

6th August 2020

Blame

**"It's the same the whole world over; it's the poor wot gets the blame;
It's the rich wot gets the gravy; ain't it all a bleedin' shame."**

British soldiers' song from World War I, She was poor but she was honest

The Beatles were to blame. Well, it wasn't *my* fault, nor could blame be laid at the door of my parents – though it could be argued they were in some fashion just as culpable. But I blame *The Beatles* for the whole affair.

I'm hazy on dates and details, but I remember the event well enough. It was mid-1960s. *The Beatles* had become a world-wide phenomenon and were my favourite band. They were to make an appearance on BBC TV (I know it was BBC, because we only had one channel back then) and I was all set to watch it. How did *I* know there was to be a family event which *I* would be obliged to go to? How did *I* know that I wasn't legally allowed to stay at home on my own to watch TV? How did I know I *had* to enjoy myself with family when I was going to miss *The Beatles*? So we had a row, me and my parents. Even the promise of a new sweater didn't placate me. We had a *screaming* row. And *The Beatles* were to blame!

I'm saddened that, sixty years on, the culture of blaming someone, *anyone*, when something bad happens has become all pervasive. The medical profession gets blamed when someone has an illness that isn't treatable; the weather forecasters get blamed when your barbeque is spoiled because they didn't tell you it was going to rain; the Chinese get blamed because we have a world-wide Covid-19 pandemic; a university gets blamed when a student didn't get a First because "they weren't taught properly"; God gets blamed when ... there's no one else to blame. Where is personal responsibility; an understanding that not every "effect" has a "cause"; an acceptance that (sorry for the language) "shit happens"?

It's not always someone's fault when something happens you don't like. *You* wouldn't like to be blamed for something that was never your fault in the first place, so why point the finger of blame at someone else? No, Tom, the truth of the matter is, it just wasn't *The Beatles* to blame.

A prayer for today

Loving God, when I am afraid, give me peace; when I express my fears, be patient with me; when there's no escape, bless me with a freedom for my soul. Amen

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