



# *The Drink Tank*

THE SIXTH ISSUE



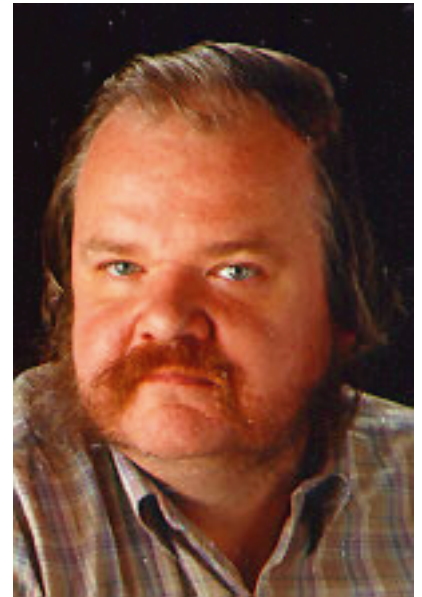
REFLECTIONS AND REFERENCES  
WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY  
CHRISTOPHER J. GARCIA

## Jack Chalker: 1944-2005

My introduction to Jack Chalker was in the pages of *Mimosa*. I came across one of his articles, the first part of the *History of Baltimore Fandom*, and with that, I felt that I could read his stuff forever. Somehow, I found his writing completely easy to digest. For me, that is quite rare.

I met Jack in the late 1990s, I think. We chatted briefly, as I typically do when I'm meeting a writer I really respect, mostly about the history of television. He had mentioned seeing something on TV long ago and I knew exactly what he was talking about and we went on for a few minutes. I never met him again, though I read a couple of his books and a few stories of his along the way.

Jack belongs to a generation that is about to get the book closed on it. The generation that entered the SF-writing world after being a die-hard SF fan. Writers tend to come to fandom after they have started writing now, which can lead to tragic misunderstandings of the SF Fannish culture. Jack was one of the good ones, a guy who went from the 13-year old writing for a fanzine to a writer of great science fiction stories. He'll be missed.



## The Fine Art of Texas Hold 'em

Truth be told, I'm not the biggest fan of Texas Hold 'em. My three favourite poker games are Five Card Stud, Omaha Hi-low and Seven Card Stud. Hold 'em has become the game that people play now, and I've entered a few tournaments. I won the first one I was in, then did poorly on the next couple before pulling out a strong second when I went into the final table with a short stack and managed to take it to the leaders by a tough series of raises and playing at the big stacks. To me, stud is a much harder game than Hold 'em, mostly due to the hidden cards coming the way they do. By being able to represent big with the first six and not have an exposed card at the end, a wheeler-dealer like myself can do well at stud. I also love a game called Razz. Razz is a version of Seven-Card Stud played with the lowest hand winning. It's a tough game, requires a good sense of bluff and strong betting ability. I've been very successful at times with it, and at times not. It's my favourite of the games that comprise the HORSE of the World Series of Poker.

While I do have prefs, any Poker tends to be good.

So, I played in the Tournament of Champions, where all 7 of the past winners met and I bombed out second. I played a good game, made a run a few times, but ultimately I was far too loose a player to make it at the table. I did play a few hands better than I've ever managed to before, but I let it lead me into the temptation of 'You can't win if you don't play'. I was taken out by the girl who tossed me the time I took second, which hurt a little.

We're doin' an Omaha tourney next and folks seem to think that I'm a favourite to win.



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When asked who was better, Charlie Chaplin or Buster Keaton, my answer is always the same: Harold Lloyd. He is over-shadowed by the two bigger names, but Harold Lloyd certainly tops the showman and the Tramp for pure comic genius. While Chaplin was the better emotionalist and Keaton the visionary, Lloyd was every bit the daredevil acrobat that Buster was and could be as lovable as Charlie. Chaplin, the Impressionist, and Keaton, the post-modernist, were both working on the edges while Lloyd destroyed them both in terms of being further ahead in terms of comedy than either of them. Only Lloyd's comedy manages to hold up today.



Of course, Lloyd will always be remembered for hanging off the face of the clock in *Safety Last*. Arguably the most iconic image from any silent comedy, Lloyd actually hung off the face of a giant clock and climbed the build, all while missing two fingers on one hand. Harold did far more than just *Safety Last*, though that is the film that gets shown most often. His *Lonesome Luke* films were well-received and threatened to tie him forever to one character. he did break away, after more than 50 films. His high point came in 1921 through 1925. In that period, he made films that are easily the superior of any period of Chaplin or Keaton at any era. From *I Do* in 1921, through *The Freshman*, Lloyd did make make a single bad film and he managed a couple of classics. Lloyd made a few talkies, including the excellent *Movie Crazy*.

