

The Drink Tank



Issue 143

The Drink Tank isn't always boobs, wrestling and stories of drinking. Once in a while, someone will send me something that both excites and worries me. Typically, that someone is Frank Wu, and this is another one.

JUST BENEATH THE SURFACE

by

Frank Wu

Despite "Avenue Q" telling me that "everyone's a little bit racist," I don't encounter a lot of racism in my day-to-day life. I know it exists - at least intellectually - but I like to think that humanity's becoming more civilized. I'd like to think that racism is disappearing.

YouTube tells me I am wrong, very very wrong. Not necessarily the videos, but the Comments Section. Racist videos can be flagged as "Inappropriate," but not so racist comments.

And we see on YouTube the racism running like a deep torrent of raw sewage under our city streets. Not mild racism, but dialog that quickly degenerates into name-calling and war-cries to "Kill Them All." I don't know if I'm more shocked by the thoughts expressed, or the fact that they're expressed all around the world, or that they're

expressed without any sort of regret or self-editing.

If this lies beneath, will it burst to the surface in uncontrolled violence and mayhem?



IRAQIS AND AMERICANS

These are direct quotations from the comments section of a video in which a U.S. Humvee is hit by an IED (roadside bomb). The IED isn't very effective, though, and the soldiers laugh when they realize they are ok.

digitalrobotics: cowardly roadside bombs... iraqi insurgents are cowards

tuttle63: cowards?..i think the Iraqi resistance is quite brave and heroic when you consider what they are up against

handy0070: End violence, end suffering: end Islam

elementsb4eva: God bless our godlike troops, let the unfortunate ones rest in peace in heaven. As for bush, let him rot in hell.

discobiscuits0: Fuck IEDs. Fuck Iraq. We need to get the fuck out of there.

RGaunt88: so the iraque's just planted a bomb and it is pretty much like a mine if u run over it it blows up????? u guys r luck USMC

stevenhelton: No it's not a mine, they usually attach a cell phone and all they need to do is to call it and it explodes.

topslope1: Thats gay as hell.. IEDS take lives and its a pussy war, not even a shooting war anymore.

OMGITSANOREO: How the Fuck does that Third world country have fucking cell phones??

macpeace: they (animal troop) deserve to death...why they attack that country? all citizen over there just defend their country, home, family,.. not like bush.. suck their oil, create story september 11, to attack middle east,.1st..we

just want sell our bullets, gun, weapon, make war like game. let they dieeeee!!!! burn in hell with bush and the gang...die you all fuckerrrrr.. hahhahahahah. god bles u freedom fighter..defend your country, home, family..we are no 1 terrorist

0331: macpeace is retarded!!!

stevenhelton: He is a insurgent ahhahahah die pig!!

wkh88: could you marines go kill some sand niggers? nearly all of them are insurgents or sympathizers, just kill some randomly.

Lachausis: shut up, you racist! You can't speak like that about the whole nation.

avenger007007: yes he can



BLACK and WHITE in AUSTRALIA

These comments follow a video of a news report: an aboriginal man died in prison from wounds

inflicted by a white police officer. Even after the case went to court, the cop was not punished.

AndersLive: *** Yawn ***

makwaa1: This is such a useless video.

What exactly do you hope to achieve by running us through the 'destruction' of Aboriginal people? They had 40,000 years to civilise a whole continent. The new wave of migrants from Europe did it in just over 200. We have enough problems dealing with Aboriginal issues. Why can't we look forward as one country and one people, instead of lamenting the past injustices?

katedorrough: Please educate yourself further on this subject. The Aboriginal people DID civilise the continent - ON THEIR TERMS, in THEIR way- not in WESTERN TERMS- ALL THINGS THAT WESTERNERS DO IS RIGHT, right? NOT!!!! They shaped and nurtured this continent in a SUSTAINABLE way, through FIRE and their form of agriculture was to re-plant the roots of the plants they pulled out, so that next year, the same plant would be there, in exactly the same place, again. All you proved was your ignorance.

makwaa1: don't white farmers do the same? Farm and replant? Their

work feeds 21 million mouths. How many boomerangs and woomeras would you need to do the same 'the sustainable aboriginal way?' It's people like you, throwing up scrappy arguments and fueling hatred that need to educate yourselves further. Do you have a solution for the problem? If so, please let us know. Don't be so fashionably green and argue for the sake of it.

ray25620: It's pathetic the way you fawn over Aborigines. White people invented anaesthetics, medicines, vaccinations, and discovered the germ theory of disease, apart from all the other accomplishments unique to the white man (note MAN). Yet you fawn over people who made nothing more than the boomerang and the didgeridoo.

gateway1178: Actually your wrong about white people inventing medicines, the real father of medicine was an Afrikan multi-genius known as Imhotep,(a black man). He is also known as the god of medicine. The greeks got this knowledge from the kamites and that is how whites come to know of medicine and Herbs.

