



*The  
Drink  
Tank's  
119th  
Issue  
Clip Art  
Spectacular!!!*

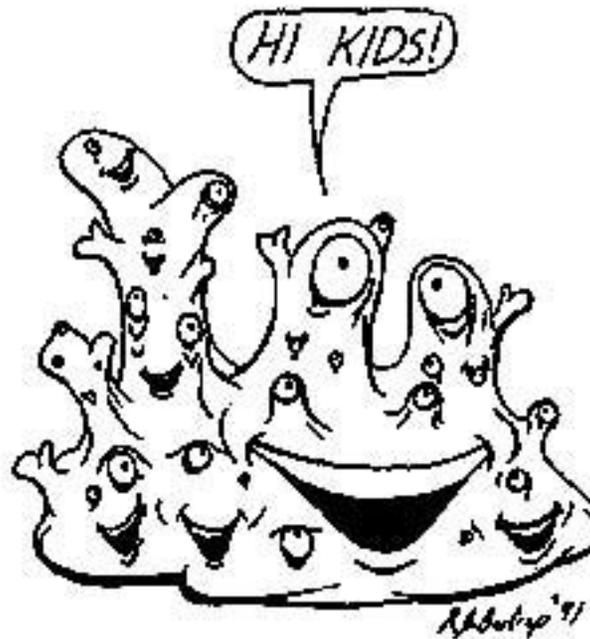
**Stick with me, this one's kinda weird. About three weeks ago, we got a huge donation of software from a software clearing house. There were thousands of pieces of boxed software ranging from home and office management software to PDA list keepers to clip.**

**In fact, there was a lot of clip art.**

**The instructions with the donation stated that anything we didn't want to add to the collection we could use as a capital donation and anything we didn't want for use around the office could go to any of the employees for personal use. One of the boxes was an SF Clip Art set from 1998. I was interested and instantly loaded it onto my PC and found that there was a lot of great art from artists I'd even heard of. I thought I'd just use them as screensavers until I read the agreement.**

**Basically, the agreement said that as long as the things the images were being used in weren't being sold, they were free game and could be used for anything. As always, that led to an issue idea and you're now looking at that issue.**

**This issue will actually be about Science Fiction, mostly, plus LoCs (mostly from issue 117) and more. This'll be fun...or at least I hope so!!!**



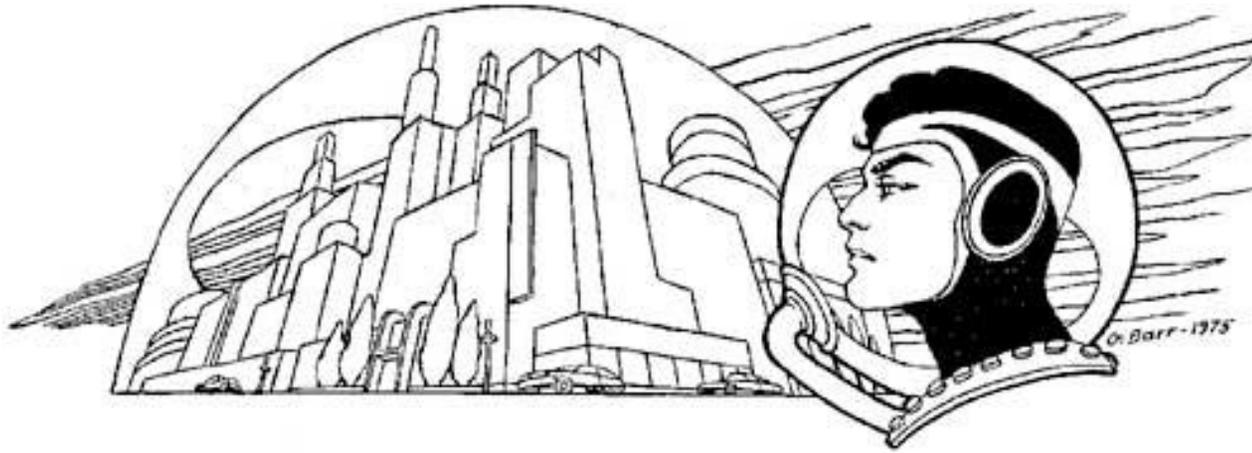
I encountered science fiction when I was very young, but honestly, I'm not very well read in the subject. While most of my friends in fandom have read thousands of SF and Fantasy novels, I've maybe read a few hundred. I've been unable to get into some of the classics (Dune remains unfinished by Garcia eyes) and other have just been pushed back by Noir or Westerns or Mobster or whatever genre I happen to be into at the moment. The idas in SF are great, but I often have to move back into the realms of Noir or Westerns because the thoughts are too out there.

Now, I can hear those of you that know me saying things like 'Chris, you're out there enough. It should all

be old hat to you.' and you've got a point. There are times that I want to be grounded and to have at least a form of realism in my mind. Case in point: Dhalgren. A very tough read and one that's pretty out there. I followed it up with Farmer's Riders of the Purple Wage, another classic that required a fair mindstretch. On the heels of those was another attempt at climbing Mount Dune. It was after I got 1/2 through Dune that I knew I had to stop. I had been going through worlds that were so much removed that none of them had any sort of sense of wonder to them. I guess I'd become jaded, in a way. I put Dune down (again) and I picked up The Godfather.

You see, gangster drama, like The Godfather, is at once fantastic and realistic. It's got the sensationalism of Science Fiction mixed with the right balance of no-way-that-could-it-ever-happen and grit-in-the-teeth realism. At that point I realised that sometimes you need an escape from the escape, and that's the hard part.

When I was still trying to write science fiction, I had a belief that reality, as we know it, should be preserved. How different are we in our day-to-day lives from what we were in 1950? How different is our technology? I always thought that you could be realistic and still give the fantastic a shot. Bobby J. Sawyer does that fairly well, as does Howard Hendrix. I...not so well.



***The Most Important Science Fiction Novel That's Never Been Written***  
**by**  
***Chris Garcia with help from M Lloyd***

In the late 1990s, early 00's, Chris Garcia and M Lloyd shared a pseudonym. They wrote bunch of stuff and they got almost no response, and certainly no acceptances, to their many stories. Some were good, most were terrible, and before Chris completely gave up on it, they were a productive, yet unpublishable, team. The two of us put out a ton of stuff, some good by our standards, most bad by everyone else's. And it was OK because they were simply writing to write most of the time. I'd come up with an outline and send it to M. M might say it was crap and I'd write it myself, but sometimes I'd give her a taste and she'd run with it. She liked doing erotica, and there are a few of our pieces floating around, and I liked SF. I never got into the

political SF that M sometimes tried to write, but mostly we just wrote whatever we could.

M had an idea. She sat on it for almost a year. She filled a notebook full of the weird ideas and then, at the right moment, sprung it on me.

And I was blown away.

The story was a simple one: BOy meets girl, boy loses girl, boy starts working on a way to destroy the entire universe except for Boy and Girl so he can restart the Big Bang and win her back.

