

Cranial Interlopers

The bi-polar nature of sound folks

By Sully

Have you ever sat in front of an accountant, watched his lips move, but heard only the voice of one of the adults from a *Charlie Brown* cartoon?

I have two thoughts during these encounters: get to the part were I get a bag of cash, and, “you do this... *ALL* day?” Honestly, the breadth of that reality is unnerving. It was bad enough when I found out the IRS had a numerical designation for what I do.

Intellectually, I know people are

aware of the *idea* of my job. Rarely though is there organized recognition. Such a collected concentration about *me me me*; it gives pause and purpose to the small quadrant of my dome I dedicate to Fear, Loathing and Distrust. (FL&D).

This is a fairly tidy section in the right hemisphere of my brain, set up much like a firehouse, complete with pole for FL&D to speed into action with only the most meager of urgings.

Quite a few responsibilities are entrusted to these boys, and they're

always prepared, one hand on the pole, waiting for the nod from dispatch, ready to mount a flock of paramecium and ride into battle.

They are such strong proponents of reactionary behavior that they've been known to distract their next-door neighbors – Good Sense and Patience – by making centipede shadow puppets, shouting C.S. Lewis quotes, then commandeering my personality in the ensuing confusion.

When this happens. I involuntarily screech out things like “YOU LOOK SILLY” during Hibernian folk dancing demonstrations, and I once had a large perspiring woman clamping her paw over my mouth to keep me from further commenting on a sheep-mounting exhibition.

Thankfully, there *are* times when the left seems to be in complete control – during religious seizures, among friendly prison populations and when opting not to use water fountains in Mexico... but therein lies the problem. Whoever's running id dispatch isn't always checking current conditions or they have a twisted sense of humor.

It's not that I'm difficult; it's just that I want to choose when I'm left-handed and oozing creativity and weapons, or right-handed and impersonating Ghandi with an abacus. As it stands now, I could walk into a gig and the wrong side of my brain might show up for work.

Sound Provider: “Hi, I'm Bob... I spoke to you on the phone. Listen... the promoter sold the show in the round, not the end stage like I swore to you it would be. We only brought those two



Altec Voice of the Theater boxes you said you liked... anyways, I gotta go, but Spam the system tech over there can help you with anything you need...

Me: "Uh... O.K."

Brain, this isn't funny. This guy's leaving and you're handing me Wally Cleaver. Brain, don't do this to me... Nothing. Rats. I know exactly what this means.

Pastor Joe: "Hi, welcome to the Church of Really Terrific Folks! We had Guatemalan coffee bean herders fly brewed café' in this morning for you guys, and everybody gets chocolate and diamonds after load out! We hope you'll really enjoy your stay! By the way, here are the keys to the parish Jag in case you have time to drive over to our private pancake mine."

Me: "Yeah, that's wonderful, but I only counted 15 hand towels in the dressing room...the rider clearly states a minimum 16. I'm not cracking the truck until you stop playin' games with our personal hygiene."

Wrong, brain – wrong. This is totally not funny.

There must be some evolutionary explanation to this hemispheric peculiarity. Perhaps this duality is simply an evolutionary step prior to humans developing into some seriously talented artists that can square Pi while reworking Handel.

Or, maybe it's just me.

But I doubt it.

Seems I meet a boatload of bipolar people in my travels, and quite a few of them have the words *audio engineer* after their names on business cards. I gotta say though, it's almost as if a measure of Sybil-ness is required to perform adequately on some gigs.

The trick, as I mentioned before, is to be able to toggle between sides. Maybe a motor pickle installed on the neck...

Believe it or not, during a recent critical study of empirical data garnered from field subjects (I polled my friends over flat meat in catering), everyone agreed that my split-brain theories are completely worthless (+/- 3 points of utility).

Further, my compadres universally declared *themselves* to be in complete control of their faculties at all times, never once admitting that they too have difficulty controlling the cranial civil war raging under their preposterously pretentious VonDutch lidded bonnets.

They lie.

Not in the "I didn't steal that prized DX 77 ribbon mic you've been carefully polishing for years and put it in a speed metal kick" sense of lying, but in more of a "I'm not getting involved in the sensitive guy conversation. Here – take back your *Five For Fighting* CD."

(That denial is our "Fonzie" heritage; we smother our exteriors in leather and denim as definitive statements that our interiors contain only hearts of non-tariffed steel and critical-

ly honed maiden rescuing techniques.)

Not that I'm promoting public proof of emotion. Things are just as they should be. I'm not sure anything would get done if we all had to smear ourselves with Crisco and sit naked in a circle before load-in. The added union call alone would be... disturbing.

Nothing, including the supremely researched opinions of my associates, provides any useful insight into my bipolar dilemma.

Me, I'm just happy when I achieve the government mandated 70 percent Appropriate Personally Deployment rating. (Apparently anything under 60 percent requires observation and prying questions about gifts from strangers.)

It's kind of amusing, though, on slow days to view the people I encounter with the thought *which side's running your head today?* Try it.

In fact, do this: find somebody you think has the capacity to flip sides quickly, then borrow a wireless PowerPoint remote from video. Stand in front of your victim and repeatedly click the button. Record the results – especially information from test subjects in New York and Chicago.

Not only will you be providing seminal research data about this confusing malady, you may uncover additional information about other sections of the body that tend to be split in two. ■

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