



THE DRINK TANK

M Lloyd's Views of Moscow
by
M Lloyd

“Hey, why don’t we move to Russia?” Jay said one night while we were settling down into bed. It was one of those nights when neither of us had done anything more strenuous than watch TV and write articles for that ingrate in Northern California.

“What’s in Russia?” I asked.

“It’s going to be the next Berlin. You loved Berlin, right?”

Well, I did. It was cheap, I was younger and more adventurous, which is my code word for slutty.

“I don’t know. Moscow sounds cool.”

“What about St. Petersburg? It’s supposed to be beautiful and the dollar goes even further than it does in Moscow.”

That sounded intriguing, especially since I had always wanted to visit. There is a strange fact about being an heiress; you’re expected to make strange decisions and live in esoteric circles in cities where you don’t speak the language. I’ve never been a typical heiress, but maybe it was time to start living like I was.

“Let’s look into it.”

And that was how it started.

Chris, you’d love Moscow. It’s entirely run by adorable mobsters.

We arrived in Moscow on a Wednesday morning and immediately started looking for a longer-term place to stay. We didn’t want to stay in a hotel, but we didn’t want to full-time settle in Moscow either. After talking to a bunch of people, we found that there were some cottages that we could rent for several weeks at a time. They were in a nice part of town, they were cheap (I gave them 200 US Dollars and they said we could stay through February. That sounded perfect to us. We settled in, me with my 20k of cash that I brought, Jay with his note books and two computers. Neither of us brought much

What Were the Seventies Like?

When I noticed we were up to Issue 54, I began to think about the club that Steve Rubell opened in the 1970s that brought together all of the legends of that era. Andy Warhol, Truman Capote, David Bowie, Ray Jay Johnson, they were all there and partied like it was 1995.

I, on the other hand, missed it.

You see, I was born in 1974, and though I have strong memories dating back to late 1977, I don’t remember anything about the reality of living in the 70s. M, who is only a couple of years older than me, says she has a lot of memories of doing typical 70s things, most notably going to see Star Wars and waiting in long lines (I remember seeing it at the Drive-In, but only barely). I missed the 1970s, and though I’ve never caught 1970s nostalgia like so many others of my generation, I do wanna know what all the fuss was about.

True, those folks around in the 1970s sound pretty awesome, most notably Warhol. I love the Pop Art and the whole sign and dine concept.

OK, enough of that, this issue has been the most fun I’ve had yet, and it’ll start with M Lloyd and her talk of the first part of her and Jay’s move to Russia.

in the way of clothing, but as we soon discovered, there were better ways to dress for less.

We quickly discovered that there are three economies in Moscow. The first is in Rubles and is easy enough to deal in. We bought about two grand worth of the legal currency before we arrived with a suitcase full of real cash. The Ruble market tends to be over-inflated and risky. You can walk safely through the streets with rubles hanging out of your pockets because they are the weakest of the methods of payment. The Hard Currencies, the Euro and the Dollar, they are what the Mob and the black market deal with, and that's bigger than the legit market by far. A dollar can get you a lot of stuff. I bought about a hundred bucks worth of pirated movies for a dollar, and a DVD player for about twenty. It worked well too. I had some Euros, but they don't spend as well as the dollar. There are people who will give you more for an American 20 than for a 50 Euro bill. Not sure why that works. The final market is the information market. You know where to get a guy who has something like cocaine, you can sell just that information for goods. You have a lead on American Whiskey, you tell someone where to find it and you'll get paid. I discovered this at a large, open-air market the second day.

I mostly deal in dollars, and I discovered that I'm more willing to pay for friends than for stuff. The perfect example is third night we were here.