Boiled down to that, it's a touching story of love, life and theoretical physics (and M claims that every concept she presented was taken directly from real research done at Brookhaven National Lab) and it probably would have been a rip-roaring good time.

The longer story is actually far more complex and slightly more entertaining. The boy is Dr. Mathias Langer, a big-time particle man from

Lawrence Livermore National Labs who has developed a new type of artificial sub-atomic particle that allows matter to pass through matter by 'phasing' the basic units of the atom. He calls it the Mathias particle. M presented it as a phase of both space and time. The good doctor meets a young reporter (so young that she's writing for the Livermore Valley High School Gazette) and she dazzles him with her understanding. Her name is, and get ready for this, Melody Altshuel. I nearly hit her for that name. The doctor agrees to let her interview him and they exchange phone numbers. The doctor impresses her by giving her a real klein bottle for her 18th birthday (so it's not quite Lolita, but it's close). She marvels and they share a few sexy moments (and I was just trying to imagine what sick and twisted stuff M would have them doing.

Of course, something happens, and it wasn't really clear in M's outline, and they split. Mathias starts doing research and discovers that his particle has a complementary particle that allows for annihilation on a large scale. He names it the Melody Particle. An ounce uncontrolled could cause a large star to blink from existence across a number of event horizons. He manages to make several thousand pounds of it and contains it in an experimental magnetic field. He then does an experiment with a dog and manages to send

it off the frame, but then, after shaving a single particle off of the mass and realises that the dog doesn't disappear while the rest of the container is obliterated. He then figures out a way to win Melody back.

He brings her to the lab and introduces her to the substance and then says that he'll destroy the Universe just for her and explains about the dog and the experiment. She tells him that she doesn't want him to do it but she doesn't want to be with him either. He gets dispondent and runs to the storage facility where all the Melody Particles are stored and is about to jump in. Melody then shows up and tosses the klein bottle Mathias gave her into the containment field, which then phases the entire quantity of the Melody particle out of existence. She then explains that she figured out that the reason the dog didn't phase out along with the container was that the Mathias particle actually absorbed the energy from the Melody



particle and that since the Mathias particle phases, it actually can absorb all of the energy of the Melody particles. She then kisses him and the two of them phase out of existence when the klein bottle rolls over to them and touches their shoes. The universe then begins to contract as a mega-black hole is formed where they were standing.

Yes, it's ridiculous. She pitched it to me as 'The perfect airport science fiction-romance'. I liked the way she put her tongue firmly in her cheek. The particle stuff made my eyes glaze over (and I simplified it a good deal for this description) and I'm hoping that it'll someday become truth (well, except for the destruction of the Universe thing).

Here's the thing that I loved the most: it was so very M. I'm a romantic, and in her own way so is M, but in her eyes true love only exists to destroy everything. I knew once I read about the Melody particle that she'd end up killing the universe. Even now that she's married and with the girl of her dreams

too, she's still that nihilistic romantic who believes in opening her heart and knows that once you do that, all you're gonna do is bleed (as she once so eloquently put it). Still, she believes true love exists, which makes the fact that it can only hurt you all the worse.

She never wrote it. I didn't think I could write it (I'm not much on romance writing) and I knew that she'd never finish it without my help. She could always be counted on to polish off a piece of erotica on her own (and there are a few that she did floating around the web) but if it was SF, she needed a hand to keep her going.



**Letter Graded Mail  
sent to Garcia@computerhistory.org  
by my Gentle Readers**

**Here's a bit of fun...John Purcell on  
Issue 117...Again!**

Doggone old Gateway E-3200 computer here at school is sloooowwww today. Frustrating as all get out when you're trying to smash out a couple locs. Then again, I am working with two open windows so that could explain the retardedness of this system today.

**That's a good point, though I  
hear Windows Vista is supposed  
to handle multi-windows better  
than any other system...(shill for  
Microsoft because they help to pay  
my salary).**

Great Corflu report, roomie! I'm glad that you were able to use the photo - which is one of many that Geri took over the weekend - in your conreport, and effectively too. However, you talked in your report about how you were a bit on the philosophic side of zine production during the weekend. Gee, if I had known at that time you and I could have had one of those deep, meaningful discussions that could have helped you sort things out.

**Ah, deep meaningful conversations  
with me are a waste of time! I'm  
more often guided by simple gags.**

**Lives can be changed by something  
so simple as a pie to the face.**

As it turns out, your conreport does get around to the epiphany that what kind of zine you produce really isn't all that important, nor is it the layout or the list of \*stellar\* contributors, but it is the fact that you ARE producing a fanzine which is the all-important part. When the letterhack panelists were discussing the "on-going fannish conversation" as an integral part of a fanzine, that is, by extension, the whole point of producing a fanzine. Whenever somebody takes the time and effort to produce a fanzine - paper, electronic, audio, or whatever form they may take in the future - that person is still willingly joining the rich tradition of the fannish conversation begun way back when. It is an ongoing conversation, too.

**I think it was Andy Trembley who  
once said it best when we were  
discussing paper vs. e-Zines vs.  
other: It's all FANAC. I totally buy  
into that concept.**

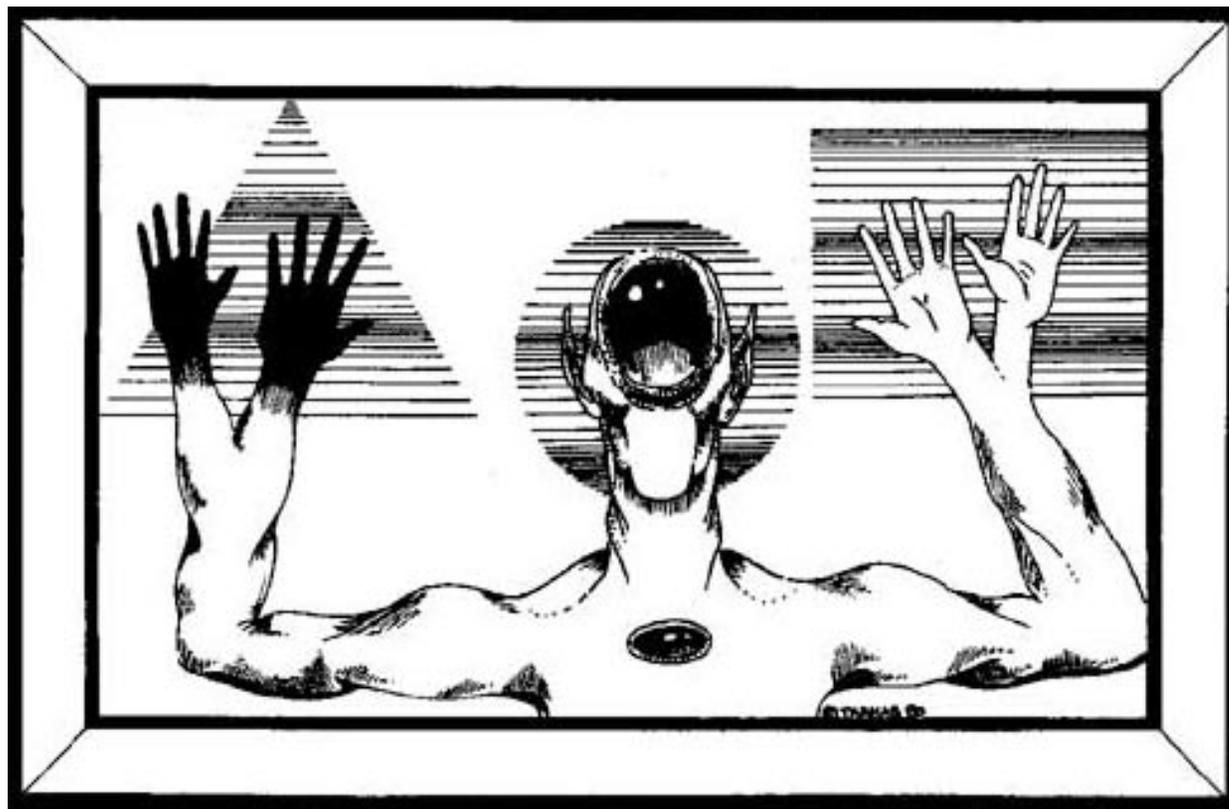
More than anything, what I have gotten out of producing my fanzines over the years is simply enjoying the community of fanzine fandom. Even Fandom at Large, I would say. Though I am not heavily into anime, furry animals, Regency Dancing, filking, or other fannish activities, it is the people

