





The Power of Paranormal TV
by
Christopher J. Garcia
illustrations by *Charlie Irons*

As I understand it, Paranormal TV has basically taken over Living TV out the way of most Everlasting Club members, which means the UK. This is being talked about in US TV circles as the next thing that will take

over US Minor Cable, and it's already started with ABC Family in October and Travel Channel on Friday Nights. It's not the first time, as things that I'd call Paranormal TV have been on the air since the 1970s, though specials about ghosts and other strange things have popped up since the first days of network TV.

Probably the first example that many folks would think of is In Search

Of. There were other documentary shows about the paranormal, but none with the effect and scope of In Search Of. They actually went to the trouble of getting real psychics and doing real investigations into the unusual. While not every episode dealt with ghosts and ghouls, some of the better eps were about Amelia Earhart, Simon Wiesenthal tracking Josef Mengele & the Crystal Skull. The ghost episodes were wonderful, the ones I remember best. There are only about a half-dozen ghost episodes, but the Ghost Photos and the Haunted House stake-out are in my top ten (along with Sasquatch, Jesse James, Jack the Ripper and UFOs).

It's easy to see In Search Of's effects, as it led to a major rush of shows like That's Incredible and the second Ripley's Believe it or Not. These shows weren't all about ghosts and the like, but they did use them fairly often. The producers of That's Incredible took a cue from two shows: In Search Of and Real People. I remember a lot of these shows as they were my faves as a kid. As an adult, when they replayed them, the Vincent Van Gogh episode was actually very touching.

The 1980s saw a bunch of small specials, but documentary shows weren't popular again until the 1990s. There were things like Arthur C. Clarke's Mysterious World, Haunted Hotels of The USA, James

Randi: Psychic Investigator and a ghost hunting show or two that weren't American that we saw on stations like Discovery around the Halloween season, but nothing regular really. The Amazing Randi was a bummer as he was all about debunking stuff. Sylvia Browne, a friend of my Dad's from back in those days, used to pop up on all sorts of shows, including Donahue. Though you could find it if you looked, it was really a Paranormal TV wasteland.

Then there was Ghostwatch in 1992. Talk about the BIG announcement of what was to come.

Basically, Ghostwatch was what Blair Witch would be seven years later. The idea was so simple, a group did an investigation of a haunted house and found a ghost named Pipes. They then did a seance and it ended up with the ghost running wild and even invading the BBC studio. They used real BBC



personalities to get it over as a legit thing, and I'm proud to say that it was a giant success. It was so good that a couple of kids were diagnosed with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder after having watched it. That's good TV.

That thing got lots of play in the US media for the

reaction. I didn't see the show until well after I was in college. In fact, they showed it along with playing parts of Orson Welles' War of the Worlds in the Psychology of Media class I took. It was great stuff, really well-produced and actually scary.

That started a wave of new shows in the UK. The best show that started being produced in the genre around this time was Sightings. There was already Unsolved Mysteries, which only showed Paranormal things once in a while, but it wasn't until after the Ghostwatch incident that really sent things on towards actual definable Paranormal TV. Sightings was hosted by Tim White and it was all about the Paranormal. Ghost, ESP, Loch Ness, Bigfoot, you name it, it was there. Sightings also had a great website which is now gone but it was really a wonderful place to go to for Paranormal info.

With the rise of Reality TV, there were a few shows that come to mind. The first, and in my mind the one that influenced the style of all the ones that followed, is Scariest Places On Earth. It was a special on ABC Family that featured footage from a British TV show where a family from the US had to spend the night in Chillingham Castle. That was sweet and it established the face-first camera angles used by many of the other shows in the sub-genre, especially Most Haunted. It was a good show and it started my

fascination with Chillingham.

In late 2000, MTV did a really inventive show called Fear. In many ways, it was a game show where a group of college-aged kids had to spend the night in a haunted location doing all sorts of challenges. They often used real haunted locations (and places featured in ghostly movies, like Danvers Mental Hospital) to make people think they were really facing ghosts. It was a good show for entertainment, but it had nothing to do with paranormal research. I did love it, though.

This led to the Most Haunted era, where Derek Acourah and Yvette Fielding lead teams into real haunted houses, with its follow-ons like I'm Famous and I'm Frightened and all those other ones. In the UK, it's all about LivingTV, in the US, it's the Travel Channel that does all the shows, especially things like Haunted Southern Cities and Haunted Hotels of the US. It's also the US home of Most Haunted. The US TV's mainstream has gone away from Reality TV, though they have held strong on cable stations like VH-1 (which is the perfect place for a US version of I'm Famous and Frightened!) but Paranormal TV is pretty much only on The Travel Channel.

