

# ***The Drink Tank Issue 120***



***Garcia@computerhistory.org***

### **Letter Graded Mail**

sent to Garcia@computerhistory.org  
by my Gentle Readers

**Let us start with an LoC that covers The Drink Tank issues 117, 188 and 119. Guess who it's by? That's right, it's Lloyd Penney!!!**

Dear Chris:

You said you were going to slow down...didn't believe it then, and don't believe it now. I'm in the familiar position of being three issues behind with The Drink Tank, so here are comments on 117, 118 and 119.

117...you make me wish I'd gone, really, really! Lots of people seemed to have flight problems. Seeing you had three flights cancel on you, your opinion of air travel probably hasn't improved any. I have a copy of that very Progress Report you have on page 2...I purchased mine about 20 years ago from a Toronto fan who had emigrated to South Africa, and had returned to take a table from me (I ran the dealer's room at Ad Astra for more than a decade), and sell off mint SF hardcovers, all at least 20 years old. I purchased all his old Worldcon program books and PRs for \$10.

**Wow! Sounds like you've got a mess-load of stuff that I'd love to get my hands on. I love those old Prog Reports and when I do another Hoax Bid, I'll be incorporating the design**

### **into them!**

Please list all the zines you picked up at Corflu. There were one or two only to pick up last year, and I think I may have eventually gotten those that were distributed in San Francisco and Las Vegas. I want to be sure that I know about all that were handed out so I can remember to see if I'm getting one.

**Well, there was WAY by Randy Byers, Shoes by Yvonne, Ian Sorenson's which I don't have around right now but I rather enjoyed, Rasterman by Lenny Bailes, Banana Wings from the Fishlifters, In A Prior Lifetime by John, Art Widner's Zine, which I can't find and I'm afraid I might have left it on the plane, The Seven Fannish Sins from Tracy and Bill, Sense of Wonder Stories from Rich Coad and**

For those of us who not only like the community, but care about publishing, distribution and communication, Corflu is definitely the place. I wish more had come to Corflu 23. I know exactly how you felt; I felt the same way at the LAcon fanzine lounge. Very comfortable, and it was where I really wanted to be. I wanted to be on that letterhacking panel! What kind of letter did the panelists like? I try to provide a lot of feedback on the issue, a little humour, a little fannish news and a little personal news. My letters become a bit of a conversation, with



tags for the fanned to comment on, and carry on that conversation within the local.

***I discovered that they're looking for letters that dig deep into a couple of subjects instead of the sampler variety which is what I tend to do. Folks also mentioned something that I rarely thought of: commenting on art. I don't know why I never think to do it, but I've certainly started now. I'm very much from the Harry Warner school of LoCs.***

Fuddruckers used to have locations up here! We used to go to the one just south of us, but found that the novelty wore off really quickly, and the burgers offered were big, but not that good. Some American chains just don't make it once they get here. Olive Garden, Fuddruckers, ChiChi's...here, and now gone.

***And we don't get all those great chains you have up there. Harvey's is one of my all-time faves. And where can I find a Tim Horton's in the US?***

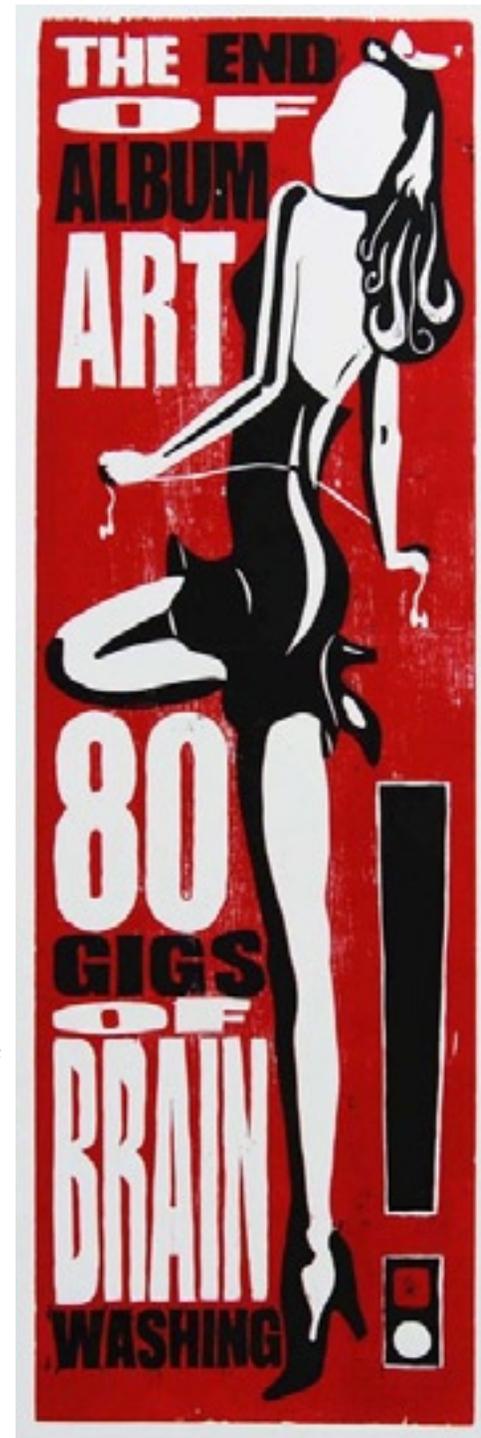
I might have had some locs in those issues of Novoid Colin gave to you. If I recall correctly, when Colin first moved from the west of Canada to the east, he lived for a while in Orillia, where I grew up. Novoid wasn't so much a science fiction fanzine as a little magazine, and I think it slowly evolved from the latter to the former. ***Indeed. They've been enjoyable***