Machetazo1: Haha yeah it's like italians who think tomatoes

originated in Italy, when in REALITY never has a single “Roman” even SEEN a tomato. They originated in Mexico, and therefore should be called Cuauhtepac and Atlapa tomatoes, not “Roma” and “San Marzano” tomatoes, but you know Europeans, always naming things after themselves. Just like the “pizza” which is from PERSIA, and noodles from CHINA, the “tortellini” copied off the won ton. White people need to get over themselves.

ray25620: Electric power: Michael Faraday. Radio: Marconi. Germ theory of disease: Louis Pasteur. Powered flight: the Wright brothers. Gramophone record: Edison. Computer, Viagra, Internet, Anaesthetic, Internal combustion engine, etc etc etc all invented by WHITE MEN of European ancestry. No wonder non-whites hate and envy us, as we are so obviously superior when it comes to making the world a more comfortable, interesting, and safer place.

doggoleslurry: ray25620 = moron
Aboriginals are spiritually evolved people that lived off the land and were quite content living without all the technology the whites had...

ray25620: “Aboriginals are spiritually

evolved people” What a joke you are. Why don’t you go and live amongst them then? White people from Europe are the most spiritually evolved. The greatest philosophers, Kant, Kierkegaard, Locke, Descartes. The greatest writers and poets, Woolf, Eliot, Keats, Shakespeare, Chaucer. The list of great Europeans is endless. Aboriginals just want to get drunk.

chezza1967: ... I still say before the white man came to Australia, we were so healthy and happy that the bush medicines we used were enough. Our biggest problem before white man, was snake bites, burns and the infection here and there. Our bush medicines which included herbal painkillers were enough to treat these. We lived happily without all the modern technology etc.

korninator: I’m white and I feel bad about what my ancestors did to the Aboriginal population... I wish I could go back and change it... they did a very bad deed... they left survivors. Stupid abos they should have wiped them out while they had the chance.

firesonglady: Indigenous peoples of Australia, please forgive me and my ancestors and release me/us from your anger and

unforgiveness, so healing can happen, even in this small measure....let forgiveness begin to flow throughout this land. Not Terra Nullius, but Terra Spiritus; the Great South Land of the Holy Spirit; so we can be the Great South Land of love, acceptance and forgiveness, where the peoples are one in Spirit and in Truth.

PorkyHonky: evil white people
bozes: fuck all the aboriginals off just shoot them all they are all fucking useless I think we should kill them all and feed them to the poor kids overseas that’s all their good for the fucking black cunts





CHINESE, KOREANS and JAPANESE

Again, these are direct quotations from the comments section.

ShowJumper1334: We need to stop racism...it's terrible!!!

jhsakana: We need to stop Koreans from hating Japan. Vice versa.

koreanpunk92: y? japanese fucks treated us like shit...they'll never learn

Intranetusa: Japan, Korea, and China got screwed over thanks to European imperialism...

elsalfo: the racism will pry neva end (least not for anuter cpl hundred yrs)..only takes 1 guy to piss off 100ppl who then go and become racist, btw i dont agree with u sayin most is japanese on korean its actually korean on japanese, the jap vids r norm jus defendin themselves. Their are alot of korean makin fake accs and pretend to b jap to piss ppl off

and make em h8 japs

Intranetusa: Chinese, Japanese, and Koreans hate each other thanks to WW2. oh well...

yoNY1yo: actually, they hate each other even before WW2.

itgeek8888: I've known many Japanese people in the United States. What I've noticed with them is, they are very bitter people. One of the reasons is because their country is the only country that was bombed with A-bomb. They were also capture and hauled to internment camps. One of them used to work as my yard maintenace guy. I fired him because he was very sneaky and cheated on the bills. He pretty much smiled in front of me and stabbed me in the back.

itgeek8888: Koreans, on the other hand, were very honest and hard worker. He did not say much, like that Japanese guy, but did exactly what he promised. And, he billed me exactly what I was told. I have many friends that tell me the same story: Japanese people are often deceptive about their services. Since this incident, I try not to trust any of the US Japanese slaves.

IAMTHEBEST: in non gook/jap view, you gooks and japs are all same shit. you gooks and japs are all pancake-faced, small-

dicked, rice-eyed, powerless migits who eat sticky-rice. you gooks and japs can't open your eyes to see that fact. open your eyes u gookityjappitychinkity subhumans.

seanki11: IAMTHEBEST-uneducated piece of ignorant trash.

Intranetusa: koreans/chinese eat dogs japanese eat whales and dolphins fuk that shit

kiyohama: American can eat my ass.

Juanserz: racists is very GOOD!! I LIKE IT. AND IT WOULD NEVER END

kjo616: As you can see from the comments below, Japs are the worst human kind there is. No wonder so many people hate Japs. Disgusting.

myASIMO: kjo616: If you don't think there is no solution to the rascism in Japan and what are you doing in Japan? Why are you in Japan? Instead of making the blanket statements why don't you put your comment to that one person. One by one that is what you should do. Don't you think so? This non-sense got to stop. We have a bigger fish to fry you know.

kjo616: Japs, All they did in WWII- steal, rape and kill. All they do on YouTube- lie, hate and blame others.

EvilJapan: OK, calm down and let's all get to the point... It's

already been proven that Japan is the most evil, suspicious, and notorious country in the world even if the Nanking Incident wasn't true. Japan is too shameful for admitting its past countless amount of great atrocities. Japanese culture, tradition, and suspicious behavior also proves that fact.
DOWN WITH JAPAN!

