

**THE DRINK TANK 199
ARE YOU OUT OF YOUR MIND!**

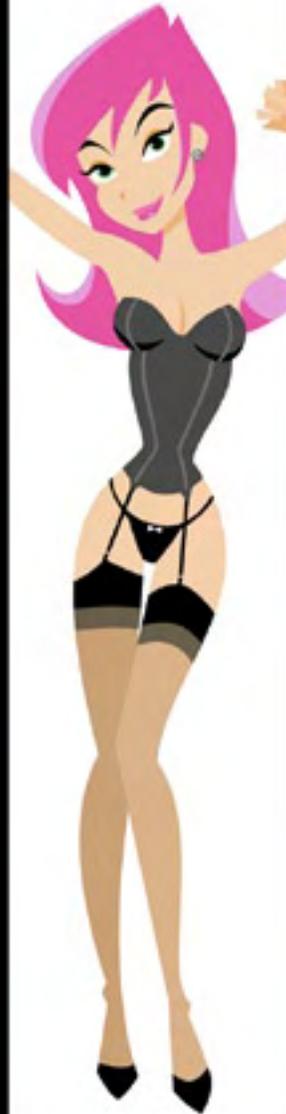


That's another great cover from Mo Starkey. She's a super-lady and I'm so glad I get to use her stuff! She also did a piece on a really bad photo painting of a Mexican wrestler emerging from the Sea. That's an awesome one too!

There's a new sheriff in town and it's pretty good to have him around. Obama's inauguration went smoothly, except for the actual swearing in part. The museum had a viewing party with all sorts of food and it was a good time. I still have reservations, particularly about my taxes going up. The only thing I give Bush credit for, along with his initiative to fight AIDS in Africa, is the fact that his tax cuts made it much easier for me to get by. I had a hard time under Clinton and if the cuts helped me, they must have helped much of America.

Still, it's a good thing when a guy of mixed race, much like myself, can make it to the White House. OK, not much like myself. He's supremely confident, well-spoken, intelligent and motivated, whereas I am very knowledgeable about wrestling. It'll be interesting to see if he can get us out of this hole we're in without putting a lot more of us in a much more personal one.

This issue is mostly LoCs with a couple of other little things. I'm still in need of articles for the Fourth Annual Giant Sized Annual, so send some!



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

Since it's the most topical, and it came this morning, let's start with Lloyd Penney!

January 20, 2009

Dear Chris:

It is Inauguration Day, and this is happening all over the world. The CBC is covering this on all channels, you name the news agency, it's covering it. As much as I like the idea of some truly fresh blood coming into the White House, and Dubya heading out, the inauguration of Obama is being promoted nearly at the level of the second coming of Christ. I am hopeful, but trying to be realistic. I'll take a break from all this hoopla with some comments on The Drink Tank 197 and 198.

We just got done watching it at work. We took the morning to have eats and enjoy an internet feed.

197...Sorry, Chris, Bob Wilkins is completely new to me. But, it does show that we grew up with TV characters and television shows. Where I grew up, just north of Toronto, we watched the CBC and also Channel 7 in Buffalo. That meant that I grew

up with The Friendly Giant, a long-time kids' show on the CBC, plus Chez Helene, a kids' show that taught English-speaking Canada French. On Channel 7, there was Rocketship 7, with Dave Thomas, Promo the Robot and Mr. Beeper. (Here I am about to turn 50, and I still remember all this stuff.) Also, there was the Commander Tom Show, vaguely SFnal, but also vaguely military.

You see, television, especially television of a less Adult, more fun variety is one of the things that really defines people and their times. You can tell a lot about someone by asking who their horror host was. I really believe that.

My loc...Mickey Rourke got his Golden Globe, and he must feel like he's truly returned to the fold. Norman McLaren is indeed the father of Canadian animation. the NFB offices are in downtown Toronto, and I have applied for several jobs there in the past. Leonard Maltin is probably one of the most vocal proponents of the NFB; he knows the good stuff that comes from that organization.

Every school kid in America watches NFB shorts during elementary school. Why? Because they make packages available for dirt cheap! I'm so glad Mickey Roarke won. It was a great

performance and one so true it's scary. I saw it yesterday and I was blown away.

I did like The Golden Compass, enough to get the books and read the trilogy. I can see why Philip Pullman got into trouble over these books, but given my own opinions on religion, I guess I am a sympathetic reader. I like the movie, but I saw that box office was poor, and I'm under no illusions about any more movies in the series. I hope there will be more Narnia movies...and comments on The Hobbit?

