



COMPLETELY DIFFERENT

Four Villains by Joe Foering

Joe Foering is a former member of the Monty Python Society. As "Gary, the Cola Preacher", he once discussed at length the horrors of drinking Coke or Pepsi products during the Society's 1993 "Coke-In" mock protest on the steps of Schwab Auditorium. This should in no way be held against him. The following sketch, however, is another story. No, we kid. Actually, it's Foering's "cut-and-paste-humor" adaptation of the well known Monty Python sketch "Four Yorkshiremen", which is available upon request in any reputable local chemist's. The cast are as follows: Gamilon Leader Desslok of the early anime series *Star Blazers*, The Master of *Dr. Who* fame, Emperor Palpatine of *Star Wars*, and Khan Noonian Singh of *Star Trek II* (better known to the world, perhaps, as Ricardo Montalban, purveyor of rich Corinthian leather). And now, without further ado, the sketch:

Master: Very passable, this; very passable.

Desslok: Nothing like a good glass of Royal Bee Jelly, eh, Khan?

Khan: Right you are, Desslok. What's it made of?

Desslok: Depends on whether it was made in America or Japan.

Palpatine: Who'd have thought, thirty years ago, that we'd all be sitting here eating Royal Bee Jelly?

Master: In those days, we'd have been glad to have cried for the price of Ultimate Power.

Palpatine: Without Superlasers or the Force.

Khan: Or Power!

Master: In a filthy, cracked gun.

Palpatine: You were lucky to have a gun. We used to have to kill our enemies with a rolled-up newspaper.

Desslok: The best we could manage were some second-hand mines.

Khan: But we were happier in those days, even though we were evil.

Master: *Because* we were evil! My slaves used to say to me, "Goodness doesn't buy you happiness, Master."

Palpatine: They were right. I was happier then, and I had nothing! I used to have to live in this tiny old palace with great big holes in the roof...

Desslok: Palace? You were lucky to have a palace. We lived in one city complex, all 26 million of us... half the planet's surface was missing, and we were all bundled together in one tower for fear of falling!

Khan: You were lucky to have a complex! We used to have to live on a dead planet!

Master: Oh, we used to *dream* of living on a dead planet! My Tardis was in the shape of an old statue on a rubbish tin! I was woken up every morning by having a load of rotten Silurians dumped all over me. Palace? Hmph!

Palpatine: Well, when I say "palace," it was little more than a tiny planet covered with urbanization, but it was a palace to us!

Desslok: We were evicted from our planet! We had to go live on a battle carrier!

Khan: Well you were lucky to have a battle carrier! There were 150 of us living in a small derelict spaceship in the middle of the desert!

Master: *Cardboard* ship?

Khan: Aye.

Master: You were lucky. My Tardis was stuck for three months in the shape of a brown paper bag on a septic tank! My slaves used to get up at 6 o'clock in the morning, clean the bag, eat a dry crust of bread, battle the Doctor 18 hours a day, and when they got home, I would thrash them to sleep with my Tissue Compression Eliminator.

Desslok: Luxury! My minions used to get up at 3 o'clock in the morning, clean the battle carrier, eat a handful of Star Flies, destroy the Star Force 20 hours a day, and when they got home, I would drop them into a bottomless pit in my throne room — if they were *lucky!*

Khan: Well we had it tough! My followers used to get out of the ship at 12 o'clock at night, and *lick* the desert clean with their tongues. They'd have one handful of freezing cold brain worms, fight Kirk 24 hours a day, and when they got home, I would slice them in two with my acting!

Palpatine: Right. My servants had to get up at 10 o'clock at night, half an hour before they went to bed, eat a lump of dry Sith Venom, crush the Rebellion 29 hours a day, and when they got home, I would kill them with the Force, and dance about on their graves singing, "Come to the Dark Side!"

Master: Well, you try and tell the young people of today that, and they won't believe you.