ProudofPRC: haha koreans are soo racist. its in their culture. they even discriminate against 1/8 Korean people in their own race. Koreans are treated well in China, USA, Japan. Americans, Chinese and Japanese are treated like criminals in Korea. In other words... we should act racist against gooks

FuckKoreans731: fuck koreans
Tereteremunnsitt: racism is ok



BLACK and WHITE in AMERICA

In another news video: a white school teacher was repeatedly taunted with racial epithets by her black students. The black principal refused to intervene, claiming that profanity was part of their culture. The abuse continued, so the teacher sued the school board and won \$300,000.

sirgwaine0001: teens curse yes! but if a white kid were to use the word nigger as these black kids use the word cracker and honkey the white kids would automatically be suspended if not expelled from school, the teachers are being told NOT TO DISCIPLINE BLACK KIDS FOR USING RACIAL SLURS AGAINST WHITES!!!this is discrimination and needs to have full immediate attention, the black kids have to be disciplined for this racial hate!

rOaCh2000: racial hate? lmao.that's just how we act.

johncl280: you're justifying those students' behavior toward their teacher? Calling here a white c*nt and other disparaging, degrading and derogatory remarks. You're saying it's a product of their culture. Well even if this were a cultural thing which it's not, anyone is capable if those words, they're

certainly not restricted to any specific creed or culture; it is NO way for any student to act in an educational environment, period.

Guru7776: bull shit, so calling a black person nigger isn't racial hate, its just how us whites act.

bostonburn: Right on. Good for her.

blood18age: ahhhh, i have been called "white trash" and i call them "shitty nigger" if they think they're going to take over us then we have to hit them back

siszam: I am white and grew up in a black neighborhood and couldn't play outside because I would be attacked. At school I was picked on constantly and the teachers did nothing. It's a shame that the only people it's acceptable to abuse in America are white people and Christians.

kokema82: I'm sorry maybe I'm understanding your statment wrong, but I'm Christian. and if it is only acceptable to abuse Whites and Christians are you implying that the only Christians are white? Read what you write before posting it.

Fusiondoom: THANKYOU!

sporksandknives44: I think he meant that out of all the religions it's only "acceptable" to make fun of Christians.

sheepmeat: Fair is fair, it is time to begin to enforce all the laws

evenly. Respect is self respect as well as respecting others. A culture of violence needs to change, regardless of race, religion or nationality.

airjordanthenexttobe: you know more hate crimes happen to white christian males than anyone else is the U.S.A. when the hate should be pointed to terriost.
rjksoccer06: Black people are more racist than white people. My mother grew up in queens and was spit in her eye by a black kid as she walked out of a grocery store bc she was white

MykeTyson: I know what you mean. I have seen Black guys blocking the back door on busses and calling people "Chinaman and Chink" when they try to get off. They hide behind their history of slavery to get away with their own racism.

rOaCh2000: they only do it because they know they won't do nothin.

MactownGeorgiaBoi: yes black people are more racists. That's why we had white people in slavery for 400 years. WDF no 1 race is more racist than another

misterbriggs894: don't worry, when no white people "want" to teach anymore the mexicans will do it[they do all the jobs americans don't want to do] unfortunately the lazy niggers won't be willing

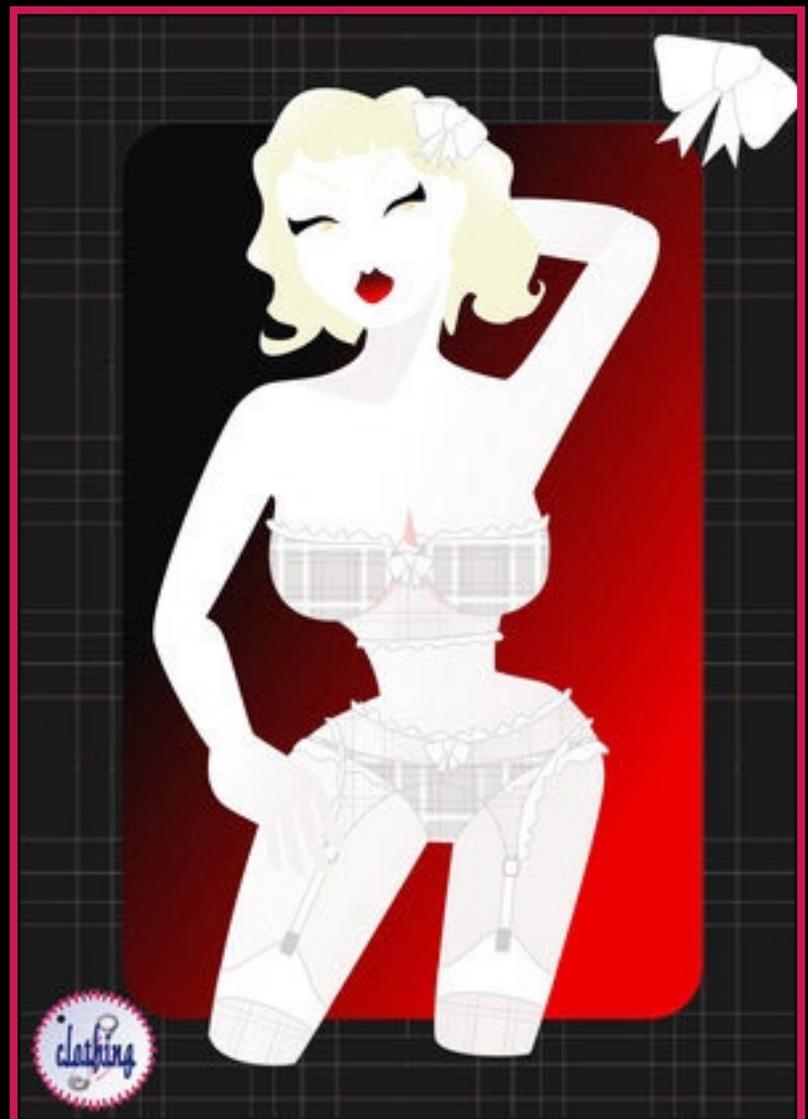
to learn spanish any more than the stupid mexicans will learn english