Sadly, Lloyd's career after the talking picture fad gripped the nation was not on the level of his career in the silents. He did some good sound work, but mostly he faded away after a string of good movies that didn't produce box office. He produced a number of films, including the fantastic *The Cat's Paw*, and is the only of the three Silent Geniuses to own all of his work.

Lloyd's son entered acting, and one of the his daughters made it her mission to make sure he was remembered. There are a lot of Lloyd comies that still exist, probably a similar percentage to Chaplin, though less than Keaton. Sadly, even I have to always put him in context with Chaplin and Keaton. They were the touchstones of silent comedy. Harold Lloyd isn't the only one wrongly ignored. The other great silent comedian would have to be W.C. Fields.

If W.C. Fields had been around ten years earlier, he would be on the list and a step above Lloyd (and Keaton in my eyes).

Fields' work in films like *Sally of the Sawdust* actually show his range and ability to turn on an emotional dime. He is, at once, sour and harsh while maintaining a sweetness and lovability that is both realistic and over-the-top. His juggling, featured in several of his silents, is amazing.

While most folks point to his sound work, that his voice and dialogue were what brought him to the dance, his facials and his timing were even better without. He was a true genius and one that gets passed over by Silent fans.

The silent era is still somewhat vital. In the Bay Area, we have the Stanford Silents series in the summer and Cinequest is showing four during the festival (including 2 Harold Lloyd pictures). There is a strong following that I hope will never be replaced by the Talking Picture.





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## Trufen.net's Review of the Drink Tank

Well, Victor Gonzalez did a review of Issue 4 of my little rag and I gotta say he took me to task, but I'm very happy with it. Oddly, I agree with much of what he had to say, and he complimented my very short fiction, so those of you who aren't fans are gonna have to put up with more of them! The meat of the argument was contra my vision of what I'd like to see Fanzine Fandom as in the future and what he saw as my "anti-exchange" stance. I respect that.

And, in case rich brown or any of those who know him might be reading this, I'm an idiot and when I proofed it, I capitalized your name, since when I write names I tend to forget and I over-corrected. As EE Cummings once said "sorry about that."

So, what do I think about the review? Go over to trufen.net, look up Triage and mine is the first comment. Overall, I thought that it was a well-written review of a section of The Drink Tank that is probably not even 1/5 as long!

### A Very Short Story

BASIC, the Beginners All-Purpose Symbolic Instruction Code.

When words began to form on the screen, James had no idea what was going on, no concept of the programme that had caused the words to appear on the screen.

*It's talking to me.*

```
10 PRINT HELLO JAMES
20 PRINT I HAVE ALL YOUR ANSWERS
30 PRINT ASK ME ANYTHING
```

James stared at the screen, half-horrified and half-amazed. He began to think of all the questions he wanted answered, then he stood and turned the computer off.

No one with all the answers would be writing them in BASIC.



## Of My Many Fandoms...

I doubt that any of my readers here ever venture to the other site that I write for. Fanboyplanet.com. It's like a comic shoppe on the Web, where you can go and see what ego-maniacal fanboys believe is good and bad about comics, wrestling, movies, TV and more. We're a small site that gets a decent number of hits. I write the weekly wrestling column called Falls Count Anywhere and a fair number of movie reviews. I even got quoted in DC's press release for their graphic novel Barnum! a couple of years back.

I wrote a couple of articles for a project called Once Upon a Dime. The concept came from the rather funny film Comic Book: The Movie. Basically, we were producing the comic book fanzine that the characters in the film had supposedly written. My article, Once Walked The Reverend, was a nice piece of satire, but the better one, Taking the Blame For The Bottler, was never used. It was a funny story of a group of writers and artists trying NOT to get creators rights over a failed comic character. Perhaps someday it will grace the pages of The Drink Tank.





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## Freaks by Tod Browning

How you follow-up on your first big winning feature is a huge deal. Many have made big mistakes in judging their audience and their talent. Kevin Smith's *Mallrats* did not deliver what *Clerks* did, though it's still enjoyable. Tod Browning, a great director who had just done *Dracula* for Universal, chose a film for his follow-up that has kept people talking for decades: 1932's *Freaks*.