I wanted to go dancing, to spin the floor and maybe make Jay jealous as I



slid up alongside a lovely. We found a disco (it's so funny to hear people call a nightclub a disco) and we wanted in. The place was obviously a former warehouse in a nowhere part of the city, I had given a twenty to a cab driver named Alex asking him to be on call, and he was our for the next few days. He was a good guy and when we asked him to take us to his favourite place, he did, and fast. It was called Cabo, or something like that. We entered the queue and found that they were a 'Locals Only' sort of establishment. I was ready to call Alex back and throttle him when Jay handed the bouncer



a twenty and said something along the lines of 'I think we're friends.' The guy at the door smiled and ushered us in.

Wow.

The joint was huge, far bigger than it looked from the outside and there was a dance floor the size of a football field. There were about five thousand people dancing and the bar was an island in the middle. Along the edges

were tables and booths. Gregor took us to a table where they apparently put all of the foreigners. This was the table that proved we were in the right place.

Every day, Japanese, American, German and English business people arrive, set their shit down and try to make a buck/Euro/Pound/Yen off of the Russian market. This table had six business guys, all in suits, all hammered on Vodka and spicy cigarettes. The hash bar haze look of the photos that hung all around these tables showed that this was where the smokers lived. There were three Germans, a pair of Japanese, a Russian guy who was with a pair of Brits, and there were three other Americans. There were two empty Vodka bottles on the table, and several open packages of cigarettes.

“Two more American friends to join you.” Gregor said as he brought us to the table. We shook hands, bowed and we started small talk with the Americans and Brits. We also drank free all night.

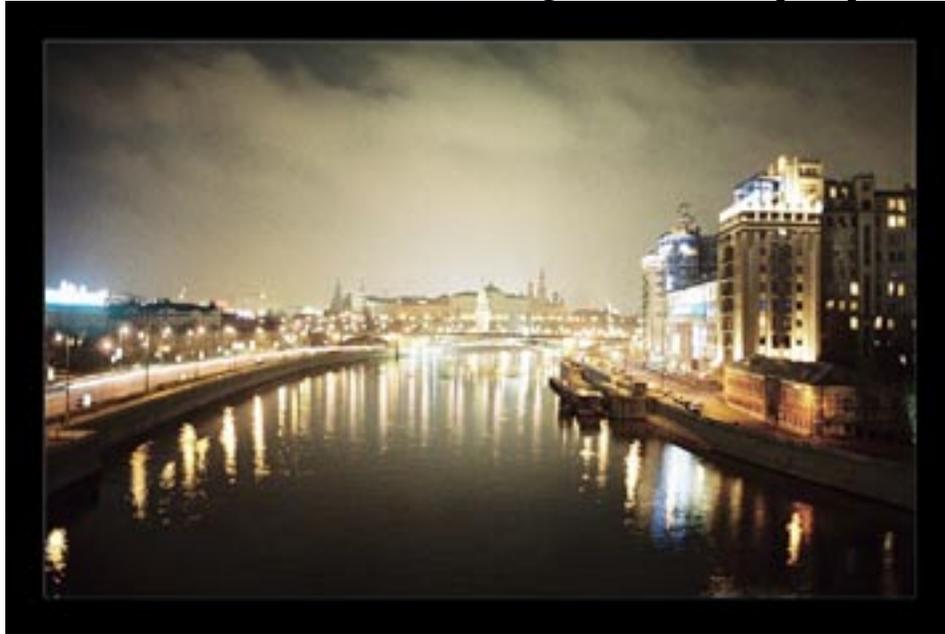
Here is how this part of the economy works: we paid our way in to the good graces of Gregor, who worked the door and is probably well-known in the area’s underworld. By paying him, we now drank free because we were his friend. Normally, all drinks were paid for with rubles, but since we had given Gregor cash, he was now our friend and we drank on whatever we gave him to let us in. We only gave him fives the other times we came, so we would drink heavily, dance all night and it would cost us next to nothing.