thatphillipthing: More white people need to take a stand before we become the minority. Martin Luther King Jr wanted equality right? Yeah right. Black people are the most racists people on this planet, they just get away with it cause they're black and nobody has enough balls to say anything about it.



This was an article that really got to me. I'm bothered by the way we think about racism. Not just Americans, but everybody. There are millions of examples and counter-examples of racism in every country in the world against many different groups. Sometimes it's institutionalized, Apartheid, Jim Crow Laws, many of the Anti-Korean laws in Japan, and we cry out against those. There are subtle notes, like the interview process for many housing communities that aim to exclude minorities (or in the case of many NorCal communities that are being sued, exclude anyone but Asians) and there's the entire Credit Check process that is a way of keeping low-income families out of many neighborhoods (particularly those areas with good schools). These are subtle, but they exist.

One of my heroes is a fellow named Nicky Winmar. He was an Aussie Rules player in the 1980s and 90s and happened to be Black. In a game at Collingwood, a bunch of fans were yelling racial epithets at the guy. So what's he do after the game (which St. Kilda won)? He lifted his jumper and pointed to his stomach, pointing to his skin. This riled the crowd and got the AFL to take a serious look at racial problems. It was as powerful a state as the power salute on the podium.



And Now...Boobs, Wrestling
and Stories about Drinking!

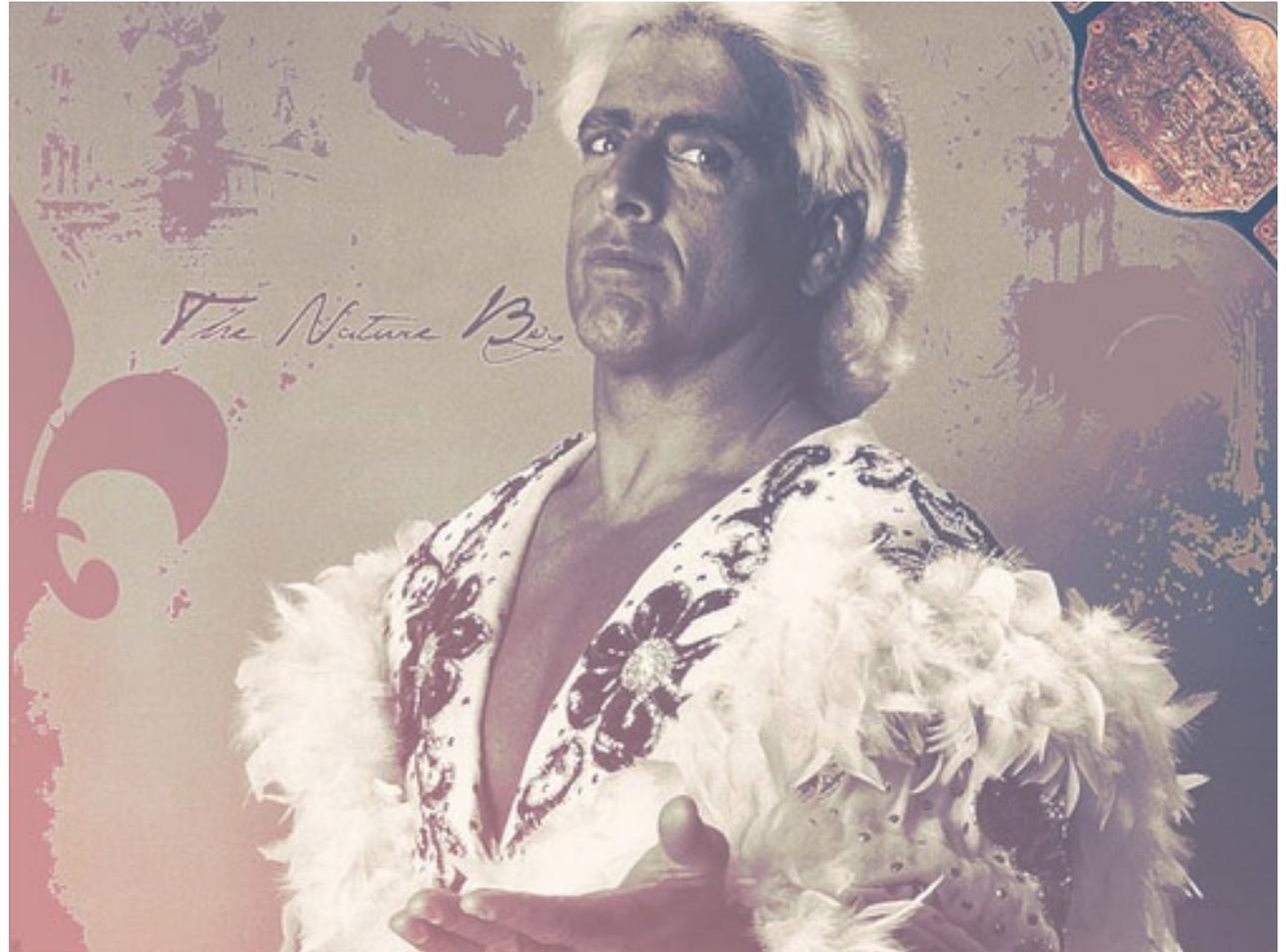
That man right over there --> is Richard Morgan Fliehr. You've never heard of him? Maybe you've heard of Ric Flair. If you're a wrestling fan from any point over the last 30 years, you know the name, that's for sure. A 13-time World Champion, though you could even make a case for it being more than that since he dropped the belt for a day in the Caribbean a couple of times. He's one of the all-time greats, a legend who followed in legendary footsteps and probably outshone them all.