Weekly Horoscopes

Aries: (March 21—April 19)

Others admire your quick thinking and sense of responsibility. To say nothing of that thing you can do with your tongue.

Taurus: (April. 20—May 20)

Your laughter and lighthearted manner might cause friction where you least expect it: Zimbabwe.

Gemini: (May 21—June 21)

Your attempt to break old, bad habits is commendable. Your attempt to break everything *else* in your path with a sledgehammer...well, not so much.

Cancer: (June 22—July 22)

You might feel your energy lagging somewhat this week. But just think how that evil robot army feels now that the sun's been blotted out and their power's gone. Really now.

Leo: (July 23—Aug. 22)

You may find you have a lot of ground to cover this week. But that's just one of the drawbacks to not writing down where you buried your evil master's corpses, now isn't it?

Virgo: (Aug. 23—Sept. 22)

Making a good first impression could be essential this week. But you'll have to accept that you sound nothing *like* Daffy Duck, and the spitting is just getting embarrassing.

Libra: (Sept. 23—Oct. 23)

Be careful with frivolous spending this week. Ask yourself this: do you really *need* that kidney transplant?

Scorpio: (Oct. 24—Nov. 21)

Upon closer inspection and after exhaustive debate, you'll have to admit that the subtlety and wit you found so admirable in the original is simply not there in any of the later *American Ninja* movies.

Sagittarius: (Nov. 22—Dec. 21)

You have a way of lighting up other people's lives this week. That way, of course, is nuclear radiation.

Capricorn: (Dec. 22—Jan. 19)

You'll suffer something of a personal setback this week when you discover that the black private dick that's a sex machine to all the chicks is in fact *Shaft* and not you.

Aquarius: (Jan. 20—Feb. 18)

Your willingness to sacrifice is admirable, but you might want to first ask what that deranged monkey god has done for *you* lately.

Pisces: (Feb. 19—March 20)

You're starting to suspect that the whole idea that positions and aspects of certain celestial bodies can influence the course of natural earthly occurrences and human affairs is, really, just a crock of shit.

The Reader's Poll is currently buried under a mountain of snow but will return after the semester break.

From "Snack Treats" by Fred Coppersmith

Described by former Monty Python Society member Jon Kilgannon as "Monty Python on acid" (but ironically written whilst completely sober) "Snack Treats" has always proved exceptionally difficult to excerpt, much less perform, since it's mainly a string of weird and often obscene non sequiturs that goes on for about ten to twelve pages: two old friends meet on the street and they talk. And talk, and talk, and talk. Rumor has it the sketch is so long that a performance first begun in the spring of 2001 is still going on today. All that aside, however, Kilgannon also describes the sketch as "curiously compelling" — which means either it has its moments, or he's finally received the bribe we sent him. Whichever it is, here's part of the sketch:

Bob: Didn't that happen to you a lot back in college?

Phil: Y'know, Bob, I really couldn't tell you. I went through most of college high on horse tranquilizers and methamphetamines. Sophomore year I was convinced that god was cheese and that I was in fact the Brazilian soccer player Pelé.

Bob: Ooh. He was good.

Phil: Yes, yes he was, Bob, but that's the point. You see, the rest of college is just a blur, like the rumor of that frat party where I lost my pants and a pint of blood. A few exams, a winning goal, that night in June I urinated all over the dean. I don't remember much of anything else.

Bob: Well I remember that night, Phil. It made all the papers.

Phil: Yes, yes it did, Bob, and the nightly news, too. There was talk even of a weekly series starring Marilu Henner and a talking dog. But that's not the point either. College isn't about who peed on who. It's about opening yourself up to new experience, about letting go of the past — your inhibitions, your fear, that string of bodies you left in south Wyoming because you were drunk and thought you knew how to use a belt sander. It's like the book says, Bob: "When I was a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child, but when I became a man, I put away childish things."

Bob: Well, yeah, except for the crayons, Phil.

