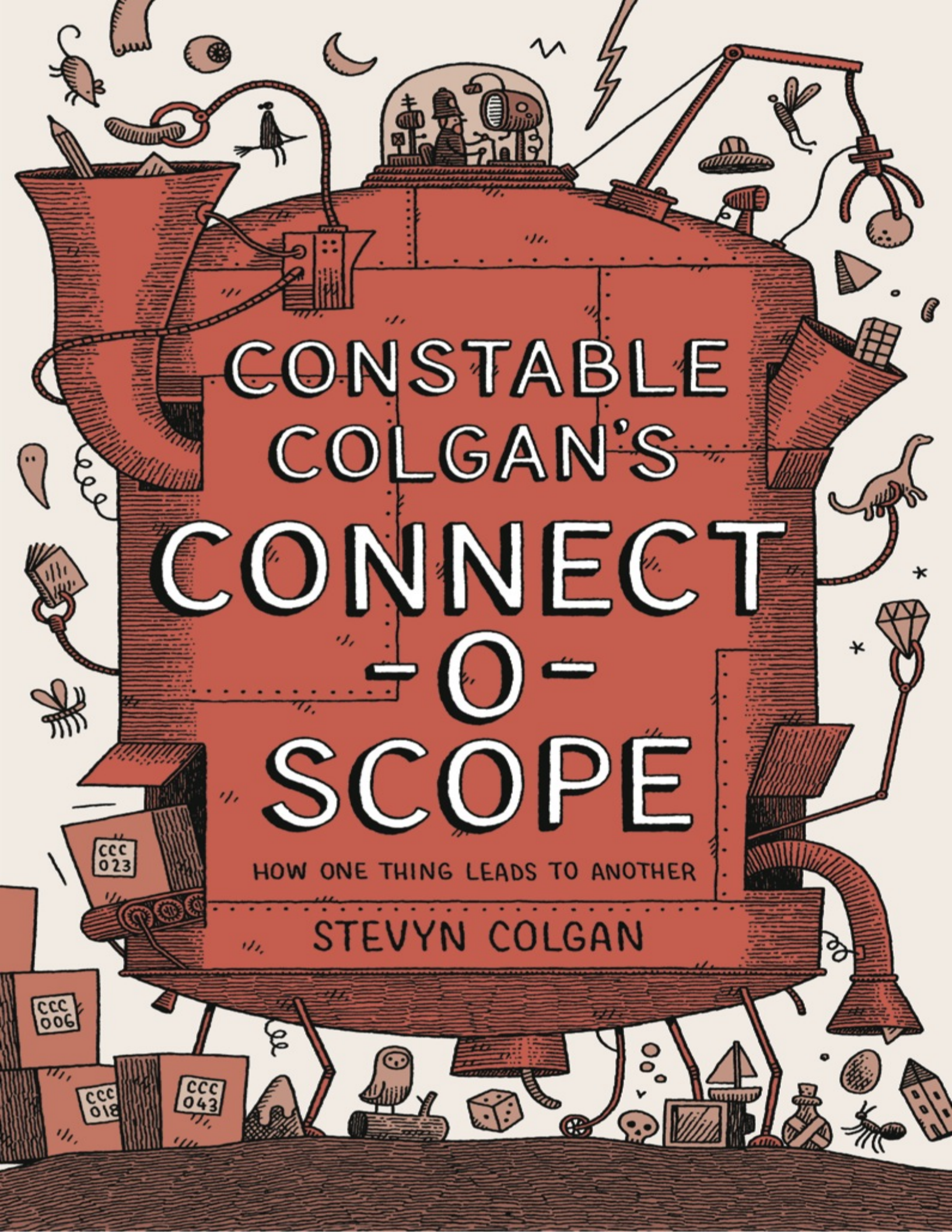
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Constable Colgan’s Connectoscope®

Stevyn Colgan

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For Dawn, Sarah, Kerys, Liam, Leah and Tyler
Dedicated to all of the authors, philanthropists, scientists, researchers, detectives, librarians, explorers, journalists, biographers, analysts, inventors, comedians, physicians, adventurers, artists, philosophers and anyone else who ever thought to ask ‘Why?’
Without them we’d still all be living in the Oldupai Gorge.