### ***reads***

118...where on the net do you get these graphics? And yes, they ARE graphic, aren't they? Claire is right, a lot of us envy you the time and energy you seem to have, while oldpharts do little except whinge about the way things used to be. Take advantage of it, because these days, jobs don't last forever. (Oops, more whinging from this oldphart...) Interesting to find that there's no active fanzine scene in British fandom. After so many great zines coming from the UK, there's a few now? Is there a united fanzine community anywhere except for the annual fanzine conventions? (Well, I did get Prolapse 5 in the mail yesterday...)

***I never would have thought that there was no scene in the UK. I always pictured it as far more fanzine oriented than the US. Goes to show, I guess.***

Ah, hugging Brit-



ish fans...I'm sure I scandalized Lilian Edwards and Christina Lake many years ago, and I'm much more careful now about hugging. Best to know the folks a little better, and I do know even local fans who I wouldn't hug, mostly because they don't appreciate it. Others...well, I do warn them that I'm not planning to let go...

***This may be a habit I'll have to break if I ever win TAFF. But I'm a hugging machine!***

If there is a Montreal Worldcon, we must do something about making sure there is a substantial fanzine presence. This is planning, not doing. I'm retired from working cons, remember? (That's a reminder to me, too...)

***I'm not going to let there be a WorldCon without Lloyd and Yvonne in attendance! I'll make sure there's Fanzine representa-***

**tion, you can count on that. You jus-  
sure up and have a good time.**

Backwater country? I'm sure the folks in the Netherlands would love to hear you say that. I brought back a lot of Dutch money, including a ton of coins, and some of the money, which looks like small pieces of art. The tough part with Dutch money was dealing with the 25-guilder note. We're so used to 20s, that when I offered a 25, I kept thinking they were giving me too much change back.

**That's a good point. Dear  
Netherlandishers...I love you. You  
are wonderful and an important  
part of Europe! Many kisses from  
NorCal!**

So, it was Colin who brought the Myles' House buttons to Corflu 23! I was connected with that hoax; I was to be the Pro GoH! I have original buttons, and somewhere in a box, the hoax bid publications. The Boston folks should remember it well; some of them were supporters! Even though the Worldcon was in Boston that year, Myles' House was declared one of the better hoaxbids. Myles Bos is a real person, and he lived on his parents' goat farm in Sidney, British Columbia, on Vancouver Island. I tracked him down a few years ago on Google, and I think he is now a pastor somewhere in Vancouver. One of my oldest friends, Dan Cawsey was the artist in this hoax, and he got the most laughs out



of the whole thing.

**I love a good hoax and I wish I  
had been around. I'm working on  
the AhwahneeCon hoax right now  
(along with the help of my Indian  
Guides Running Gag and Beats  
Dead Horse).**

Yes, please run more photos of SaBean and M. Not just because we're dirty old men, but because it will be nice to further place names and faces. I come up with publishing ideas and other things to do in the middle of the night, too...that's why I keep a pen and pad on my night table. Half-asleep creativity should be preserved.

**And when you sleep as poorly as I  
usually do, it's a fertile time! I'll try  
and get M and SaBean to send more  
shots my way.**

Aha! There's the young lady

from the Space Chaos Pirates panel on fanzines, Sarah Duff! I knew her works would show up at some point. I hope there will be more from her. Fanzine Fandom: TNG should be more than just a dream. Please write some more, Sarah!

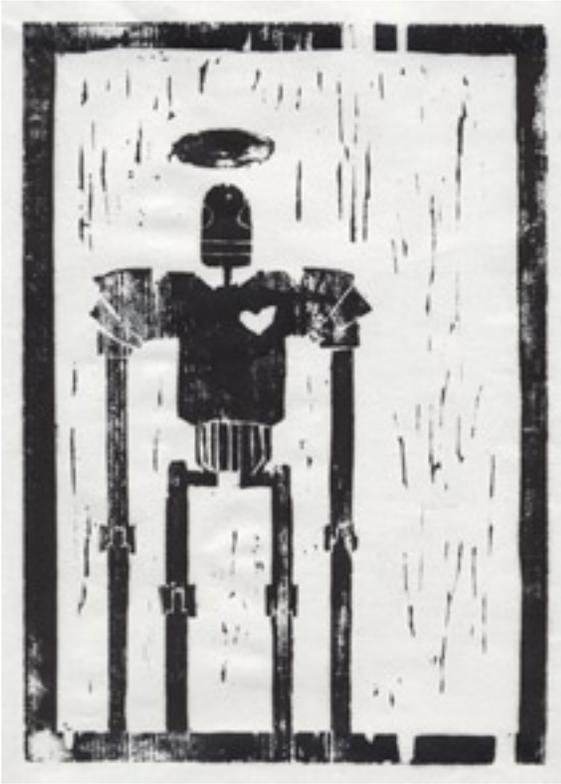
**Indeed! I'd love to be known as the  
one who brought us Sarah Duff!**

Many years ago, while I was in high school, I was a sports reporter for a weekly newspaper in Orillia. I covered the local Junior B hockey team, and I did much the same when I worked for another weekly paper on Vancouver Island. On the island, though, I was also the sports/entertainment/courts/whatever reporter. I was lucky that some of my articles were reprinted by the big local paper in Victoria, the provincial capital. Being a stringer for the Victoria Colonist was some true ego-boo.