I wanna see what Peter Jackson does with The Hobbit. I think he could make a very good film of it. I did like the animated version from



the 70s, though.

Taral's loc...I've seen the table-top mock-up of Taral's apartment. Putting that up full-size at Anticipation will be something to see. Paul Wilson's usually a pretty quiet guy, but he's got something to brag about with this project. the idea of gainful employment holds nothing special for me, although like you, Chris, I will work until I drop. I'm still working, but I'm still looking for something better.

I'm never looking for something better, but I'm always looking for some added stuff. I'll take consulting and writing gigs.

I'm watching the CBC coverage of the inauguration right now...Joe Biden's about to get veeped. I, Joseph Robinette Biden Jr....

I have been talking with the Anticipation committee, and I don't think we should get our hopes up about the fanzine lounge. I am told that Montreal is not a rich Worldcon, and a number of people are skipping Montreal to go to Australia next year, so I will get a small space, with no refreshments. We'll see what we can get away with, and there's time yet.

Sometimes, it's more important to just have a space than it is to have the extras. We can always people it with fun folks. That's what we do!

Rickey Henderson got into Cooperstown. He played for the Blue Jays for a while, so he may be the first Jay to get into the Hall.

Phil Niekro, Paul Molitor and Dave Winfield all played for the Jays towards the end of their Hall of Fame careers. Rickey and Paul played together on the 1993 World Champion team. I really should celebrate him because he was another big part of the BArea Pop Culture of the 80s.

And...Barack Hussein Obama is the 44th President of the United States of America. The world's faith in America just went way up, now that Dubya is the past president. As others have said, American has finally elected a smart man to be president, and if he can't do it, it can't be done, and we're all in trouble. But, there is faith and confidence. I just hope that the expectations of Obama haven't been so overblown that he's bound to disappoint. There's be a honeymoon period, and I hope it is a very long and happy one. Many Canadians are worried that in order to strengthen America, President Obama must look inwards and become somewhat isolationist, but he must know that prosperity comes through dealing with your friends, and America's friends look forward to working with him. His first foreign trip will be to Canada, and

I think he'll like Ottawa.

One of the big problems in dealing with the Great Depression was the early stance of isolationism.

Chris, your star has not fallen, I think you'll be on that Hugo ballot again. This ballot this year is going to be very difficult to call. There's so many fanwriters who should be on that ballot, it's a shame there's only five slots per category. We've all been busy and diligent...dare I say renaissance? If fanzines are supposed to be dead, it's a pretty lively corpse.

It's a very interesting time. The question is who is best known coupled with who has been doing the best work among those who are best know. Hence why I think you've got nothing to worry about.

I did send 20 locs to The Drink Tank in 2008, but I'd have to count up how many were sent to SF/SF and any other zines you've produced. You almost walked out on The Golden Compass while flying across the Atlantic? Just imagine what would have happened if you had walked out! Whoosh!

I think you hit us 15 times in SFSF, though I could be wrong. The stats are in the back of the latest issue.

I surprised you know the name Bill Barilko. He was one of the Leafs' best players in the late 40s, but his career was very short. In my own researches, Punch Imlach coach of the Leafs in the 60s and part of the 80s, and during Barilko's time, I believe the Leaf coach was Hap Day.



The Tragically Hip did a song called 50 Mission Cap which opens with the line “Bill Barilko disappeared, that summer. He was on a fishing trip. The last goal he ever scored, won the Leafs the Cup. They wouldn’t win another, ’til 1962, the year he was discovered.” It led me on an investigation into the life and times of Bill Barilko and it turns out that he would have been a Hall of Famer if his plane hadn’t gone down in the 1950s. The last goal he ever scored was in overtime to give the Leafs the Big One. As they say, all information is contained in Canadian Power Pop lyrics.

If nothing else, Barack Obama is a master orator. His inaugural speech was stirring; he is so well spoken. America can take the high road again, and it will be a friend again to all. Much of his speech was a veiled criticism of the past eight years, and those years are done. I think we’ve witnessed history in the making.

It was a pretty darn good speech, slightly overshadowed by the Benediction, which I thought was awesome. Snarky and up-lifting.

There, I’m done venting, and done praising the new president, at least for now. Stay warm, say hello to all the BASFA folks for me, and see you

next issue.

