



# The Drink Tank



ISSUE AND A FIFTH

MORE THOUGHTS AND STRANGENESSES  
WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY  
CHRISTOPHER J. GARCIA

## Nearer Corflu to Thee...

My first Corflu is only a couple of weeks away. There's a lot I'm looking forward to, mostly getting a look at the faces that go along with the names I've been reading most of my reading life. The folks I'm most eager to get a chance to chat with are folks like Arnie Katz (who I didn't see on the membership list, but he was the co-chair of the BBB movement), Bill Burns (to apologize for the frequency of this publication), and Art Widner, just cause every other time I've ran into him, he's always had a few good stories. There are of course others I'd like to get a chance to talk with, like Marty Cantor, Bruce Gillespie, and Gordon Eklund. There's always someone else to meet at these things.

### ***This Just in***

Two Millers have made significant moves. Reggie Miller of the Indiana Pacers has retired while Arthur Miller has passed away. The great basketballer is one of those guys who stayed with his team from the start and was one of the great shooters. Arthur Miller was a fine playwright, a raging Pinko leftist, Marilyn's husband and a damn smart guy. Growing up as a Reagan-loving Conservative, I always found his political works to be most annoying. I will say that the man could write a tragic hero better than most.

## My Favourite Fanzine Ever

I've never been shy about saying what my favourite fanzine happens to be. For most of my life, it was Granfalloon. Then, in the 1990s, it became Mimosa. It's been challenged by a few things, but nothing has ever come up to the Mimosa standards.

Richard and Nikki Lynch ran Mimosa starting in the 1980s. The goal was to tell the stories of fandom's glorious, and schmutzig, past. The history of fandom has always been one of my majour interests, particularly the 1968 WorldCon. The first issue of Mimosa I got my hands on, I think it was Mimosa 14, featured an article from David Kyle on the Science Fiction League. I was deeply hooked.

The articles were by fans, and fans turned pro, who were some of the best and most entertaining possible contributors. Kyle, Mike Resnick, Forry, The Benfords, Jack Chalker and so many others. For me, Dave Kyle was the highlight writer. When I got a chance to read older issues, I would always jump for the Kyle article first. Mimosa wound up doing 30 top-notch issues, and in my eyes, went out still holding the belt.

In 2002, likely early in 2002, I came across Dick Lynch's outline for a book on 1960s Fandom. I had heard so many of the full stories but had never seen all of them gathered in one place. It hit me that the 1960s was probably the last decade you could do a view of a Grand Unified Fandom. The 1970s explosion of Star Trek fandom and later Star Wars and anime, not to mention the Con Explosion that followed, would make doing one of the 70s too hard and of the 80s even harder. More than anything, I want that book to get released. Hell, I'd pre-pay for it before it was even written. Fannish history is important, and folks like Richard are gonna make sure we know that.



Richard and Nikki Lynch, 2000



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## Chess: The Computers and Women That Play

The Computer History Museum is putting together an exhibit on the history of Computer Chess. While I've been doing a lot of the research, and believe me when I say that there is so very much material to go through, I've managed to learn very little. Here's what I know: computers have been playing chess as long as there have been computers to play the game. Some of the true legends in computing history have worked on the chess problem. Alan Turing (who was named the Most Important Gay Man of the Twentieth Century back in 2000), Stanislaus Ulam, John Von Neumann, Ken Thompson (inventor of UNIX and the guy who bumped into me yesterday at the museum) and of course, AI pioneer John McCarthy. We only managed to get computers to beat Grand Masters by putting the programmes on specialized supercomputers.



I've studied chess games from the last fifty years of all the greats. Kasparov and Karpov's games are amazing to analyze and the same can be said of all the Bobby Fisher games. I've played games against a dozen classic programmes. I managed to beat the first computer chess board, the Exidy Chess Challenger, BattleChess, and MicroChess and lost to programmes ranging from Mephisto and Shredder to Deep Junior and one of the later versions of SARGON.

### The G-Man Playing Deep Junior

The thing that interests me are the chess personalities. Gary Kasparov is the most famous, since he lost Human Superiority to the Machines in that famous match. The most interesting set of chess figures that I have stumbled across are the Polgar sisters.