INTRODUCTION

> The ability to relate and to connect, sometimes in odd and yet striking fashion, lies at the very heart of any creative use of the mind, no matter in what field or discipline.
>
> – George J. Seidel
>
> Making mental connections is our most crucial learning tool, the essence of human intelligence; to forge links; to go beyond the given; to see patterns, relationships, context.
>
> – Marilyn Ferguson
>
> I believe that all things are fundamentally interconnected, as anyone who follows the principles of quantum mechanics to their logical extremes cannot, if they are honest, help but accept.
>
> – Dirk Gently[1]

It's a fact (the first of many in this book) that I am horribly unskilled in a great many areas of human endeavour. I'm a sporting disaster: I can't run, swim, kick, dive, throw, hit, crawl, twist, hurl, lob, leap or thump with any degree of grace, speed or accuracy. I'm even worse at DIY. Any shelf I put up could double as a ski-jump for kittens and recently, while attempting to repair my reading glasses, I somehow succeeded in superglueing them to my nose. My panoply of incompetence is really quite impressive. However, it's not all doom and gloom. There are a few – a very few – things at which I'm not too shabby. For example, I'm pretty good at remembering things. And I'm not too bad with a pencil and paintbrush. So while I may not be able to fix your carburettor or help you win the local football derby, I can at least draw you an ostrich and tell you that its taxonomic name is *Struthio camelus*. Not terribly useful, I'll admit. Which is why, for most of my childhood, it seemed to me that all Nature had equipped me for was winning quizzes while starving in a garret.

Upon leaving school I embarked on a number of poorly paid jobs, and a stint as a trainee chef, before joining the police service as the result of a £50 bet (true) with my late father, himself a homicide detective. And I quickly

discovered that I was pretty rubbish at that too. I couldn't have spotted a villain if he'd painted his bottom *smalt* in colour (see Investigation 9) and lapdanced in my face to the tune of The Clash's 'Bankrobber'. I was deemed psychologically unsuitable for anything involving weapons. I had the leadership skills of Captain Bligh. And my short legs, long body and large head meant that any uniform I wore fitted like a glove on a dolphin.[2] Things weren't looking too rosy for me in my (nearly) chosen career. But rather than throw me out on my incompetent arse, the London Metropolitan Police Service was sufficiently large[3] and flexible enough to find a niche for me (or maybe they simply weren't prepared to throw away the investment they'd made in tailoring a uniform to fit me). Whatever the reason, someone noticed that I was: (a) quite good at remembering things; and (b) of a creative bent. These things combined meant that I often found the links between facts that others hadn't spotted. This led to me being brought into the fascinating world of intelligence work.

Criminal intelligence works rather like a mosaic or a jigsaw for which you have no guiding picture and just a suspicion of what the finished article looks like. You start with lots of apparently unrelated pieces and, over time, you spot connections and form the pieces into clumps. Then you try to merge them into bigger clumps by finding out what links them together. Eventually the big picture starts to emerge. And, with luck, it's the one you suspected it would be and you get to catch the bad guys.

So that's what I did for most of my 30-year police career…I joined things up. I helped match the bad guys to the bad things they'd done. But it went further than that; finding connections helped me to research and analyse crimes and community problems and subsequently design

creative solutions that were more permanent and sustainable than the usual short-term enforcement-based tactics. And I got pretty good at it. I won awards and ended up sitting on Home Office consultative groups and lecturing all over the UK and USA. Of course, I was just one tiny, tiny cog in a very big, multi-organisational machine. But just as the flick of a guppy's tail can be an infinitessimally small part of a tsunami, so my modest contribution helped to get some bad people off the streets and, more importantly perhaps, made good people feel safer in their homes.

So it's maybe no surprise that I came to write *Constable Colgan's Connectoscope®* and my previous book, *Joined-Up Thinking* (Pan Macmillan, 2008). Spotting connections is in my DNA. And connections are all around us.

For many years, we have known about something called *Six Degrees of Separation*; the idea that every person on this planet can be linked by a chain of just six, or fewer, individuals (You can read a lot more about it in Investigation 7). So maybe I shouldn't have been surprised when I found that I could do the same thing with facts; a kind of *Six Degrees of Information*.

Everything really can be connected to everything else. You've undoubtedly experienced this for yourself when surfing the net; how one website leads you to another and another and, after a very short time, you find yourself some way away from the topic you started with. So imagine how great it would be to have a device that helped you to make those connections; a portable hand-held *Connectoscope®* that could access and search every possible database, encyclopaedia and online resource. But more than that, it could spot the connections, no matter how obscure or bizarre, between any one fact, object, person or event and

any other fact, object, person or event. It would revolutionise so many areas of human endeavour.

Sadly, the real *Connectoscope®* doesn't exist yet. But I can, at least, give you a sense of what such a device would be like. In this wireless, battery-free, paper-based *Connectoscope®* that you hold in your hand,[4] you'll find the results of 32 'investigations' each starting off from a simple question asking me to connect three apparently unrelated items. All 32 investigations are stuffed full of fascinating facts linked together into small circular chains by the connections that the *Connectoscope®* has found.

