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WILLIAM H. DUTTON

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THE FIRST ROCK MUSICAL REMEMBERED by Ted Nelson

🕒 [December 10, 2007 \(https://billdutton.me/2007/12/10/the-first-rock-musical-remembered-by-ted-nelson/\)](https://billdutton.me/2007/12/10/the-first-rock-musical-remembered-by-ted-nelson/) 👤 [Bill Dutton \(https://billdutton.me/author/billdutton/\)](https://billdutton.me/author/billdutton/) 📁 [General Interest \(https://billdutton.me/category/general-interest/\)](https://billdutton.me/category/general-interest/)

Ted Nelson writes on Oxford, 22 and 23 November 2007 (posted with permission) —

To the best of my knowledge, the first rock musical was performed fifty years ago today. No, you probably haven't heard of it; it ran as scheduled for two nights at Swarthmore College, near Philadelphia. I wrote and directed it in my Junior year, when I was twenty. There is even an LP.

Was it technically a rock musical? Well, it had

- rock songs (at least nine, others borderline)
- a plot with persistent characters (thus not just a rock concert)

– more than one act (thus not just a revue or musicale)

Well-known early rock musicals include “Hair” and “Jesus Christ Superstar,” but these came much later. “Bye Bye Birdie,” which played on Broadway in 1960, appears to have come the closest. But “Anything & Everything” played in 1957, and I think that makes it Number One In History.

HOW IT HAPPENED

For decades, Swarthmore students put on an annual “Hamburg Show” (a term presumably intended to sound messy). In the fifties it was officially sponsored by the association of Swarthmore’s student athletic managers, no one knew why, which was called KWINK, no one knew why. Playwrights were thin on the ground at Swarthmore that year; Grandin Conover, our best playwright, was apparently not interested. My play “Getting Colder” had won the one-act contest earlier in the year, so I guess that put me next in line. The KWINK guy said I could write the ’57 Hamburg Show if I collaborated with a fellow student named Tex Wyndham.

I liked Wyndham, who conducted excellent Dixieland Jazz, but the briefest of conversations showed me we could not work together. I was a cynical New Yorker and he was not, having a much more mainland perspective. That alone settled the matter, never mind the deep problems of any collaboration. I suggested that he write one act and I another. He declined and left in a huff.

That left me holding the whole franchise.

Wow! A whole musical to myself! And I’ve only got two months! NOW what?

THE INITIAL IDEAS AND HOW THEY GREW

I had only a few ideas at the start.

Foremost, I wanted to write the first rock'n'roll musical. Rock'n'roll at the time meant Buddy Holly, The Coasters and anything with an electric guitar. This was long before the Beatles, and just after Elvis' Ed Sullivan appearance, which had little impact. Nobody called it "rock" at the time, though it had been around for perhaps five years and had become a serious market.

"Oh, Nelson, rock'n'roll won't last!" everyone said. I replied that it would last a long time (and was I right?). How I would get the rock'n'roll music written was another matter.

As a cynical New Yorker, I was much taken by the songs of Brecht and Weill from "Threepenny Opera", which was playing in the West Village and strongly appealed to my Bohemian angers. I wanted those same rough harmonics for the bitterness I intended to express. However, combining rock'n'roll and Brecht'n'Weill could be a problem.

By luck- I don't remember how- I found a freshman named Dick Caplan who declared himself willing to write the music as I wanted it, with the rocking arrangements and the Threepenny sound. He did a wonderful job, exactly what I asked for, even though he had to do all his composing on the upright piano in the front parlor of Parrish Hall. Passersby kept saying, "It sounds like Threepenny Opera." I couldn't have been more pleased.

I wanted to print the program as a big poster. (I think this was a new idea at the time.) Initially I wanted it to be on butcher's paper.

I had one idea for a great scene. The college at that time owned a three-story aluminum scaffold that snapped together with spring latches. I thought it would be a great effect for a chorus to come onstage carrying the parts of the scaffold, singing a bitter song as

they snapped it together and climbed it. However, Cliff Renshaw, who managed the Clothier theater among many facilities, would not allow the scaffold's use. So the bitter song and chorus stayed, but without the powerful scaffold business.