The Polgar sisters are Judit, Sophia and Susan. Some say that the Polgar sisters had a father who made the dad from Shine look like Bill Cosby. He bragged that his daughters were going to be the first female World Champions. Easily, Judit and Susan are the best female chess players of all time, and Sophia isn't too far behind.

I've seen their matches, both on tape and in report form, and they are most impressive. I'd say that Susan might play the most elegant game of chess in the world. Judit plays like a juggernaut, she's unstoppable. I've not found any records of matches between the two of them, though I know they exist, and I'm pretty sure that they would be battles. Arguably, Susan is better at central board control while Judit can destroy a position better than anyone (OK, maybe that Kasparov guy is good at that too).

I know Judit and Susan are moms, in fact, Judit just returned to the circuit after having her kid. Judit won the Japfa back in 2000 and did well at the Corus after coming back this year. Susan won Gold at the 2004 Chess Olympiad. Susan has been the Woman's World Chess Champion, though Judit would probably have held that title since she was 15 or so, but she refuses to play all woman tourneys.



Top: The sisters Polgar, Middle: Judit vs. Kasparov, Bottom: Fischer vs. Susan



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## Lord Kelvin's Machine

By James Blaylock

Ah, steampunk, that genre that has pretty much always been around and only after Sterling, Rucker and Gibson turned everything into a -punk did it gain a name. Jim Blaylock is one of the best steampunk writers, along with Tim Powers. He created a world surrounding a cast of characters like Dr. Narbondo and Langdon St Ives. It's a beautiful little world he's created, but Lord Kelvin's Machine does sort of drop off towards the end into a rank-and-file time travel story. While I was amused the whole way through, I didn't think that it lived up to the early chapters. Blaylock is as good a closer as I've seen, unlike, say, Robert J. Sawyer, so I was a little shocked at the flacidity of the ending.

Still, it was enjoyable. I'm not a Victorian fan at all, but the England Blaylock presents is fun and at times hilarious. I'm hoping that Homunculus, which features the same characters, ends better.

I'd suggest reading it if you're a steampunk fan or like the Victorian Age in general.

## A Very Short Story Alternate History

Harry Turtledove sat at his desk, distracted from his latest manuscript by the third season finale of CopRock. To clear his mind of concious thought, he took a sip of his New Coke and freed his brain by reading Dave Meltzer's column in the National. He stopped, looked up and had two very dark thoughts.

First, he had written himself into his latest story.

Second, he was running out of good ideas.

## Danny Bot

Reviewed by Christopher J Garcia

Frankly, there are a lot of short films that are just plain silly. Silly films can be great, like Lon Lopez's Oh Yeah! (available on iFilm.com) but mostly, they are just fluffy and insignificant. Frank Lesser's Danny Bot is not at all fluffy...I mean it is, but it's still a great little short.

Danny Bot is the story of Young Master, a young man whose robot companion through his childhood has been called up to the RoboWar. So, in the grand tradition of all those left behind as their nearest adn dearest go off to fight, Young Master begins to sing.

Now, understand that this is actually a filk song, taking the tune to Danny Boy and making it about a Robot War instead of WWI. It's hilarious, especially in combination with the images of protestors and Young Master's childhood. Plus, any song that calls a robot a War-like Dove will have me in stitches.

I can't say that it's the funniest short I say last year (that honour goes to Spam-Ku) but it is right up there. Lesser does a great job and the costume for the Tambor 3000 (which I'm betting was named after the Patron Saint of The Drink Tank, Mr. Jeffrey Tambor) was great.

Not only is it a fun short, but it's got a great website at [www.dannybot.com](http://www.dannybot.com). It's got a RoboBlog for Danny Bot and a bunch of funny material that kept me entertained.

This is another short you can see at the Cinequest Film Festival in March. I'll be announcing one of the screenings, so hopefully I'll get to meet the brains behind the madness!

## Iron Chef American: The Series

By M Lloyd

I love Iron Chef. We used to watch it together back in the old days. The tapes the Jay sent me are great. The Flay-Tsai battle was fun, but nothing beats Buffalo as a theme. I wish they'd have the challenger choose who he wanted to face, and maybe bring in a chick soon! Alton rules!