Everyone seems to have their own personal mobster. Gregor was ours, though only at the club. We asked him if he could

point us to good live music, and he sent us to a club a couple of miles away where there was top-notch hip-hop. When we got there, the guy at the door saw us, said to Jay ‘There’s you! Gregor says you friends are coming.’ He got us good seats and after the show, we chatted with the star of the show, MC Kosmanar, and we partied well into the night. The next night, we were planning on going to the movies. We stopped by the club to say thanks to Gregor for his tip and tip him and he gave us a bunch of tips on where to go and what to say to get the best deals. We have a two-hundred forty pound concierge with a gun!

Jay’s plan all along has been to start a magazine. That Hip-hop show got us think-

ing and by the next night, he had started putting together a thing called World-Bop, a magazine of International rap and hip-hop. He’s doing three versions: one in English, one in Russian and one in German that



he’ll send along to our friends in Berlin.

That’s the other thing. In the 1970s, kids went to Berlin to be tough and score drugs and write. That’s what kids are doing now in Moscow and St. Petersburg. It’s strange, but as we’ve done the various clubs and casinos, we’ve met them, the people who want to write novels and do X while arguing politics over bottles and bottles of Vodka at the discos. I’ve gotten to know a few of them, most notably a screenwriter named Charlie Hinis, and they’re all hoping that the city will bring their words to life more than just their writing. It’s a strange theory, but still.

We haven’t been able to travel the last few weeks because Jay’s been sick. It’s

given him a lot of time to work on the zine, which is nice, but mostly we're just staying in town. I've discovered a fondness for the Black Market which Jay has also found.

There's an apartment block where one floor has been con-

verted to the Russian equivalent of Fry's. You can get appliances, televisions of all sorts, DVDs, CDs, large amounts of American and British snack foods, computers, printers, guitars and toys, all by going from one apartment to the next. I've spent about five hundred dollars there over the last week or so.

We've already started looking for places in St. Petersburg, I went there for a day and found a place that we could buy for far less than I expected to pay. We also have to prove that we have a job before they'll let us move in, so Jay's mag better take off. There's a neighborhood where a lot of former Brits, Finns, Americans and Germans have been living for the last five years that seems to be our planned settlement. We're probably going to tour Europe before we settle down in Piter, probably spending a month or so in Finland and maybe a



few days in Latvia. Jay has already started learning Finnish, which I'm picking up faster than Russian. I do not have the talent for language that Jay does.

There's a lot of porn in Russia, very little of it being legal. I'm not into a lot

of it, but some of it's kinda quaint. I met the girl known as Yulia Nova and another Russian girl who does a lot of her work in Japan. I was rather shocked that they were so sweet. The biggest name Russian smut photographer also shoots at a lot of the clubs, so I've met him once or twice. Nice guy, great hands, good eye.

So, that's M's Russia for you. I think we're going to like it here for the long run, and unless Finland turns us around, I'm sure I'll be gavarooting pa-russki soon.



Me For Mayor Update November 2005

Me For Mayor has come up big in the race, that is to say no one is talking about it, but it's there. Oh yes, it's there. I've handed out more fliers, including putting a couple up in the Cinequest offices, and I'm working on the bravest stunt of all. Let's just say Banner, and leave it at that.

In other Me For Mayor news, I visited the 1/2 scale light tower at History San Jose and was struck by the beauty. A gentleman came up to me and we started chatting about it.

"You see, we could have a tower like this today and make it strong enough to withstand the high winds and earthquakes and even make it out of lightweight materials." he said.

I told him about my campaign and he was interested in hearing more. I told him that my opponents were all anti-tower ex-



tremists without the human feeling that all of us share for giant, street-straddling light towers.

"Well, you'll need a lot of good luck, but if you win, I'll make a bid on the contract." he said, laughing a little as he walked off.

It turns out that he was one of the company that built the 1/2 scale model that we'd been looking at. When I went in to talk with some of the folks who work at History San Jose, they told me that he comes by every now and again to make sure no repairs are needed.

And other than that, I've been endorsed by a few people, including Arminster at Cinequest and my Mom. So what if neither of them can vote for me. I'm leading a revolution dammit! I don't have time to deal with all of these specific problems!

