

The Drink Tank 161



Franklin + Be

Cover by Brianna and Frank!

And now, let us all begin with Taral Wayne and a note about the times in which we live!

Not the American Century?

Nonsense. We just need a little clear thinking and planning, and the American dream need never end!

Seriously. Why don't the Americans just stop pretending? If they finance their nation with foreign debt, and export only their jobs, why pretend that Americans work for a living? Why expect them to hold down increasingly meaningless and low paying jobs, when the real work is being done in Malaysia, Taiwan, or India? As long as the U.S. has pretty much advertised its intention to finance the American economy in future by running the presses 24 hours a day printing \$100 bills*, why not just print a few more? Put everyone in the country on welfare!

Like the citizens of Kuwait or Dubai, Americans can just live off the largesse provided by Allah. While Indonesians and Chinese labour in sweatshops making soccer balls and Blu-Ray players, Americans

will exchange their worthless bills at Wal-Mart for the fruit of Asian productivity. Who will serve the fries, and greet you at the big-box store? Guest workers. It solved the problem of labour shortage in Germany; it can solve the problem of labour avoidance in America.

Universal welfare in the U.S. will end politics as we know it as well. Who will be discontented, what issues will there be, as long as everyone gets their check at the first of the month?

The rich will still be the rich, of course. They may choose to tip their waiter with this month's welfare check, or just light their crack pipe with it. (What does it matter? It's only American money, and therefore imaginary.) The rich will own the remaining assets in the nation, and have a monopoly of all the power, just as they do now. But under the universal welfare scheme, no one will



Anti-Flag by The Poopsmith

care anymore. The Democrats and Republicans can fold together into one party, *the Republicrats*, and issue the interactive "elections" every year on CD-Rom for the general entertainment. Nothing of importance will change, only the deception that ordinary Americans need to work for a living, and the resentment caused by it.

As long as the Almighty Dollar is backed, not by gold or exports or international confidence in the American economy, but by the fear inspired by American arms, anyone with citizenship born or a green card can be guaranteed a middle-class standard of living for doing *absolutely nothing*. There is no point to pretending otherwise, and forcing single black mothers in Cleveland or young men in Austin to take pointless service jobs; often two of them, both part-time, paying minimum wage and offering no benefits.

That's why God made foreigners -- to fulfill the New American Dream.

-- Taral Wayne

** In March, the Federal Reserve Board announced it was no longer publishing the M3 Report that reveals the amount of American paper money in circulation abroad, thus releasing the government from any restraint on printing speciously valued dollars.*

From Frank Wu
I DON'T HATE HILLARY...

And if she winds up being the Democratic nominee for President, I will vote for her no matter who (probably McCain now) will be on the other side.

But... this is a critical time for our nation. We're economically, morally, emotionally and philosophically exhausted by a pointless war, with an economic downturn imminent, or possibly even upon us. China is all revved up to seize the world. Every Presidential election is crucial, but this moreso than others. There is so much healing to be done, for our country, for the nations of the world, for the world itself.

My fear for another Clinton administration is, essentially, a return to the days of endless scandal. Yes, we had a budget surplus and relative peace and prosperity, and, yes, perhaps many of the scandals were minor or artificially generated by a "vast right-wing conspiracy," but we can't risk the distraction in the next administration, and many of the scandals were ones the Clintons brought upon themselves. Some politicians are coated with so-called Teflon, accusations of wrongdoing simply rolling off their shoulders. The Clintons aren't like that. They are magnets of malice.

Here's just a few Clinton

scandals (remember these?):

Travelgate - in which long-standing employees of the White House Travel Office were fired at the beginning of the Clinton administration, allegedly so that Clinton cronies could have their jobs.

Troopergate - in which two Arkansas state troopers allegedly arranged meetings between Mr. Clinton and his girlfriends

Whitewater - in which the Clintons were allegedly involved in illegal loans and shady failed real estate dealings.

Filegate - in which the Clinton



Hilary by Gore Mantra

administration allegedly poked into 300 - 900 FBI files without permission.

Pardongate - in which Mr. Clinton pardoned Edgar and Vonna Jo Gregory (cronies with Hillary's brother, who got a windfall after the pardons); Mark Rich (tax evader involved in suspect Iraqi oil deals); among others.

To say nothing of the parade of bimbos, the Gennifer Flowers and Paula Jones and Monica Lewinskys.

There were probably more, but I was too full of despair to track them down.

All this stuff will come back, as will the cigar jokes. The Republicans will remind of this, and they'll find more. The old scandals and new scandals will be the yip dogs barking and biting at the feet of a new Clinton administration.

We don't need the distraction. Yes, Hillary will be ready to President on Day 1. And the scandals will begin on Day 2.