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COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS  
SENT TO GARCIA@COMPUTERHISTORY.ORG  
BY MY GENTLE READERS

Lloyd Penny- Etobicoke, ON Canada

Dear Chris:

Thanks for posting issues of The Drink Tank on eFanzines...you're putting them out at a rate of about one every two or three days! Before more arrive, I thought I'd do up the traditional letter of comment on the first four issues.

***I though that to put more time between issues, I should double the page count. I finished the first ten pager in less than 5 hours and said 'nah, I'll stick to 5 (or now 6) a time.'***

1...You must know Arnie Katz by now, for he also shares your twin interests of fandom and wrestling. I think I can include Bill Kunkle in that, as well. I've never really been involved with wrestling, but I do know that the initial organization that eventually became the WWE was founded in Toronto. Wrestlers like Sweet Daddy Siki got their start here.

My own training is in journalism, so I had hoped to be an author by now, as well. Sometimes, I don't even think I'm a writer, but I do whomp out a lot of locs, and that's what's keeping me busy these days.

There's a group of fans in Montreal that do fan films every so often. Their latest one was Beavra!, and they've done several others, too. Check out the Montreal Sf Association, give them a Google, and see what they're doing.

***I've exchanged a couple of emails with The Kingfish, but we've never met. I'm hoping to get the chance at Corflu. Sweet Daddy Siki is a name that pops up a lot with old-timey Canadian Fans. I met him when my Dad used to work up yonder. He was still wrestling into the 1990s! I was about to say that I've seen your name in most of the fanzines I tend to find myself reading. I'm wondering if my LoCer from issue 3, Mr. De Mey, is one of those folks making fan films.***

2...Television SF is one think I haven't been watching at all. Enterprise was cancelled, Battlestar Galactic hasn't caught my eye at all...I haven't gotten into a good television show since Babylon 5. I can enjoy a good programme, but I'm waiting for one that I can really get into. Time will tell, and I'll wait...I've got enough on my plate right now.

Media fandom gets no respect because for many years, they were seen as almost illiterate, preferring watching the small or large screen to opening a book. We know now that it's not true; many media fans I know have a respectable bookshelf; they simply find the fandom that's more friendly, and to be honest, that's media fandom. Lit fandom can be pretty nasty to the neofan. I should know...my own start in fandom was with Trek fandom, helping to start a club on the west of coast of Canada in 1977. I did eventually ask if there was anything else fanwise, and that's when I found out about lit fandom, conventions, Hugos, Worldcons, and much more. I'm more into lit than media now, but I know people on both sides, and our efforts with Torcon brought a lot on either side together.

***Lost is really good. I never got into any Star Trek after TNG and I've never seen any B5. I pretty much think that I straddle the line of Media and Lit. I had an easy intro, though. My dad wasn't about to put me through the paces before I could read and once you can claim second generation, things are made much easier, I've noticed.***



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3...I notice there's lots of poker, billiards and strongman competitions on the various sports channels. A lot of it is because of the NHL hockey lockout. (As you can tell, I don't watch ESPN, but sometimes, I do watch TSN, which is their Canadian affiliate.)

I've heard the complaint that fandom is very white. Part of the complaint comes from my friend Wayne Brown from Rochester, New York. Wayne is black, and a very busy fan in that city, irregularly staging a con called Astronomicon. We plan to go to it this coming November. Wayne's black friends call him an Oreo cookie for his interest in fandom. They think it's a white man's hobby. I find people of many different descents around Canadian fandom...black fans in Montreal and Nova Scotia, oriental in Toronto, Hispanic out west. I am happy to say that race has never entered into the equation; fans is fans. We all look different to each other, and somehow, that makes us all the same.

***I love Trick Shot Magic and Women's 9-Ball on the Deuce. I really do wish that someone would start ESPN 8- The Ocho. I am in serious hockey withdrawal, especially since I live around the corner from The Shark Tank. I notice that Anime and comic fandom both tend to have a lot of ethnicity, especailly Asian kids. I've never actually seen any out and out exclusion due to race, I more think it's a matter of interests not being presented.***

4...and right up to date. I did hear that Max Schmeling has passed away. I think names like his fade away from popular culture because it's much more detailed these days, and modern pop culture depends more on look than achievement. When it comes to SF writers, we feel that way with Roger Zelazny. He was preparing to come up to our convention some years ago when he passed away. We had an excellent reason to give to our convention members when we had to tell them Roger wouldn't be here this weekend...