Sabeen Morel Talks About Sex In Space: The Real Issues and the Comedic Potential It Presents

So far as we know, there's never been sex in space by anyone born on the Planet Earth. While I read M's article on The Best Little WhoreShip in Deep Space a couple of

issues back, I started looking into what it would take to make Space Sex happen. It's even more than just a bottle of Two Buck Chuck and a scented candle. There's prepara-

rations that must be done!

Let's take it from the top, the very first thoughts of sex in space. In 1908, some guy published a book called *Honeymoon in Space*, which is really just a space flight that's a metaphor for fucking. Plain and simple, and not entirely easy to read either. There are some nice double entendres, but overall, weak sauce.

There were a few times that sex in space came up over the next few decades. My favourite has to be Spider Robinson's *StarDance*. There, he discusses the problems that sex in zero gravity presents, making it more of a team effort. Spider claims that rape would damn near impossible in space, which would make about 2/3 of the space porn I've seen completely wrong. It does make sense, when you think of the mechanics, that if you're not tied to something, you won't be able to do much in the way of the dirty stuff unless you have a little help from your partner.

Back to some science. Neither NASA nor any of the other space agencies have ever come out and said that any of their people have got good and done the bad thing on one of their flights, but MIR would seem to have presented the option. No one has talked about it, which makes me think it hasn't happened because doesn't everyone who nails someone hundreds of miles from home like to brag about it over a good game of cards? There have been many opportunities for it to happen, most shuttle missions, any of the space station vigils, all of them could have led to some screwing, though honestly, foreplay would have been enough to satisfy my need to know. But they haven't, or they've kept it quiet. And that's a bad thing.

You see, I understand the fear, that two astronauts will get in-

involved and at their first spat, WHAMO...right into an asteroid. It's a possible scenario, true, though a strong sexual relationship can help to hold a dependant group together. Just think of the old Greek Phalynx. Nothing held that together as well as the buggery.

As long as there's been filmed porn, there's been space porn. One of the older smut films I've seen is from the 1930s and features a time-travel theme. There were others that I've seen, some of them well-known, like *Flesh Gordon* and *Latez*, some of them not, like *NightRide*, *Deeper Space*, *Satellite*. All of them had some strange scenes, but only one, *Satellite*, had a zero grav sex scene almost. They did the camera trick they used in *2001* and had the set rotate while they were at it. They even had things on string to make it look like they were floating. The money shot completely destroyed the illusion though, giving you a solid up and down.

There've been many porn bits where girls are hooked up to devices which give them pleasure undecipherable. One, whose name I forget, even had a guy dress up as a computer and use a hand-like appendage to give her a good time. There have been ones where guys dress up as robots that rock young starlets' worlds, though I've never seen it the reverse, where the girl is the SexBot. There are a lot of space ship themed



porn titles, including many that are strict take-offs on *Star Trek* and *Star Wars*. No B5 yet though that I've seen.

This is all just side-light to my main point: how do we prepare for a future in space without knowing the basics of sex in space?

I'll tackle this from a few points of view, but believe me, it'll start out weird but

end with a lot of logic.

M is right on one thing: you need sex as both recreation and for procreation in Future Space. It's also a fine exercise. The fact is you'll need to work even more muscles for zero grav sex. A woman can no longer allow a man to make his time without rising to greet him, as it were. While there have been no studies into it, I'd say that a good example would be sex in open water. I've done it, and I know others who have, and it's a much more cooperative process. The use of props, such as belts and tie-downs, would be a requirement for much of it. There was a book written in the late 1990s all about it, but there's also a report that they credit that NASA has completely denied, but it said that there were 10 useful positions and six of those required a belt of some sort. Makes you think.

Another matter is the emotional thing. Sex as recreation, which is usually the playground of college studies and the creepy guys who hit on me at Cons, is almost a requirement. There's no better physical activity that requires less space and provides more positives. Aerobic activities aren't easy to come by in tight quarters, but sex would certainly be one of them. And, just like M said, finding the right combination of social boundaries and protections, would be a must. It would be far more important to assure that sex is seen as anything but a way to share an emotional connection than to build on it as a form of unity.