119...I'd like to be more well read in SF than I am, but there is so much to read, and only so much cash to purchase what you want, only so much time to read it all, even with a trip or several to my underfunded local library.

**Time and tiredness prevent me from  
being better read. I can get away  
with writing zines at work, but  
reading SF at work's a harder thing  
to pull off.**

So much I've heard about the new Vista...they've already discovered



gaping holes in it, there's patches already...another fine product from Microslop. (Quoth him who's now hacking away on a computer with Windows XP on it.)

***I must support MicroSoft because Bill Gates gives us a lot of money, but I've heard good things about the idea of Vista, but not in practice.***

John Purcell is right, it is the people. Yvonne and I have always thought that the biggest and best thing about fandom is the people within. We'd always wondered about the interests others have, so in our conrunning career, we've helped out the local Whofen, Trekkers and filkers. We've

gotten to know them, and they've gotten to know us. We don't share their interest, but we at least have some understand of why it interests them. If you're hanging with some of the local filkers in SoCal, mention our names, and that we ran the con suite for about ten years at FilKONtario, and they might just remember us.

***I know exactly what you're saying. I'm not a filker, but I hang out in Filk Rooms once in a while. Same thing with costumers. I'm not a costumer, but there's nothing in the world that'll keep me from having a great time working CostumeCon next year.***

North of Toronto, there are ostrich farms. Now there are drumsticks I could enjoy, the carnivore that I am. There are a few llama and alpaca farms around, too, but the ostriches are the only ones I've actually seen. They are enormous, crabby, and dumb as posts. ***I love that there are a ton of camels and zebra in California and Llamas and Ostriches in Texas. I'm thinking and Cali wins!***

Isaac Asimov has been one of my all-time favorite SF writers. I have not only two shelves full of his good works, but I also have a number of his reference works, including his Guide to the Bible. Met Dr. A. twice, once at a Trekcon in Manhattan, and again at the Baltimore Worldcon in 1983.

***I must work through a few more of***

***his books.***

Like Randy Byers said, you're being assimilated. Fanzine fandom is the Borg. Resistance is futile, and I can think of a few other things, too...

***I'm a willing participant, so let's get through the implant portion of the event!***

Wow, just made it onto page 4! And, it's time to go, because I've run out of Tanks to drain. I will be looking at the finances to see if we can go to Vegas for the next Corflu. I am hoping that some inexpensive flights to Vegas can happen...I'm not holding my breath, though. Take it easy, and see you next loc. Or maybe I should response to the latest SF/SF.

***I'll make sure to get more issues out for you to talk on.***

Yours, Lloyd Penney.

***Thanks Lloyd! And now...Claire Brialey!!!***

Dear Chris,

OK, you got me; there I was, thinking that fluffy exterior hid an introspective soul very well, and it turned out you were having at least as good a time at Corflu as everyone else. Chris-the-continuous-fanzine-machine marches on, then?

***Much like a mobius strip, I'm all surface!***

Part 2 of the ANZAPA mailing arrived by itself yesterday, so I have yet



to find out how much of Part 1 is down to you. This weekend therefore seemed like a good opportunity to catch up with typing up my mailing comments on the previous ANZAPA mailing, and indeed on the one before that. Mark has, I think, been doing this over rather more time and is generally more up to date than I am (the fact that this is partly because I spend more time busy at work than he does is, as you might imagine, not in the slightest bit consoling), so he took the opportunity to read #5 of Peter Weston's *Prolapse*, which also arrived yesterday morning. 'Have you written to it yet?' I enquired sardonically when he revealed this over dinner. Mark gave me a Look. (If you've ever seen the Wallace and Gromit movies, it's that raised-eyebrow thing that Gromit does. Mark does this very well; it might be that this is because I give him plenty of opportunities to practise.) I commented that I just

thought he might have been having an attack of the Chris Garcias. Mark repeated his Look, simultaneously pointing to his chin (it's a talent of physical co-ordination I won't venture to replicating while I'm typing). 'No beard,' he said pointedly. 'It's the only way, obviously, that you could tell us apart.'

***I also think that I've got crazier eyes than Mark. So all you have to do is look at him and if it looks like he's about ready to flip out, then it might be me.***

Still, if an active fanzine scene in the UK revives, I think we will need to blame it on Peter Weston; he's not as prolific as you either – that's one of those statements like 'he hasn't got as many Hugo awards as Dave Langford', isn't it? – but the publishing schedule he's set out for the mighty *Prolapse* puts the rest of us Brits to shame. I say this as someone whose next issue

will be out in, um, May.