If you fancy a challenge, why not have a go at finding the con-nections yourself? At the start of each investigation, I'll give you the same list of three things that I started with. Your challenge (if you choose to play along) is to build a circular chain of connections that includes those three things. You can use as many other facts as you like to form each chain. The only rules are that:

(**1**) each fact has to connect to the one before and the one after it; and (**2**) the very last fact must link back to the first, thus completing the circle.

Have a read through one of the investigations first to get a feel for how the *Connectoscope®* works.

I wonder if you'll find the same connections that I did?

This isn't a textbook or an encyclopaedia. It's not even very serious. This is a book for those dull commutes to work on the train; for reading on the beach on holiday; for that little shelf near the loo. My aim in writing it is to provide you with an entertaining and informative read, spiced with a soupçon of challenge, if you fancy it.

That said, I hope that it will occasionally surprise you too. It would be grand if at least one fact in each investigation

made you exclaim, ‘Crikey!’ or some possibly ruder words to that effect.

If that happens, then the *Connectoscope*® will have done its job.

Stevyn Colgan
(Ex-Constable 174702 Metropolitan Police Service, London)
A pub somewhere in Soho, probably
January 2013

1. From Douglas Adams’s *Dirk Gently’s Holistic Detective Agency* (William Heinemann Ltd., 1987).

2. The man at the police uniform stores told me that I was ‘Sooty shaped’ (as in the glove puppet) and that I had a head like ‘a fucking watermelon’.

3. The Met has more employees than the Royal Navy; around 45,000 to the Navy’s 43,000. Sources: Met Police and Royal Navy websites.

4. Unless you’re reading the e-book or listening to the audiobook of course.

INVESTIGATIONS

INVESTIGATION 1
How do you connect the Yakuza to the Pendle Hill Witches and LSD?

Bob the Builder gets the Finger

The author **Jerome K. Jerome**'s middle name was Klapka. Or, at least, his nom de plume contained the name Klapka. It is most likely that Jerome was christened with the same names as his father – Jerome Clapp Jerome – and that he later adopted 'Klapka' to sound more exotic. Some evidence for this lies in the fact that his mother's death certificate contains the words 'J.C. Jerome, son, present at the death'.

Jerome Snr was an eccentric parson who obviously had a thing for unusual names as his other children were named Paulina Deodata, Blandina Dominica and Milton Melancthon. There is a commonly told story that he was friends with an exiled Hungarian General called György Klapka and that this friendship was honoured by his son adopting the name. However, research shows that it's far more likely that Jerome K. made the story up.

The family was very poor (due to a series of bad investments) and Jerome Jnr's parents died when he was a teenager. He therefore sought work on the railways and then later as a jobbing actor using the stage name of Harold Crichton.[5] He also began to write and, in 1889, he wrote the book that would make his name: *Three Men in a Boat*. The book has been in publication ever since.

In 2005, comedians Dara O Briain, Griff Rhys Jones and Rory McGrath re-enacted Jerome's journey along the Thames for a television series called *Three Men in a Boat* made for the **BBC**, the world's first national broadcaster.

The British Broadcasting Corporation was founded in 1922 (but got its charter and current name in 1927). It is

now the world's largest such organisation, employing 23,000 staff and has an annual budget in the region of £4.26 billion (based on 2011/12 figures). Starting with (and still broadcasting) radio programmes, it has followed the development of new media as time has gone by and has embraced television, digital television, interactive services and the internet. Its website (bbc.co.uk) is the 45th most popular website in the world and the 5th most popular in the UK.[6]

In 2000 the BBC reported that its television series **Bob the Builder** was being 'doctored' before export to Japan by giving all the characters five fingers instead of the original four.[7] The reason given was the fear that people would associate the characters with the Japanese 'mafia' – the **Yakuza** – because of their tradition of cutting off the little finger, or part of the little finger, as a punishment. This sounds like an urban myth but the story was, and still is, posted on the BBC website and claims that the doctoring would be done by HIT Entertainment. It's also notable that the characters in Japanese cartoons or anime do traditionally have five fingers on each hand. However, *Bob the Builder* eventually went out undoctored in Japan along with other four-fingered shows such as *Postman Pat* and *The Simpsons*.[8]

The cutting off of part of a finger, or *yubitsume*, is an act of penance or apology to the Yakuza boss or *Oyabun*. Upon first transgression, the Yakuza member is required to cut off the tip of the smallest finger of the left hand (at the first joint) and present it to his Oyabun. On second offence, it's more of the same finger to the next joint. And so on. When the pinkie is completely gone, attention moves to the right hand. Yubitsume originated in a time when the sword was the weapon of choice. The Japanese style of grip relies

heavily on the strength of the little finger so losing it, or a part of it, would adversely affect swordplay performance. The penitent was therefore forced to rely more upon the group or family for protection.