There was one study that said the zero gravity reduced the sexual desire of the astronaut involved, which is kind of



understandable as our current methods of space travel are entirely fear inducing and the level of stress for most astronauts is very high during missions. But how do we combat this? Well, at this point, we don't need to, but by the time we're going traveling among the systems, we will need a way.

We're not too far away from a time when at least one couple will have had relations in a floating tin can traveling through the great vacuum that is space. In 2003, Russia, always out for a buck, said that they'd bring a couple out on a Space Honeymoon for the right amount of money. The concept is thrilling, since the idea of screwing where no man has ever screwed before is appealing, but also because it could answer some of the questions that we all have that need to be answered. What would be a better selling point for a multi-million dollar honeymoon? 'Hey, come on, give us tons of money, take a flight in to space, have sex and let us watch and monitor your every reaction!'

My money would be on the table before they got to the end of the ask.



I've Got My Spine I've Got My Orange Crush...

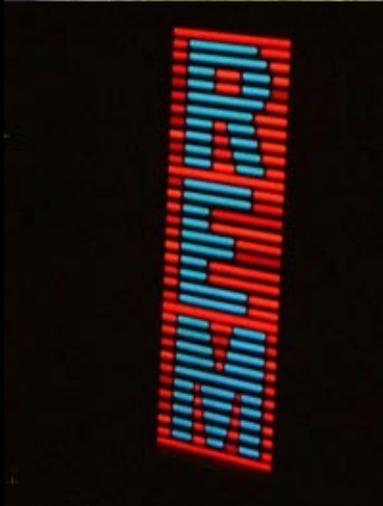
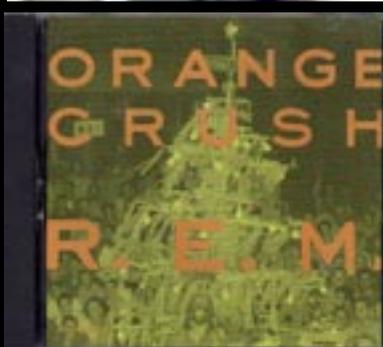
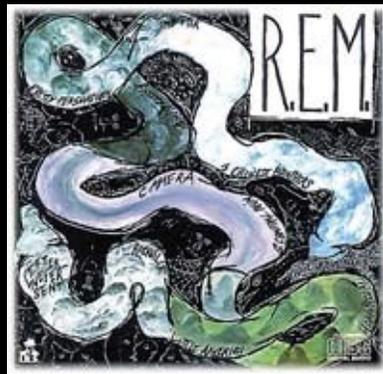
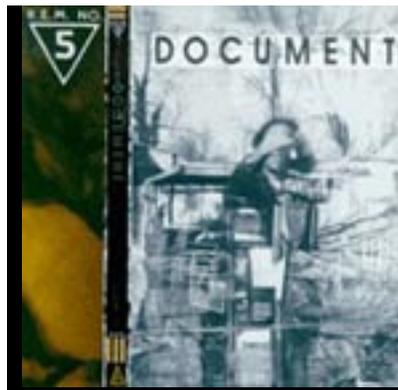
It's hard to remember that type of September when I did nothing but listen to REM. It was a long time ago and I haven't listened to any REM in ages, but still, when I happen to hear a song, I remember why I loved them so.

I Love the 80s, the original, was on and they talked about It's the End of the World as We Know It and I suddenly had all the memories of REM rush back at me. It was strange, since I Love the 80s basically just made fun of the video, but it let me know that I had been ignoring them, probably unfairly.

REM was, in the 1987-1990 timeframe, the best alternative rock band in the world. Document and Green are two of the epic albums of the late 80s and easily the most important in the development of the sound that so many bands would take in the 1990s (one of which, Barenaked Ladies, sound can be traced to Document quite easily) and they were riding a wave of originality and jangly guitar-driven interest.