***Yeah, I just got Prolapse 5 and it's a darn good'un, lemme tell you! Remember it's not the sched you manage to keep, it's the fact that those of us who publish more often will continually ask you when you're gonna follow up on your last issue!***

Further to comments in your letter column, you may have seen on LiveJournal that the Corflu Armadillo (Twilltone K Dillo, as he is now known) arrived safely. I think this means that he's not all that far away from you now; when you hear a rustle outside in the middle of the night, and the stealthy clink of his empty beer bottle, you'll know that the Time of the Armadillo is upon you. I'm not sure what time that is, mind you; it'll probably just be some sort of sign that it's time for you to put out another fanzine.

***Armadillos don't scare me. You might have seen the photo Bill took of me with Twiltone where I was cradling him very lovingly.***

Your mid-word capitalisation – CorFlu, WorldCon – puts me in mind of early Jon Courtenay Grimwood novels (the ones before he got *really* good). Three of his first four books had a mid-word capital but no capitalisation at the beginning: *neoAddix*, *reMix*, *redRobe*... If you're not familiar with Jon's books – and in particular if

you haven't read *9Tail Fox*, you being a Bay Area resident an' all – then I recommend rushing to the nearest book shop; the Arabesk sequence (*Pashazade, Effendi, Felaheen*) also comes with a high seal of approval from Croydon.

***I must make an attempt to find it.***

We, too, saw the many goats of Texas. It's not an animal I previously associated with Texas; maybe goats grow up to be llamas, and I never knew. We also saw bison, which surprised me less because I expected everything in Texas to be bigger than, well, anything anywhere else.

***You saw Bison? I've only seen a couple of bison in my life. I've also petted one. Texas's got everything!***

'Doctor Pepper and Orange Juice doesn't sound all that weird,' writes Peter Sullivan, revealing his hitherto unknown secret life as a mutant. Dr Pepper and *anything* – or indeed, Dr Pepper with nothing else – doesn't sound like something I'd be prepared to put in my mouth, never mind swallow. But it wasn't until I looked it up on Wikipedia that I realised that it came from Texas. Maybe that's what they use to make all the goats turn into llamas.

***Dr. Pepper is an acquired taste. I grew up on the stuff (explains a lot, don't you think). And everyone knows that to turn a goat into a llama you have to expose it to low-***

***level background radiation.***

I have noted your comment that you'd be happy with a LoC a year or so; but it just seems wrong not to be engaging with all this conversation. You will note, however, that this is not a cohesive letter of comment which weaves together everything you and your contributors and correspondents said in a way that makes profound connections to the underlying Theme of what's currently on your mind and driving you to put together this issue; in other words, this is not the sort of letter I usually aim to write. Maybe I need to learn how to write properly to this sort of frequent fanzine... Next, though, I think I have to write to *Prolapse*, or Peter W will get the idea that fans under 40 just aren't interested in fan history.

***One a year from everyone who reads The Drink Tank would be delightful, though if you took that route, I'd expect a 16 pager that I could turn into an issue by itself. I must remember to let Peter know that as a fan under forty who is interested in fan history I'm really***



***excited that he's up and excited again for zining!***

Best wishes,  
Claire

***Even if it wasn't a proper LoC, you're much thanked for sending it our way.***

***And Now, back with another one of them block-rocking LoCs...Eric Mayer!!!***

Chris,

I've been kind of suffering from the old no days off work since before Christmas temperatures below freezing for three straight weeks two feet of snow and no end to any of it in sight blues, the results of which are no blogging, no loccing, etc...However, I

read your Corflu reports in previous issues with great interest.

***I was just thinking that it'd been a while since we heard from ya.***

In this issue my attention is immediately caught by John Purcell's comment "...it is the part that you ARE producing a fanzine which is the all-important part." If only more fans acted as if that were the case...or maybe I should say if only less fans acted as if it weren't.

Too many of the more vocal fans are so intent on crabbing on about what they perceive as quality (or more likely lack thereof) and comparing fanzines people today want to produce to the sort of zines they think ought to be produced, which is to say like zines they loved when they were young, it's easy to get the impression that just producing a zine at all isn't really enough. Not nearly enough.

***That's very true, though I imagine that I, when of proper age, will go on-line and find the zines the next generation are doing to be completely unsatisfactory.***

That kind of ties in with other musings I've been having. (Yeah, I've come down with a bad case of winter musings...) What I've been wondering is whether you can be a full fledged fan these days just by participating in fanzines. I tend to think not. (As Mark Plummer points out there hardly is any UK fanzine fandom anymore.

A couple years ago you and Arnie Katz both produced more issues than all of UK fandom, according to the Nova Awards eligibility list.) ***Which is still so strange to me. I'd always had it in my head that there were tons of UK zines (I could easily name***

***five by the time I started LoCing Peregrine Nations and eI in 2004).***

I'm thinking about when Mary and I joined the Mystery Writers of America. They have membership levels. You can be an affiliate member if you don't have any professional credits, or an associate if you're a professional in a field related to mystery writing, but only those who have had mysteries published are "active" members. I figure that the reality of sf fandom today is that if you don't go to sf conventions you're considered, at best, kind of an affiliate member.

***Very good point.***

I'm not sure why that should bother me. I didn't renew my MWA membership since I can easily read Mary's newsletter.