I have found that as long as SF fanzines have been around, they provide someone to take a nasty swipe as someone else. Feuds still take place, and people assume the worst in others. I don't get involved with them, in spite of the fact I've been a target a couple of times. rich brown doesn't like the way Cheryl Morgan does her zine, and Cheryl couldn't give a rat's ass about what rich thinks. (Found that out this morning. She think rich is very entertaining, and gives her zine publicity she couldn't buy.) I know Cheryl doesn't print locs, which seems to be the focus of his complaint. I loc her zines anyway. They whole idea of communicating through zines is communicating. Getting your byline printed with your loc is egoboo, and it's fine.

In the local, Helen is right. I am reading Somewhere to be Flying by deLint, and it's quite entertaining.

***You're definitely right about the way Pop Culture works today. Max will probably be better remembered than most of his contemporaries, save for Joe Louis. I miss Zelazny. I do feel like he's been sort of pushed to the side after his death, sort of an anti-Cordwainer. I try my hardest to avoid participating in politics, though I guess by commenting on them, I'm doing just that.***

Well, two pages to cover four issues isn't too bad. Keep the issues coming, and I'll write more locs, simple as that. Many thanks, and see you with the next one.

Yours, Lloyd Penney.

***Thanks for reading and writing in. Issue Six is cooling on the window sill as we speak.***



# The Drink Tank



ISSUE IN THE THIRD

COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS  
SENT TO GARCIA@COMPUTERHISTORY.ORG  
BY MY GENTLE READERS

Helen Spiral- UK

Hi Chris,

It seems to me that De Lint's writing is more popular with women but you could try "Forests of the Heart" which features a half Hispanic character Bettina as one of the main protagonists. Or if, like me, you prefer to meet a new writer through a variety of short stories then his collection "Dreams Underfoot" includes a story about Hispanic character LaDonna out looking for trouble...

You're typing on a computer ok? I know old habits die hard but stop double spacing after full stops! It's the visual equivalent of hiccups,

Helen

***I'll keep an eye out for those De Lint books. I've seen that folks liked Dreams Underfoot quite a bit. I am a short story guy in a multi-part series world!***

***I clutch the Double Space! I really do believe that it makes full well sense to have two spaces after a sentence ends. For me, it makes reading easier to have it there. Sadly, I can't claim to have ever gone through typewriters until after I learned to type on the Xerox Alto that we had, so I don't have much excuse.***

M Lloyd- Geelong, AU

No amount of money would ever persuade me to do porn, but having just watched Embryo last night, I'd do it if it gave me a chance to work with Jennifer Barker. She's way too cute for words!

I also got a chance to watch Robot Boy and was impressed with the woman who played the girl. She was well-researched, but I didn't see that Robot Boy himself could have done anything. The soundtrack was good, though a little too indy for my Goth tastes.

***You know, Jay and I always said that you'd make a good porn star. You certainly did enough research into the genre.***

***On rewatching, Robot Boy has a charm that comes from the acting. Even with just his eyes, I thought the Robot Boy did an amazing job conveying sadness and comedy through that slit in his headset.***

Jay Crasdan- Evanston, IL.

Chris has a soft spot for old boxers after all. I remember you saying that after a boxer is done in the ring he should be taken out and shot, his mane and hooves buried under the ring at Madison Square Garden to prevent him from trying to make a comeback. I was sad to hear that Max had passed away. Leni Riefenstahl died a couple of years back and Max was the only other Big Name German of that era left, really.

Also, stop whining. You sound like a little girl.

***Thanks, Jay. There are some boxers who just need to learn to be retired. Pretty much anyone with the last name Spinks. Leni was a great filmmaker, but more than likely a Nazi, if not in membership, in thought. Her films seem to promote Nazi physical ideals, even if they are of Non-Aryan people.***