial, pleasant man. Poor soul to be given the lot in life of tempering Edgar. "John, Hugh. You have met Martin's other sisters, Miss Charlotte and Miss Victoria. May I present to you, the eldest, Miss Catherine Becket. Miss Becket, my esteemed colleagues, Mr. John

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Foxwright and Mr. Hugh Richardson.”

Both nodded at me, which I returned in kind. Mr. Foxwright took my hand and kissed it quite deliberately. “Miss Becket, it is a pleasure to meet a lady as lovely as yourself.” I looked down and feigned modesty, though the real challenge was to control my eyes from making a round about their sockets.

Mr. Richardson did not make the same gesture but quietly sat back down around Martin’s desk. Clearly, Mr. Foxwright was mother’s front runner for the post of husband. Let the battle begin.

I attempted to join the ladies in their conversation, but mother quickly rose and grabbed my arm. “Let’s take a turn about the room, shall we, Kate? I want to hear about today’s market.” The rigid lines about her forehead only moved for a moment as her eyebrow shot up temporarily, her one signal that the gears in her head are not moving in harmony with her mouth. I looked back at Charlotte on the settee with Mrs. Wiley and felt slightly bad for her. Mrs. Wiley was about as boring as Edgar and insisted that both Sir Wiley and Edgar wait on her as though she were a newly bred puppy. Still, I am sure Charlotte had ulterior motives of her own, her designs squarely on one of the eligible bachelors that sat unknowing on the other side of the room. I could see her glance up at them every so often as though they were elk and she a lioness assessing her prey. Charlotte, though only 15, was determined to beat me to matrimony. And, as far as I was concerned, she could win that race. Still, mother could not allow her younger daughters to be married before I. There were procedures to be followed and reputations to uphold after all. Charlotte, therefore, saw me as both competition and a window into her own betrothal. I am sure she wrestled with that thought more than once a day.

Mother’s grip was tight on my arm, and I know that she was determined. “Kate, darling, perhaps tonight would be a good time to decide to put our best faces forward.”

I waited a moment, attempting not to show my true feelings. “And why is that, mother darling?” I said with feigned innocence.

Mother ignored my condescension and continued, “It’s time to put your childishness behind you and be a true lady. Don’t you want to be the mistress of a household like me?” No, I certainly did not want to be like her. I let her continue without answering aloud. “Don’t you want to get out of this house finally?” Yes, I certainly did. “Well, here is your opportunity. Young John over there comes from a fine Devonshire family, and he is set for big things. You would run a house even bigger than this one. Sir Wiley’s uncle, the one that owns the business in which they all work, has spoken very highly of John, according to Martin. I think it’s time that you cease your foolish notions of traipsing off to Paris and realize what a grand opportunity that is in front of you tonight!”

“Where’s father?” I inquired, attempting to bite my tongue and not yield to the answer that she would surely be stung to hear.

“Oh, he’s securing all the horses. There is talk of a storm tonight. So, darling, will you do your mother this one tiny favor and be open to possibilities tonight. Please?” So rarely does my mother plead in this manner, but I cannot tally the amount of “tiny favors” I have done for her.

I paused. “Yes, surely mother.”

She beamed. “Great! What a night it will be!”

She returned to the sofa and resumed her conversation with Mrs. Wiley. Charlotte approached me, happy to be out of her clutches. “Kate, that was not very fair of you. Not only were you and mother

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setting your sights on what clearly should be my husband, you also left me with that utter bore! How awful of you!”

I elbowed her side. “Keep your voice down. She may hear you.” I secretly hoped she would. I was tired of being known as the outspoken sister, as Charlotte always appeared genteel and feminine, saving her diatribes for our bed at night. Only Mrs. Wiley’s boring drones would cause the mask to slip off in such a public forum.

“I certainly hope that you are not planning on making Mr. Foxwright your husband. He and I are perfect for each other.” That, I could not argue with.

I leaned against the chess table. “Charlotte, you know very well that these are mother’s wishes, not mine. As far as I am concerned, you can have him,” I thought, looking over at Mr. Foxwright. His foppish hair hung somewhat wildly in his face, and his skin looked a bit drawn for my taste. Though not short, he did not command the room with his stature. Still, Charlotte smelled wealth.

“You wicked girl, you know I cannot marry until you do,” she said, almost stopping her feet.

I smiled wryly. “Then you are in a difficult position, aren’t you?”

She looked as though she were thinking for a moment. Then, she brightened. “Why not pursue Mr. Richardson? He’s amiable enough?”

I looked over at him. True, he was not as plastic or loathing as Mr. Foxwright, but he did not exactly make any kind of impression of note. He was taller, thinner, and more appropriately groomed, but his manner was not that which I imagined my suitor to be, outgoing and magnetic. “Charlotte, he has not said one word since I entered the room, and I suspect since your entrance either. Can you see me with such a bore?”

Charlotte began to plead her case as a barrister might. Pity that she would not be allowed to practice law; she would win every judgment. “Kate, if you had someone just as you were, then you would always be fighting for the spotlight. You command the room, you are the one who can carry on conversations about matters of state or Italian art. You play piano forte, and people take notice. If you had someone as your equal, you would spite each other, and then where would you be?”

I thought for a moment about this. I was torn between deciding whether I truly craved the attention she proposed or whether I would, in fact, spite a mate that was able to make me appear smaller. As we were silent for a moment, I heard Edgar’s maddening voice confiding in my half-listening brother.

“No, William, you don’t understand. It’s women’s desire to be poised in men’s footsteps that is what Britain needs to rail against. Otherwise none of us will be able to be successful.”