The start of college in September gave only eight weeks till curtain time. I already had a pile of one-liners saved up, but no strong plot particulars in mind, and could use some more jokes, so I invited people to join me in a brainstorming session, I think in a room called Parrish 21 (generally used for Freshman English). Perhaps a dozen people came, supplying some funny lines and a bunch of ideas. I took these away and juggled them in the solitary processes of inspiration.

Gradually a vision began to emerge: I would present the boredom, loneliness and enmities of Swarthmore in a cynical but playful way. Also the mad sexual tension of the place. (These were the fifties, when sex did not officially exist, condoms were "for the prevention of disease only," and no one was allowed in a dorm of the opposite gender. So much was different, but we did what kids always have done, except more sneakily than today.)

I put together two acts, showing the school in its different aspects: the optimism of freshman week, the boredom and desperation of seminars and romances, the mutual antagonism of fraternity and non-fraternity guys, the pomposity of the Administration.

In the show this all took place at Wrathsome College, a name which expressed everybody's anger and was also a nice anagram— not for "Swarthmore" itself, but for "Swathmore", the common mispronunciation among those less academically aware.

THE TITLE

The show's title had a rich history. As a freshman and sophomore I had published a little magazine (very little- palm-sized) called "Nothing," officially from the Swarthmore Dada Club. Then Charlie Harris published a detailed parody of it called "Something." In his annual commencement address, president Courtney Smith (with whom we students had a love-hate relationship) recounted these two student-magazine titles and said, "Next we may expect to see Anything and Everything." So that HAD to be the name of the show.

THE PROGRAM POSTER

The program, which indeed became a large poster, was perhaps the best part of the show. Russ Ryan, Swarthmore's great cynical cartoonist, did the overall artwork, then into this I dabbed photographs of the cast members. It was on white paper; the printer said butcher's paper was infeasible.

(Overview of poster at <http://hyperland.com/A&E/A&Eprogram-Sml.png> (<http://hyperland.com/A&E/A&Eprogram-Sml.png>);

closeups at

<http://hyperland.com/A&E/A&Eprogram-upperchunkSml.png>

(<http://hyperland.com/A&E/A&Eprogram-upperchunkSml.png>),

<http://hyperland.com/A&E/A&Eprogram-lowerchunkSml.png>

(<http://hyperland.com/A&E/A&Eprogram-lowerchunkSml.png>.)

THE LION AND KANGAROO

There turned up an old Swarthmore songbook from the 1920s or earlier. It had a dopey song,

Oh we're going to the Hamburg Show
See the lion and the wild kangaroo
And we'll all stick together,
Through rain or shiny weather,
'Cause we're going to see the whole thing through!

This was so wonderfully inane that for old time's sake I began the show with it, and with a Lion and Kangaroo character (played by Caplan and myself). Russ Ryan designed masks for us, and brilliantly thought of having the kangaroo wear Lederhosen, leather shorts whose front-flap looked like a kangaroo pouch.

(Apparently this dopey song was generic in U.S. culture of the early 20th Century; I've since run into it with the opening line "Oh we're going to the animal show," which probably came first.) To my great chagrin, people thought I wrote the damn thing. Including it in the show was intended merely as nonsense nostalgia.

CERTIFIABLE ROCK NUMBERS

Here were some of the rock numbers:

- The opening number, "The Rockin' Hamburg' (the old-time Lion-Kangaroo song, rearranged).
- A phony dance-craze number: since who knows when, America has had songs pretending to celebrate some nonexistent dance craze that the songwriters hope will catch on. Such fictitious dances have included the Varsity Drag, the Huckle Buck, the Tighten Up, and hundreds more. In this show, our obligatory fictitious dance craze was the Rock-a-Doodle. (You can hear "Do the Rock-a-Doodle, Do" at

<http://hyperland.com/A&E/DoTheRockadoodle.mp3>

(<http://hyperland.com/A&E/DoTheRockadoodle.mp3>). The vocalists wish to remain anonymous.)