I'm betting that will change in the next year or so. The Most Haunted ratings have tended to increase over the years, which is a feat for any show.



**Catalina:
Or That
Place We
Used to Go
by
Judith
Morel**

I spent a lot of time in and around LA. I grew up in Chicago, hung out at The Vineyard and used to spend at least one month a year in LA. Typically, at

least one of those weeks was spent on Catalina Island.

My Dad, Real Estate genius that he was, bought a place on Catalina in the 1950s. When we were kids, we took a water taxi over, but by the time Dad started getting sick, we flew on helicopter. There are advantages to having money. The place was a bit of a walk from the landing at Two Harbors. Most folks on the island live in Avalon, and Dad used to spend a lot of time over there and would bring us along, but the place was in Two Harbors. There weren't many folks living there,

though my first boyfriend, Lucian, lived a few houses over the summer we lived on the island for the entire vacation. He was a sweet boy who lived in Two Harbors along with his father who was a USC prof at the research station they had on the island.

There was a lot to do on the island, even if it was in the middle of nowhere. Dad's favorite thing was to hike into the deeper portion of the island and spot the Island Foxes or Bison. One year, we went out to see the bison every day for a week. I even touched one when Dad and I hunkered down and they came up to us after almost an hour. Dangerous game true, but it was amazing.

SaBean liked to chase the boar. We'd go inland and she'd find one and run at it, usually brandishing a stick in a threatening manner. Dad was furious with her when she actually beat one on an afternoon hike. SaBean said it was because they were an invasive species and they needed to be driven off the island. Dad had a permit to hunt them in the 1980s and he trapped a few and made sausage out of them. I loved that stuff, and if I'm ever at a place that has Boar sausage on the menu, I order it. I reminds me of Dad.

The last time we all went was in 1993 or so. We sold the place about a month after Dad passed, but we went back, all of us, to stay in Avalon and have a wonderful time. I spent a lot of the trip in Two Harbors, mostly around the Banning House and the Civil War barracks. Dad used to love the Civil War, so when I went over there and found a spot where Dad took a picture holding both SaBean and me, I broke down and cried hard. The next day when I went back, they were shooting something for TV, so I didn't get that experience again.

I've been back a few times myself, never for very long, but I really do miss the days when we'd go. The house, tiny as it was, felt almost as much like home as the house on the Lake Michigan or Grandpa's place. Maybe after Chris hits it big he'll buy a place there and we can all party.



A CLOCKWORK SOUNDTRACK

It's, menya droogs, that I've been waiting for a long time to write about one of my favourite movies. Released in 1971, A Clockwork Orange has to be one of the strangest films ever made. Based off a novel by Anthony Burgess, it's a classic film that haunts the viewer. Powerful imagery mixes with strange references and one of the best voice-overs in modern film history. A great film but one with an amazing soundtrack.

There was a guy named Walter Carlos who was something of a genius. In fact, Walter Carlos was a major force in the formation of the music of today. He assisted Robert Moog in building some of the earliest electronic synthesizers, and he did the first classical recordings to ever reach Platinum sales: Switched on Bach. Switched on Bach was performed on Synth and sold mad numbers, proving that people could make real music on electronic instruments. As time went on, Walter Carlos became Wendy Carlos, which really didn't matter much except people started asking 'Is Wendy Carlos related to Walter Carlos?'

As Walter, the compositions



done for the soundtrack to Clockwork Orange are remarkable. The first recorded musical use of the vocoder is on the album, which was a big step in the electronica direction. The mood pieces are disquieting, exactly what we should be feeling at the moment they are used. The William Tell Overture is on the synth is wonderful and probably the highlight of the record. The entire feeling of the record is one that perfectly complements the film: a

slightly-less-than-human feeling where much emotion has been drained from what should, by all right, be an emotional piece.

There's also a lot of regular classical music on the soundtrack. A lot of people claim that it was Clockwork Orange's Soundtrack that repopularized Beethoven's Ninth. I don't know if that's true, but it's a good story. The use of it in the movie is so perfect, so elegant in the presentation that showing up without that strong connection actually forces me not to enjoy it that much. I know, I know, I should enjoy everything on its own merit, but I can't do that with Ludwig Van. It's just not possible.

Of course, there's always Singin' in the Rain. The Gene Kelly classic was used at a moment of sheer, unhalting violence, which I understand Kelly was not happy with. Kubrick knew how to make the most of the song against the dark vision and I was happy to see that it's on the soundtrack. I can't say that it's the best piece of music on the record, but at least it stuck out properly, like an extremely sore thumb should do. Good way to close things too.

It Has Come to My Attention...