Yours, Lloyd Penney

Thanks, Lloyd! And now, some words from Steve Green!

Hi Chris,

Y’know, I thought the central image in Genevieve’s cover artwork for TDT #198 looked vaguely familiar...



You know, great minds think alike. Perhaps we could call Genevieve’s The Vetruvian Babe?

All Best

-- Steve

Thanks, Steve!

And now, Eric Mayer!

Chris,

So I downloaded Drink Tank 198 at 5 am, having got up to run water and

keep the pipes under the house from freezing. I’m kind of surprised 5 am actually exists since I never see it. When the sun came up I saw that the thermometer on the shed behind the house read 10 below F. Which is cold for around here. Anyway, I have read this issue early! Comments:

Coldness: it’s what brought me back to California.

Another nice cover. Artful doodles? **I saw it when I borrowed the binder of her art and I instantly knew that it was going to be a cover. There’s no much going on! Doodles are some of my favorites, and when folks take some time to fiddle with them, I’m hooked.**

I loved Rogue Moon, one of my all time favorite sf novels.

Only .7 locs per issue? Fandom has certainly changed. eFanzines is a wonderful resouce but most ezines don’t seem to get the level of response zines did back in the seventies (when I were a lad etc etc) Of course if Drink Tank were a quarterly and you got the same amount of locs per year it wouldn’t be so bad. I’m surprised John Purcell wrote “only” 80 locs. He has a letter in every zine I read. Last year I wrote 59.

Some of it is my speed, but some of it is that I tend to work in

areas where folks who tend to LoC just aren't interested. That's a completely valid reason for not LoCing.

In response to my bleak whingings in this issue you pose the intriguing question whether you go straight from being a fan to being a mundane? Is there a medium setting? Yes. I think it's when the antennas start to dry up but haven't fallen off yet. My antennas fell off a long time ago, back in the mid-eighties. Well, tell the truth, sometime before then. I'm not sure when. But a little more than twenty years ago fans suddenly started pointing and laughing. Look, he has no antennas! (Actually the more erudite said, "he has no antennae") I hadn't even noticed.

I wonder: do I have antennae?

Who (or what) is a fan anyway? Imagine, for instance, someone who corresponds with people he met in fandom forty years ago. People with whom he went to sf cons and published fanzines. He hasn't published a zine or attended a con in decades, neither have his friends, but they still correspond. Are they still fans? Is what they do fanac? You see the same situation with many "faanish" list participants.

Does keeping in touch with people you met through a hobby years ago constitute participation in the hobby?



I haven't run for years, even on my own let alone entered a race. I'm not physically able to these days. There must be lots of gimpy old former recreational runners around. The running literature, I recall, always stressed the idea that you were a "runner" no matter how slow you ran.

So might that be extended, and if we old, sedentary runners sat around and reminisced about the races we'd run twenty years ago would we still be "runners"? I think not.

But fandom is ill-defined, and is largely based on various forms of communicating, so maybe in fandom's case, talking about how one used to go to cons or publish fanzines would amount to fanac. And of course many fans largely attend sf cons in order to visit with fan friends so I suppose attending a con is still a faanish activity even if the attendee doesn't participate in fanzines or read sf any longer.

Mostly the question of who is a fan and what is fandom it is all very metaphysical and of no consequence. Which is why I love pondering it. But it does make a difference if one is talking about attracting new fans. Entering a hobby, defined by it's activities, is quite different from insinuating oneself into a small group of long-time friends who happened to meet while engaged in a hobby.

Now you're sorry you asked....

I am with Taral in that I tend to think education can do an artist (or writer) as much as harm as good. Although I do have college degrees I

have never taken a course in creative writing or attended any sort of workshop. Nor, for that matter have I ever had a journalism course. Yet I have been paid to write for newspapers and magazines and had stories and books published. The best teachers I've had have been the editors I've worked with. Getting paid to learn is better than paying.

I, sadly, have a degree in Writing, Literature and Publishing and have worked as a journalist. Not a good journalist, true, but I got paid. I'm not much the learning type, I guess.

I don't think I would be a better writer if I had had instruction. What if I had attended Clarion for example? Maybe some editor moonlighting there would have taught me to write exactly the kind of story he and his colleagues buy and I would've sold a couple stories to sf magazines. I don't know. What sort of achievement would that have been?

Well, as I've always said, money schmoozed is better than money earned!