*Freaks* is the story of a little person who falls in love with a Trapeze Girl. The Girl only wants the Little Guy because he's rich. She cheats on him and is eventually found out and taught a lesson. Pretty simple, really.

The beauty of *Freaks* is the ability of Browning to humanize the "freaks" and to make the mundanes seem evil at every turn. From Johnny Eck to The Living Torso, each of the sideshow performers is made to look human in a way that current documentarians could learn a thing or two from.

*Freaks* was despised by audiences and critics alike on its first release. There hadn't really been much support for looking at sideshow attraction as people up to that point, but no one wanted to see a film where the bad guys were the normal ones. In the 1960s, the counter-culture film movement picked it up and *Freaks* was redistributed and ended up making the Nation Film Preservation list of historically important films.

At first, I didn't want to like it, but as it unfolded, I knew that it was a film of great importance than I had given it credit for. On top of that, I found a depth that I never expected and a midget with a switchblade.



## Side Effects by Scott Allen Perry

There is a type of a short film called a Mindbender. It's basically a short film that means to mess around with you, either from the start or along the way. *Side Effects* is one of those shorts.

It's a basic SF principal: a guy needs money so he allows himself to join a drug experiment. The guy is played by the director and he does a really good job with the role. He eventually meets a beautiful young blonde played by Katheryn Gordon. The two have some minor adventures on the way to the big reveal.

It may sound a little like an M. Night Shamaylan film, but honestly, it's much better than that. Perry's characterization is dead on and Gordon is actually electric on the screen. Daniel McLeith is perfect as the head of the trial, Mr. Samson.

*Side Effects* got a number of honours heaped on it in its run through the fests in 2002 and 2003. It won the Best in Fest Award at the Dead Center Film Festival, even when running against quality feature films. Film Threat gave it a rare 100% rave review.

Take a look at <http://www.perryscopepictures.com> for more details on this great short film and great filmmaker.

## ***M. Lloyd's Very brief review of the Triage on Trufen.net (from an email).***

Chris, I love you, but you're an idiot. Mr. Gonzalez has all sorts of points on you, and he wrote them well. Frankly, I woulda snapped and then realised that he was right! You could learn a lot from his style, too, kiddo.



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COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS  
SENT TO [GARCIA@COMPUTERHISTORY.ORG](mailto:GARCIA@COMPUTERHISTORY.ORG)  
BY MY GENTLE READERS

Dear Chris:

While I don't /agree /with all of them, you make many very good points about my piece on Cheryl Morgan in Earl Kemp's eI. I also note that Victor Gonzalez contested a few of them in his 'Triage' column at Trufen.net, so I won't belabor any of the things he said to you there. Or I'll try not, although I will say that while /he /also made a number of excellent points, I don't agree with all of/ them/, either.

I asked a question of the people who read what I wrote about Cheryl and I have to assume that your answer is implicit in what you have to say about the piece. And, really, I have to say I find it commendable. If you were the subject of a smarmy attack in the pages of /Crstal City, /no matter how out-of-context or based in butt ignorance Cheryl's comments about you might be, no matter how distorted a view of you (and of fandom) she might be presenting to her readers, you -- for the betterment of greater microcosm, to be sure -- would not respond with anything that was less than kind. Well, you /couldn't /respond in the pages of her fanzine, since as a matter of policy she wouldn't let you, so of course I mean in the pages of any other fanzine that might think it could be a good idea to let other people know about the way she behaved toward you.

To an extent, I can admire that. I just can't emulate it. Honestly.

I participated in two of the three major (nearly fandom-wide) fan feuds which have erupted over the nearly 50 years I've been involved in the microcosm. This spat with Cheryl is minor when compared to those events, of course, but they do have something in common: I get (and got) no pleasure from my participation in them. For the most part, I like expressing my views and even enjoy a good spirited debate, but in these few cases speaking my mind takes on the aspect of shouldering an unpleasant duty. You may have felt something similar in saying what you did here. Yes? No?

The difference between us, I guess, is that I wouldn't change it.

Fandom is a realm of the mind, and the coin of the realm is egoboo. And egoboo is an honest coin -- or it /should /be if it is to have any value. There's enough insincerity and bending over backwards in the name of being "pleasant" in the mundane world; one of the major reasons I've remained involved in fandom as long as I have is that it encourages us to be forthright and honest. For me, it has grown to become a basic component necessary for friendship; if we can't sspeak our minds honestly, what kind of friendship could we have?