***Well, what was it that Tully Savalis used to say: Membership has it's privileges.***

Your piece on sf music immediately got me to trying to pull sf songs out of my memory. Putting aside whole albums like Bowie's Ziggy Stardust or Paul Kantner's Blows Against the Empire, I can think immediately of these favorites (or semi-favorites) from various eras of my youth:

Purple People Eater -- Sheb Wooley  
Little Space Girl -- Jessie Lee Turner  
Telstar -- Tornados  
2,000 Light Years From Home --  
Rolling Stones  
Set the Controls for the Heart of the

Sun -- Pink Floyd  
Mr. Spaceman - the Byrds  
Supersonic Rocketship -- Kinks  
Aliens in Our Midst -- Twinkeyz  
Attack of the Giant Ants -- Blondie

Actually those are all space/aliens songs.

***I thought of Purple People Eater and Attack of the Giant Ants, but I can't even think of what Mr. Spaceman sounded like.***

I'm not well read in sf compared to many. I devoured the classics until I was in college then the literary pretensions of stuff like Dhalgren sent me off to read other things from personal essays to mysteries. I couldn't finish Riders of the Purple Wage or Dune. Not my sort of thing. ***Riders was easy for me because it was a Farmer piece and I was on a kick. I've still never finished Dune.***

You're right that some sf seems to depart so far from our reality -- its characters become so inhuman -- that...well...it's hard to care. The writing is more an exercise in contrived weirdness than anything meaningful. I think that sometimes happens in part because of concentration on literary stylization. Come to think of it, a lot of stories I've tried to read in magazines like the New Yorker involving rich neurotics at French seaside villas strike me as just as removed

from my reality. (Mind you, the old New Yorker had great writing) Ever read Charles Willeford or Cornell Woolrich or Chester Himes? They get some serious weirdness into what appear to be naturalistic settings. ***I read some Hines. I've had Woolrich recommended to me a few times over the years, and have yet to try him.***



That novel sounds like a great idea. Not sure about the ending, but the concept is terrific. The ultimate love story -- to destroy the universe for love. You could have a lot of fun with that.

***If M ever writes it, I'll buy a copy!***  
Best,  
Eric

***Thanks much, Eric!***

***And what LetterCol of the last few weeks would be complete without Mr. Mark Plummer?***

Chris,

At first I was thinking that only in The World of Chris could two consecutive letter column appearances be sufficient to qualify me for the status of 'becoming a regular', but I suppose it's of a piece with the Instant Traditions of so much of modern fandom where anything done twice becomes an immutable custom. Still, better stop talking about modern fandom like that in case my typing develops a Birmingham accent. Rather I will think back to my old non-fannish pal Hairy Steve who would so often remind the rest of us that 'It's all anarchy, innit?'

***Well, I was more hoping that by giving you the title of regular you'll keep dropping a line. And now that you've spoken of it in an LoC, we've***

**got an oral contract and you're stuck! Haha!**

Funnily enough, as DT#119 - or is it DT#1019? -- was being a little sluggish on the download this afternoon, I actually read the text at the top of your efanzines page. Didn't find any startling revelations therein, and my personal theory that Arnie Katz fashioned you out of plasticine in a quiet moment at a Vegnants meeting remains unsubstantiated. (And in passing I note that while checking the spelling of plasticine -- it not being part of my everyday written vocabulary -- I happened across the Wikipedia page which opens with the clarification 'Not to be confused with the Pleistocene epoch which is part of the geologic timescale'.

**Garcia-cia-cia, Arnie made him out of clay, and when he's dry and ready, at fanzines he will play.** And I also learned that '[in the United States the term modelling clay is much more widely used and, although the Plasticine brand is available, it is not well known.' So actually it's entirely possible that you don't know what I'm on about here. Maybe you're thinking that this is one of those BritFan letters fuelled by seventeen pints of bitter, a bottle of vodka, and a Brandy Alexander. Maybe you are thinking that it's time for dinner. Maybe you're thinking that you'd prefer an email from Claire. What are you thinking,

Chris?)

**Chris also realises that you might not be familiar with The Dreidl Song that he mocked in the previous Bold Italic section. And of course I know plasticine. Every American kid looks it up when they go through their Beatles phase and have to learn what the words in Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds mean.**

But yes, on the efanzines page, that introductory paragraph says, '[The Drink Tank] will regularly feature articles on filmmaking, short films, SF that he's read, cons he's hit, and folks he respects/hates' which I thought was mostly a fair description but... 'SF that he's read'? I didn't remember any of that. Maybe it cropped up in one of the issues I read after drinking seventeen pints of bitter, a bottle of vodka, and a Brandy Alexander. Maybe DT was supposed to have stuff in it about 'SF



that [you've] read'

**It rarely pops up (I did a few articles on SF books in the Early Days) and they will again when I start reading more...any day now...**

but Arnie didn't get something quite right when he was fiddling with the plasticine. And then you pick this issue to Explain about you and SF books, which is very convenient and everything -- and still doesn't discourage me from my plasticine theory.