Bill Burns, that strong and true assistant of fanzine fans everywhere, does a brief pass on my stuff when I send it his way, taking care of the most egregious of mistakes. (Could you imagine what it would be like if he didn't?) Bill sent me this note when I sent him last issue.

Chris: No such place as Norwegia, although the inhabitants of Norway **are** called Norwegians!

Poor Bill. You've been duped by that deFacto Corporate Prostitute calling itself the English Language. The fact is we've all been mispronouncing, misspelling and mistreating the names of the Scandihoovian countries for too long and I'm about to open the eyes of all you who wish to hear it.

First off, let's start in Norwegia. Norwegia is a lovely country, the middle of the three Northern, or Ass-Cold, Scandihoovian nations. It's inhabitants are tall and easy on the eyes and seldom do they make bad movies.

To the west of Norwegia is Swedeland, home of the Swedes. They are a leggy race of blonde hair and blues eyes and they love large stores that sell do-it-yourself furniture. You're best bet for a really fun night listening to strange folk songs is with a bunch of drunken Swedelanders.



On the other side of Norwegia is Finlasia. The Finns are a tall, dark haired people with eyes that tend towards blue. They are most useful for their cell phones and science fiction fandom. Once a part of Russalia, they broke away and have been Finning it up ever since. Probably the best of the Scandihoovians to party with (just ask Andy Trembley)

I've heard that people believe that the southern most of the Scandihoovian nations is called Daneland. This is just not so. While the people are kind and not easily

told apart from Germans, the proper name for that archipeligo is the Danish Congo.

Now, let us not judge Bill Burns too harshly, I mean he did grew up in Anglandia.

Of late I've had a lot of thoughts about trying to find a documentary company to go full-time with. The issue is what I'm really good at is the research and the presentation as opposed to the rights & clearances stuff that most folks are looking for. I'm much better at the stuff that anyone could do, but few are able to do right. Research requires three things: the ability to find info, the ability to sorts info and the ability to smell bullshit when you find it. I've got those skills, but sadly, I fear that I'll not find myself in such a role.

Poor Old Cotton Mather: An Appreciation by Mike Swan



If you weighed significance on a scale, and placed proper weight to all things, then Ben Franklin would cause a great tipping to one side. The same could be said of Edison. But for my money, Cotton Mather's weight would break the balance at a thought.

Cotton Mather, simple and plain,

was a secular genius and a spiritual master. The two mix well so seldom that it is imperative that these men be put up for special admiration.

He went to Boston Latin, that long-standing school which gave us Louis Farrakhan and wrestler Kevin Sullivan, and then graduated from Harvard before he would have been eligible to drive in modern society. He was held in such high esteem that he could influence British politics from the Colonies.

Like our fabled editor, Cotton published like a mad man. He is said to have put out a pamphlet a day for several years on subjects ranging from the need to maintain the Sabbath to defeating witchcraft. He published works like *Wonders of the Invisible World*, which decried witchcraft and defended his role in the Salem Witch Hunt (as it came to be called).

Every now and again, Mather will pop up in a story (like *Calculus of Angels*) or in a history programme (like the History Channel's look at Old North Church), but mostly he remains a figure that is not widely remembered. Shame.

Christopher J. Garcia writes about 2005 in Documentaries

I never did do my article on what should win Best Documentary, so I thought that I'd do a little thing now.



The award was won by *March of the Penguins*. OK, I understand that cute wins awards, but not this one. It's a good doc, with outstanding English narration by Morgan Freeman. But it's basically fluff. No, it's not a bad doc, in fact it's pretty damned good, but not Best Feature Doc material.

Street Fight, a doc about the race for the 2004 Mayorship of Newark New Jersey, is much stronger, but also lacks the great depth. It's must more engaging and I can't think of a doc that I was more drawn to immediately than *Street Fight*.

Almost at the same level, but certainly not quite there, is *Darwin's Nightmare*. Basically it's an ecological nightmare tale about the introduction of the Nile Perch to Lake Victoria. It's strong and a powerful statement about African politics and business. Sadly, this would have been exactly the type of doc that would win back in 1995 or so.

For the type of doc that could

win nowadays, *Enron: The Smartest Guys in the Room* out Michael Moore's *Michael Moore*. It's a brilliant look at Enron and their practices, the ways they played the numbers and made it all swing the way they wanted it to. I was hoping that it would get more notice from the critic world, but it did get a wide-release and did pretty well. Not *Penguins* well, but really good for a doc.

The nominee that I thought should win was *Murderball*. A combination of heroism and tragedy, *Murderball* was as tough a doc as you'll find anywhere. The subjects are so interesting and they really make you care at the same time as wondering how they can be so macho in the face of everything they've faced. In the end, we learn why real life isn't as pretty as fiction with neither of the teams we focus on being the winner. It reminded me of the Yankees losing the series in 2001 when the entire world seemed to

be rooting for them following 9-11.