The name Yakuza comes from a card game called *Oichu-Kabu* and literally translates (in old Japanese) as ‘eight nine three’ (*ya ku sa*). This is the worst hand of cards you can have during the game. Consequently, if a player finds themself landed with it, they have to exhibit extraordinary skill to outmanoeuvre their opponent(s). The hand is sometimes called ‘good for nothing’.

Yakuza are organised crime groups, many of which enjoy a degree of respectability within society. Some have histories spanning hundreds of years but their origins are confused. It may be that the early Yakusa were Robin Hood type figures; community vigilantes that enforced order and protected the people. Other evidence suggests that they were town bullies or local criminals. Another theory suggests that they were groups of *Rōnin* (masterless Samurai) who operated as soldiers of fortune. Samurai were, at that time, the only people allowed to lawfully carry swords.

Samurai Jack was a cartoon series created by Genndy Tartakovsky that ran from 2001 to 2004. The Emmy Award-winning series was an immediate hit because of its cinematic style, wit, clever stories, striking graphics and excellent musical scores. The series follows the adventures of a Samurai warrior (with five fingers on each hand) who fights an apocalyptic battle with Aku, a shape-shifting demon.[9] At the last minute, Aku opens a hole in time and hurls him into the far future to an earth where the demon has reigned for millennia. It is a desolate, subjugated place…some people have reverted to mediaeval lifestyles,

others to societies mirroring different eras. There are bounty-hunting aliens and mercenary robots, strange mutants and even stranger creatures from mythology that have somehow been brought back to life. We follow the Samurai's adventures – some epic and deadly serious, others very funny or light-hearted – as he searches for a way to return to the past to defeat Aku and prevent this terrible dystopian future. On his journey, he collects the nickname of 'Jack' and uses it thereafter.

A male donkey is called a Jack. A female donkey is called a Jenny, or a Jennet. Jennet is also: (a) another word for a mule; (b) a breed of small Spanish horse with a distinctive spotted coat; and (c) an old-English girl's name originally derived from John.

Jennet Preston was one of the 13 **Pendle Hill Witches** who, in 1612, were accused of killing 17 people by witchcraft. Following a series of sensational trials, ten of them were hanged at Lancaster Gaol. They were: Alizon Device, Elizabeth Device, James Device, Anne Whittle (known as 'Chattox'), Anne Redferne, Alice Nutter, Katherine Hewitt, John Bulcock, Jane Bulcock and Isobel Robey. Jennet Preston was hanged in York. Margaret Pearson was found guilty of witchcraft but was acquitted of murder. As a result she was the only survivor and served just a year in prison. The 13th alleged witch, Elizabeth Southerns (known as 'Demdike'), died in Lancaster Gaol while awaiting her trial.

In Demdike's written confession, most likely extracted under duress, she claimed that she and her associates had sold their souls to the Devil and had murdered the 17 by making 'pictures of clay'; small voodoo-doll type effigies of their intended victims that were then stuck with a pin or slowly crumbled or burned over time, causing pain, illness,

degeneration and ultimately death. Demdike also claimed that each of the witches had a familiar; a spirit companion of hellish origin. Alizon Device's familiar was a black **demon dog**, whom she allowed to suck on her breast.

Demon dogs are fairly commonplace in British mythology and folklore. In Cornish legend, the wicked clerk Jan Tregeagle is pursued across Bodmin Moor by a pack of demonic hounds whose 'heads blazed with the fires of Hell'. Yorkshire's 'Hellhound' is called Barguest, and the Norfok, Suffolk and Essex coastline is reputedly haunted by Black Shuck. The Isle of Man's demon dog is Moddey Dhoo, Wales has Gwyllgi and Devon has the Yeth Hound. In the North of England, there was a spirit called Gytrash that could assume the form of several types of animal (it is mentioned in Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre*) including a large black demon dog.[10]

Demon Dogs was the name of a famous hot dog restaurant in Chicago that was closed in 2003 to make way for development work at Fullerton Station on the Brown Line Railway. However, it did not go without a fight as Demon Dogs was a piece of rock and roll history. Owner Pete Schivarelli discovered a local band nearly 40 years previously and called them Chicago Transit Authority. The real CTA objected to the name, so it was shortened by producer James Guercio to Chicago. Under Schivarelli's management, the band went on to make millions and Demon Dogs became a shrine to them, its walls boasting gold and platinum Chicago albums, and also signed guitars from fellow rockers Steven Tyler and Eddie Van Halen and countless photos of Schivarelli with major celebrities.