In that spirit, you've paid me in the coin of the realm, and I thank you for it.

Regards,

rich brown aka DrGafia

***First off, thanks for reading and writing in. Second, sorry for the caps in the article. Maybe I'm overly sensitive because I'm afraid for the future of fanzines. I really am. I've seen too many of my friends who would make wonderful additions scared off. My generation never became fully engrained in fanzine fandom. I'm not saying I want Fanzine Fandom to be Pleasantville, I just want to see us continue to exist and thrive, and as I said in my article, attacks and feuds aren't going to help with that. At times, it seems that we're on the endangered species list. I don't believe in sitting and taking it for the good of peace and love, but I don't believe in bile and bitterness. I'm not in this for ego, since I don't really have one. I'm 100% sincere in all of my writing, and I know you are as well, but the real difference is in presentation, I imagine.***



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

Hi Chris,

I just discovered your zine via Trufen.org and I plan to spend this morning catching up on the available issues. Here's a loc on the first issue.

A damn fine first zine. If this is actually your first fanzine ever then you've obviously learned quite a bit from that collection of 5000 zines that you mentioned. Few faned debuts are this interesting. Since this zine is mostly an intro to Chris Garcia there's not a lot of extended comments I can make, but I will mention several things that you wrote that have sparked my curiosity. For instance you mentioned that you write a lot of baseball history. I'd like to hear more about that (and if you've gone into this in later issues of The Drink Tank I've just not found it yet, but will later today). What sort of articles have you written and where might I find them? Baseball has long been one of my obsessions too, though I often pay more attention to games that were played in the late 30's and 1940's than those played in this century. Have you ever listened to recordings of really old baseball games? I'm listening to the opening game of the 1936 World Series - Giants vs. Yankees - right now. Red Barbour is the announcer. Great stuff. I've been collecting these old recordings for a while now on MP3 encoded cd's. If you want to give them a try, let me know and I'll send you a few games.

I used to see fan produced short films 20 or 30 years ago at many of the conventions I attended around the South and Midwest (Khen Moore used to make a point of showcasing such films at the old Kubla Khans in Nashville) but the last several years fan films have been pretty hard to find around here. These days the only films of that sort that I see are the ones that turn up on AtomFilms. It would be great if there were a place on the Web to go to to see just the true Fan films each year. Or is there already such a site?

Looking forward to reading more of The Drink Tank.

Curt Phillips

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Curt Phillips for TAFF! Please visit my TAFF website at  
<http://www.freewebs.com/absarka/links.htm>

***Thanks for reading. I haven't written anything on baseball history here, mostly because pitchers and catchers haven't reported yet and if I start writing about baseball now, I'll never be able to handle the wait. I wrote a lot for one of the last regular baseball fanzines, Catcher's Mask, and for some of the local papers. I did have one thing show up in the National while I was in High School. I'd love to hear some of the old recordings. I spend a lot of times with old sports sections. I'll write up my favourite blown announcers call in a future issue.***

***There's no central site for specifically fan films, though both Atom Films and iFilm have many. While trying to get the Chick Magnet shown, I've come across a lot of cons that are happy for the material to show. One of my goals with the Science Fiction Fan Film Fund is to start a site just for fan films. That's a couple of years away, though. Good luck with TAFF balloting.***





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COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS  
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BY MY GENTLE READERS

## LoC on Issue 3

The look of The Drink Tank continues to evolve in a better direction, though it would be handy if you could include your e-mail address in the indicia at the top of each issue.

Poker, porn, and punkrock are topics I've never been very interested in so I'll have to ignore all that, but the photo of you with a piece of the UNIVAC reminds me that I know a fellow who's at least loosely associated with fandom (pulp magazine fandom) who worked on the ENIAC project during WWII. Al Tonik was a young Army Sgt in 1943 when he was assigned to work on that program and though he's told me that his involvement was limited (and he's never been all that clear to me on what he *did* do there) I mention him to you in case you might be interested in trying to interview him for the computer history museum that you work at. Perhaps he has some documents or mementos that he'd consider donating to the museum, or at least some memories he'd share. He lives in Pensylvania now, and last I heard he teaches a class at a local college there. Shall I dig up his e-mail address for you?

Standard Fannish Complaint # 2: Yeah, this one's been talked about for years too, and the best answer that I've ever seen is that SF appeals mostly to a white audience because it's mostly *\*written\** by a white population. This is the sort of explanation that I tend to find suspect, because while it *\*sounds\** as though it's logical and reasonable, I don't see any realistic way to prove it by testing. I can only think of three black SF writers, (Delany, Butler, and Steve Barnes) and I've read and enjoyed SF by all three while I can think of *\*lots\** of SF written by white writers that I can't stand, so isn't that evidence that the whole assumption is invalid?