– Another very rocular number, partly inspired by Aldous Huxley, was “Orgy-Porgy.” (You can hear “Orgy-Porgy” at <http://hyperland.com/A&E/Orgy-Porgy.mp3> (<http://hyperland.com/A&E/Orgy-Porgy.mp3>). Vocalists: Lynn Milgrim and Brian Mangrum.)

THE BEST SONGS

Two of our best songs (perhaps borderline rock) were directly inspired by Threepenny Opera numbers: the bitter chorus “Song of Significance” (hear it at <http://hyperland.com/A&E/SongOfSignificance.mp3> (<http://hyperland.com/A&E/SongOfSignificance.mp3>)), inspired by “O Those Among You Full of Highest Teaching,” and “That Office,” which was inspired, I just realized, by “Pirate Jenny”. (Hear it sung by me at <http://hyperland.com/A&E/ThatOffice.mp3> (<http://hyperland.com/A&E/ThatOffice.mp3>)).

The other best song was inspired by a friend of mine who’d dropped out of Swarthmore: “It’s Not Bad Being Out of College” (to be heard sung by Dick Caplan at <http://hyperland.com/A&E/It'sNotBadBeingOutOfCollege.mp3> (<http://hyperland.com/A&E/It'sNotBadBeingOutOfCollege.mp3>)).

Some of the lyrics were in what we might now call Sondheim style. One was an anti-fraternity song (Swarthmore had at the time five fraternities of the milder sort, this show was from the other faction of the campus). The fratheads, as we called them, would make fun of our long hair and non-Ohio clothing, so this song was a reply. After the protagonist is ridiculed by fraternity guys, he sings:

Some people have no earthly reason for metabolism
Except to jape and jeer at all the rest;
Warmed within the confines of their confidential cabalism,
Infant fledglings chirping from the nest-
Liberty, Equality, Conformity!
Liberty, Equality, Conformity!
Here for Eternity
In your snug Fraternity
Safe from Life's enormity.
...

I cannot help but pity those poor sentimental ritualists
Their reverence for trivial amenities.
They claim that in their secret thoughts they'r really individualists-
The foolish, hypocritical obscenities!
Liberty, Equality, Conformity!
Liberty, Equality, Conformity!
Here for Eternity
In your SMUG Fraternity
Safe from Life's enormity.

BYPASSING THE CENSOR

These were days when censorship was strong (because sex was forbidden and they didn't want us to think about it, HAH!). The guys from KWINK were warned that they had to censor my script with a strong eye, especially watching for sexual innuendi. I was not allowed to add any material without their seeing it. But they didn't say I couldn't subtract; I checked that with them. So the obvious trick worked beautifully: after getting approval for the script in one form, I DELETED one page (which I had written intentionally to be deleted).

This changed the entire meaning of the dialogue, making it very naughty for the time. I think the amended version went as follows–

A guy and a girl are sitting in the Snack Bar. A friend approaches.

Friend. Did you get your paper in?

Guy. Not yet.

Friend. Will you have it in tomorrow?

Guy. Maybe sooner than that.

Strong stuff for 1957.

HAVE YOU SEEN?

The most daring moment, however, was a song implicitly criticizing the villainous college dean (in reality Dean William C.H. Prentice), widely believed by students to be a son of a bitch. In the song I dared almost to call him that. The song was in the form of a barbershop quartet, whose chorus went:

Have you seen,

Have you seen,

Have you seen what the Dean has done?

Oh, life could be rich,

Without ever a hitch,

If the Dean weren't a son of– a gun!

Now, in order to get this past the censors, and not tip our hand, we had to rehearse the quartet in the Parrish parlors, so I substituted instead the following asinine lyrics with the same rhyme-scheme:

Have you heard,
Have you heard,
Have you heard the word from the bird?
He had no excuse,
For the duck was a goose,
And the bird is a terrible nerd.

This garbage confused bystanders, and may have caused some people to stay away from the show. However, the ruse worked nicely– except that on the record one of the singers accidentally breaks into the mock lyrics instead.

(Those parallel lyrics are of some etymological interest also because the term ‘nerd,’ new at the time, meant then a socially incompetent person.)