The **hot dog** sausage was invented in the 17th century by a German butcher from Coburg named Johann Georghehner. At least, that's the claim of the American

National Hot Dog and Sausage Council. However, the first appearance of the sausage in a bun is difficult to trace. Some sources state that Charles Feltman of Coney Island, New York was the first when, in 1867, he started selling Vienna sausages[11] in buns as 'Coney Island Red-Hots'. By 1874 he had gone from a small cart to a full-sized restaurant at West 10th Street and Surf Avenue. Others state that he started selling pies in 1867 and opened the hotdog stand in 1871. Still others claim the invention as belonging to Antoine Feuchtwanger, a German sausage-maker who served hot dogs at the 1904 St Louis World's Fair, with his brother baking the buns.

The term 'hot dog' itself also has a confused origin. It may have started as a sarcastic comment on the provenance of the meat. Or it may relate to the fact that German sausages and Dachshunds arrived in the USA at around the same time (Germans called frankfurters 'little-dog' or 'dachshund' sausages). Or it may have an origin in the phrase 'hot dog', used to describe a stylish dresser. To get dressed in a sharp suit was known as 'putting on the dog'. The term 'hot dog' for the finger snack may possibly stem (though it sounds dubious to me) from the idea that the sausage is 'clothed' or 'dressed' by the bread.

Nathan's Famous Hot Dog Eating Contest is an annual event that takes place on July 4th in Coney Island, New York. Tradition has it that the origin of the competition can be traced to 1916 when four immigrants staged an impromptu hot dog-eating contest at the site of the first Nathan's Famous Hot Dog stand to settle an argument about who was the most patriotic.[12] After 12 minutes, James Mullen had eaten 13 hot dogs and was crowned the victor. A 12-minute contest has been held on the site on Independence Day every year since (although it changed to

ten minutes in 2008). The mustard-coloured champion's belt[13] is currently held by the excellently named Joey Chestnut, who has won every competition since 2007. His current record is a gut-busting 68 hotdogs (2012) in ten minutes…and that includes the bread buns. In 2011, a separate women's competition was inaugurated and was won by Sonya Thomas who ate 40 hotdogs in the required time. She also won in 2012 with 45.

'Hot dog, jumping frog, Albuquerque' (sung twice) is the rather odd chorus of the 1988 hit song 'The King of Rock and Roll' by Prefab Sprout. The somewhat surprising lyric has since become a common **mondegreen** with people singing things like 'almond cookie' or 'Albert Turkey' instead of Albuquerque.[14] A mondegreen is a misheard phrase or lyric. It is named after a line in the ballad 'The Bonny Earl O'Moray' that should have been, 'And laid him on the green' but which was often misheard as 'And Lady Mondegreen'. The term was coined by American writer Sylvia Wright.[15]

Talk of frogs, jumping or otherwise, brings us to *Phyllobates terribilis*, the **golden poison-dart frog**. There is enough poison in one small frog to potentially kill at least two elephants, ten people or 10,000 mice. Their skin produces a poison called a batrachotoxin that affects the nerves, heart and repiratory systems. The Embre and Choco Indians from Colombia use the poison for their blowgun darts. Once a dart is poisoned it remains lethal for up to two years.

This is not the only dangerous chemical produced by an amphibian. The Colorado river toad, or Sonoran desert toad (*Bufo alvarius*) from the Southwestern USA and northern Mexico produces a psychoactive called 5-MeO-DMT (a tryptamine related to seratonin, melatonin and the

psylocibin found in so-called ‘magic mushrooms’) and bufotenin, a chemical that can produce an hallucinogenic effect similar to **LSD**.

LSD or lysergic acid diethylamide was a popular drug during the 1960s and 1970s when many prominent self-experimenting artists and musicians ‘dropped acid’ in an attempt to enhance their creativity, spirituality and consciousness. And it may have had something to do with the curious title of the 1968 single ‘In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida’ by **Iron Butterfly**. A commonly repeated story states that the song’s title was originally ‘In the Garden of Eden’ but was slurred by singer Doug Ingle when he was high. However, the sleeve notes for their ‘Best of’ album state that drummer Ron Bushy was listening to the track through headphones, and couldn’t hear the lyrics clearly and therefore wrote down what he thought he’d heard. To add to the confusion, a different set of sleeve notes (from the 1995 re-release of the *In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida* album) claims that Ingle was drunk when he first told Bushy the title. One final theory claims that that all of the above may be true but the title was supposed to be *Bhagavad Gita*, the name of a Hindu book of scripture, and nothing to do with the **Garden of Eden** at all.

There have been many claims as to the geographic location of the Garden of Eden, if indeed it ever existed at all and is not simply an allegory. Most often, it is placed in the Middle East near Mesopotamia or Israel. However, some researchers, scholars and writers have suggested locations as diverse as Adam’s Peak in Sri Lanka, the Seychelles, Ethiopia and even Missouri and Florida.