And now it looks like he's retiring.

In wrestling, there's no real retirement. As long as you can get a job, you keep wrestling. Flair has been doin' good stuff in the WWE for a few years now and has had some brilliant matches with guys like Mick Foley, Shawn Michaels and Edge. He can take a helluva beating and come back and do his trademarks. He's 58 or so and still goes better than a lot of the younger guys, even if his physique isn't what it used to be.

And now he's retiring.

The reason is three-fold. First, he's starting an investment company with his new wife that's supposed to be a big deal. He's got the know-how and good backing. He's also been booked poorly the last few months and they moved him to another show (Smack-Down!) and that was supposed to be

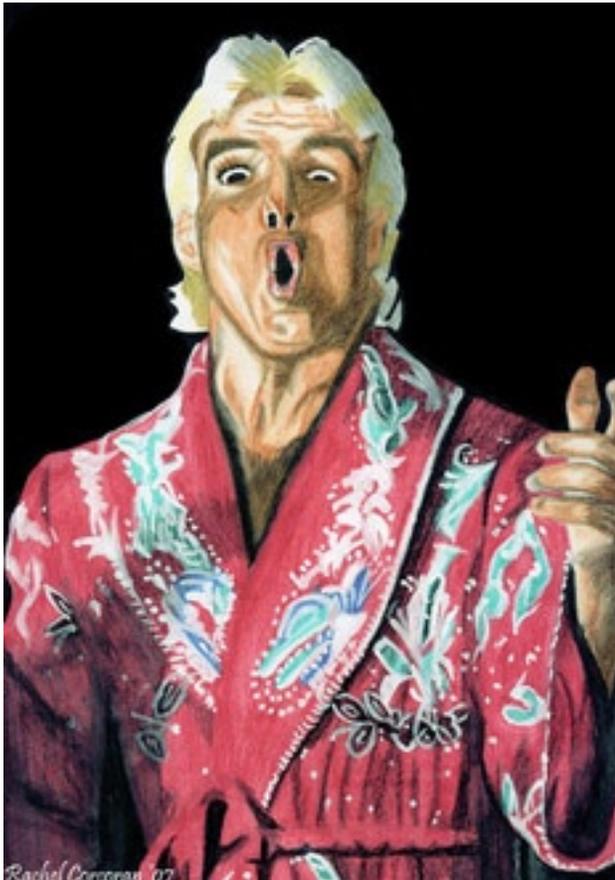


used much better and they just blew. The other reason: He's 58 freakin' years old! True, he might be the best 58 year old to ever play the game, but he's still old enough to be a Grandfather (and I believe he is one!)

The loss of Ric Flair hurts me to a degree because he was one of the guys I always loved. Even when I was supposed to hate him, he was always one of my favourites. In the 1980s, I loved the Garvin Brothers, especially

Gorgeous Jimmy Garvin and his hot wife/valet Precious. He feuded with Flair and they had a July 4th Cage match where Flair took advantage of an injured Garvin with the Figure Four to win. A fan jumped on the cage and got beat down for it! It was an amazing match and I kept going back and forth between the two as to who I was rooting for. That's the power the man had.

He feuded with Dusty Rhodes, with Nikita Koloff, with my man Ron



Garvin, Terry Funk and with so many others, it'd be too hard to list them. He launched several careers. Sting was an up-and-comer and after he went to a 45-minute draw with Flair, he was mae forever. There was Barry Windham, a guy who went an hour with Flair and it made him into a star. Kerry Von Erich, and Ricky Steamboat beat him for the title in the moments that both are best remembered for. The 1980s were his decade, without question.

The 1990s were pretty good to him too. He left the NWA and entered

the WWF after a contract dispute. He feuded with Hogan, naturally, and Randy Savage, Bret Hart and Roddy Piper as well as Mr. Perfect. When it was time for Flair to leave, he lost a great match to Mr. Perfect on one of the earliest episodes of RAW and that is one of my favourite Flair memories. He went back to WCW and was back on top. He had a feud with Vader in 1993 that was brutal and gave us one of the best matches of the year at Starrcade. When WCW changed and brought in old WWF guys and started the NwO, he was still there and still haveing great matches. After about 1995 though, he never looked like the same Ric Flair. He was still having good matches, but he was no longer the Golden God he'd been before.