THE FRISBEE(R) NUMBER

The most successful number was about a new fad. Just the spring before, 1956, Frisbees had come on the scene. (The show was performed before Wham-O got the trademark, so we spelt it differently then, but never mind.)

For the song “Friz me the Frisbee,” we turned up the house lights and threw Frisbees over the audience– with fair accuracy. (That is to say, no one was hurt, or at least no one complained afterward.) I think there were six of us throwing– Lion, Kangaroo, and whoever else in the cast had a good wrist, with maybe four discs in action at once. Betty Ladd sang the number from the stage while the audience looked all around in wonderment, and ducked.

Even here was a chance for naughty innuendo: the last chorus went

Friz me the Frisbee

Then you can kiz me–

Give it thrust! you must! you must!

Again, this was raw stuff in those days.

THE FISH-BICYCLE LINE

A prominent line in the show was, “A man without faith is like a fish without a bicycle.” That wisecrack has a convoluted history, tracked by my good friend Charlie Harris. It goes like this:

The line was coined by Charlie Harris and Bob Cotton. One of them (my guess is Bob) remarked, “A man without faith is like...” and the other (my guess is Charlie) finished, “... a fish without a bicycle.” They offered that line in the brainstorming session, so it went into the pile of pieces I was putting together, then into the script and onto the stage.

By and by the line reached the great anthropologist Gregory Bateson, who quoted it somewhere. (I believe Bateson may have gotten the line from me when we were office-mates in Miami in 1962 or 1963.)

Then the line found its way to Gloria Steinem, who changed it to: “A woman without a man is like a fish without a bicycle.” And that is the form in which the saying lives now.

THE FIGHT WITH BALTIMORE

There were several stage managers. The main stage manager didn't do much, but in charge of lighting was a guy named David Baltimore, who was extraordinarily efficient (he had acquired a radio headset, which I'd never seen before outside a TV studio, for communicating with the others). He took over more and more duties, thus becoming in effect the main stage manager by the night of the first show.

The night of the second show, an hour before curtain, Baltimore confronted Caplan and me. 'Now I think I know what this show is about,' he said, 'and we're going to make the following changes.' I listened and said, 'Then you can do the show without us. Come on, Dick, let's take a walk.' And we took a leisurely ten-minute walk around Parrish Hall. When we returned Baltimore gave in, saying and said we'd do it the old way but pick up the pace.

In fact Baltimore's suggested changes were good, but it was late in the game and his presentation was all wrong: confronting us in that way guaranteed a fight.

AUDIENCE REACTION

The audience reaction was, shall we say, muted. A group of fraternity guys left the auditorium in the middle of "Liberty, Equality, Conformity." However, several people later said polite things to me about specific parts of the show.

I GOT AWAY WITH IT

Most important, there were no retaliations from Dean Prentice. This (I later learned) was partly because the faculty loved the show. They liked it more than the students did, I think because it represented the kind of initiative and mischief they wished they themselves could express.

THE REVIEW

In reviewing the show, the college paper (the Phoenix) was very kind. It said nice things about me and called the show “sluggish,” which was a very polite description of the show’s pace.

One attendee was quoted as saying, “After the second act I wished it would go on forever, and then it did.”

THE RECORD (see label at <http://hyperland.com/A&E/TZ1A.png> (<http://hyperland.com/A&E/TZ1A.png>).

We cut a long-playing record, for which I made up one of the first silly record-company labels (Truly Zorch). The recording session was a week before the show, in order for the record to be sold at the intermission. Bob Guy, an entrepreneur in the record business at that time, quoted a flat fee of \$800 for the whole project. He came down and taped all twenty numbers (maybe more) in a marathon session (maybe sixteen hours), then delivered the records in cartons the day of the show. Alas, the performances on the record suffer from insufficient rehearsal (as did the show itself, but worse).

The record did not sell well. A friend, Michael Kurland, said he would try to place it at record shops, but I’m not sure he did anything. (Nor is it clear they would have wanted it if he had.)