that I like to be around. Sure, some of them are quite strange and may need to be banished to some island in the middle of the Sargasso Sea, but those folks are few and far between. For the most part, the fannish community is a fun place to be, and I enjoy being a part of it. Fanzines are one neighborhood of that much larger community.

***I have trouble thinking of fandom without the furies, costumers, filkers, and etc. They make things so very interesting. Yeah, it's great to have CorFlu where you can sit and get in-depth with folks you've known via zines for years, but there's something to be said for the Big Tent. Sadly, it turns out that I have a long-standing commitment the same weekend as they're thinking of having CorFlu next year which would mean I wouldn't be able to come. I'm hoping they'll move it one week forward or one week back and I'll get to go!***

Note that I don't label fanzine fandom as a fannish ghetto or isolated from the rest of fandom. It is exactly what it is: a vital, functioning organ of the greater body that is Fandom.

***Can't argue with you on that, though I do kinda like the idea of Fanzine Fandom being Ghetto Fabulous!***



In other words, don't stop publishing *Drink Tank*. If it's fun, do it. Once it stops being fun and assumes more of a workload than you desire, drop it and move onto another project. That's what I'm doing with *Askance*. Already I can feel the difference in my work schedule.

***Like I could ever stop doing The Drink Tank. It does get hard once TAFF starts up, but I love this beat far too much to put it out of its misery.***

Now. I am glad I got all that out of my fingers.

Thanks again for the kind words, and I look forward to hanging around with you at future cons. It was a good time and needs to be done again.

All the best,

John Purcell

***You best better believe we'll be seein' each other again, brother! If you've got the time, St. Louis is hosting NASFiC and I've got a room and need a roommate!***

***Thanks, John. Here's another guy who's becoming a regular...Mark***

## **Plummer!!!**

Chris,

About a year ago I was using an ANZAPA contribution to meditate on the etiquette of addressing one's partner via the medium of APA mailing comments, and whether it might not be better -- as an off-the-wall idea -- to simply try talking to one another.

**Person-to-Person communication?**

**Face to face? No electronic or printed matter at all involved?**

**What is this, the age of Charlemagne?**

The subject has been on my mind again just recently, albeit in broader terms this time -- essentially the importance of matching the intent to the communication channel, something at which many people are not specifically too good -- and now I wonder again about the more localised matter of engaging Claire in debate over something that happened in Texas and doing so via a hub-point in California and the letter column of The Drink Tank, when the alternative would seem to amount to little more than standing up and walking into the next room to talk about this.

Still, I will justify writing by noting that Claire's not yet back from work so I will continue to use you as an intermediary if you don't mind.

**See how much harder, and therefore better, this method is?**



OK, about the Texan llamas... I think it's important to put this in some kind of context so can we pretend that the screen goes all wibbly-wobbly at this point and we are travelling back in time for a couple of weeks.

It is Corflu Friday and I have been in America for less than twenty four hours. I am in a car, sitting in what should by all rational viewpoints be the driving seat while SOMEBODY \*insists\* on driving the thing from the passenger side \*and\* on the wrong side of the road. Claire and Lilian Edwards are seated in the back. She is taking us, she says, to visit Texas vineyard about which I am frankly sceptical. These are located, she say, in the 'Texas Hills', a region whose name is actively misleading in at least one important respect. I am charged with navigating and have been given a number of computer prints and a comedy map of Austin where we no longer are. I do not know where -- or

indeed when -- I am.

There are also far more goats than I was expecting. Nobody had previously mentioned that Texas is over-run with the things. These are the conditions in which I see a llama. Let us for a moment visit the inside of the Plummer brain at this point:

'Oh, goats. Nobody ever mentions goats when they talk about Texas. Where am I? More goats. Is it bed-time yet... or lunch-time? \*Whoa, we're on the wrong side of the road!

We're all going to d...' Oh. Goats. Goats with long necks. Goats that are white. White long-necked goats. Where am I? Where are the hills? \*Where is She taking us?\* Is there such a thing as a llama-goat? I don't think so. Bloody hell, it's a real llama, an actual real lla...'

... but by this point -- when I have finally realised that, yes, I am indeed looking at a llama -- we are three miles further up the road and I am not looking at llamas any more. **Now, when I was being driven by the World's Oldest Cabbie, we passed the two gun clubs (North Austin Firing Range and Gun Club and the Texas Texas Enthusiasts Club, as I remember it) and then a Llama farm. While I saw no Llamas, I did see a llama farm sign. Now, there are lots of llamas and ostriches in Texas (and lots of everything else, it would seem) and this was not too**

**shocking.**

I would add that I did successfully point out the bison and the cyber-cow just outside Johnson City (population, as of two weeks ago or whenever they last updated the sign, 1161, which may or may not include goats -- or indeed llamas) and it is not my fault if there were no llamas in view on the return journey. If you cannot see the llamas they may be sleeping.

And what's with calling a place that has a population of 1,161 people -- even assuming that excludes goats, llamas, bison, cyber-cows and so forth -- a 'city'? I was brought up in a place that we called a 'village' and that had a population of something like 2,000 people. Are the llamas somehow the defining characteristic?