As far as films that weren't nominated go, there were a few that were right up there with all the ones listed. Grizzly Man, by the greatest director ever Werner Herzog, certainly stands up well against everything, including Penguins. The story follows Tim Treadwell, a grizzly lover who is eventually mauled to death along with his girlfriend. A really strong documentary and one that you should see.

Mad Hot Ballroom was another, but I think it was actually first screened in 2004. It's the story of kids from the wrong side of the tracks who learn how to dance ballroom. It's a



powerful story and it's well-shot. I can't really think of a better doc that passes the Inspirational Story test and the Well-Crafted Doc test. It did fairly well last year in pretty wide release. I'm hoping that the filmmakers do another one in a similar vein.

Let us not forget the Aristocrats. The filthiest doc ever, a wonderful piece of work and a great commentary on the nature of the Comedian. It was both funny and scary and dirty and great. The DVD with the extras is well-worth the time and effort.

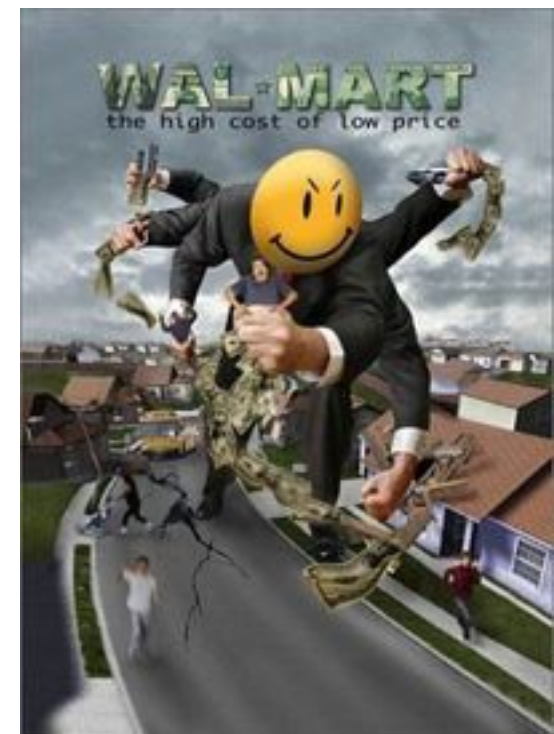
Rize is another one that might get passed over. It depicts the dance traditions of Clowning and Krumping and then features a dance battle. It's visually sumptuous and should be watched, even if you think it's just a dance movie.

Though it's not easily available (I managed to see a screener), Viva Zapatero! is worth finding as it takes a look at the current state of free speech in Italy. It's very funny and very smart.

Stalking Pete Doherty is a BBC TV doc that is very good about Pete and his heroin use. It's a rough doc

and some question its validity.

Though it's an evil piece of liberal anti-corporate propaganda, Wal-Mart: The High Cost of Low Price is every bit as good as ENRON: The Smartest Guys in the Room. It talks a lot about the anti-Union stance of WM and the fact that the workers get paid so little. I admit that even though I disagree with many of the points they make here, I have to say that they really do manage to convince people that it's an Evil Corporation and should be stopped. In fact, I thought twice before going there to get my film developed at one-third the price of anywhere else in town. I still went, but it was with a heavy soul (and slightly fuller wallet).



I miss The PeopleMover

I've written about Yesterland before in my homage to Disneyland past. I miss the PeopleMover, more now than ever because of the following article.

The City Of My Hopes & Dreams based off the scribblings of Johnny Garcia, elaborated on by M Lloyd, SaBean MoreL, Judith Morel, Manny Sanford, and Chris Garcia. Written Up and Presented by Christopher J. Garcia
Art by

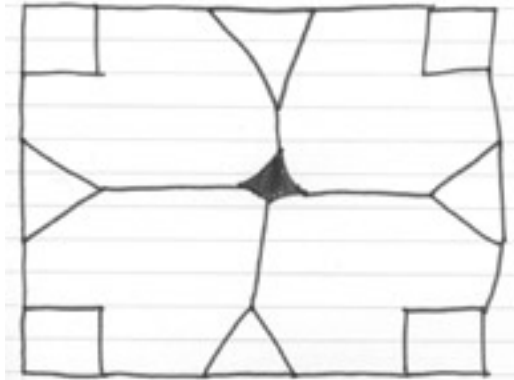
Dad's notebooks were full of strange things. As I was helping him go through things, one of the books had a bunch of writing that I recognised.