Then they got artsy.

That's not to say that they weren't artsy in the 80s, but the Out of Time/Automatic for the People phase was rough for those of us who loved them during the olden days. They did songs like Everybody Hurts and Losing My Religion which didn't feel like Alternative Rock, they sounded like the leading edge of pop, and that's just what it was. REM, along with Nirvana, can be said to be the ones who



took Alternative Rock and made it pop. Without REM, there is no Matchbox 20, no John Mayer, No Killers or The Hives or the White Stripes, in fact, pretty much all the Non-Bubble Gum rock isn't pop if there is no REM.

But I didn't like it. I turned from REM and found Frank Black, who was once Black Francis in the seminal Boston Rock combo The Pixies, and I discovered more Ska and Punk and things just changed. I hadn't listened to REM in years when I finally pulled out my copy of Green and put it on my Windows Media Player.

Orange Crush is a great song. It's my favourite REM tune and one of the songs that defines good songwriting to me (along with Elvis Costello's Allison, Veronica and Deep Dark Truthful Mirror). Its jangling guitar and simple structure combines perfectly with Michael Stipe's half-whine singing voice that folds over every word. IT's a powerful little tune, and the video for it was great.

Also on Green was the song Stand, which was a favourite for a long time. It's a nice tune, and I believe it was the theme to Get A Life, the greatest TV show of all time. There are other tunes, like World Leader Pretend, that just blow the doors off.

So, I'm going to try and get back into REM. Monster was their last good album, sort of a turn away from Automatic and Out of Time, and that's when I saw them at Shoreline. I hope to see them again, since they did rock hard when I saw that that long ago eve.

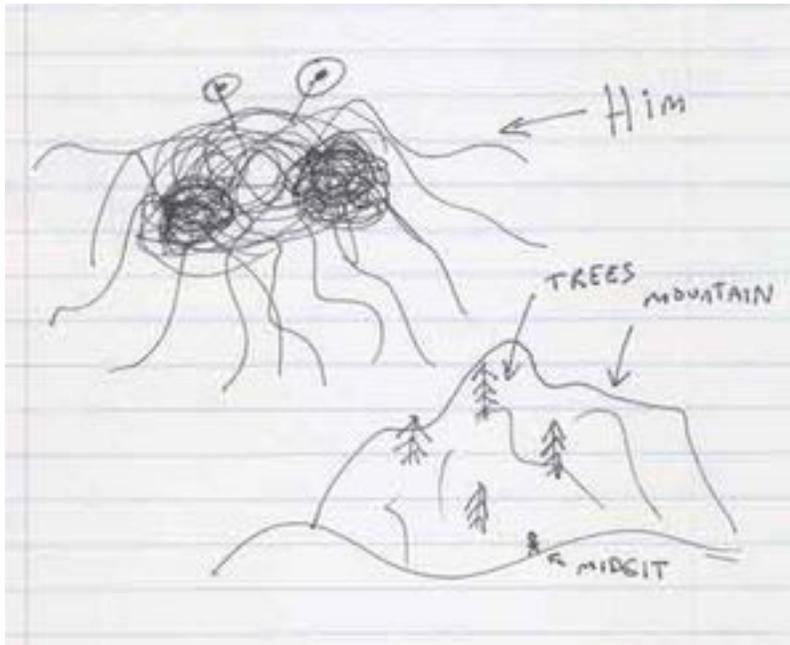
Touch Me with Your Noodly Apendage

There are some movements that start out as jokes, but somehow gain more momentum. The Internet has only increased the number of things that get taken and carried out. Sometimes, they are merely cults of personality, but sometimes, they are damn funny.

The Flying Giant Spaghetti Monster is one of the funny ones.

