

THE MANIFESTO OF SOMBRERO GUY

YOUR FRIENDLY REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE SILLY HATS PARTY, AND
CANDIDATE FOR SFØ SENATORSHIP



A few words of introduction...

Hello, I am Sombrero Guy. As many of you will know, I have been playing SFØ for a long time, and it has become, to me, a lot more than just a game. When I started playing I was, by my own admission, useless. I look back at some of my first tasks and wonder what the hell I was doing. But with time, I understood what SFØ was. I became part of this wonderful community. I discovered the SFØ Skype chat, and all the weird conversations therein. I began to task with others, something I wish I had more opportunity to do, in long-distance collaborations.

Maybe my opponents will say that I'm stuck in the past; that I'm a sentimental fool, who resists change and improvement. And I suppose, in part, they will be right. But although the retirement of several brilliant players I got to know in my first year of the game saddens me, I see new talent emerging to fill the gaps. And I encourage this. But I also don't give up on the old players. I hope that, with a little persuasion, they will one day learn to enjoy tasking again.

There are aspects of SFØ as I knew it two years ago that I think the current community is missing. The Skype chat has descended from a lively, ongoing conversation to a barren desert where barely a word is uttered. One of my aims as a senator would be to revive this additional arm of our community.

I have been told, by a well-known player of the game, that I "truly deserve a special badge" for "keeping the drive". Whether this is true or not, I leave to your good selves to decide. Certainly my tasking has been sparse recently, but I have kept posting praxis. And as I escape the exam season into a long summer holiday, I have more time to commit to the game, and I will be able to give more back to a community which means so much to me. I hope that you will take the time to read through my manifesto and cast your vote.



aka. Sombrero Guy



Sombrero Guy (the one in the big hat) meets with a team of SFØ players from Great Yarmouth, UK, and a special representative from America (the one with a silly moustache and sunglasses).

Community matters...

I firmly believe that community is the most important aspect of SFØ, and as such have participated in many community events. It is unfortunately not possible for me to travel overseas to engage in such activities in the present economic climate, so my efforts are concentrated on UK events.



I am a regular attendee at UKØ gatherings, and have participated in many tasking activities, including extreme hopscotch, pictured left, as part of the task Overkill. At these gatherings, I have met with many other players of the game, and made just as many new friends. The friendly atmosphere of SFØ and the community gatherings which result should be encouraged further, and members of the public should become involved in activities, in order to attract new talent to the game. The JTTEOTN events in the USA are a good example of major gatherings involving non-players, and an example we as a community should build upon.

Design plays an important part in community building. The symbols associated with teams and groups within the game are no meaningless scribbles. LocalØ teams are an excellent way to group players together and get them tasking well. The team logos and symbols are a part of team identity, in the same way as the Sutro Tower is an important icon to all of us. The photo on the right is a favourite of mine, and is an excellent example of design bringing people together. After a quick game with a Calvinball team I was involved in, we sat down among the scattered equipment and a team identity was born. I encourage the creation of strong team identity and praxis posted representing teams. I also encourage friendly rivalry between different teams, as it inspires players to perform high quality tasking in order to beat their rivals.



I make no secret of the fact that I am, in general, a solo tasker. Maybe this is why I love the community in SFØ so much. Having not found anyone in my area who would enjoy the game as I do, I have done more to task with people living further away than I would otherwise have done. I have found friends all over the world; the USA,



The GYØ Cube, which I sent through the mail in pieces to several different inactive players, in an attempt to reinspire them.

Mexico and Australia, to name a few locations. Long distance collaboration is to me a vitally important aspect of SFØ, without which I would always be the lone wolf, and would have most likely lost my enthusiasm for tasking long ago. It is the chance to be part of such a global experience that makes SFØ what it is. I have been part of many different collaborations, involving all sorts of tasking from walking routes in my town chosen by other people and discovering new things doing so, to burying items for other people to dig up at a later date. In my solo tasks I try to involve others as well, usually by posting things to them. As the solo tasks I do are often creative, I have many odd things to post.

As a senator, I would encourage more long-distance collaborating. I would also increase my continuing efforts to reinspire older players of the game to join us again. It is often these older, inactive players who are the targets of my mailing tasks.



Another part of the community which was once a very good idea was the SFØ Podcast. It was an entertaining look at many aspects of the SFØ community, with different guest presenters discussing many random topics. Among the random chatter were weekly features such as choosing the week's best praxis, and selecting a random player of the week to talk about. Reinstating this would be a large commitment, and require input and sufficient interest from many players. But this is my vision. Whether it would work without the presence of GYØ Tom remains to be seen, as the first podcast without him also became the last podcast.

