

half finished things – a confession

7 June 1664

Up and to [the office](#) (having by my going by water without any thing upon my legs yesterday got some pain upon me again), where all the morning. At noon a little to [the 'Change](#), and thence [home](#) to dinner, [my wife](#) being ill still in bed. Thence to [the office](#), where busy all the afternoon till 9 at night, and so home to my wife, to supper, and to bed. Samuel Pepys

I'm sure a physician would have a field day deciphering what ailments Samuel Pepys is suffering from. It seems that dampness from the river Thames causes some type of arthritic condition but then it is June when you would expect the weather to be clement.

So it's my turn to be in the confessional box (Roman Catholic joke). I realise how many things I start and do not carry through to a conclusion. One of them is books which I start to read and abandon them after about page 100 because yet another new and exciting book comes along. Switching off my imagination is a bit like trying to stop a river flowing. It is a type of pond hopping mentality which gets me less far less deeply than focusing on one or two matters. I once met [Karlheinz Stockhausen](#) the composer and he said the problem with people was that they did not explore the same topic from enough angles to truly understand it.

Today, the day after my birthday (73 y.o.+1 day) , the temperature is only 12°, the crows are crowing and the sky is grey. The wind blows in gusts. I don't anticipate anything special happening today so I should be writing one diary not two. I have to speak with a lady who wants her garden done. She has told me she cannot afford it and she must rely on her

son to pay but so far as I know, she has not even asked him in principle so it looks like she's doing things in the wrong order.

I should have been involved *after* she got approval from the son in principle so today I must call her and gently remind her of this. anyone who has to do business with the public in general knows that a major part of the problem is naivete and ignorance. Sometimes you have to tell people what the facts are without being patronising which I think is quite an art.



silence is a true friend
who never betrays

I often say to other people and should say more to myself "there is a time for everything, and for everything there is time". Part of the answer to dealing with the difficulty in concentrating is the endless distraction of moving images. I refer to the television. After my day out yesterday (see previous diary entry) I actually did not want to watch the television and preferred to sit quietly with my wife talking – and quaffing champagne let it be said. I'm getting addicted to silence because actually a lot goes on.

Today is election day and, praise God, there are no politicians banging on via the TV for the radio.



I have been reading the autobiography of [Christopher Reeve](#), the actor who gave Superman its prestige and fame. I was absolutely stunned to note that after his accident he continued to direct films and

keep a schedule that most of us would be exhausted by whilst he was a paraplegic.

This man was in such pain that it took him three hours to get up because when the body is in a locked state all the limbs need to be activated and this is attended by pain in spite of the so-called painkillers. He continued to enjoy a high reputation among the acting community and was able to spend considerable amount of time and energy raising money for good causes, and persuade others to do the same.

And yet, when I think of the image that I have had of him via the media, these good works were not reflected. The media tends to concentrate on this spectacular, the lowest common denominator, and we miss the human and compassionate features of the individual on whom they focus.