"Hey Pops, is this the design for that game y'all would play?" I asked.

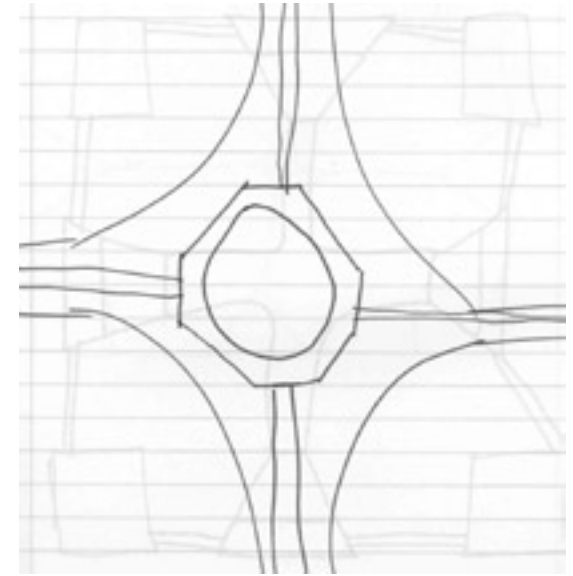
Pops wasn't sure, but he said that the guys used to go to Denny's and would write things and do little scribbles. As I was looking, I was amazed at exactly what I was seeing. Notes, lots of them, about a city. I know Pops never studied Urban planning, but it all made a lot of sense.

As I looked at it, it had a definite SimCity thing going on. There were pods, and in those pods there were various methods of transport. For example, there were eight pods: four of them triangles and four of them squares. I asked Dad about them

and he thought that the squares were residential zones and the triangles were mixed use areas.



While one could debate endlessly the merits of the plan (or lack thereof) it did show some simple thoughts that I've always taken into consideration when thinking about cities that could be planned. The connection through a transit network is the first of them. If enough layers of transit are design and implemented, there's no need for a massive series of roads. I'm not saying that a totally car-less society could work, but one in which maybe 20% of the population drove to work is potentially doable. I interpreted the design as being a series of high speed lines connecting the various residential pods with transit hubs (so if you lived in the pod on the lower-left corner you could hop a train and arrive at the first hub and then transfer to the Centre-bound train before heading out to whichever hub you needed to get to. If the triangles are mixed-use, they'd have on one level all the transit



arrival and departure areas, and then logically, retail, light industrial and other concerns on the upper portions. Looking at the diagram above, you can see this mapped out. The lines feeding in would be high-occupancy, high-speed vehicles, monorails as an example, that would arrive on the lowest level, dropping off passengers. Those that would be going elsewhere would transfer and the others would move up a level. That level would feature a local transport method for getting between the different sections of the hub. There's nothing better for that use than a PeopleMover system. With certain safeguards, these can be safe and cheap. The system would allow for some road transit, the lines surrounding the feeder lines, which would be the logical way to ship goods without too much dependence on

passenger lines. The idea has a lot of merit, though it does require an entire city infrastructure that goes quite a bit vertical (or subterranean as it were) and would be massively expensive to build. Then again, it would be easy on the pocketbook once built due to the simple nature of the design as transport costs would be lowered (per capita) and the localization of retail and industry with transit would eliminate so many problems facing modern cities.

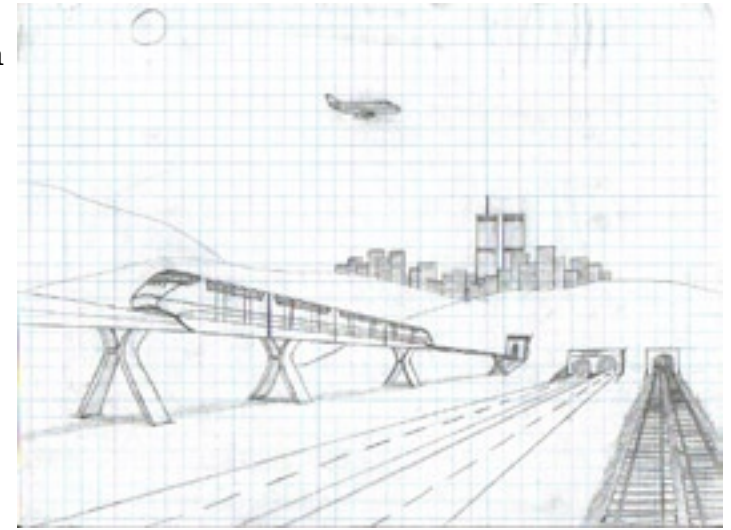
M's addition

When I sent some discussion of the city plans to M, she wasn't too thrilled. It seemed a bit too Science Fiction-y for her. I can understand that. The biggest problem she pointed out was the lack of free form space. There's a school of thought that believes that some amount of rugged space, that is not manicured parkland but natural state space, is important. I can see that too. If the areas between the pods were



allowed to exist as natural space, that help the design's success, but there would also be far too little control, it would seem, and the areas abutting the pods would naturally be pressured into serving as expansion space.