**Well, a city has a City Council and a town has a Town Council. That's the way I tell them apart.**

I will echo Claire, though, in confirming that there really is no fanzine scene in the UK to speak of with most people having retired to the elists or LiveJournal. The ones who are actively producing fanzines are, what?... us, Peter Weston, Plokta, Dave's Ansible. That's really about it. There are a few people who might produce something once a year or so -- Ian and Yvonne, for instance, or Pete Young -- but it doesn't make any sort of a \*scene\*. I remain interested in why it is that British fans just haven't

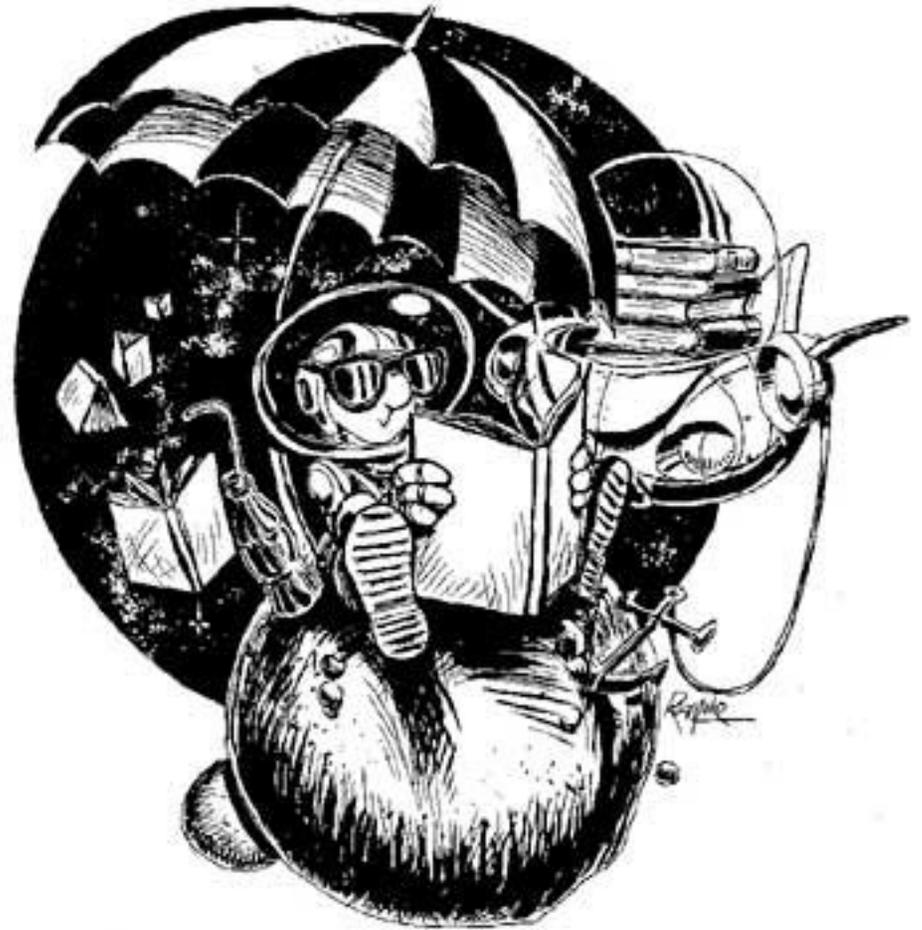
embraced the whole efanzines.com thing.

**Well, I think the real reason that British fandom as a whole hasn't embraced the eFanzines.com thing is that they haven't had a good leader show them that's how it's did. I'm thinking that some zine that's been on the Hugo ballot with a FAAn Award for Best Fanzine might do it, but who do we know that has one of them?**

\* \* \*

I'm broadly familiar with the general areas of

intersection between 'our' kind of fanzines and those produced in the music field, although I don't have that much direct experience of the kind of publications Michael Layne Heath writes about. I would buy the occasional DIY-steeped A5 fanzine from a bloke in the Marquee Club back when I first moved to London in the early '80s, and even then there were still loose connections with the sf fan scene in that at least one of the editors



was very tangentially involved with wider sf fandom and they all seemed to have access to a regular source of \*yet more\* unused Michael Moorcock lyrics from Hawkwind's Elric album.

**I have a couple of English music zines from the early 1980s. I think one's called Hammersmith that I really enjoyed because they spent half the issue complaining about the rise of Frankie Goes to Hollywood.**



I wonder if there's a Robert Lichtman or a Greg Pickersgill diligently collecting and archiving all those publications?

***It seems that those zines go in even greater numbers to University libraries and archives. I know that both Cal and Stanford have large music zine collections as a part of their library special collections.***

Michael mentions the book compilation of Sniffin' Glue as an affordable alternative to eBay prices for the actual fanzines, but I'm guessing that \*if\* you're lucky enough to have Sniffin' Glue originals they must be astonishingly easy to bootleg as they were presumably photocopied in the first place. Or am I missing something obvious here?

***I've only seen one issue of SG, but am I right in the fact that there were some hand-written additions to the individual issues?***

Sniffin' Glue was before my time -- and outside my area of interest, if I'm honest -- although I did have a couple of albums by Perry's band

Alternative TV from 1978. Well, one album, twice, and ATV only did the second side of it. The first side was by a band called Here and Now and was recorded live at the Stonehenge Free Festival in 1978.

***Alternative TV is a good little band (I never made the connection until recently) . They used to be well-represented on Napster before it became bastardized.***

Through some bizarre feat of engineering, the record company managed to press that first side with the groove cut the wrong way so that the record -- big black circular thing with a hole in the middle, you remember -- had to be played by placing the needle on the inside edge of the vinyl by the label and letting it work its way back toward the outside of the disc... and the music still came out backwards. As I mostly wanted it for the Here and Now side, I had to buy another copy of the second pressing where they managed to cut the groove the right way. It was really quite disturbing how little difference this made to the sound.

***I Know a bunch of California punk bands did that same trick on purpose (I think the Dwarves did it on one of their very early albums) but to have it happen by mistake is just too classic. You know, Evelyn once found one of my LPs and went to put it in the LaserDisk player.***

***I luckily stopped her. Such is the danger of Vintage Tech!***

Altogether now: 'How much is that doggie in the window, the one with the mechanical leg...?'

--

Best etc,

---Mark

Mark Plummer

Croydon, UK

***And the Best et cetera to you too, Mark!***





A fair amount of the movie High Fidelity deals with the topic of Mix Tapes. Maybe the book does too, I don't know. I haven't read it. A mix tape can be the ultimate expression of just about anything. The perfect combination of songs in the right order with the right amount of filler can express everything...kinda like a really good meatloaf. Yes, they both can change the world.

Science fiction has music. Not even counting filk, there's been a lot of great SF-themed music from all

sorts of different bands from all sorts of different countries. The themes are easily molded into songs and folks like Michael Moorcock and John Shirley have lived in both the rock and music worlds at the same time. I've written about SF and Fantasy-themed surf bands and so on over the years, but there are a lot better known bands that also use these themes.

I think you know where I'm going with this.

A now I am proud to present the perfect Science Fiction Mix Tape (and no whining about it being a tape and not a CD. There's nothing magical about a CD).