The Dork Knight continues to amuse. Hey, even his car looks like him!

Best,
Eric

I really want a Dorkvagon myself! It's just the perfect car for certain, strange, occasions.



And now, back to Canada and R. Graeme Cameron!

Hi Chris!

The cover by Genevieve initially struck me as quite cheerful (because of the colours) but then my impression darkened considerably when I took note of some of the imagery (beak/claw head, mouth dripping oil?). In the end I concluded it was a powerful revelation of the conflicts and tensions inherent in any creative process, here specifically the perils of being a musician. Mind you, I'm usually wrong when interpreting art (in terms of the artist's intentions). At any rate, strikingly vivid & active cover.

I gotta say I go with ya on both those statements!

You said you don't understand the Canadian government at all? Find it confusing?

As I understand it, you guys vote separately for Senators, Congressmen, and an individual to fill the office of the President. If we had your system, we'd be voting (separately) for Senators, Members of Parliament, and some chap for the Office of the Prime Minister. But that's not how our system works.

First of all, our Senate is like the British House of Lords, the senators hold their position for life till they retire or die. When an opening comes up, the Prime Minister gets to choose who gets appointed (recently a couple of journalists no less). The senate acts as a check on the Parliament, since the Senators can veto any bill passed by Parliament. This they rarely do. In short, our Senate isn't as powerful or as significant as yours.

Secondly, there is NO vote for who gets to run the country. None. Nada. Zip.

Instead, we vote for our local Member of Parliament only, on the understanding that the political party that gets the most MPs (though not necessarily a majority – currently all the opposition parties in combination have more MPs than the governing Conservatives) will form the government and the party's leader (who must get elected as an MP in his local riding) will run the country, sort of. Except that he faces a constant threat

to his rule which is why our system is superior to yours.

If the majority of voters, Senators and Congressmen consider your current President a disaster for your country, there's nothing you can do about it. Sure, his proposed legislation can be blocked, but most of his decisions are enforced by executive order. In a sense, your President can run your country like a dictator if he wants to. Only impeachment can remove a bad President, and how often does that happen? Nixon left because he didn't want to get impeached, but he hung in as long as he could.

If, for any reason, the opposition calls for a vote of confidence in the government, and a majority of MPs (possibly including dissatisfied government MPs) vote no confidence, the Prime Minister must either call an election, or resign and let the opposition take over.

Mind you, Harper went to the Governor General (who represents the Queen of Canada – our head of State) and in effect arranged a postponement, but when he delivers the budget soon and the opposition doesn't like it, he's screwed, unless he's tailored it to meet the concerns of the opposition.

In other words, the opposition felt he WAS running the country like a dictator, and did everything they could

to knock him off his high horse. They didn't actually want to bring down the government, but merely force Harper to concede that ALL the MPs collectively ARE the government, and that he should govern accordingly.

Of course, Harper has a minority government which makes him vulnerable to any opposition coalition. But even if he had a majority government (ie the most MPs), he still might lose, since it's perfectly legit for MPs to vote no confidence in their own party if they agree the PM has got to go.

In short, our system holds the head of government to greater accountability than yours does, and if the majority of MPs agree he's no good he can be knocked out of office in a matter of hours. Consequently, no Prime Minister can ignore his parliament whereas your President can act unilaterally and ignore the Senate/ Congress as much as he pleases, pretty much.

And if all this seems antiquated and confusing, I would bring up the subject of your electoral college system as an example of same, but I don't understand it so I won't.

See, I don't get a system where you don't vote for the individual. That's what gets me. I might like the political stance of my local



Democrat who is running for Congress, but not want to support the Democrats as a party. True, our election system is weird (the Electoral College is hard to explain even to some seasoned politicians), but I like voting for people. There are folks who say that having a Congress one way and the President the other is best for everyone because you have to make sure that laws are balanced, but it didn't work this go-round because you couldn't balance Bush. Then again, I'd rather we just elect people without parties. That'd be good. Sadly, the President can't act unilaterally at all, though some have, but the courts tend to pull back folks from the brink (though they failed to rein in Bush). On the other hand, I would rather have my vote be what determines leadership than the vote of Congress.

Darn. Politics....Must write

something fannish...Lloyd Penney hints at the risks of writing on the job. Canadian author Michael Coney (now deceased) used to work for the B.C. government and wrote a great many of his novels at work. But with modern corporate 'spy' programs where they can 'see' everything you write, keep tabs on the number of keystrokes, etc., how much longer will writers be able to get away with it?