Basically, the Kansas Board of Education was having a hearing about giving Intelligent Design equal time with Evolution in schools. Bobby Henderson sent off an open letter to the board saying that he wanted equal time to both of those given to his religion, Flying Spaghetti Monsterism. He got four letters back, only one of which seemed to get that they were being mocked and made comment back to them. The letter was on Henderson's site, and BoingBoing, as it is wont to do, started giving it play and things were a go from there.

Like any thing like this, there soon popped up a series of added little things. There was a great series of beliefs like, in the words of the prophet: An invisible and undetectable Flying Spaghetti Monster created the universe, starting with a mountain, trees and a "midgit" (as shown in the illustration). All evidence pointing towards evolution was intentionally planted by this being. This should be followed by the saying of Ramen, as if one were properly using Amen as a period.

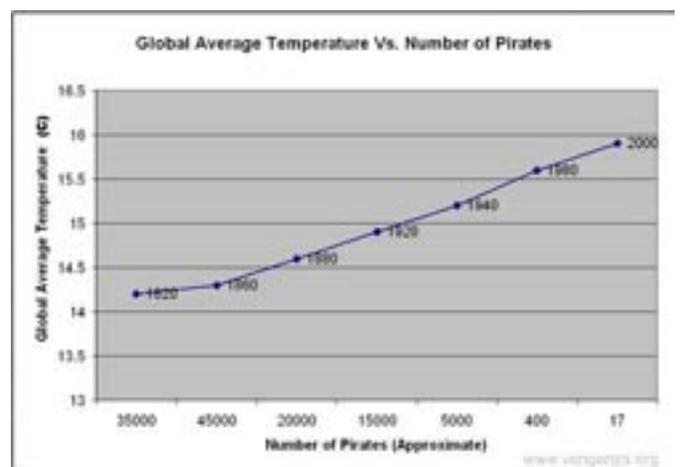


There are other things. The decline of pirates has led to the increase in Global Temperature and all the other natural disasters. My favourite being the graph that was produced to show this effect.

Flying Spaghetti Monsterism, or Pastafarianism, is on the rise, and it won't stop any-

time soon. Michael Saladi identifies himself as a Pastafarian, which is a big get for FS-Mites everywhere.

I'd love to see where this goes. The worst case scenario is that it takes off like Scientology, the best case is people have a good laugh over it for a year or so. I'm not committing my life to his noodly appendage, but I will say that I am willing to enter the contest that offers 250,000 to empirically prove that Jesus is not the son of the Flying Spaghetti Monster.



Letter Graded Mail Sent to Garcia@computerhistory.org By My Gentle Readers

Now Entering the Arena, from Etobicoke, Ontario, Canada...Lloyd 'The Crusher' Penney!!!

Dear Chris:

Hi, it's Lloyd in catch-up mode. Spent last weekend running a con suite at a friend's con in Rochester, New York (just before the snows arrived), and last week was spent not only with my evening job, but a day-time assignment as well. I'm soooooo far behind! Here's a loc on issues 51, 52 and 53.

I really do like the hunk method of LoCing. As FANAC speeds up (the Velocity of FANAC is directly proportional to the available bandwidth of its practitioners) the block comment technique will be the only option.

51...How much of a novel did you write in three days? Not even Ellison can write that fast! We'll put you in a storefront window, and see how fast you can go.

I figured out my total word count for the year to date (1,187,025, including fannish-type emails and the like) and I'm amazed that it took me that that long! No, it was a lot of fun and I'm sure other writers could write that many good words in less time.

My tastes in women must be simpler...I'm a fool for a woman with an honest smile. I won't dwell on build because it's so personal, and perhaps too revealing for a family fanzine, but some of my closest female friends caught my eye with a beautiful smile.

M's first thought when she met me was that I was a guy who was on the look out for 'tits and Cash' since I liked the girls

in the expensive clothes that showed off their curves. I'm a sucker for a long neck. That's my thing. A nice long neck is an underappreciated thing.