Since he had slightly raised his voice, he had commanded the attention of the entire room. I could not help myself. “Oh, I don’t know, Wills. You seem to work fairly successfully with father. In fact, I imagine you to be more than adequate in his footsteps. And, Martin, you have started your own successful export business, without the hindrances of us pesky women. And John, Hugh, and Sir Wiley, you have all helped in making Sir Robert Wiley’s business a true success. I fear that most men in this room have, in fact, prospered quite successfully in the workplace, despite us silly women.” Edgar looked as though he would strike me through the heart. Hugh and John smiled to each other. Mother shook her head, while Mrs. Wiley came to her son’s defense.

“I quite agree with Edgar. Too many women want too much nowadays. I mean, educating women as men are. The very thought!” She looked at me, knowing that I had the same tutors as Wills and Martin. Father insisted that all of his children be bright and ready to face the world around us. I just smiled back at her, knowing that I had the benefit of something she would never have.

Charlotte leaned in and whispered, “Do not fancy the limelight, eh, dear Kate?” Perhaps she was right.

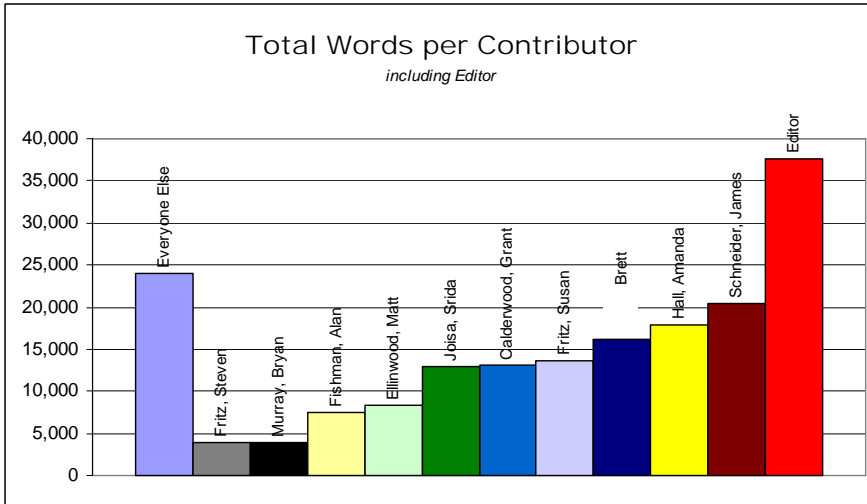
Father walked into the room and was shaking the newly formed rain from his jacket. He was tall and filled the doorway.

“Oh, darling! Thank goodness. Let us away to the dining room!” my mother said, anxious to leave the messy scene behind her.

TO BE CONTINUED

NEWSLETTER STATS

Note: Margin of Error is +/- 3%. Does not include the current issue.



Compiled by:

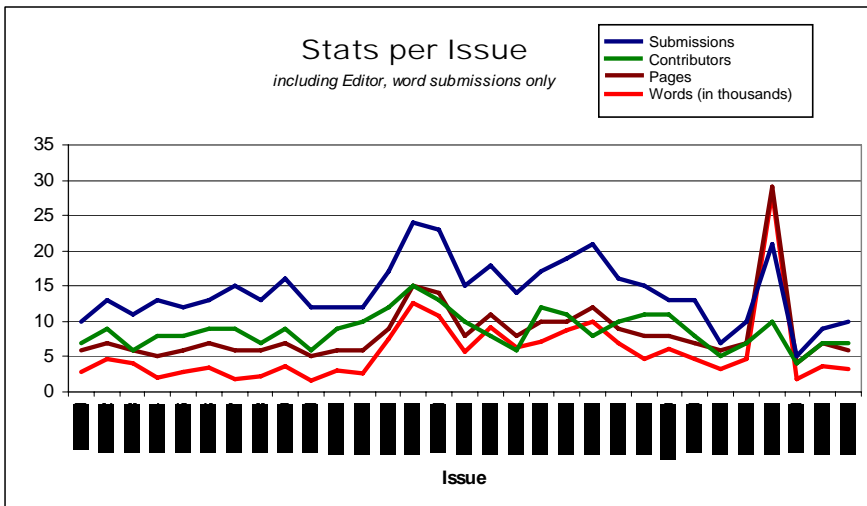
Dan Fritz, Editor
in New York, NY
for the June 5, 2007,
Volume 5, Issue 4 edition of Babble-ON™

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Life-to-Date Stats

Word Submissions only
Includes the editor
Does not include the current issue

Total Words: **179,434**

Total Pages: **261**

Total Contributors: **38**

Total Submissions: **439**

Average Words/Page: **687** (↓)

Average Words/Contributor: **4,722** (↓)

Median Words/Contributor: **1,113** (↓)

Average Words/Submission: **409** (↓)



Global Watch Map

BabbleON has attracted contributors and readers from around the globe. In addition to the U.S. writers from 15 different states (noted on the map), there have been international submissions from: Germany, Belgium, Italy, Iraq, and Australia.

Key: Yellow circles mark the residence of each contributor. ☒



Awards

These awards could be yours!

For Total Words Contributed:

1,000: **Little Scribbler**

5,000: **Babble-ON-ian**

10,000: **Grimmelshausen Award**

Each additional 10,000:

Proust BabbleStar

For Consistently Contributing:

Contributing to 10 issues or more: **Methuselah Award**

For Exceptional Content:

Alfred, Lord Tennyson Platinum Seal of Excellence:

To date, no one has won this.

Good luck, and keep the submissions coming! ☒