I have a theory - Crazy Idea No. 911, if you will - and I cannot back this up, but I blame the Monica Lewinsky affair for 9/11. Yes, the terrorists were responsible for the deed, but for months (possibly years) before hand, there were signs that something really big was up - terrorists had, as it were, already attacked the World Trade Center with a truck bomb in 1993 and American targets throughout the

world. But no one in Washington was doing anything about terrorism (or anything else, for that matter), for over a year because they were all fixated on Monica Lewinsky. And Gore lost in 2000 partially because he distanced himself from Clinton and the Lewinsky scandal, and because people were just sick of the Clintons and all the muck associated with them. And because the Dems lost the White House, continuity in anti-terrorism operations was lost. With the change in administrations, experienced people were thrown out and replaced by the inexperienced. And those people were still new at the jobs when the 9/11 attacks hit. Now, I can't say for sure that, had there been continuity, we would have caught the terrorists before they committed the 9/11 attacks, but I'm sure it didn't help.

This is a strong nation, and somehow we've survived the debacle of the Bush administration, and somehow we would survive a Clinton administration riddled by new scandals. But, personally, I'd rather not have to live through it, and I'd rather roll the dice with Obama and his idealism. I am afraid for the future of this nation, and I'd trade Clinton's decades of scandal for Obama's lack of experience any day.

Editor's Note: I haven't made a Hillary joke since they found Vince Foster dead on that park bench...



More things have come up and down over the last couple of weeks and here's what's going on so far. The biggest news of late is the release of a PreLim Orbital Schedule. I'm on a bunch of stuff all across the weekend, and I rather like the things they've got me on.

On Friday at 3pm (I'm assuming that GMT) I'll be in the George/Elizabeth Room on a panel called With Friends Like These. I'm not sure what it's all about, but I do know that Niall Harrison, my favourite UK writer and the World's Next Dave Langford, is on the panel. Also there are John Jarrold and Caroline Mullan. I'm interested in finding out what this one's all about!

Saturday at 3:30pm, in the Elizabeth Room is the most dangerous panel I'm sure to be on. It's me and James Bacon in the Chris and James Present: A Taff Report in an Hour. James is the Mad Scientist of UK Fandom, as I hear it, and I sorta fill that kinda roll out here on the West Side. The two of us are basically gonna do a Big Ass Fanzine in an Hour. Who knows what it will turn into! If you're gonna be there, stop by and help us out!

Here's a tough one and one that

I've done at other cons. It's What's The Point of Fannish Awards?. I've got a lot to say about it (there are people who love them and who have their fanac validated by awards [unlike me] and it provides a jumping on point for new comers) but really, I'm way outclassed on this one. There's Pete Young, whose zine Zoo Nation hasn't been out in a while and is one of the best out there. There's Alison Scott, a PLOKTA who happens to have a couple of shiny rocket-y things, and Greg Pickersgill, the guy who my Dad always called The Voice of Reason in Fandom. I really wanna see how this one goes. It's at 5pm in Tetworth.

There's a panel that I'm not on called At Least I Can Get a Fanzine Article Out of It featuring Flick, James Bacon, Graham Charnock, Yvonne Rowse and Ian Sorenseon that I'd love to see, but I doubt I'll be able to. That's a great line-up there. It's from 10 to 11 on Saturday and the fact is, I've got an early morning on Sunday and I dunno if I can make it.

Another fun one is Who Are You Calling Obsolete?. That's about the 'young crowd' who've gone in on Fanzines in the last few years. There's Peter Sullivan, me, Flick, Abi Brown and that scamp John Coxon. OK, look at those names. Other than Peter, I think I've got them all beat out by at least 7 or 8 years. I'm 33, not a young guy! Plus, that Coxon fellow is

way better than me and he can't even legally drink in the US! Shame! That's at 5pm in the Winchester Room on Sunday. I'm really excited to be getting a chance to be on a panel with these folks.

Here's one that I might steal for a US con that Frank Wu, Jay Lake and I are at someday. Two Minute Warning has been described to me as 'You get topic, you talk for two minutes.' Yeah, I think I can do that. It's me, Catherine Pickersgill, Tony Keen (who I think is a fantastic writer) and Mike Abbott. Should be fun at 7pm in the Winchester Room.

Sunday at 10pm is the Fan Fund Auction. Apparently, and I can neither confirm nor deny this, there are OTHER fan funds than just TAFF. Bridget Bradshaw, Flick, Alison Scott, Ang Rosin and I are auctioning stuff. I'll be bringing some stuff and I've gotta get a couple of folks from this side here to pledge strange things that can go for silly prices. I'll start all my items at 1000 pounds, that way if I sell only one thing, it's paid for almost my entire trip!

My last panel is What I Did on My Holidays, which is a bunch of Fan Fund types talking about their trips. I'm tempted to simply say what I'm looking at at the moment as my entire contribution, but that wouldn't be nearly meta enough. That's on Noon on Monday with Bridget, Ang, and Chris

O'Shea.

So, if you're gonna be at Eastercon, lemme know and I'll save you a seat as you are hereby bound to stay for at least one of these panels!



eMailed Words of Comment sent to garcia@computerhistory.org by my gentle readers

Let us start with a brief note from Taral Wayne!

Yes, reading Capt'n Carrot does make you a furry! Who would know better than I. One of us! One of us! One of us!

Not very good furry, mind you, but tainted none the less.

I'm also guessing that being on staff for Further Confusion doesn't help my case, either.