**Arnie did good workmanship, especially around the eyes!**

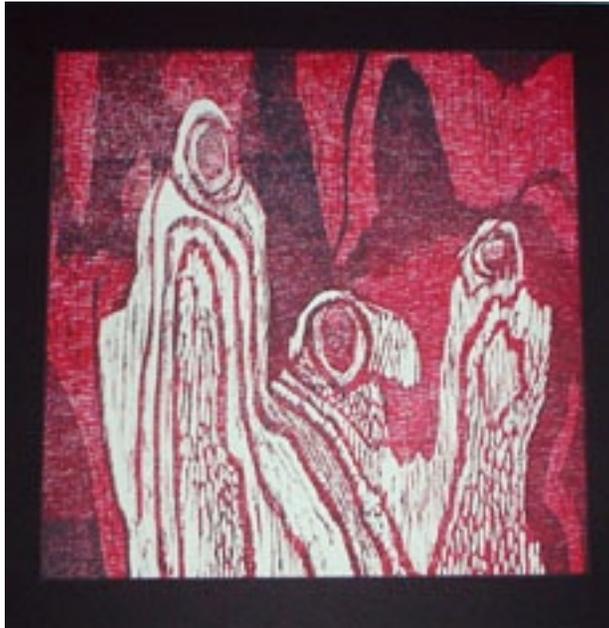
I'm sort of surprised to see that Randy was feeling disconnected at Corflu as he always seems like the kinda cool kid who's entirely at home anywhere, but I think I do know what he means about 'there being so many great people to talk to and so little time'. Perhaps it's not so much that there are more such people than at a Worldcon or even a British Eastercon but rather that by stripping out all the people I don't want to talk to - - those people who attend the same conventions as me year after year but with whom I seem to have no points of intersection \*at all\* beyond the fact that every so often we find ourselves in the same building -- it all seems so much more concentrated.

**Good point. Then again, I find a lot of folks at the huge cons that I have a lot in common with too.**

At my first Corflu... sorry, first \*American\* Corflu as the UK one was kinda different, I found myself clustering with the rest of the British contingent. This wasn't quite as bizarre as it sounds as in most cases they're hardly people I see frequently anyway, but looking back on it now I think that it was partly that I was seeking the comfort of the familiar but also... well, where do you even start? I'm better now, I hope, but it's still a case of so many fans, so little time. I remember walking into the con-suite at this year's Corflu and seeing Ted (he had to be first) and Andy and Randy and Tracy and Bill and Jim and Janet and Murray, and people I'd never actually met but instantly recognised like James and Teresa and John... and there wasn't a face in the room that wasn't known to me to some extent. That's welcoming and cheering, but also daunting.

***I knew only Bill Burns and Frank Wu at CorFlucisco in 2005, but I recognised all the names of the folks in the room and was so pleased.***

And I also wonder whether perhaps we've lost a little of the specialness of these occasions. When Willis describes the end of the 1952 Chicon he talks about how 'a feeling of utter exaltation swept over me to realise that here I was sitting between Lee Hoffman and Max Keasler at the



top of a skyscraper watching the sun rise over Chicago.' He probably wouldn't have felt \*quite\* the same way if he knew they were all going to do it again next year or maybe the year after.

Not that this is an argument for going back, mind. I sometimes lament that we've lost these once-in-a-lifetime opportunities, but I can't deny that I welcome the chance to have them more than once.

***You may have a point. I've met a few UK fans and I know that if I go to a WorldCon I'll probably run into a few new folks and some of the old folks. Still, I think if I ever make it to the UK, I'll have at least some moment like Willis did because I'll know that the odds of me making it out there again will be pretty darn***

***long.***

--  
Best etc,

---Mark  
Mark Plummer  
Croydon, UK

***And another Thanks goes out to Croydon!***

***How about some words of clarification from ML Heath!!!***

Hiya Chris: One slight adjustment, for clarity's sake, to my fanzine piece: I think I might have mistakenly created the perception for your readers, unfamiliar with his writing outside of SF, that Paul Williams was still involved with *Crawdaddy* Magazine in the Seventies. This is not the case: Williams by then was long gone from the *Crawdaddy* fold, with his writing - in books like *Das Energi* - reflecting a concern with matters of a rather more metaphysical nature. He did, however, dip back into music writing around the mid-Eighties, even reviving *Crawdaddy* for a while the following decade as a small-press, low-level newsletter, sort of bringing it full circle.

***Ah, thanks for the clarification. I have some of those Crawdaddys from the 70s that were just meh.***

BTW, some of Paul's definitive Sixties music essays were compiled in

the book *Outlaw Blues*; likewise his more recent ruminations as *Back To The Miracle Factory*. And of course, not forgetting his inexhaustible efforts to keep the work of Theodore '90% of everything is crap' Sturgeon and PK Dick in the public eye; in the case of the latter, sitting in on a fantastic panel about Dick's unpublished writing at LA Con 4, and the publication this year of Dick's *Voices From The Street*. ***I missed that panel. I had it on my list, but I think I had a panel that I was on right before or after and I had to run back to my hotel. My loss, as always.***

As far as your SF music tape: here's two doozies for ya, one touching, one sublimely silly. First is 'Miss Clarke And The Computer' by Roy Wood - I'd hope at least some of your UK readers know of Wood and his most amazingly creative 60's/early 70's band The Move.