There is so much of what I say in everyday use that I stole from Ric Flair. 'To be the man, you've got to beat the man!' is one. 'I'm Space Mountain! I may be the oldest ride in the park, but I've still got the longest line!'. 'I'm the dirtiest player in the game' and of course, WHOOOOOO!!!"

They had a great idea for how he would end his career, but it never got launched because one of the writers, a dude named Brian Gerwitz, doesn't like Flair and really doesn't un-

derstand wrestling (according to Dave Meltzer of the Wrestling Observer Newsletter). They were gonna have him go on a losing streak. This wouldn't be too different from how he had been booked, but they would have had him snap and do an interview swearing to retire if he lost another match. Then he'd go on a long win streak and then, at WrestleMania, he'd come to the end of the road.

It's a great story, one that Steve Austin supposedly came up with, and it would let a legend go out like a legend. Sadly, it looks like it's not gonna happen.

So, goodbye, Ric Flair. Enjoy your years off. I'm sure you'll be around a good long time and be able to berate the youngsters for having no idea what wrestling really means.

I'll miss ya.

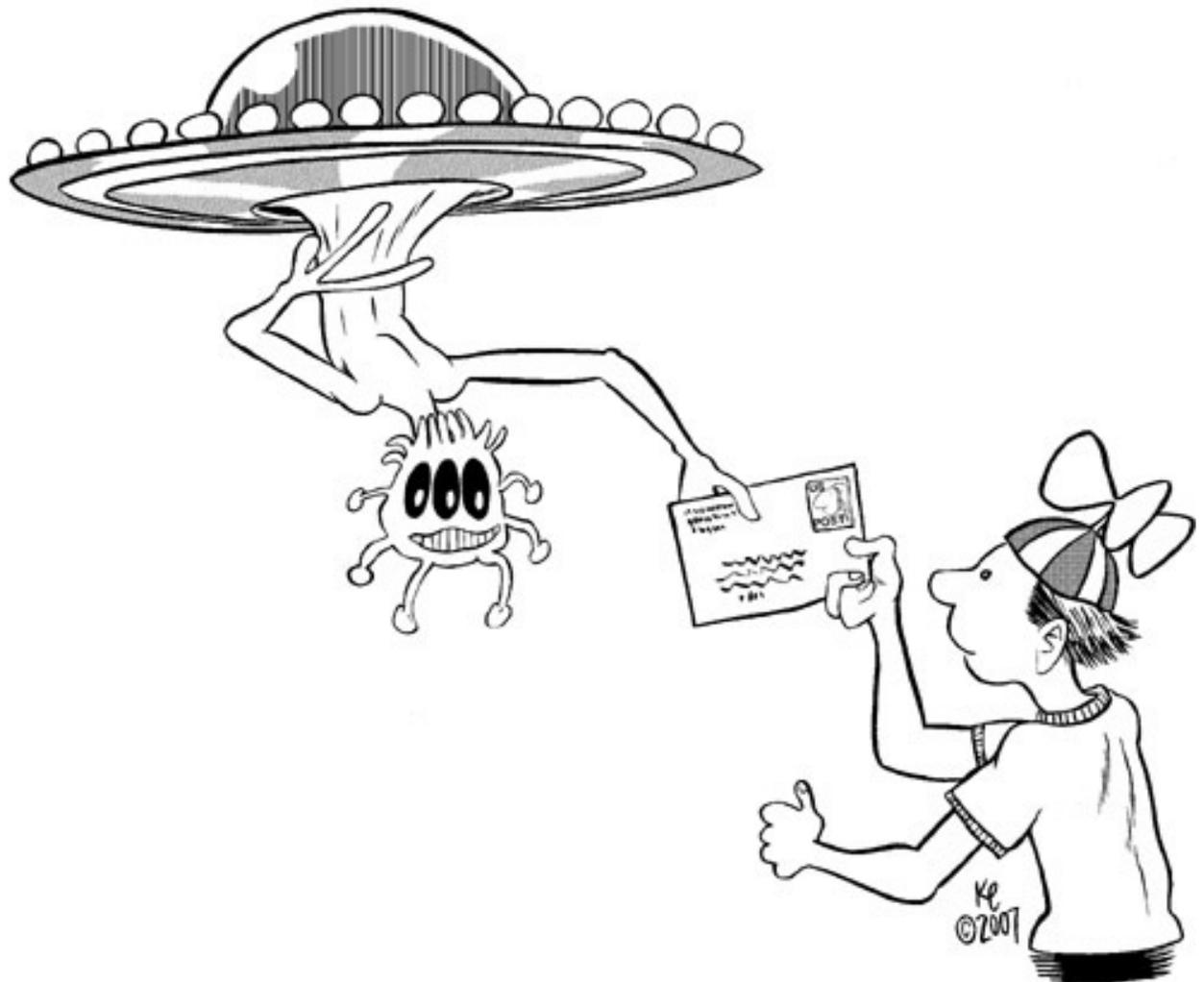


Letter-Graded Mail
sent to garcia@computerhistory.org
by my Gentle Readers

**Let's Begin with John 'for DUFF'
Purcell!**

I'm gonna pass on making comments on your Cocktail Issue mainly because I have *way* too many innuendo-filled puns running through my head. Lopping your 140th issue is much safer, I believe.