Thanks, Taral!

And now...Eric Mayer!!!

Chris,

Congratulations on another year. You manage to publish more zines in a half year than I've produced in over three decades.

Well, I do have an unfair

advantage: I can do mine at work!

Terrific cover by Brad Foster. I remember Brad's work was all over the place in fanzines decades ago. Who would've imagined someday we'd be treated to Brad's fanzine work in color! It would've sounded like that crazy Buck Rogers stuff.

I found a catalog for Brad's comic stuff from the 1980s and it was great. He's everywhere in zines over the last, oh let's say, 25 years.

And hey, you found a Donnie Jupiter drawing for my article. Cool. ***He's got a lot of stuff out there. I was shocked that there was so much, but I'm hoping I can get permission to use more!***

I enjoyed John Purcell's guitar heroics. Hey, anyone who can play a chord is a guitar hero to me. I've always loved listening to music but have no aptitude for it. I can't even sing. Don't even really understand the concept of a "note." Or at least my croaking, flat off-key (whatever a "key" is) voice doesn't. I was too young for Elvis. I was more into Sheb Wooley's Purple People Eater.

I was too young for living Elvis. I had Dead Elvis to worship.

Mark Plummer's article reminded me of how many of us came to our love for things like sf through...well...stuff that was basically junk. I read books by Andre Norton and Lester del Rey early on but before those I read Tom

Swift Jr. Sure, the Victor Appleton Jr books were crude in many ways, but they nevertheless managed to communicate some of the same sort of wonder as the sf juveniles I went on to read. The basic, compelling ideas were still there thought perhaps not expressed very well.

I just wrote an LoC to Earl Kemp about the kind of reviews that Sid Coleman used to write for F&SF and realising that he completely missed my kind of reader which really get and love the Tom Swift books.

Captain Carrot I never saw. Sounds pretty funny. Flaming Carrot, I know about. The comics I loved as a kid were Batman and Superman, but especially Batman. Then I went though a phase when I read a lot of the Marvel stuff I the early days of Spider Man and Fantastic Four and, especially Iron Man. But that phase, and my later foray into small press and indie comics basically ended because it was too expensive to keep up with all the continuing series I soon wanted to keep up with. Well, I see those covers so I'm thinking they look pretty authentic, not part of a fictional comic universe?

I loved the Flash, Plastic Man, The Justice League and The Hulk when I was younger, then I got into Batman, Doom Patrol, the Metal Men and Starman when I was older.

Recently, I've rediscovered the Justice Society.

I wouldn't think liking Captain Carrot would make you part of furry fandom. More like part of root vegetable fandom. You might not have heard of that. It's an underground movement. (boom! boom!)

Damn! Another movement I'll have to become a part of!

Nice bit of pseudo-philosophical balderdash by Frank Wu. Next year he might have to renounce the FAAn award for writer.

Yes, let us give him awards inscribed with Chinese curses on them! May he live in interesting times!!

Great piece by Derek McCaw. I had to love it because it was my grandmother who set me on the road to ruin too. Yeah, sweet old lady, so you'd think, but she got me hooked on words. You know where that leads.

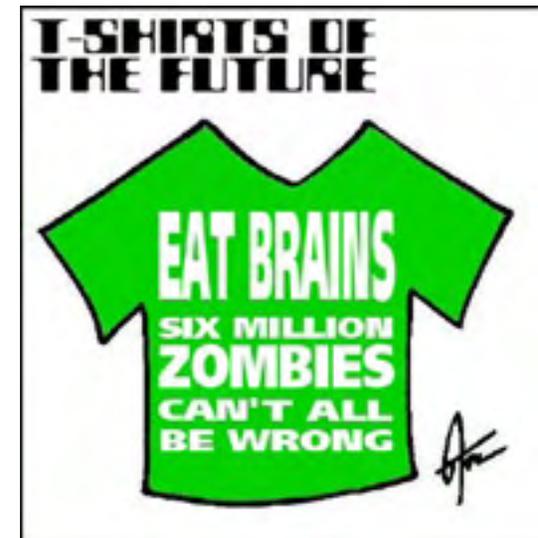
My grandma and I used to watch wrestling together, but it was really my Dad's fault. She was just along for the ride.

Instead of studying or making a living you're satisfying the habit - reading, writing. Oh sure, it was soft stuff she introduced me to, reading to me there in her living room, me sitting beside her rocking chair. Don't let anyone tell you there's no danger in Heidi or the Wind in the Willows. Soon as I could read I was into Tom

Swift Jr books and from there it was a quick descent into science fiction. Who knows what I could've done with my life. And look at me now. Fifty-eight years old and reading a damned fanzine.

Best,
Eric

Here's to a wasted childhood...and adulthood, at least in my case!



And on that note, another issue of The Drink Tank rides off into the Sunset! I wanna thank Taral, Frank, Brianna, Steve Green (for the TAFF logos and that shirt up there), Gore Mantra and The Poopsmith for their materials, meaning you had less of me to deal with.

Next issue is a sorta special one, and I'll be talking about my idea for a Canadian section of San Jose!