The long-lived writer **Eden Phillpotts** (he was 98 when he died in 1960) was an English novelist, poet and dramatist whose work mostly centred upon Dartmoor in

Devon where he lived and grew up as a child (and, hopefully, avoided the Yeth Hound). He loved the area and, for many years, was President of the Dartmoor Preservation Association. He produced 18 Dartmoor novels and two volumes of short stories. One novel, *Widecombe Fair*, became the play *The Farmer's Wife*, which was later filmed by Alfred Hitchcock. Phillpotts was a great friend of Agatha Christie[16] who encouraged him to also write mystery and horror novels (which he did under the pseudonym of Harrington Hext). Among his other friends, he counted many contemporary writers including J.M. Barrie, H. Rider Haggard, H.G. Wells, Arthur Conan Doyle, W.W. Jacobs, Hall Caine, Thomas Hardy, Israel Zangwill, Rudyard Kipling and Jerome K. Jerome. In fact, Phillpotts and Jerome co-wrote a farce with the excellent name of *The McHaggis*.

The author **Jerome K. Jerome**'s middle name was…

5. Pronounced Cry-ten, it's a name often associated with butlers and manservants. It was popularised by Kenneth More's character in the 1957 movie *The Admirable Crichton*, which was, in turn, based on a play written in 1902 by *Peter Pan* author J.M. Barrie. Barrie's character later inspired the name of Kryten, the service droid in the BBC TV comedy series *Red Dwarf*. Unrelated but curiously coincidentally, *Red Dwarf* starred Chris Barrie (whose real surname is Brown). Also coincidentally, all four of the show's main cast members – Barrie, Craig Charles, Danny John-Jules and Robert Llewellyn (Kryten) were born in leap years (1960, 1964, 1960 and 1956 respectively). Yup, that's the kind of book this is.

6. Stats taken on October 28th 2011 from www.alexa.com.

7. The tradition of animated characters only having four fingers is as old as animation itself and is simply about making the characters as easy to animate as possible without the hands looking too 'weird'. A traditional, non computer-based cartoon short involves something like 50,000 individual drawings. By removing one digit, that's 100,000 fewer fingers to draw. Time, as they say, is money.

8. In Japan, *Bob the Builder* is called *Hataraku Buubuuzu*. Meanwhile, BBC TV show *Teletubbies* is translated as *Teretabīzu* or 'Antenna Babies'. I rather prefer that.

9. *Aku* means 'evil' or 'wickedness' in Japanese and there is a demon with burning eyes in Japanese mythology called Akuma.

10. There is a long tradition of demon dogs in literature. One of the earliest is Cerberus which guarded the gates to Hades, the hell of Greek mythology. However, the most famous is probably found in the Sherlock Holmes adventure *The Hound of the Baskervilles* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

11. *Wiener* is Austrian for 'Viennese', which is why some hot dog sausages are called wieners to this day.

12. Although veteran publicist Mortimer Matz claims that he invented the idea with a friend, Max Rosey. Nathan's admit that they have no records of such an event before the 1970s.

13. Contestants also win two crates of hot dogs and $10,000.

14. Albuquerque is the largest city in the US state New Mexico and is named after Don Francisco Fernández de la Cueva, Duke of Alburquerque (Spain) and viceroy of New Spain (New Mexico) from 1653 to 1660.

15. There is an urban myth that Prefab Sprout's name is also a mondegreen. Various sources state that the band was named after the opening line of Nancy Sinatra's and Lee Hazelwood's 1967 hit single, 'Jackson'. It's said that Sprout frontman Paddy McAloon misheard the line 'We got married in a fever, hotter than a pepper sprout' as 'hotter than a prefab sprout'. He didn't. He simply made the name up along with other rejected possibles like Chrysalis Cognosci, Dry Axe and The Village Bus.

16. Agatha Christie may have been one of the very first people in the UK to stand up while surfing. In a recently published book of her travel diaries, *The Grand Tour* (Harper Collins 2011), she describes learning the technique in Waikiki in 1922. She says she had 'a moment of complete triumph on the day that I kept my balance and came right into shore standing upright on my board!' The only account I could find of a Briton standing up before this related to Prince Edward, also in the early 1920s.

INVESTIGATION 2
How do you connect Terry Scott to the Battle of Marathon and Fennel?

Terry and Chewin'

Fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*) is an edible plant with a gentle aniseed-like flavour. This can be found in its feathery shoots but is concentrated in the bulb, which can be cooked and eaten as a vegetable or used like a herb to flavour food – particularly fish. It is a primary ingredient in making the spirit Absinthe. The word 'fennel' comes from the Anglo-Saxon *fenol* or *finol* and means 'little hay' as it smells sweet and often grows in hay fields. In mediaeval times, it was used as a medicinal herb in conjunction with St John's Wort as a charm against witchcraft and other evils. It was also once said that eating fennel improves the bust and/or milk production. Modern chemistry has revealed that the plant does contain phytoestrogens that can promote growth of breast tissue so it's maybe not so much of an Old Wives' Tale after all.