Okay. I lied. I guess I really do have a couple comments to make about cocktails in general - the drinking kind, that is - since this ish starts off with more alcoholic-related nattering. This topic is kind of like an over-flowing cup: it just never seems to want to end. Well, for that matter, that's what your fanzine is like anyway, so what exactly *is* the difference? At any rate, I am not one for mixed drinks or hard alcohol. My dad used to mix up a small pitcher of either martinis or Manhattans when he got home from work. I tried one once in the hotel bar at MidAmeriCon - a vodka martini, that is - and didn't care for it at all. Other kinds of mixed drinks never really appealed to me that much, although if I do try a cocktail of any kind, it would be something like a Margarita. To be perfectly frank, I would much prefer having sex on the beach to drinking a Sex on the Beach. Unless the latter led to the former, in which case I could go



for that.

Liar! I knew you couldn't resist commenting on booze. My Dad drank beer, whcih I never acquired a taste for (other than Guinness and Boddington's, neither of which I drink that often) Sex on the beach the activity is far less interesting than the drink. Sand does bad things...far worse than what

usually happens after three or four SotBs.

I say, old chap, that James Bacon has his name cropping up in fanzines all over the place. His recounting of Comic Con in San Diego was really enjoyable. He has written elsewhere about his love for comics, and that he got into sf fandom thanks to comics (I think one of these

articles was in John Coxon's debut issue of *Procrastination*). I must say, he certainly has a knack for getting photoed with cute girls. Not only that, he got some sketches from Howard Chaykin! That's a pretty good deal. Comics really aren't my cup of tea - never really have been, even though I do have a small batch of them in my lock box at home, including a couple *Dr. Strange* issues from the late 1960s - but I do appreciate their influence on fans and writers, plus their huge impact on the mega-budget action flicks that the public gobbles up. Yeah, this was a long and very enjoyable report, and that photo on page 16 reveals that we are a bit behind on our reading. Funny thing: a small section of his report sounded vaguely like "Club Egg," the article he wrote for the third issue of *Askance*. It really made me stop for a moment and shake my head. A bit of *deja vu* there.

The latest Procrastinations is great stuff too. I love Chaykin and have been trying to get him as a GoH for some con for years! I gotta learn that photoed with babes trick.

But a wonderful zine, Chris, as is *PrintZine 2* in its second incarnation. What can I say? You're a spitfire, young 'un!
All the best,
John Purcell

Thanks much, John! I'll keep going as long as I'm concious!



And Now...Lloyd Penney!

Dear Chris:

Two issues have I now, loc them I shall! 141 and 142 issues they are! Type like Yoda talks I do! Why, I know not...

Strong the Fannish Force is with this one...

141...Great art, especially the astronaut and his cat. He's thumbing a ride to Earth, and we'd all want to thumb a ride spaceward. Don't leave

without me, guys...take me with you! I am afraid that the Denver Worldcon will have to do without me, but I do have some news...after much deliberation and soul-searching, Yvonne and I decided that we will not only attend the Montréal Worldcon, but we will also work it. We have volunteered to the committee what we would like to do, and we may get some confirmation soon...we will also be going to Con*cept, Montréal's annual SF convention, and there will be a big meeting to launch this newest Worldcon. We eventually realized that if we didn't go, and didn't help out, we'd probably regret it later. So, no regrets, and I hope we can do the kind of job we wanted to do for Torcon 3. Of the Worldcons written about here, the only one I was able to attend was the 1990 Worldcon, ConFiction, in the Hague, the only non-North American Worldcon I've been to. Great time, enjoyed the Haagsemarkt downtown, and a quick trip to one of the pottery shops in Delft. I told my ex-girlfriend about the Dutch Worldcon, Joanne being Dutch, and I had the dubious honour of introducing her to Yvonne in the middle of the Congresgebouw. We had a few perqs to enjoy with the convention because we had acted as Canadian agents for them, and Holland does have a soft spot for Canadians after all.

That's super-duper! I should offer

my services to the folks. Not a particularly enviable position of introducing an ex to the current. I'll have to do that at some point in the near...

Yeah, you could have won one of those Ultraman Hugos, but seeing how much Arnie Katz hates that Hugo design (see VFW 100, section D, I think), you might not have heard the end of it. That Langford guy's invasion fleet of silvery rockets just got one ship bigger.

How could anyone not love Ultraman? I mean that's just weird! I thought it was the best Hugo statue ever!

142...That is a heckuva Communist Party! I wonder what year they're bidding for...

I think they're bidding for Moscow (spelt Mockba) in 2017. Sadly, it also looks like Trotsky wasn't invited. Maybe he had a bit of a headache.

Art is in the eye and mind of the beholder, but yet, one man's art is another man's offence. It is getting to the point where the line is blurred, the only difference may be whether there are police nearby to act or not act. All is anarchy, and who knows what the reaction will be to anything you might do. There are rules to follow, even at something as anarchical as Burning Man...