The thing she liked about it wasn't the greenness, but the fact that it recognised that all parts of a retail sector have to be served by easy transport. She mentioned that it's not easy navigating buses in Finland (and she can't drive right now) and even though they go almost everywhere, it's so much effort. Access is the key to strong retail and if the PeopleMovers are more than just a few stations



around town, they'd allow for great exposure of the businesses to people, allowing for great success.

M also mentioned that the only thing really missing was a strong single area that everyone could identify with. In olden days, these were the Cathedrals, and in modern times, depending on the city, they've been things like stadiums and museums. In Seattle, it's Pike's Place Market while in Boston it's the Common. Stadiums or Universities could easily fill that role.

SaBean came in a bit late but made two points that really got me thinking. They were both on energy usage.

To be able to build a city (or a series of cities, as these pods could be seen), you'd require a vast area, preferably of flat terrain. The easiest source for that sort of land would be the desert, which would require a lot

of air-conditioning...unless you moved everything underground. That would then require a system to bring fresh air into the underground system, which is not a trivial concern. The underground option is OK, so long as people get adequate vitamin D and the like. The problem would be powering such large cities. Unless the areas are truly huge (each pod being 10 miles on a side and the distances between them being 5 or so miles) there'd be no way to generate all the power and grow all the food in the area allotted.

SaBean failed to mention the required energy and other resources to build such a huge series of communities. That would probably be enough to keep a million people employed for a lifetime.

The possibility of a below ground system, at least for some portion of the system, would solve many problems (and the aforementioned health matters that would come about because of lack of exposure to natural light would cause over ones) but the desert would really be the

only option. There are several deserts around the world where this amount of land would be available. Putting the transit system underground would be one way, but using the naturally cooler subterranean environment for the living quarters would be intelligent too. In any way you look at it, there has to be massive amounts of power generated by either traditional power plants (not bloody likely) or by wind and solar. I'd say that solar would be the most likely (if a panel that could convert with thirty percent efficiency and have a lifetime of somewhere around fifty years could be developed along with a cleaner production method) and that would require much space.

Manny spoke up on the matter of food. Manny's first comment was 'What about the farmers?'. They'd need land, not to mention fertilizers and other things that make plants grow, like water. The desert is not the environment for such things. Pigs are highly useful as disposal and reclamation creatures and could

provide meat. The issue: they require space and at least some percentage of real feed. But, they'd provide meat. When we talked about designing a space ship, we made all these points about space and food, but SaBean made a good point by saying that people on a space ship are more willing to forego some comforts like meat because they understand the conditions. A city would have to provide that sort of thing because people understand the conditions allow for it. Interesting topic.

That's a small problem when you consider the water issue. If one would build in the desert, water would have to be brought in. Now, in CA, we have the Aqueduct. If these cities would be diverting people from existing cities (let's say each pod could handle 2 million people in fair density), they'd be able to redirect the aqueduct (and improve it to fight loss via evaporation) to the new location. Water reclamation and recycling would also be hugely important. Getting people to drink recycled waste water would be a



POKORO (Baby Vireo)



Joe... - [signature]

challenge (the psychology is the rough part) but once people get over it, it's much easier.

Judith didn't have a lot to say other than 'Who's gonna pay for all of this?' She makes a valid point. As things stand, money for developing housing units, with the exceptions of low-cost (project) housing is usually the domain of private industry. This is more a project for the public sector. Planning a community of this size with so much thought towards sustainability (or at least less non-sustainability) is seldom going to ring true with private industry. On the other hand, if a developer could get



Δ City of Tomorrow - Today

together enough money, make a pitch to get the land for free (or close to it) then we might see a private version. It would also likely lead to issues with corners being cut once the true expense of such a thing would be discovered.

Judith also mentioned something about existing cities. With the massive single tax base that these megalopolises would provide, how could the other cities compete? That's a good point and it makes me think of the current issues we're having with rural small town vs. city issues. There will always be people who prefer the old ways and making sure they are taken care of will be difficult. There's an easy test case going on right now in the city of New Orleans. There are those that want their homes in the old quarters, districts and parishes rebuilt, but there are plans that will severely limit the number that will be rebuilt. This conflict will undoubtedly happen.