To wrap up this section, I find the community of the game its most important aspect. It's not all about doing tasks and getting points. The community has many aspects, and there is potential for more. We can reinstate old ideas which can still work in the modern tasking environment, and we can think up entirely new things. Whatever people do to represent it, we are a community. And I will support any venture which helps to bring the community closer together.

It doesn't have to be praxis...

SFØ is about having fun and discovering things. It teaches a mindset, a way of thinking, that we should carry with us through life in general. In short, it's not all about the points.

As a senator, I would promote the idea of doing tasks for the sake of doing them. There are several SFØ activities I have taken part in that haven't made it to praxis. The aforementioned Calvinball game was originally intended to be a 'proper' completion for the task, but we never even started writing it up. There was never any discussion about it, really. It just never happened. Maybe we didn't feel we'd documented it enough, or had enough to say about it to be worth putting in a praxis. Or maybe we're all lazy. Who knows? But we'd had fun playing it, and that's what matters.



A GYØ player wears a net as part of Calvinball



Then there are my pipe cleaner Sutro Towers. Stemming from my completion of 'The Ukrainian Commemorative Spoon', these models were an improved version of the one I made for that task, but I never thought to update the task. I like to submit completed praxes and leave them. I feel that updating a praxis after submission is in a way cheating the people who read it the first time around; denying them some of the details. So I made some pipe cleaner models for fun, and gave them out as gifts at last year's UKØ gathering. Incidentally, anyone wishing to receive their own pipe cleaner Sutro Tower, as modelled by myself, left, need only contact me with their postal address. I claim no responsibility for any damage or flattening that may occur in transit, especially if I try posting them naked. Which is another good example of a task becoming more than just praxis. I know a few players who now try to post anything they can without packaging, despite having submitted praxes for the task 'Naked Mail' ages ago.

I am also a huge fan of 'level zero' completions. This is the practice of completing a retired or pretired task and submitting the completion in a comment below the task. It is something I have not actually done, but I have the greatest admiration for those who do, because it shows the real spirit of SFØ; going out and trying mad things for fun. The points don't matter. The task doesn't have to be approved and 'active' for you to do it.

Some important issues...

There are some important political debates in the community, and I feel I must make it clear where I stand on these issues.



First up, hills. Hills are a good thing. They make things interesting, they create landmarks, they allow us to reach the highest place. Any rumours you may have heard about hills killing babies or hiding terrorists are malicious lies spread by the Humanitarian Association for Topographical Equality. In reality, fully implemented topographical equality would destroy society. Without hills, we would be subjected to the unbearable boredom of everywhere having the same flat landscape. The sea would flood all landmasses and we would all drown. It would be the end of the world as we know it. Besides, would you really want to associate with a group that call themselves HATE? So I say, **UP WITH HILLS!!!**

Broccoli seems to be disliked, even hated, by more than a few people on SFØ. But why? What has broccoli ever done to deserve this? True, when overcooked it turns into a disgusting mush, but this is true of any vegetable. Why the persecution against the harmless miniature trees? I like broccoli, and I am not scared to admit it. However, everyone is entitled to their opinions, so I shall take no action against the Broccoli Defamation League. The poor souls are merely deluded due to the lack of vitamins in their diet.



Having just defended broccoli, I need to make it clear that I am still a fan of meat. I am a member of the seemingly eternal war effort against the vegetarians, as well as being in the team 'All Things Meatiful'. As part of the Get Your War On group task (which has been in my task list for a couple of years now), I added bacon to a vegetarian pizza as a symbolic act of defiance.

While it must be admitted that the vegetarians made a bigger effort to promote themselves with their song, the fact is that we do not need to. Because meat is good, and everyone knows that already. I urge everyone to add bacon to anything they can. Because bacon makes everything better.

Contact...

If you have any questions regarding this manifesto or anything I may have missed, or if you wish to claim your pipe cleaner Sutro Tower, feel free to contact me.

I can be contacted:

- On SFØ, as Sombrero Guy.
- Via e-mail, moustachemafia@googlemail.com
- On Facebook, as Jowan Barnes (URL: <http://www.facebook.com/JMB22>)
- At my postal address on request only, as I live with parents who wouldn't like me broadcasting it to the whole internet.



[illegible]