However, over fifty years I’ve disposed of nearly all of the records in one way or another. Currently I can lay my hands on just two.

ERRORS OF JUDGMENT

In this show I made two great errors of judgment.

First error: giving in to pressure. When I described the first two acts, people would say, ‘You have to have a plot!’ I gave in and added a plot– a third act, with a silly story about a student who happens to be a young middle-eastern potentate, and various spies messing with him. At the denouement, the Russian spies capitulate to some deal, delivering their answer by painting it on the water tower (a perennial Swarthmore prank).

This third act was a huge mistake.

Second error: size in general. The whole thing got too big. There were too many songs (twenty are on the LP, and I think there were even more in the performance). There were too many participants, around seventy-five– possibly outnumbering the audience. After the big bitter number ending Act 2 came a prophetic lyric–

You thought this was the Finale, well, you’re wrong–
It’s just another loud and crowded song;
And perhaps the trouble is, you want your towels marked Hers and His,
Or it may be that the play is just too long.

But I learned the lesson. I did two more rockish musicales at Swarthmore, called respectively “Something for Nothing” and “Umphthing,” and kept them small. (See program for “Umphthing,” with cartoon by Kathe Johnson, at <http://hyperland.com/A&E/UmphthingProgram.jpg> (<http://hyperland.com/A&E/UmphthingProgram.jpg>).)

That meant they could be done quickly (perhaps one month and one week respectively) and to everyone’s much greater satisfaction. Alas, neither was recorded.

The lesson transposed. The following year, when I did my student film “The Epiphany of Slocum Furlow,” I kept the plot minimal and concentrated on atmosphere and character. Some love it, some don’t. And after I got into software, in 1960, I always insisted

on minimalist, clean design.

WHERE HAS EVERYONE GONE?

Everybody in “Anything & Everything” worked hard to fulfill its vision; I thanked them then and I thank them now.

I don’t know what happened to most of them; I’ve only run into a few. I hope all have done well.

I last saw Caplan in the sixties, when he visited me in Poughkeepsie. He seemed to have aged dramatically. He said he had done very well by patenting an underwater cocktail lounge (wish I had gotten the details!). I sure wonder what he did after that.

Tex Wyndham has continued as a Dixieland band leader. When I saw him some years ago, he expressed regret that we could not have collaborated, and I still could not convince him that there’d been no possible common ground.

Michael Kurland became a successful science-fiction and fantasy writer. Notably, he has written a series of novels with Moriarty (Holmes’ arch-enemy) as the protagonist.

Charlie Harris, now retired, has had an eminent career as a perception psychologist and Bell Labs gadabout. His wife is the controversial Judith Rich Harris, whose claims about child rearing (notably in her book “The Nurture Assumption”) have been considered outrageous in some quarters.

One of the spies was played by Maurice Eldridge. He was for a time my wonderful brother-in-law. He is now a vice president of Swarthmore College.

Playing another of the spies in “Anything & Everything” was a gruff young man I thought was a friend. I shared an unfortunate project with him in the late sixties at Brown University; supposedly ‘to try out my hypertext designs’, but turning into a rather nasty running fight. I greatly regret participating: I was continually insulted, lost a lot of money and time, and compromised my design principles, creating an awful structure which I believe eventually became the World Wide Web (see my apology in New Scientist, 2006, readable at <http://xanadu.com/XUarchive/ApologyInNewScientist-Lg.png> (<http://xanadu.com/XUarchive/ApologyInNewScientist-Lg.png>)).

And what of David Baltimore? He got the Nobel Prize for discovering reverse transcriptase. When I spoke at CalTech a few years ago, he was president of the university, and we had a nice chat over single-malt whisky. He had no recollection of the show whatever. Oh well, people are entitled to their own interests.

IN MY OWN LIFE

The show was enormously important for my sense of identity. It was the biggest project I ever did, and all in two months. I allowed myself no dates and no alcohol, and I kept moving on little sleep with nothing stronger than caffeine, managing to keep up in my college seminars as well. Never since have I been so efficient, and the memory of that achievement– just getting such a huge show written and produced, regardless of quality– has been a driving force in my own self-confidence ever since.