M brought up another good point. If this system were adopted, how big could it go? could the entire country be put onto a system of interlinked pods like this, allowing for greater growth and higher populations. Well, with the amount of rail/highway interconnectivity, we're almost there, but this plan would allow for greater unity in presentation. If more than one of these pod schemes would work, then I'm sure you'd see them add another



layer for transit between them.

My thoughts on the speed of the transit methods were bolstered by SaBean. 100 MPH Monorails are not unthinkable, and 250 MPH Bullet trains are easily doable (though both are expensive). If the PeopleMover system went ten miles per hour with cars every two dozen feet, with pull-out stations every quarter mile or so, that could very easily work as a method could allow for reliable, and timely travel around the pods (especially if you had Clockwise and

counter-clockwise travel paths). The travel system would be essential to the design ever having a chance to work.

Now, My Pops wasn't the type of guy who would do anything that he thought might have a chance of ever working, but he hit a few good points. When I showed him a few of the comments that M and co. made he said 'Well, that's further than we ever got' and went on to other topics. Strangely, this is perilously close to World Building and I swore that I'd never get involved in that, but still, it's an interesting topic that I'm probably going to be thinking about more.

A Few Other Thoughts

So, I'm President of The N3F, and as such, I'm always thinking. Here's a spot of truth: I usually think of how the N3F (and by extension, I) can better serve all of fandom than just what could be done to help the N3F itself. I really believe that by helping the N3F, a group that many accuse of having no real reason for existing other than the fact that there are still people who want to be members, focus on serving All Known Fandom that it can become a very relevant and important group again.

I mention this because I've heard a few rumours lately and if they are true, I'm hoping that the N3F can help out. The first is that SF-Lovers,

that long running site (dating to the late 1970s, if I remember correctly) of con news and SMOF gathering, is about to shutter itself. I've only heard this a couple of places, and dimly remember reading an email about it that I can not find now, and am hoping that it is not the case. Oddly, my two emails to discover if it is in fact true have gone unanswered. Anyone with info please let me know.

The thing is, the SF-Lovers Con Listings were the most complete on the web and would leave a large gap if they were to go away. That's one thing I've brought up as a way of making the N3F more important to all fans, that we might find a way to continue their work. If they're not going anywhere, and I hope they're not, then still another source of information on cons would be helpful.

Letter Graded Mail

sent to Garcia@computerhistory.org

by my Gentle Readers

First off, an LoC I should have run last issue from John "I wrote an entire Fanzine Review Column on Chris Garcia for Some Reason" Purcell

I really don't have much to say about the 69th edition of your splendid

fmz, Drink Tank, but it all can be summed up in one brief phrase:

You are one sick puppy! And thank you for letting M take care of this issue while you were out Cinequesting.

I'm not that sick. I did cut out one article that M had got (it was a Male article that was very good but a little too porno for me. Think of the Same-Sex Tendencies article in issue 69, but with two and a half pages of graphic 'this goes here, that goes there' stuff. It wasn't the subject matter, but it was the graphic writing. The guy who wrote it, M's long-time friend Shane, wrote me saying that he understood and would try and get me a cleaned up version for a later issue.

So, when are you going to do this again? It was fun to read and look at; I may have to check out this deviant-art.com site some day and peruse the art galleries.

I'll probably give in to M and let her edit another one next year, after the Baby has come around (they're thinking Aarno for the name, whcih I approve of). I've promised SaBean and Judith an issue: one-half on Music, the Other on Money. I'm interested to see how that one pans out.

The main comment I have to make is that studies have ascertained that the ultimate male sexual fantasy

is girl-on-girl action, followed distantly by bondage/dominance. The brief stories in your zine followed this trend, and are an interesting cross-section of your Drink Tank coterie. When you get this loc, tell M that I am well aware of how horny a pregnant woman can get. When my wife was expecting our kids, it was always during the third trimester when she would get supremely horny. FYI: tell M to try it doggie-style while lying on her side. Much easier that way.

I've often accused M of being bisexual specifically because it drives the boys wild. She's denied it, but you could tell she didn't mean it. I've based this along and she is most grateful.

Anyhow, I'll see you next issue. Hope the film fest went well.

All the best,
John Purcell

How About a little something from the Originator of the "Lloyd Penney-Style LoC": Lloyd Penney!

Dear Chris & M!:

I think we've all survived another wild St. Patrick's Day, the green beer is all consumed, and the warm bodies are being swept up along most bar-laden streets. I had to go to work St. Patrick's Eve, so I saw several bars bursting at the seams, renting out most good brews. It's done, and it's the weekend, so I can get with the programme again,

and here's some comments on issues 69 and 70 of The Drink Tank.