As a friend of mine was told when he was asked what'd happen if he looked at porn at work was told 'Well, we're supposed to fire you, but then again, an admin who has enough time to keep tabs on what people are surfing is just out wasting his time.'

Eric Mayer feels uncomfortable with fandom? Feels that he's communicating with individual faneds rather than fandom at large? I see what he's getting at, but to me communicating individually with a bunch of people active in fandom is the SAME THING as communicating with fandom. And Eric is damn good at it. So if I were him, I wouldn't worry.

Very good point. He usually ends up on my ballots for stuff!

Taral's article on the problems and perils of art education... My wife's best friend of years ago was accepted into the ultra-prestigious Evelyn Carr

Art College and on her first day was told to go wild and be creative with a block of wood, a nail and a hammer. She told them to shove it and walked out. Never went back.

Cheers! The Graeme (fanned of Space Cadet & WCSFAzine)

That sounds like legit criticism of such a project! Thanks much, Graeme!



I've been writing a lot. You seemed shocked. It's not that I'm just writing Zines entirely, I've actually dipped my toe back into fiction a little. I'm writing a crime novel, no intention of trying to sell it, I just felt like writing a story and out it's been coming.

You see, I've been reading the Hard Case Crime novels and they're just so much fun. The first two I read, The Last Quarry and The First Quarry, were both deliciously awesome and ugly and wonderful. Money Shot by Christa Faust, nominated for the Edgar Award this year, was even better than either of those. The most recent one I read was 50-to-1 by Charles Ardai. He's the co-founder of the line and he did a fun and witty and sticky novel that used the titles of all the other Hard Case Crime books to tell a story fifty years in the past about the Hard Case Crime novels. Trust me, it works.

Now, yes, I'm a fan of Science Fiction, but this is much more fun to write, and to read in many ways. Yeah, the endless future with all sorts of permutations and such is glory, but the gritty world that lies in crime fiction is fun too. it's fun to watch the terror and grit from the cushy comfort of my own little bed.

So yeah, I'm writing fiction. I don't feel good about it, but I'm having fun, and that's what writing's about.

Alright, that's enough! I'm packing up for the week. I'm headed out to Further Confusion for the weekend. FC is a lot of fun, even if it's a Furry Con and I am NOT a furry, I must remind you in the same way that I remind people that I am not a SMOF. I'm not! Seriously! I do have a good time at FC, and I've taken on my second role by

working in the Creator's Lounge. It's in the same room as the Fanzine Lounge was at Silicon, so I'm aware of the place. I've never worked in a Lounge for anyone, I've only run them, so this'll be good training for helping Lloyd and Yvonne out for WorldCon's Lounge. And I'll have a little time to just hang

out in my favorite Airport Hotel: The beloved DoubleTree. I'm hoping that the recent changes aren't as bad as they felt during Silicon and that a good time is had by all.

We've started to do the Hugo recommending at BASFA and I hope I'll get to publish some of the results.



The art this issue is weird. There's the fine piece from Mo on the cover, and the DaVinci-Genevieve Mash-Up that Steve Green put together. Of course, there were the couple of Rotsler pieces with the LoCs, Bob Hole did the Pirate Ship skiers and the crazy bunny thing is from Genevieve. She's so damn good! The photo next to these words is interesting. It's listed as a wrestling match from a work camp from about 1921. I think it's mislabeled as I'm pretty sure that at least one of the fighters is English as the guy's wearing the kind of fighting jacket that were worn during fights at Carnivals from the 1890s through the 1930s. Those didn't make their way to the US for some reason, but it's possible that an English fighter would have brought one with him. The other thing is I'm pretty sure that's Shellmound, which is in Emoryville. I'm looking into it.

I wanna say thanks to Dann Lopez, who also did the 200 cover!

Tales of the Dork Knight

You mean YOU'RE the %\$@#!! that STOLE My CAR??



Don't you know you comitted GRAND THEFT AUTO??



...but let me give you a little rundown on just what YOU did here.



First, You left your KEYS in the ignition...



...with the windows rolled down, and the radio blasting... in front of a liquor Store...



You should NEVER leave your car vulnerable to car thieves! Besides, I only used it to go get some Mascara!

So let that be a lesson to ya!



This public service message brought to you by Concerned Citizens Committee against public stupidity!