In mythology, Prometheus used the stalk of a fennel plant to steal fire from the Gods of Olympus. The ancient Greeks called the plant **Marathon** and the town of Marathon – North East of Athens – took its name from the plant. It was the site of a famous battle in 490BCE; the final battle, in fact, in a long campaign by King Darius I of Persia to conquer Greece. When the battle was won, the legend goes that a herald named Pheidippides ran from Marathon to Athens to announce the Greek victory. As he entered Athens with the cry 'Nenikékamen!' ('We were victorious!'), he suddenly dropped dead, his heart having given out after such a swift and lengthy run.[17] His extraordinary feat was

immortalised in the ‘marathon’ long-distance running race, which was first staged at the 1896 Olympic Games.

The 1896 **Olympics** were the first international games to be staged in 1500 years, having been banned by the Roman Emperor Theodosius in 393ad. They were a far cry from the huge events we know today. There were fewer sports and many of the athletes played for themselves or their clubs rather than for a national team.[18] The facilities were poor and the athletes were a mix of amateurs, professionals and people who entered solely for the sporting fun. For example, an Irishman called John Pius Boland, who was on holiday in Greece at the time, was entered for the tennis competition by a friend and ultimately won first prize. He also won the men’s doubles event by selecting a German called Friedrich Traun – who was actually an 800m runner – as his partner. Boland walked away with two silver medals because silver was awarded for first, bronze for second and nothing for third. The gold/silver/bronze medal system that we know today wasn’t introduced until the 1904 Olympics.

The 1904 St Louis Olympics formed part of the larger Louisiana Purchase Exposition being held in the city. The bid to host the Olympics had actually been won by Chicago but the St Louis event was so huge that it threatened to split the visitor count so the Olympic Committee agreed to its relocation.

The marathon that year was extraordinary – but for all the wrong reasons. The day was hot – over 32°c/90°f – and very humid and the entire course was wreathed in choking clouds of dust. The first man over the finishing line was New York bricklayer Fred Lorz…but he was disqualified when officials discovered he’d completed most of the race in a car. He had dropped out after nine miles due to exhaustion and had been collected by his manager.

According to one source, he was actually going to collect his clothes when he walked past the finishing line and was accidentally hailed as the winner. However, another states that Alice Roosevelt, daughter of President Theodore Roosevelt, was just about to award him his prize when the truth was revealed. Lorz then claimed he had never really intended to accept the prize and that he had only crossed the finishing line 'as a joke'.[19] So the prize then went to British-born Thomas Hicks, who'd nearly died in the attempt. About ten miles from the finishing line, Hicks had begged his trainers to let him stop running as he needed a rest. Rather than pop him in a car, they gave him a dose of strychnine sulphate mixed with raw egg white and brandy instead. Strychnine was often used, in small doses, as a stimulant. In larger doses, however, it is also used as rat poison. Regular doses continued to be administered for the rest of the race and Hicks was eventually carried across the finishing line, very close to death. It took the efforts of four doctors to revive him enough to leave the stadium. As it was, he fell asleep on a trolley during the awards ceremony.

Another runner was a Cuban postman called Felix Carvajal. He raised the money to get to America by pleading for donations but then lost it all en route in a craps game in New Orleans. He got to St Louis by hitching a lift but had no money for running gear, so the marathon was put back by several minutes to give him time to cut the sleeves off his shirt and the legs off his trousers. During the race, he ate some apples from an orchard that turned out to be rotten and eventually came in fourth, doubled over with stomach cramps. The marathon also boasted the first two black African Olympic runners although they were not officially competitors. They were actually part of the Boer War cultural exhibit at the Exposition. That said, Jan

Mashiani came in 12th and Len Taunyane came in 9th and might have done even better had he not been chased almost a mile off course by aggressive dogs.

The word ‘marathon’ is now used to describe any long-distance running race. Many are held around the world every year but perhaps the best known take place in New York, which began in 1970, and London, which began in 1981. Both races attract around 40,000 runners per year, the majority of which are running to raise money for charity. A marathon covers a distance of 26 miles and 385 yards. This curious distance was set at the 1908 Olympics in the UK when the additional yardage was reduced from 585 yards so that Queen Alexandra and others could clearly see the finishing line.

Marathon was also the name originally given to the British version of the American **Snickers** bar, produced by the Mars confectionary company. The Marathon Bar had its name changed to Snickers in 1990, which brought it in line with the rest of the world.[20] The bar was named ‘Snickers’ after the Mars family’s favourite horse. It got a chocolate coating in 1930 and has gone from strength to strength ever since, becoming the best-selling chocolate bar of all time with annual global sales of US$2 billion.[21] The reason it was originally branded Marathon in the UK is probably because Snickers sounded so close to ‘knickers’, a word not used so much in the USA (who favour ‘panties’) and still considered a bit rude in polite 1930s British society.