***I'll add those to my list to consider for Ultimate SF Tape II...***

After they took on Jeff Lynne and mutated into ELO, Wood took off on his own, creating this song from 1972's *Boulders*, his literally solo (as in playing and singing everything) debut LP. A sadly beautiful, nursery/

lullaby waltz sung from the POV of a computer, imploring of its operator to not be sent to the scrapheap. And remarkably, all done *sans* any musical synthetics: just a nylon string/Spanish guitar, bells, harpsichord and subtly distorted vocals. Kind of the musical equivalent of Wm. Gibson creating his cyberworlds on some rusty Royal typer-machine. (The rest of *Boulders* is dandy too, almost as much as the stuff Wood later did as leader of 70's Glam Rock funsters Wizzard.) And the other is just deliriously dopey fun: Sarah Brightman - Mrs. A. Lloyd-Webber when she's at home - cut a single in 1978, at the height of Star Wars Mania, called 'I Lost My Heart To A Starship Trooper'. It's full-on disco cheese of the highest order; lifting shamelessly from John Williams' score, with low-budget Light Saber and R2 sound FX galore, all whirling around Sarah as does her best Donna Summer impression. Princess 'Leia', indeed. I hereby vow before all *Drink Tank* readers that, the day I ever spring for an iPod, this song will be its first entry.

***I have found it on-line and am now amusing myself no end with it.***

And I'd like to think you're a 'buddy' to me as well. Heh.

***A man can have all sorts of buddies, but a buddy is one-in-100,000***

Later,  
Mike Heath



**What's more *The Drink Tank* than two LoCs from the same person? Here's Claire Brialey...again!**

Dear Chris,

For me, I've been writing a lot of letters to fanzines recently. I realised something odd was happening to me when I dreamt earlier today about writing another letter of comment. I was certain at the time that it was a brilliant, witty, relevant and informative letter – the very model of the modern art of letter-hacking, really – but as usual with my dreams I remembered very little of the detail even when I first woke up, and all but one phrase has now returned to the disordered shelving of my unconscious mind. I'm pretty certain that it was a letter of comment to you, though, because the bit that I remember was about llamas.

Clearly this has got to stop, or in years to come Those Who Know will be pointing back to your fanzine to demonstrate the start of the downward spiral of that llama-obsessed woman who used to be some sort of fan writer. ***I don't think I've mentioned it prior to now, but on my desk, with a little sombrero pinned to his head, is a Lamma pinata. It's rather garish, as pinatas are supposed to be, but it's also too much teh awesum!***

Meanwhile, I also realised when Mark waved a paper copy of *The Drink Tank* #119 at me when I staggered in



from work late on Monday evening that my last letter had crossed with your next fanzine. As a precaution this time, I've just checked the website again and for now all seems quiet on the Garcia front. Moreover, I've just spotted the remarkable statement on the final page of #119 which suggests that the number of days between issues might make it into double figures this time, so maybe this time I won't be obsolete before I start.

***A Paper copy of *The Drink Tank*? You mean it didn't burst into flames when applied to paper? I'm***

***at Cinequest all week, so I'm not posting until this issue which is almost all LoCs, but the next one will be Cinequest thoughts and so on. It's not easy living the life of an Northern California film snob/fan writer.***

The thing I liked most about your and M's 'touching story of love, life and theoretical physics' – apart from that description – was the way that, although the male character was content to destroy the universe in order to get back his lost love (thus making it, in effect, *her* fault – and you can imagine the way it would come up in every argument they ever had, right?), she was the one who was smart enough to figure out the really complicated stuff about (a) how the particles would interact (b) how she actually felt about him. No, I'm lying. The thing I liked most was the way that they got obliterated... and *then* the universe got destroyed. Even Stephen R Baxter hasn't done that.

***I thought she should call it Love and/or Universal Obliteration, but she didn't go for it. M and I have always had one thing in common: strong female characters.***

You quoted Andy Trembley on fanzines, in any format, as saying 'It's all fanac'; and I think on the letter-hacking panel at Corflu that John Purcell mentions I referred to the old theory that 'fanac is anything two

fans do together'. In that respect, it's arguable that engaged response to a fanzine – that is, ensuring that the fanzine isn't just something that the person producing it is doing by themselves – is the most important contribution to it. Of course, it's also arguable that ensuring that a fanzine both contains material and gets disseminated in ways that provoke engaged response is the most important thing. Indeed, all this sounds to me like part of that ongoing fannish conversation we were discussing on the panel...

***Very true, though I wouldn't discount the crazy guy writin' zines off the top of his head in some crowded apartment somewhere. It might be said that anything a fan does to be viewed by other fans is FANAC. That'd increase the circle a little.***

Now, on the subject of ongoing conversations, I note that Mark has raised the thorny question of communicating with your partner



through the medium of fannish publications when you live in the same house. Indeed, right now we're sitting in adjoining

rooms in front of our respective computers (we've both been spending more and more time doing this rather than other equally productive pursuits like, say, reading books, cleaning the house, or sleeping since we got back from Corflu last month) and, although Mark continues to dislike online chat as a form of communication, I could quite easily email him or just try that face-to-face conversation thing he mentioned. Obviously, if I were going to mention woolly beasts with long necks that I did not see in Texas just because I was talking to Lilian – about polyamorous horse jealousy, if you must know – in the back seat of the car, I would do that in the privacy of our own home to attempt to head off the increasing risk of appearing to be llama-obsessed. But if I were going to comment, for example, on Mark's contention that...