Opening Song- So important. It has to both ease you into the mix and energize you for the rest of the tape. It should be something that people will know and something people will like. David Bowie's Space Oddity fits that bill quite nicely. Bowie's first real hit, it's a song that starts with that simple acoustic guitar work and then turns into that still kinda slow but very powerful rock 'n roll song that will power us through.

Total running time- 4:33

Time left on Tape- 40:27

The Second Song isn't as important,

but it does need to keep the momentum going. You have to provide a slightly up-pace tune, especially after than slight downer that is Space Oddity. I'm choosing a little Men at Work and their retelling of The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde titled Dr. Heckyll And Mr. Jive. It's a fun little song, up-tempo with a lot of bounce. Men at Work were a damn fine group and this even charted, though not too high.

Total running time- 4:38

Time left on Tape- 35:49

You gotta keep things movin' but you can also add a bit of funkiness to the affair. To that end, Bop Gun (Endangered Species) will fit the bill. It's one of Parliament's best tunes and the concept of a gun that turns the funkless into FUNK Machines is a great idea to push the tape forward.

Total running time: 8:31

Time left on Tape- 31:56

At this point, you can add a touch of filler. Audio filler is all around us, but who better than The Simpsons to tell us the truth! I've chosen Planet of the Apes, the Musical, one of the best bits featuring the late Phil Hartman

Total running time- 3:06

Time left on Tape- 28:50

So, what comes next? Well, once you've done a break, you can go in full-bore and to me, nothing says that more than good old fashioned metal. A who does metal better than the Dutch? Space One is a Prog Metal band that's just about as awesome as you can get. Their album Space Rock is full of songs about SF themes and the one I'm choosing for this spot is Sandrider, all about Dune. Great song.

Total running time- 5:31

Time left on tape: 23:19

And now we arrive at the end of the first side of my Maxell 45 minute tape (specifically designed to resist stretching). There's a little leader here, so I'll fill it with the sounds from one of the greatest album titles ever: EEVIAC Operational Index and Reference Guide, Including Other Modern Computational Devices. That's a Man-or-Astroman album and no Science Fiction music block would be complete without a little surf (as I've always said). The song I choose is Engines of Difference and it'll fade out (with a few seconds left) as the tape ends.

Total running time: 0:49

Time left on Tape- 22:30 (one full side)

Starting the second side is almost as important as starting the first. Think of it like this: if you

started your Fleetwood Mac compilation with Don't Stop Thinkin', you damn well better have Go Your Own Way for the second half starter. To this end, I've chosen DEVO. The song from Devo to choose isn't easy either. There are just so many. Smart Patrol/Mr. DNA is a musical dipthich and has a great into (Ich bin with the World, I'm tired of the soup d'jour) and is a great song that breaks out into a late-Punk fury at the end with Mr. DNA.

Total running time- 6:06

Time left on Tape- 16: 24

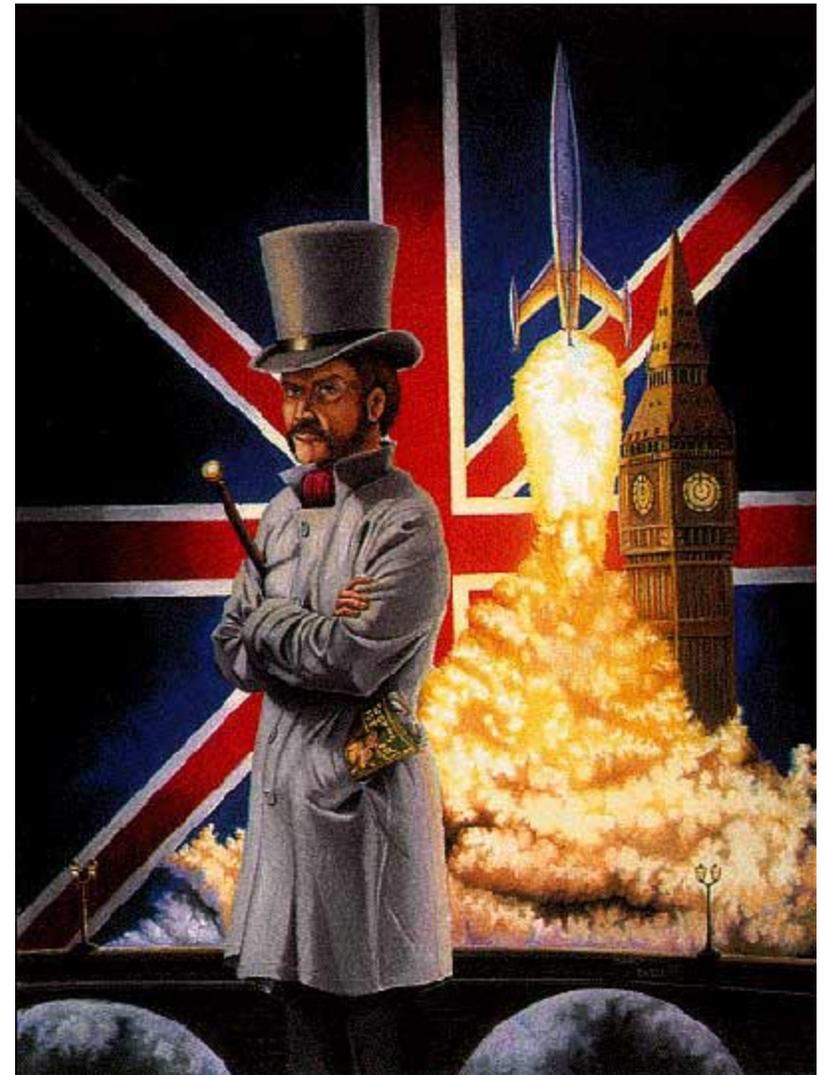
Now, more fun. You wanna kick 'em in the teeth and make 'em squeal. To that end: The D. Tenacious D in the motherfuckin' house! Tribute is one of the truly great crossroads tales and

it would just be wrong not to include simply because it's fantasy. It's got some of the greatest lyrics ever!

Total running time- 4:08

Time left on Tape-12:16

We're in the home stretch and we need something from the Brits since we



haven't revisited since the first song. I'm going with Hawkwind's Kings of Speed, written by Michael Moorcock. It's a great song and will flow through to the next

Total running time- 3:25

Time left on Tape- 8:51

I'm a sucker for SteamPunk, as I'm always blathering on about it, and I'm nuts for The Dresden Dolls. Can you see where this is going? Coin-Operated Boy is probably the best song to choose from them and that's the one I'm working with. I'm going to use the live version from TT the Bear's in Boston.