Phil: {sigh} Yes, Bob, and the occasional bout with diaper rash, I know. But in these pants, that's inevitable, and I've learned to cope.

Bob: Well I've got to say, Phil, that's a pretty mature attitude for such an unstable little man.

From "Dedicated Idiocy" by Alyce Wilson

The following is taken from Alyce Wilson's personal history of the Penn State Monty Python Society, "Dedicated Idiocy". Wilson served as both Society president and newsletter editor for a number of years and holds the singular distinction of being the only club member on record to ever interview one of the Pythons, Terry Jones. She is also currently the editor of the online quarterly literary magazine Wild Violet (www.wildviolet.net). The following is reprinted here with her permission:

Somebody asked me recently how I first found out about the Penn State Monty Python Society. As I told him: "I discovered the MPS while bored in an Amnesty International meeting. Glancing up at the corkboard, a flyer featuring a cartoon Gumby drew my eye. After the meeting, I jotted down the information and showed up at the next MPS meeting. As it turned out, MPS meetings conflicted with Amnesty International meetings, so Amnesty International lost out. Dictators about the world breathed a sigh of relief."

Amnesty International was a worthwhile cause, it's true. But the Monty Python Society, it was a way of life.

Showing up at a meeting, you never knew what (or who) awaited you, what sort of madcap, off-the-wall silliness: whether it was someone cross-dressing or endless jokes about Spam. Whether it was tongue-in-cheek political humor or somebody running around the room with a silly prop, playing a bizarre version of "duck duck goose."

Stress relief? Definitely.

Bonding? Most certainly.

Silly? Indubitably.

The people I met in the Penn State Monty Python Society were my homies, my peeps. They understood me, and most importantly, they didn't judge me. I've never met a more genuinely caring and supportive group of people. Does occasionally lapsing into a poor British accent have anything to do with it? Perhaps.

I have a theory, which is mine, about the role of pop culture in the modern world. In this global world, the world of instant messaging and satellite television, we no longer sit around campfires with our clans, sharing stories of our ancestors. Instead, our instant ability to communicate with like-minded people all around the world gives us the ability to form our own subcultures, our own tribes.

For instance, if you're a David Bowie fan, you might connect with other David Bowie fans. Or if you're a dog fancier, with other dog fanciers. Britney Spears haters with other Britney Spears haters. You get the idea.

But it's not just the pop cultural artifact that links you, I believe. Something inherent in your personality, something about who you are, what you believe, what you value, made you identify with that pop cultural artifact, be it Ben and Jerry's ice cream or Gérard Depardieu.

In the case of Monty Python fans, I'd guess there's something about us that identifies with the sort of humor that troupe represented. Something about us loves their playful satire of the world's dogmas (religion, politics, celebrity worship); their oblique yet relevant social commentary; their nonsensical thrashing of old clichés; their affectionate (nudge-nudge wink wink) teasing about our every day experiences.

And the sex jokes. Especially the sex jokes.

Monty Python, in essence, is about the very nature of being human. So are all humans Monty Python fans? No, but perhaps they should be.

To quote George Herbert Walker Bush, in his landmark work, *All I Really Need to Know I Learned at the Monty Python Society*:

Think what a better world it would be if we all — the whole world — had a tape recorder up the nose and could defend against fresh fruit (and broccoli). Or if all governments had as a basic policy to always fall off walls backwards and make "payments" to the Piranha Brothers (I do).

And it is still true, no matter how old you are — when you go out into the world, it is best to walk silly and avoid exploding penguins.

Truer words were never spoken. We should all take them to heart and learn from these silly sketches, movies, books and films to live fuller, richer lives filled with archbishops and crunchy frogs. I know I do.

Now, bugger off.



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Completely Different is the mostly weekly newsletter of the Penn State Monty Python Society. *The Sound of Music* twice an hour and *Jaws I, II, and III*. Back issues available at www.clubs.psu.edu/Python. Submissions always welcome. For more information, write to different@unreality.net