***I've been giulty of talking via various electron...wait a sec...did you say Polyamorous Horse Jealousy? I mean, seriously, I could swear I read that a second ago. Lemme go back and see. Yep, it's there. What...why...when...why...I've become confused...***

Oh, that put an end to that, then. With the comic timing I have come to expect of him, Mark just appeared in person in the doorway and we seem to have had a conversation about his letter in *The Drink Tank*

in the margins of failing to be very decisive about dinner. Anything two fans do together, right?

***Choosing a place for dinner is something no two fans can do together. It's just not possible.***

However, your comments on the points in Mark's letter about the British fanzine scene were spot on, Chris. I was a bit stumped at first to work out what you meant when you suggested that British fanzine fandom just needed a good lead towards eFanzines.com from 'some zine that's been on the Hugo ballot with a FAAn Award for Best Fanzine', but I worked it out and personally I think that's a really nice compliment. And I quite agree that *Chunga* is the best British fanzine currently being produced in Seattle.

***But Chunga is already available on eFanzines.com. In fact, of all the zines that were up for Best Fanzine last year, there's only one notable exception from the world of net. It's a certain something from Croydon.***

***I can't remember what it's called***



### ***though...Waxen Skins?***

On which note I should add that I was also really pleased to meet Randy Byers at the airport after Corflu and have the chance to talk properly – thus extending the convention for several hours after we left you (twice) in the hotel lobby. All conventions should include the chance to hang out with Randy, although this does suggest that the majority of conventions I attend in any given year are doomed to at least one measure of disappointment. He remains one of my favourite current fan writers; I was delighted, impressed and hugely envious to read his Corflu fanzine, collecting so much of his LiveJournal writing that I'd managed to miss before. So it was splendid to see a letter of comment from him too.

***He's one of my top faves too. I think I've become an LJunkie because of his blog.***

For my own part, if I'm to have any chance of keeping up I'm just going to have to hope that I keep being inspired by dreams.

Best wishes,

Claire

***And as always...Croydon Uber Alles!***

***And Now...an Actual Article!***

***by***

***Christopher J. Garcia***

Is it OK to be a part of fantasy?  
Is it OK to have a fantasy life? Is it OK



to go away into something that isn't real? Is there a line you have to keep away from when things get blurry as to what matters? These are the kinds of questions that panels at cons are built around, but it's also the basic reason behind one of the best documentaries at Cinequest this year. It's called Monster Camp and it actually does a good job of presenting a portion of this thing I call fandom.

Director Cullen Hoback heard about the LARPing group NERO Seattle from his girlfriend's brother and decided that it was a good subject for a doc. Nero is one of the more interesting

and complex groups doing the various live action role playing and the events they have are really interesting. I'm not a part of any NERO group, but I know a lot of folks who have been over the years. In fact, I have a passing knowledge of the folks chronicled by Cullen in Monster Camp. I've met several of them at NorWesCon and at NASFiC in 2005. They're good folks and there's even a massive hotty (Miss Becca I think her name is) and a guy named Fern who I met at NorWesCon while trying to chat up the lovely lass with the red hair and the nose ring. Nice folks one and all. It's kind of

strange to watch this as a fan. You know these people, no matter what fandom you're in, you know these people in various forms and various places. Some are good friends, some you only see at cons, but you know them and you don't want to see them mocked. Every shot has the potential to become a cringe-worthy segment of mockery.

Thankfully, Cullen didn't go that way or I'd have had to choke him. He shoots the whole thing as a realistic tale of people who have a hobby, albeit a strange one. He does go for a few laughs, but it's by showing things that make sense to the person saying them because in the world they inhabit at the moment (That of the game) but when they are removed from 'real' context they become funny. It's incredible to see a filmmaker who is willing to present 'Us' as something more than comedic figures. Yes, Monster Camp is funny and one or two of the characters are presented in ways that aren't perfectly flattering, but they're mostly presented as real people...even when they're in a world where there is a different reality. That's the power of the line that Cullen walked. It could have bombed massively by sympathetically presenting characters that an audience would want to laugh at. Instead, he won over the crowd by making them into real people...real people who fight

with padded swords.

There are moments when you wonder is it all worth it. NERO is a fine passtime. It's a weekend every couple of months or so, there's physical activity and imagination and dedication to a bit. Then you see Dave, pictured below from Monster Camp's MySpaec page, playing hour upon hour of World of Warcraft, much to his young daughter's unhappiness.

And that's where Cullen hit me. Is that healthy? Does NERO and WOW make people want to leave the world

they live in so much that they're willing to forget to take reality breaks? Am I in my furious pubbing flurries, risking the same thing? It's that question I ask every few issues: do I need more reality? Is there more reality? Can I handle it? I don't think I'm nearly as bad as a lot of WOW players, but then I remember that I sometimes wake up early to do an issue of The Drink Tank, that sometimes I get the call and I accept the charges.

It's a great doc for fans, even the ones who need the mirror held up.



Art This Issue From Oshi  
Ogawa, Mr. Tickle, BigBootay,  
FrogBasket, Raisha Collingwood,  
NewMarkets, Selina Phanara  
(Still my current favourite!) and  
Brace Sackler. SeeBeauty does  
the BaCover and my man Cullen  
Hoback did the photos!

**01** see beauty