Total running time- 5:47

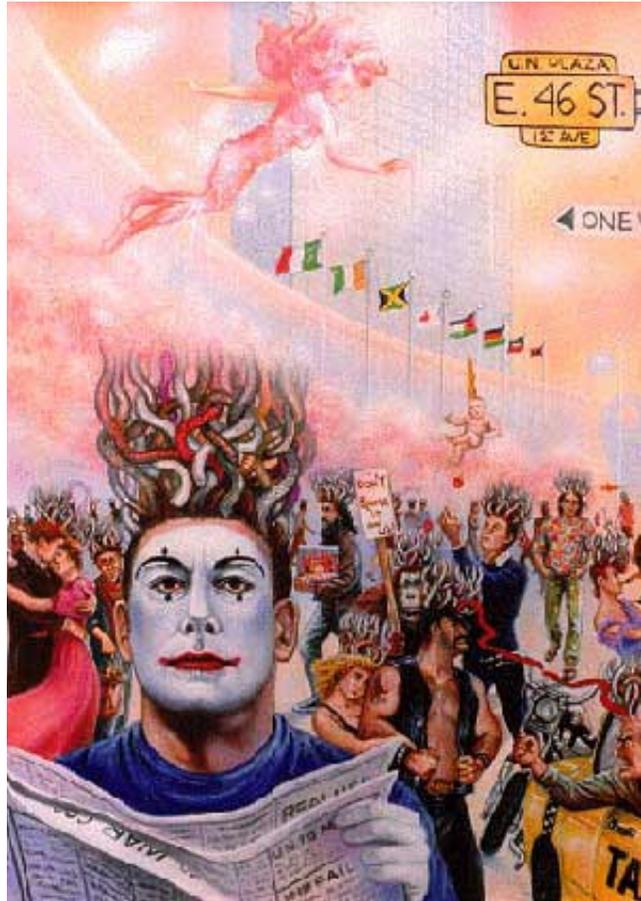
Time left on Tape- 3:04

OK, we're in the home stretch. We've gotta have a song that really nails it and brings it all home. The finish is huge and I'm going with...The Aquabats! I hear you scream 'but Chris, what about Rocketman or the works of Queen or even more surf rock?' And I say that The Aquabats are the greatest science fiction ska band ever. The song I choose: The Cat with Two Heads. It's the story of genetic engineering gone terribly wrong. It's both funny and a great tune to hum.

Total running time- 3:01

Time left on Tape- 3 seconds

I'll leave it at that. A fine assortment of music from the 1960s through the 2000s. There's funk, ProgRock, Ska, Cabaret, Surf, 80s Pop, Comedy, Folk-Metal, you name it. Anyone making this tape (or a similar CD) is encouraged to send it to me!



### ***Some Comments on the Mix Tape from My Personal Peanut Gallery***

Fun choices, but you could easily have found a 90 or 120 minute tape and increased the number of songs. Let's think of just one band that you didn't mention.

Oingo Boingo.

Even an idiot who knew nothing about music would have known that Oingo Boingo would be the best choice for a mix tape like this. *Dead Man's Party* would be a much better choice

than some piece of crap song like *The Cat with Two Heads* or *Tribute*. *Weird Science* instead of some Australian crap-pop band from the 1980s. You really need to think these things out before you write this stuff.

~M Lloyd

You're a fuck. Always have been, always will be, you shit. You put in Hawkwind but no Styx! You have The Dresden Dolls, and what the hell is your obsession with them?, but no *Captured by Robots*? You chose *Man-or-Astroman* and no *Shadowy Men on a Shadowy Planet*. Hell, you were the one who introduced me to the *Shadowy Men*.

And even worse is the fact that you included no Thomas Dolby. *She Blinded Me With Science* would have been very easy, but no, you chose *Men At Work*. Fuck you. Garcia!

~SaBean MoreL

Good choices, for the most part, but I think *The Simpsons* shouldn't have been on the list. I remember when you used to make mix tapes for us and you'd always put on the annoying comedy bits. You could have included an *Astronaut Jones* bit from SNL or maybe something from *Bill Cosby*.

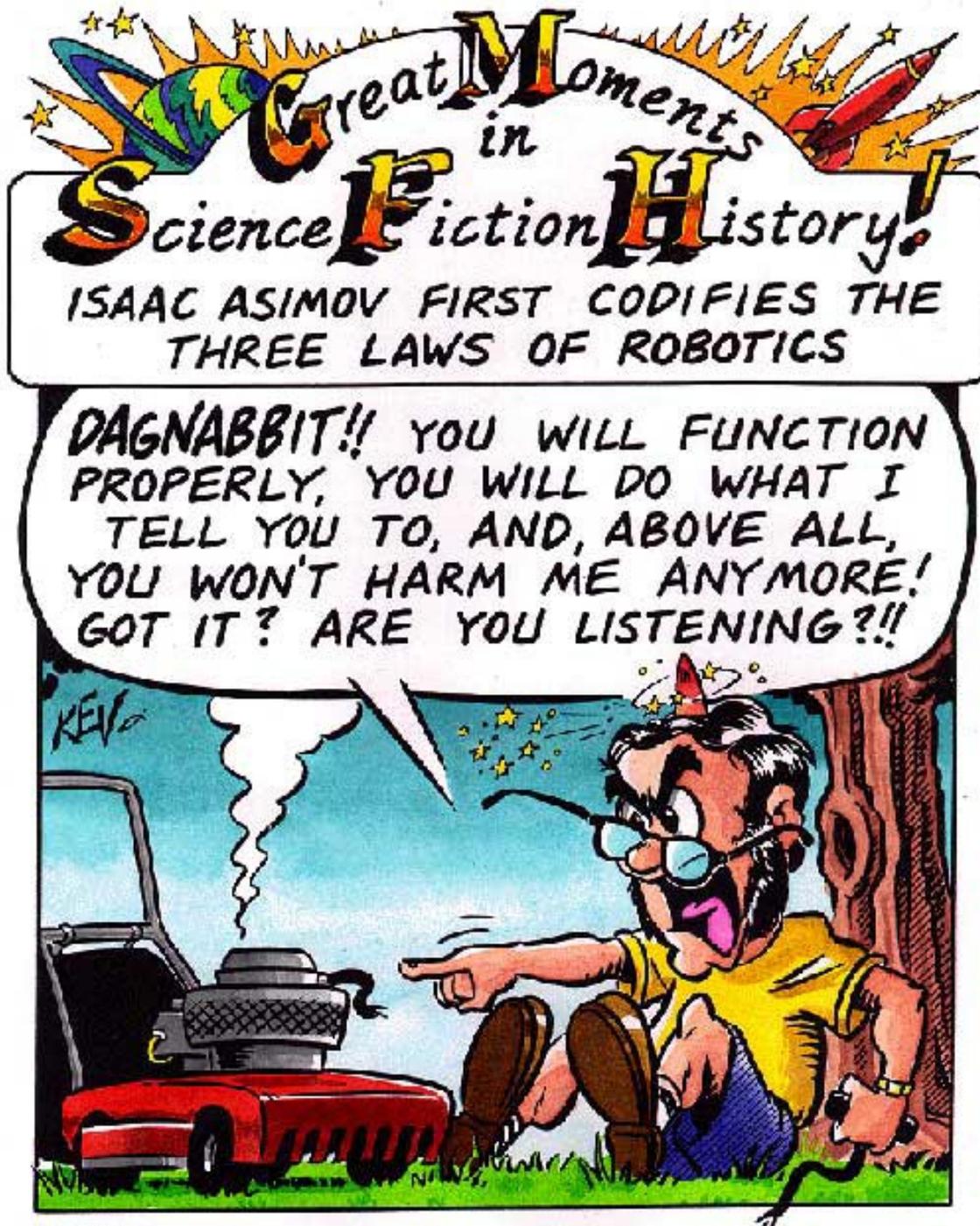
And why'd you go with *Tribute* over *City Hall*? *City Hall* is sci-fi and *Tribute's* not.