Are there cultural biases in SF itself that exclude (generally speaking) writers from a non-white culture? If so I can't imagine what they are. I've read many books from other genres by writers who are black, asian, arabic, and hispanic and though their cultures differed from mine I usually find some human connection in those books that keeps me reading. Actually, I don't pay any attention to what sort of background a writer has until after I've read their story if indeed, I even do so then. The story is what matters. 'nuff said.

I really like the report that Tim Robinson is building a Babbage machine out of Meccanno parts! If he ever gets the whole thing finished and working I'll want to come out to your museum to see it. I think I once read that what's left of Babbage's original engine is on display in England somewhere. Do you know where that might be found? I hope to go to the UK for the Worldcon this year and the Babbage Engine would be a definite "must-see" if I do go.

Curt Phillips

Curt Phillips for TAFF! Please visit my TAFF website at  
<http://www.freewebs.com/absarka/links.htm>

**Wow. That there is anyone left who worked on ENIAC (and I've met only one in my years) is amazing. I'd love to get in contact...possibly to talk more about Pulp.**

**You're right about writer ethnicity. I had no idea that Delany was African-American. There are a lot of Hispanic Noir writers, it seems, though little Hispanic Noir readership. You really should see the Meccano Engines working. It's absolutely amazing to watch. Go to the Science Museum in London and see the original, because that is a treat.**



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BY MY GENTLE READERS

LoC on Issue 5  
Hi Chris,

I share your admiration for Mimosa. My first copy was #2, which Nikki handed to me at a Chattacon long ago. It took hold of my head and shut out the rest of the convention for me and I think I suspected even then that Richard & Nikki were about to take fandom by storm. I treasure my set of Mimosa as much as my set of Hyphen and LeZombie. It recorded the fannish past for us and set a mighty high mark for any fanzine that comes after it.

Thanks for the article on the Polgar sisters. It was off-beat and interesting, just the sort of thing I read fanzines to find.

I enjoyed the reviews and appreciate that you've started running longer letter cols. The locs are the heart of a good fannish fanzine in my opinion, and I hope you'll continue to print the best of what you receive.

I see that you \*have\* started running your indicia at the end of the zine. Thanks. That helps people like me who have very small memories. I'm looking forward to more issues of The Drink Tank.

All best,  
Curt Phillips

***Thanks again. I'm trying to keep file sizes down, but it's not easy with the volume of responses that I'm getting. I know there's a way to get them small, I just haven't managed to find it. I read a lot of LeZombie back in the day, one of Dad's old faves, but I must say I maybe caught two or three issues of Hyphen. That, along with never having read any of the old SF-Ska Zine Skank-Bot, are my two greatest fanzine misses.***

Jay Crasdan- Evanston, IL (Currently in Perth, AU)

Well, Chris, the no controversy kid, got his hand caught in the cookie jar. How quaint. Seriously, I know M thinks you're wrong, and even more so thinks you should have ranted and raved, but you handled it right in my eyes. I think you worry too much about how things will effect the future and not enough about getting payback.

***I'm not a fan of payback, as you well know, but I do think Victor and rich both had some good points. As far as being the non-controversial one, with you and M around, someone has to be clean enough to hold the press conferences!***

Manny Sanford- Santa Clara, CA

Just read the Trufen thing and you're right and wrong about a lot of things, but mostly, I was smiling because I knew it would be getting you noticed, and frankly, I'd like to see more folks reading and maybe you wouldn't have to rely on M and Jay and I to keep your letter column going!

***Thanks Manny, you bastard! M and Jay would beat me if I didn't run their letters!***

The Drink Tank is written and edited by Christopher J. Garcia. All of Mr. Garcia's words are free to reuse in any fashion you see fit, in any medium without permission. Comments, criticisms, contrivances, conspiracies, and confabulations can all be sent to [garcia@computerhistory.org](mailto:garcia@computerhistory.org). If you feel like sending Chris a box of Chocolate Chip Cookies, those can go to 1401 N. Shoreline Blvd, Mountain View, CA 94043. Any errors are all Chris' fault, and he's sorry. Please don't hit him. Chris Garcia will return in an exciting issue 7 with some talk of dogs and baseball.