After that I believed I could do anything. This has led to precarious endeavors in succeeding years for which I’m glad I had the nerve.

Because of the show, I thought of myself as a media innovator and uncanny predictor, reliably ahead of my time. This attitude became the springboard for my other predictions and initiatives. That’s partly why I had the nerve in 1960 to predict personal com-

puting and world-wide hypertext, and to strive to move them forward. But that is another story.

WHAT REMAINS OF THE SHOW

Significant rock'n'roll memorabilia generally sell for vast amounts of money. Hey, guys! Over here! One of these days I'll auction off the last record.

Meanwhile, I still have lots of posters, will maybe sell them on the net when there's a chance.

—

Theodor Holm Nelson

Founder, Project Xanadu

Visiting Fellow, Oxford Internet Institute

Visiting Professor, University of Southampton

[Lancaster Sociology Summer Conference](https://billdutton.me/2007/12/10/lancaster-sociology-summer-conference/)
(<https://billdutton.me/2007/12/10/lancaster-sociology-summer-conference/>)

[What is in a domain name? An OII event and its video trailor](https://billdutton.me/2007/12/19/what-is-in-a-domain-name-an-oii-event-and-its-video-trailor/)
(<https://billdutton.me/2007/12/19/what-is-in-a-domain-name-an-oii-event-and-its-video-trailor/>)

10 thoughts on “**THE FIRST ROCK MUSICAL REMEMBERED by Ted Nelson**”



Jane Taylor McDonnell

August 12, 2021 at 5:05 am (<https://billdutton.me/2007/12/10/the-first-rock-musical-remembered-by-ted-nelson/#comment-10880>)

I knew Grandin Conover as a child. He lived around the block from me and his sister was my best friend. What do you remember about him at Swarthmore (if you can say in a few words)? I was so sorry to hear about his death. (I went to Bryn Mawr, not Swarthmore). Jane Taylor McDonnell

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billdutton (http://billdutton.wordpress.com)

August 13, 2021 at 2:52 pm (<https://billdutton.me/2007/12/10/the-first-rock-musical-remembered-by-ted-nelson/#comment-10881>)

Grandin Conover was I believe in my Swarthmore class (1959). In my sophomore year he somehow became “the King of Commons” – he would sit in the Commons flipping a 50-cent piece and hold court within the non-fraternity crowd. He wrote several good plays that were put on. I don’t remember much else about him. We were cordial but I didn’t know him well.

Best, Ted

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Maurice G. Eldridge (http://gravatar.com/maurice1940?)

February 8, 2021 at 8:02 pm (<https://billdutton.me/2007/12/10/the-first-rock-musical-remembered-by-ted-nelson/#comment-10877>)

Never a dull hour, I loved and love having Ted in my life as friend, as creator, as brother-in law, on of the good things in my life as a Swarthmore student back in the day...

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[Reply \(https://billdutton.me/2007/12/10/the-first-rock-musical-remembered-by-ted-nelson/?replytocom=10877#respond\)](https://billdutton.me/2007/12/10/the-first-rock-musical-remembered-by-ted-nelson/?replytocom=10877#respond)

[50 years ago today the word “hypertext” was introduced - Gigaom - oppoth.com \(https://oppoth.com/2021/01/13/50-years-ago-today-the-word-hypertext-was-introduced-gigaom/\)](https://oppoth.com/2021/01/13/50-years-ago-today-the-word-hypertext-was-introduced-gigaom-oppoth.com)

January 13, 2021 at 10:16 am (<https://billdutton.me/2007/12/10/the-first-rock-musical-remembered-by-ted-nelson/#comment-10876>)

[...] I was a media guy, already with a background in showbiz and publishing. I had won prizes for poetry and playwriting, I'd published a kite-shaped magazine, and I'd written the first rock musical. [...]

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50 years ago today the word "hypertext" was introduced - Gigaom - enty.info
(<https://enty.info/2020/12/22/50-years-ago-today-the-word-hypertext-was-introduced-gigaom/>)

December 22, 2020 at 9:00 pm (<https://billdutton.me/2007/12/10/the-first-rock-musical-remembered-by-ted-nelson/#comment-10873>)

[...] I was a media guy, already with a background in showbiz and publishing. I had won prizes for poetry and playwriting, I'd published a kite-shaped magazine, and I'd written the first rock musical. [...]