I remember In Search Of... With Leonard Nimoy, proving that he was just more than an actor to hang pointy ears on. Of course, he did little more than narration, but he was a face you could trust, mostly because you recognized him. I want to believe...as science fiction readers, we want to believe in things that most wouldn't. Sasquatch has to be intelligent, but if he was, why would he be in the Pacific Northwest when it's so much warmer further south? I guess with wearing a permanent fur coat, living in northern California might be better.

We've got our Bigfoot, but he does live in the colder areas. I blame In Search Of and my Pops for all my belief in things weird.

TorFlu sounds like a disease..."Coming north? Don't worry about SARS, come up and catch TorFlu!" Colin's gonna kill me... I'm looking forward to the anonymous issue when contributors spill their guts and hearts.

Me too. I've got a couple of anonymous contributions, and I think right before I do it (early Feb is the sight) I'm going to set up an email that anyone can send a mail from so that it's truly anonymous. TorFlu fever is running wild!!!

Vote for Chris! Ya know ya waaaaaaaana... Vote for Chris, when you're tired of voting for the lesser of two evils. Vote for Chris and Bill! Acccckkkk!

I'd vote for Oliver Wendell Jones if he still had his Banana Jr.

52...My favorite lounge music? When Weird Al sings "Hotblooded" like a lounge singer. Richard Cheese, because most people called that kind of music cheesy, anyway.

That's one of my fave Weird Al bits. That and the food medley he did when I saw him in 1985.

As a wrestling fan, like Arnie Katz is, you must have been shocked by the death of Eddie Guerro. Even if you don't watch it, you wind up knowing who some of these wrestlers are, to your embarrassment. Looks like cause of death was natural.

Yeah, my latest LoC to Arnie was written a couple of hours after I found out. Eddie was my favourite, so it really sucked. I did get to see him win his only World Title in Person in 2004, so I'm honoured that way/

Generational ships make some sense if we don't care to try to unpolluted the world we're on. Lots of room for food production, and lots of sex to keep people occupied with all that time. Every possible sexual deviation should be covered? That's going to be tough, there are so many fetishes out there. Is there an encyclopedia out there of sexual fetishes? Another project for Chris! I am certain that if that encyclopedia did exist, someone would open it up, go looking for their own, and see that something had been forgotten. God, we're such a bunch of perverts, but I figure that like blondes, perverts have more fun.

You can always ask M, she'll know every sexual deviation. There are only about 20k known sexual deviations, according to another article she wrote for me, and it's assumed that most regular people who mild attachments to four or five, and there are few that are rarer than 1 in 100,000.

53...I guess Tube Poker is an update on counting licence plates on the road. As far as wrestling goes, growing up with an awareness of wrestling at Maple Leaf Gardens, and seeing what WWF/WWE

became...not for me, thanks. We also ran into some wrestlers staying at the same hotel as a local convention, and some of these guys take their own PR a little too seriously.

A friend of mine is an Indy wrestler and was staying in the same hotel as World Fantasy. He's a giant geek and a horror fan, so he hung around the bars and started chatting with all sorts of authors and just had a great time. My best Con/Sports experience was sharing a floor with the Washington Redskins during Philcon in 2002. They were really nice guys and there's a great photo of two Klingons and the QB together in an elevator.

I've got a Claims Department to loc, as well as another SF/SF, but it may wait for another day. The rest of the weekend is already spoken for, so I may be done for the moment. Take care, vote for Chris!, and see you next loc.

Yours, Lloyd Penney.

And his Partner, from...well, I don't know where he's from...Eric 'The BloodAxe' Mayer!!!

Hi Chris,

When I used the subways in New York to get to school at rush hour the game I played was more like basketball I guess. I had to get off either in Brooklyn or the World Trade Center (going one way or another) and the trains were always packed to the maximum at those stops. There was no way anyone (at least someone with my build) could muscle their way from the middle of the car, through the standing, jammed together, crowd to reach the door in time to get off at the right station so it was necessary to establish position by the door. It didn't hurt to take a wide stance and put the elbows out. No three second zone on the NYC subways. People coming in would try to shove, of course. No harm no foul. You