Rules are the key. Understanding

when there are rules in the time of apparent anarchy is an important one. There are a lot of strange stories about Burning Man and people who take their 'art' too far. There's even a documentary about it that's never been released because Burning Man won't approve of it.

Togas parties are great fun, but we really shouldn't have them at cons. The hotel linen department gets real nervous, and then the atmosphere sours a little...at least they're better than skinny-dippin' parties in the hotel pool... Honestly, if some of the fans I know ever jumped naked in a swimming pool, tsunami warnings would go up everywhere, and thinking of some people I know naked is bringing nightmares and the promise of years of therapy...

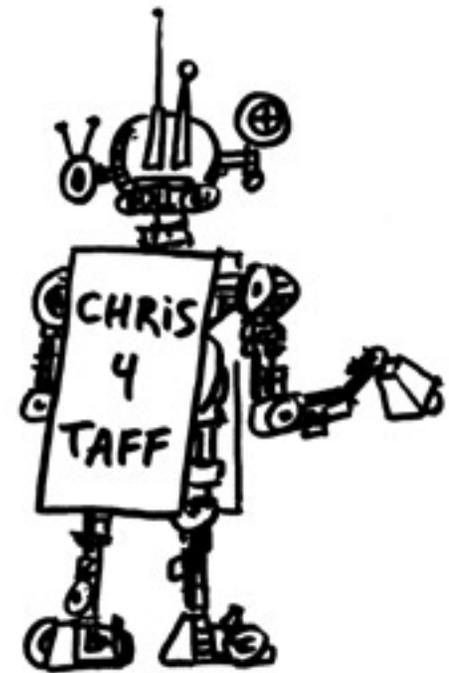
I love Toga Parties. I've only been to a couple (they seem to have fallen out of fashion) but they're always fun. It was a blast shopping with the Lovely and Talented Linda too!

And now, to go from the ridiculous to the good news, and then I fire this off to you at blazing speed. As of September 24, I have a full-time job! The position is Editor, Electronic Publications with the Canadian National Institute for the Blind. The job looks like it is something I can do, the CNIB is a great place to work, says so many people, and the pay is great.

The drought is over. I shall keep my evening job at the Globe and Mail until the three-month mark, which happens to be Christmas Eve, December 24. What a great present to get for Christmas, a firm job. I'll probably have to train someone to take over the G&M job, so as of 2008, a 9-to-5 workin' guy I'll be, and halleluiah for that.

Congrats, old boy! There's nothing like becoming a part of the class of Full-Time Schlubs!

Off it goes, and away I go...zzzzz. See you next time.
Yours, Lloyd Penney.
And we thank you!



Today is a proud day, as I am now announcing a regular columnist! That's right, Steve Green has agreed to bring back a column he used to do for Apparatchik and we're gettin' to run it in The Drink Tank! You can find his old articles at <http://efanzines.com/Apparatchik/index.html> (up through issue 71)

FANNISH MEMORY SYNDROME BY STEVE GREEN ARTWORK BY ROB LEIFELD

To Oxford, where the city of dreaming spires is playing host to Caption, the UK's annual gathering of small-press comic writers and artists. Ann acts as navigator, then heads off by taxi into the city centre to check out the Pitt Rivers Museum and reacquaint herself with a few Tolkien-related landmarks (not least the Eagle and Child, former watering hole of the Inklings and popularly known as "the Bird and Baby").

As is often the case, the first Caption – back in 1992 – was thrown together on a whim by a bunch of friends, who never anticipated the monster they had created: each year since, Caption has teetered on the brink of oblivion, only to be dragged back by the cumulative mass of goodwill generated over the past decade-and-a-half. The 1998 committee even wryly acknowledged this by dubbing its instalment "Death of Caption", in the full knowledge that



this state of affairs would be unlikely to last any longer than the recent demise of a certain Kryptonian superhero.

Whilst never inclined towards heavy programming, 2007's "Caption: Dreams & Nightmares" seems even more laid-back than usual, a vibe underlined by the choice of venue: after spending most of its life at the stately Oxford Students' Union bar and grounds before a brief spell at the sprawling Wolfson College, the introduction of idiotic levels of bureaucracy for any site needing a temporary bar licence – paperwork the

Wolfson staff couldn't be bothered to complete for a mere weekend convention with a two-figure turn-out – led to last summer's shindig relocating to the somewhat less salubrious East Oxford Community Centre.

The event has also shed its traditional line-up of guests, although Al Davison – author of the groundbreaking graphic memoir *The Spiral Cage* – is making one of his regular appearances to run a couple of creativity workshops based around the "Dreams & Nightmares" theme. During the even-more-sparcely-programmed-than-usual Sunday lunchtime, we chat about the multifold crimes against anatomy and perspective perpetrated by the likes of Rob Liefeld, a hack so dramatically untalented I'm astounded he's allowed to draw breath, let alone such icons as Captain America. Al confesses to hunting down Liefeld's more blatant artistic atrocities, not for any intrinsic value but as examples for his students of what *not* to do.

It's the kind of exchange which would once have been paralled between the pages of British comics fanzines, a sub-culture I first encountered in the mid-1970s but which had already begun to stumble towards relative extinction long before the emergence of the e-zine. It's great to see so many creators taking control of the medium – the tables in Caption's bookroom positively heave with new material – but damn it, I miss those conversations in print.