Foreword

As a bloke of that "certain age," I can remember the television series that were shown in the 1970s and early 1980s. My brother and I would stay glued to the telly each Saturday teatime. From Roddy McDowell's unconvincing ape suit in the TV spin-off from the *Planet of the Apes* movies, to *Logan's Run*; from "Grasshopper" David Carradine in *Kung Fu*, to my own personal favorite, Bill Bixby and Lou Ferrigno in the pre-CGI *Incredible Hulk*; we couldn't get enough.

These shows and many more just like them shared a common 1970s theme. While the Hulk of the original comic books just got angry, the television Banner, unexpectedly dosed by gamma radiation before he could slap on the sun block, lived outside of society. Sure, he got angry and ripped his trousers, but as he traveled across the country from place to place, along the way he met new people and helped to solve their problems—problems that no one had been able to solve before.

Like the rag-tag band of ships that followed Battlestar Gallactica on its quest for a faraway Earth, each of the characters in these series knew where they wanted to go, they just didn't know how to get there. The map to Earth or Logan's Sanctuary, or for the Hulk a course on anger management, just hadn't been written.

By now you might be wondering, "What on Earth is Malarkey rambling on about? This book is about web design, not television trivia from the decade that time best forgot." But as a web designer who came late to the world of meaningful markup and CSS, I can identify with the Hulk.

Solving problems is what web designers do, and not just for half an hour every Saturday teatime. We solve problems every day for our clients and for their visitors; we also solve the problem of how to implement our designs with web standards.

When I started my own journey toward web standards, I knew very little about CSS floats and positioning, and I got angry when my design layouts fell apart in a browser. While my trousers (almost) always stayed intact, I was filled with an inner rage when my columns dropped, my margins collapsed, or my font sizing misbehaved. I knew the results that I wanted to achieve and where I wanted to go, but I didn't know how to get there. At that time there was no clear map for people like me who understood design but needed a book to show the way between my design visuals and the standards-based web pages that I wanted to deliver to my clients.

If you are starting out on a similar journey, you're in luck. Simon Collison has written that roadmap, a book that clearly explains how to make your designs a reality using XHTML and CSS. Simon knows what it's like to design at the sharp end of the web design business. He comes to web standards not from an academic interest but from a real need to get stuff done. I have long admired his design skills and his uncanny ability to explain complex subjects in clear language.

I know that beginning to work with web standards will sometimes make you angry; that's unavoidable. I also know that this book will help you to keep any outbursts free from shirt button popping, trouser ripping, or maybe even car throwing. Thanks to Simon Collison, the world is a safer place for us to live.

Andy Clarke
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