~Manny Sanford

## *My Favourite Asimov Book*

Isaac Asimov was one of those writers who could just write and write and write. I wish I knew how to do that, because I simply can't make myself write at all! Anyhoo, he wrote SF novels, and science novels, a great book on the works of Shakespeare, a few on topics philosophical and a guide to reading maps that conveyed information topological. He wrote it all and he did a good job with much of it. Sadly, at times I thought that his writing was a bit dense, and by dense I'm talking about lower righthand corner of the periodic table. I could never get through Foundation because it was like trying to read split pea soup. I made it through Murder at the ABA because it had characters that I could easily identify and any book about Harlan, even one in disguise, is going to be fun reading. I'd heard that he wrote a book that I was certain to enjoy, no matter how much legwork was involved in the reading.

Now, working at a computer history museum isn't always easy. Well, sometimes it is, but often you're forced to deal with technology that you really don't understand and old people who love it so much that they'll talk your ear off about it. I've started learning about a lot of the stuff these folks start about, but I never managed to learn how to use a slide rule. That is



until I managed to find a copy of Isaac Asimov's An Easy Introduction to the Slide Rule.

Now, it's still pretty dense, but he has figured out how to make things visible to the average joe. Now, I didn't know how to make them work and

with Asimov's style, I figured it out. I instantly ran into my visible storage area and started working with the slide rules in there.

Now, his fiction is still way to deep for me to make it through, but this was a great book!

**Yet More Letter Graded Mail!**

**And now, The Man himself...Randy Byers!!!**

Hi, Chris. I obviously can't keep up with your furious publishing pace, but I want to join in the chorus of praise for your Corflu conreport in DT 117, which was indeed a really good piece of writing. It was very interesting to read about your wrestling match with doubt on Saturday, because I remember looking across the consuite once or twice and seeing you chewing on a pen and looking troubled, almost angry. You seem to have shrugged your doubts off now, but if they inspired you to write such a fine conreport, I hope you keep wrestling with them. It gave me, and all of us, a good look into your heart.

**Well, the pen was a part of my complex oral fixation, and I often look troubled, that is to say that I'm often confused by the world around me. For a while, I had a theory: chewing gum (or on a pen) is my form of meditation. It's true. It's where I can think without much thought of the outside world. I had a lot of fun writing the conreport too. Maybe that's why I'm so happy to write for so many different zines. It gives me the chance to write about a bunch of different reports...**



I went through my own long dark teatime of the soul at Corflu Quire, although it's hard for me to put my finger on what it was about. The sensation was of being completely connected and yet completely disconnected at the same time. I went through something similar at Corflu Titanium in San Francisco, and I think it has something to do with there being so many great people to talk to and so little time. In some ways, the convention wasn't fulfilled until I ran into Peter Weston, Mark Plummer, and Claire Brialey at the airport on the way out of town, because I was finally able to have a good, long talk with Mark & Claire, which I hadn't managed at the convention. I mean, I talked to them at the convention, but it hadn't really felt like I made a particularly good connection.

***You know, I can completely understand that, though it never happens to me in fandom. It happens to me all the time at Film Festivals and movie group get-togethers. I sort of live on the edge of that world while being a part of it by making movies and working fests. There's the saying that Tallullah Bankhead once said: I'm all alone surrounded by dozens of my best friends. I've been there.***

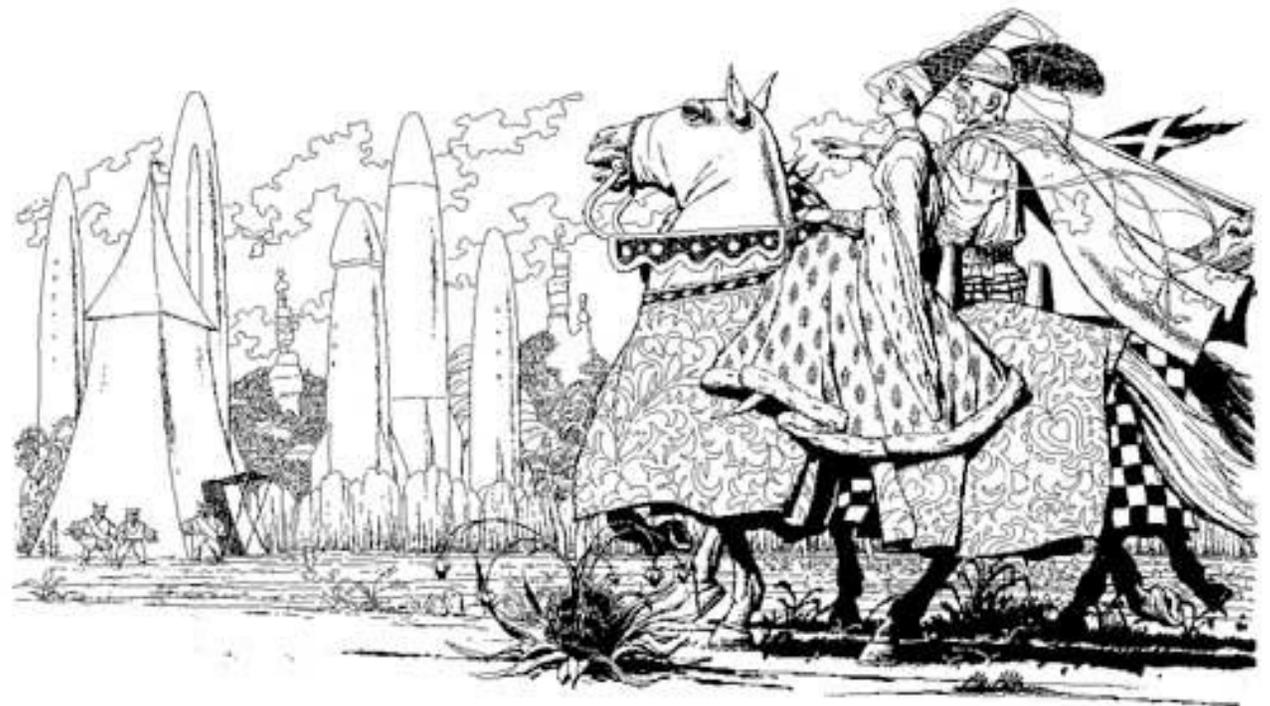
There's also something about egoboo and jealousy involved in the long dark teatime, but I'm not