69...Hello, M. Great issue, with a topic near and dear to most of our hearts. Great erotic art all the way through, too, especially pages 2 and 3...and further on, too... Thanks for some marvelous eye candy.

The Eye-candy was mostly my doing, though she forwarded a bunch my way. She said that I chose things that were totally inappropriate, but that also helped her libido. I didn't ask how.

I am pleased to say that many feel that age makes no difference when it comes to love. Doesn't matter who's younger or who's older. Yvonne is more than six years' my senior, but who cares? Perhaps Magda was just someone who needed Manny as something to hold onto along that bumpy ride of getting to the top.

Yeah, she was a nice girl at times. I've talked to her in the last year or so. I'm always the elder in relationships and usually that's a plus for me, though I do love older women...

Hey, vanilla's a flavour, too! I keep hearing about S&M adventures at some conventions, especially those that brought down the convention in Washington some years ago. Never

been my thrill, sorry.

Never understood the S&M Star Trek connection that folks like Margret Cho talk about, but I know it's there.

I can see why M put the essay on Same-Sex Tendencies...for a lot of guys, it's a thrill to be a voyeur in a girl-girl relationship, no matter how far that relationship goes. I'd like to think that the guys might be looking for some directions on how to please the girl in their lives, or how to move once that girl finally arrives. Folks, you find your love wherever it is, and no one can tell you where you should look. There's little enough love in this world, find the one you want to share it with. Gender should have nothing to do with it.

I totally agree. I think a fair amount of the stuff she got was wonderful, and from people I'd have never thought of asking.

This issue may be heavy on the sex, but at least they can't really bash men for being sex-crazed. Sex drives us all, some more than others, and we should just lie back and enjoy it, to coin a phrase...

Yeah, that's my favourite position too...wait...I shouldn't have said that.

Not sure what else to say here without getting myself into trouble. All I can say is that if we ever do figure out why we like breasts, buns or other parts of the female anatomy, they'll probably lose some of the appeal and magic. So, let's not try to figure it out, and we'll all have more fun. Have a good pregnancy, M, and get all you want and need.

I'm sure for M that won't be a problem.

70...I've always like announcing work; it gives you a chance to exercise the pipes and do a little acting with your voice. Did that at, of all places, a figure skating club one summer when I was at high school.

I used to imitate the wrestler announcers. "This contest is scheduled for one fall." and the like. I've got a great story about my time on a swing making announcements that I'll write up someday.

Hey, Chris...if one of M's articles in issue 69 was a little too pornographic for publication, how about sending it directly to us via e-mail? I can't be the first one to ask out of curiosity's sake. And if I am, well, I'm just a Dirty Old Man, and I hadda ask.

I'll get it fixed up and put out there

eventually (see my response to John)

My loc...Atomic Betty, at home with her nebbish parents in the thriving metropolis of Moose Jaw Heights. It's a fun cartoon, and if I was to buy a DVD of a complete set of cartoons, I think it would at the first season of Atomic Betty. Second season is on the go right now, and the story lines are interesting. Ladies? Is Chris Garcia an animated cartoon? Let's take a survey...

I refuse to answer that on the grounds that someone might come up to me and hit me with a mallet. That's always a danger if you're a cartoon.

That voice audition...because of my previous work with Sectarian Wave (the CDs will be available this summer, finally), I got a call to ask if I'd be interested in more voice work. Sure! The project is called Bastards of Kirk, a fan film created by a comic-book studio in Toronto, Bright Anvil Studios, but produced by a professional film studio and director. Go to www.redfortfilms.com, click Enter, click Projects, and click on Bastards of Kirk for all the details. The part I went for was a certain chief engineer, and I got it. I will be seen in profile only, probably wearing a red shirt (hope there's no target on the back), and I'll be exercising my most

outrageous Scottish accent. Shooting/taping should start real soon, and once the film is done, it will probably be submitted for a couple of film contests.

Have them send one my way and I'll take it around the circuit. I do love that name.

Zeppelins... check out <http://www.aerosml.com/aeroscraft.asp>. I had found something about a German company called CargoLifter, which would have used a fixed cargo platform and a spherical balloon, but they went out of business nearly four years ago now.

That's an awesome site. I must somehow work towards a Zeppelin trip of my own. Best Zeppelin gag of late is on the Simpsons. "1936: Jesse Owens humiliates Adolf Hitler by Out-running his Zeppelin.

C'est tout for now. Yvonne's off for another flying lesson, so I have the place to myself. Take it easy, and see you next issue. (Checked eFanzines.com, nothing new there, so I'm caught up for the next three hours, I'll bet. Cheers!)

Hey, even I have to take breaks to eat and sleep. Well, maybe not sleep.

Yours, Lloyd Penney.