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Fouad Dakwar (<http://gravatar.com/fouaddakwar>)

October 15, 2019 at 5:35 am (<https://billdutton.me/2007/12/10/the-first-rock-musical-remembered-by-ted-nelson/#comment-10766>)

It's incredibly exciting to read this as a current Swat student, fellow "cynical New Yorker," and composer of rock musicals who has gone through a similar process with "Radium Girls: In Concert" (which you can read about here:

<https://swarthmorephoenix.com/2019/02/21/bringing-the-1920s-to-2019-radium-girls-in-concert-glows-with-intersectional-messages/>

(<https://swarthmorephoenix.com/2019/02/21/bringing-the-1920s-to-2019-radium-girls-in-concert-glows-with-intersectional-messages/>)).

That frat song could definitely have come in handy last semester during the ultimately successful protests against their institutional violence but at least the song about the Dean remains accurate and could be put to good use in the future!

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Reply (<https://billdutton.me/2007/12/10/the-first-rock-musical-remembered-by-ted-nelson/?replytocom=10766#respond>)

TECNOLOGÍA » 50 years ago today the word “hypertext” was introduced

(<http://tecnologia.revistacocktel.com/50-years-ago-today-the-word-hypertext-was-introduced/>)

August 25, 2015 at 8:09 pm (<https://billdutton.me/2007/12/10/the-first-rock-musical-remembered-by-ted-nelson/#comment-7765>)

[...] I was a media guy, already with a background in showbiz and publishing. I had won prizes for poetry and playwriting, I'd published a kite-shaped magazine, and I'd written the first rock musical. [...]

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50 years ago today the word “hypertext” was introduced | moomblr!

(<http://moomblr.com/2015/08/24/50-years-ago-today-the-word-hypertext-was-introduced/>)

August 24, 2015 at 9:16 am (<https://billdutton.me/2007/12/10/the-first-rock-musical-remembered-by-ted-nelson/#comment-7764>)

[...] I was a media guy, already with a background in showbiz and publishing. I had won prizes for poetry and playwriting, I'd published a kite-shaped magazine, and I'd written the first rock musical. [...]

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lhnewton

January 24, 2010 at 3:42 am (<https://billdutton.me/2007/12/10/the-first-rock-musical-remembered-by-ted-nelson/#comment-69>)

I remember this. I was a freshman on the lighting crew (serving at the command of David Baltimore, who I ran into again at Yale, on his way at that time to Rockefeller University.) I thought Nelson was nuts, although we later became friends; I still do, I think. One mistake: the anti-fraternity song starts out, “Some people SEEM to have no earthly reason for metabolism . . .”

It was a really good show.

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Bill

December 14, 2007 at 7:11 pm (<https://billdutton.me/2007/12/10/the-first-rock-musical-remembered-by-ted-nelson/#comment-68>)

John Markoff of the New York Times reports new testimony from Bill Lowe, who headed up the PC team, regarding Ted Nelson’s role in the personal computer revolution:

“Theodore Holm Nelson, the sociologist and philosopher who coined the term “hypertext” and who is something of an Internet Don Quixote, has had a tremendous influence on the computing world.

“However, until last night it wasn’t known that Mr. Nelson, the author of the 1974 manifesto “Computer Lib/Dream Machines” — which helped ignite the personal computer revolution — also blew the minds of a team of I.B.M. executives three years before that company entered the PC market.”

The rest is at

<http://bits.blogs.nytimes.com/2007/12/11/when-big-blue-got-a-glimpse-of-the-future/?ex=1198040400&en=d167b1bb2879022d&ei=5070&emc=eta1>
(<http://bits.blogs.nytimes.com/2007/12/11/when-big-blue-got-a-glimpse-of-the-future/?ex=1198040400&en=d167b1bb2879022d&ei=5070&emc=eta1>)

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