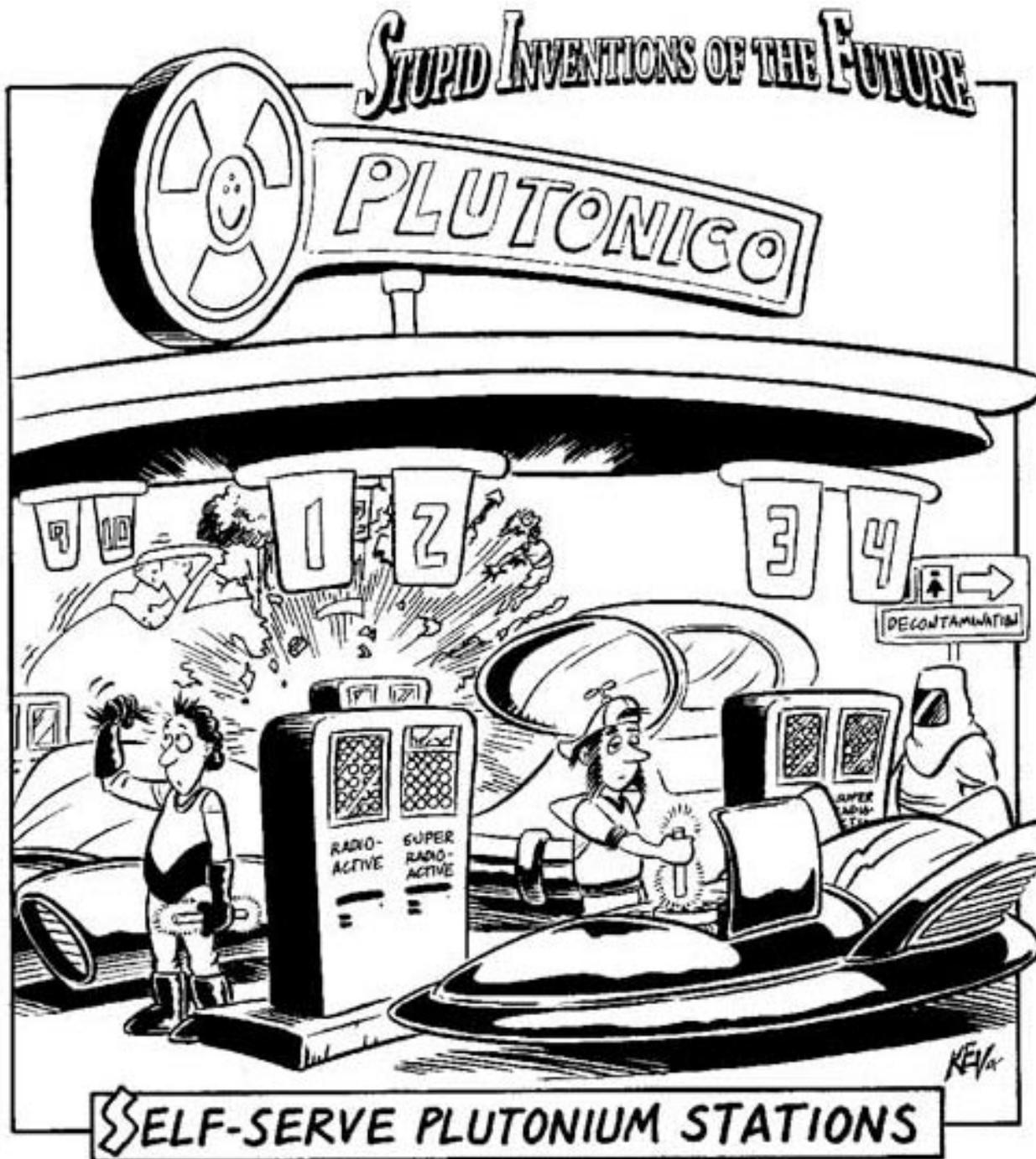
going to dig into that one, because I think it could get ugly, or at least embarrassing. I like how you were able to come to see your "failures" as quirks. You're on a learning curve, too, so I'm sure your view of how to fan your zine will change over time, but you're right to follow where your enthusiasm leads you, damn the torpedos of criticism and full speed ahead. It's obviously taking you to a good place egoboo-wise, and just as one example of my jealousy, I am \*totally\* jealous that you got mocked by Graham Charnock in a song! That's the stuff of legend, man. It's a pretty unique honor.

***I totally have to agree with the***

***deep honor part. I've been mocked by some legends (Including Dennis Hopper on stage, and with an article by Christopher Buckley) but none of them made me laugh nearly as hard as Graham's song. I nearly croaked. I'm one of those weird guys who doesn't much feed off egoboo. I know that it exists and it's always nice to get response and have folks appreciate your work, but I'd do it without any of it. I'd keep putting it out without it. I do love a good in print chat, though.***

Being mocked by Ian? Not so much. We all get zinged by Ian. He is a zinging machine, and a damned good one. It's a good thing to become





familiar with the idea of the pisstake in preparation for TAFF, by the way. The British love to take the piss out of Americans. And hey, it's a great relief to lose all that piss, really.

***He's good. Damn good. I'm going to have to work on my quips and comebacks. I've got a dry sense of humor for a mild-mannered maniac. I often undersell my gags and people miss it. Then again, we do have the lunch group that makes the Algonquin Round Table look like a Church Picnic.***

Finally, I wanted to say that I enjoyed getting to know you a little better at Corflu Quire, building on the encounters at LACon. I'm slow on the uptake, socially speaking, and I'm only starting to \*get\* you now. I look forward to continuing the process at Corflu Silver, if not before. You are being assimilated by us, you know. Which means we'll never be the same! Which is a damned good thing, and thanks for that.

***Well, if you're starting to get me, you're one step ahead of 90% of my family! It's always great to get a chance to chat with ya. I love meeting the folks who I know best through their writing. You certainly do maintain a presense in a ConSuite, that's for sure.***

Cheers,  
Randy Byers

OK, OK, that's enough of that. I really wanna thank Mark, Randy and John for writin' in so that I wasn't the only voice in this issue. I also wanna thank the good people at SimplyMedia for putting out the Sci-Fi Clip Art parts

1 and 2, which is where all of this art comes from. Now that I've used it, I'll never use any again...unless I absolutely have to!

And what's coming up next in the Drink Tank? Well, Cinequest starts

Wednesday, so I'll try and get an issue out over the next 14 days. After that, there's the Hoax issue coming and then the regular grind starts again!

And then I'll be on the way towards Sonoma Valley Film Festival and then it's on to Vegas and then BayCon!

Such is the constant shark-like voyage for Christopher J. Garcia and his crazy life. At some point in that period I'll be writing another Half Dome Happenings.

If you're around the BArea, stop by Cinequest in San Jose and I'll buy you a drink...if I've got the money!

### ***The Art Credits!***

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