The name Marathon was used in the US for a braided chocolate and toffee bar very similar to what the Canadians know as a Cadbury’s Wig Wag and what we in the UK call a Cadbury’s **Curly Wurly**. The first British Curly Wurly TV adverts featured comedian **Terry Scott** dressed as a

schoolboy – a cheeky character he created for his 1962 novelty song *My Brother* (aka *My Bruvva*).

Terry Scott was a veteran of many British comedy films during the 1960s and 70s and starred in seven of the *Carry On* films. In the 1980s, he achieved further fame as the voice of Penfold, idiot sidekick of the animated super spy Danger Mouse.[22] But most famously, he was partnered with screen wife June Whitfield in two long-running British sitcoms, *Happy Ever After* and ***Terry and June***.

Terry and June's depiction of bland suburbia and use of gentle and predictable jokes made it an easy target for people who liked their comedy a bit more 'edgy'. However, the show regularly pulled in audiences of ten million or more; three times the ratings of its more alternative competitors. Sixty-five episodes and four Christmas specials were made and a movie was planned but, for various reasons, never happened. Throughout them all, Terry Scott portrayed bumbling middle class Terry Medford from Purley in Surrey, who worked for Playsafe Fire Extinguishers and Appliances. The head of the company was the bombastic Sir Dennis Hodge (played by Reginald Marsh). Hodge's long-suffering secretary was played by Joanna Henderson and was called Nora or, as she was most commonly referred to, Miss Fennel.

Fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*) is an edible plant…

17. Pheidippides' cry was in praise of Niké, the Greek goddess of victory – the sports shoe manufacturer is appropriately named after her. That said, the story isn't exactly true as it confuses and combines two separate sources: Herodotus' tale of Pheidippedes who ran between Athens and Sparta, and Plutarch's story of a soldier who marched the 26 miles between Marathon and Athens. The legend as we know it was popularised by Robert Browning in his poem *Pheidippides*.

18. Some sports have since fallen by the wayside. The Olympics no longer boast live pigeon shooting, pistol duelling, tug-of-war, club swinging, rope climbing or long jump for horses events. Between 1912 and 1952 there were also medals awarded for literature, architecture, music, painting and sculpture. They were dropped when the Olympics went fully amateur. No one wants an amateur architect building their office block.

19. He did, however, go on to win the 1905 Boston Marathon.

20. There was a trade-off for this; the bar that had been known as Raider elsewhere got to be renamed globally as Twix. Not a bad swap.

21. At the start, its main rival was a very similar bar produced by the Sperry Candy Company called, bizarrely, the Chicken Dinner Bar because it filled you up like a full cooked meal. The name may have contributed to its demise.

22. Penfold’s first name was Ernest and he was a hamster. Dangermouse’s boss, Colonel K, was a chinchilla and DM’s iconic eye-patch was an affectation and ‘part of the uniform’. He had sight in both eyes.

INVESTIGATION 3
How do you connect naturism to cannibalism and Sigue Sigue Sputnik?

Yummy Yummy Yummy I got Man in my Tummy

The term ‘cannibal’ describes a living thing that eats members of its own species. Many animals and plants indulge in **cannibalism**, and we humans are no exception. It was certainly practiced by some ancient societies and rumours persist to this day of such things going on.[23] Human cannibalism is more properly called *anthropophagy*.

The word ‘cannibal’ comes from Columbus’s early voyages to the Lesser Antilles (part of the West Indies) where he suspected that the local Carib people ate human flesh. Some confusion between the spelling and pronunciation of Carib – the letters ‘R’ and ‘N’ were interchangeable to a degree – mixed with the Spanish word *canibales* (meaning ‘thirsty and cruel’) led to the term ‘cannibal’ appearing.

There are allegations of regular cannibalism in the UK within recorded history. In the 13th-century chronicles known as the *Trioedd Ynys Prydein* or *Welsh Triads*,[24] the Saxon King Ethelfrith is said to have encouraged cannibalism at his court. One courtier called Gwrgi was said to have developed such a taste for it that he wouldn’t eat anything else. It was his custom to have a ‘male and female Kymry [or Cymry – a Welsh person] killed for his own eating every day, except Saturday, when he slaughtered two of each, in order to be spared the sin of breaking the Sabbath’. And in 1339, when a large part of Scotland had been desolated by the armies of Edward III, there were allegations of hungry Scots who, ‘when hunting in the woods, preferred the shepherd to his flocks’.