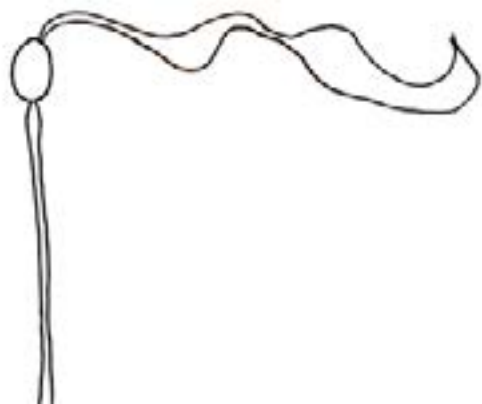


# The Drink Tank 379





# Letter Graded Mail

Sent to [journeyplanet@gmail.com](mailto:journeyplanet@gmail.com)

Lloyd Penney

Dear Chris, James and Vanessa:

The Drink Tank 378 just arrived, and 377 was in the hopper waiting to be responded to, so once again, here's a multi-issue letter. Seems to be what I do best...

377...Honestly, I had no idea Jay Lake had that many friends down there. As I've said in a previous letter, I'd never met Jay, and only knew of him as an author, one of many I hadn't read yet, and as one of the MCs from the Reno Hugos. Again, my condolences to the myriad of friends he left behind. I had friended him on Facebook as he fought his cancer, but followed his struggles, and he was gracious in this fight. I understand this well, losing my mother to colon cancer

The Drink Tank 379



-Editors-

Chris, James, Vanessa

Art by Vanessa, Photos by Chris

just over two years ago now. Fuck cancer, and fight it as best as you can.

**The hardest part for me personally was the fact that he had essentially stopped writing fiction ages before he passed. He had so many more stories in him, and now, we'll never have them...**

378... Getting married??? Our Christopher...is growing up! Congratulations!!! Now there's a reason for us coming back down to SoCal! Moving and everything... Not too far away from the museum, I hope.

I know at least three trans people, all men becoming women. It isn't an easy path they take, but it is one they choose to be true to themselves. One is Christin Milloy, a local friend of fans, and someone who has raised hir voice to make the public aware of transsexual people. Even when there is a level awareness and acceptance, there are other groups within the LGBTQ2S group that need that awareness and acceptance from not only the public, but also the more visible members of their group. Only time and gradual changes in attitudes will help bring out the needed changes; overnight would be nice, but it's not feasible.

It's easy to take shots at the Hugos; it's the oldpharts' favourite sport. It's easy to question decisions made by the Hugo administrator. To get personal about it, to question his intelligence? Out of bounds, say I. I hope you will give Dave McCarty equal time to justify his decisions, and perhaps laugh at David B. Williams' physical shortcomings. Maybe we should just throw the two Dave in a locked room, and see if they come to an understanding, or if they weep to be let out. True wisdom at the end, Chris. We need more discussion, but I think the Hugos need to be renamed...fanzines really are a thing of the past, I admit it.

All done for now! Way to go, you soon-to-be-happily-married guy, you! Set a date, yet? Tell us more about your new plans next issue, okay? See you then.

Yours, Lloyd Penney.

**Renaming the Best Fanzine Hugo might be one way to go, but I really think there's still legs on us old beasts yet!**

**And thanks! Vanessa and I are so excited to be taking this step together! Warren Buff and i were talking about it and the thought that this might be the most SMOFish wedding in years came to mind. At lest 7 Hugo winners and 5 WorldCon chairs are on the guest list so far!**

## **Jonathan Crowe**

Greetings from DetconI, where I've found a quiet moment on a Saturday morning to catch up on some correspondence.

Here's the problem with complaining that blogs are dominating the Best Fanzine Hugo ballot: you're implicitly admitting that fanzines can't compete with blogs.

Personally, I'd be much happier if I could find a full slate of fanzines each year I wouldn't be embarrassed to nominate – because I've been having a hard time doing that. Let me be blunt: there's a lot of poorly written and formatted, solipsistic, nostalgic, in-group crap out there. If there is a reason why online publications have taken the lion's share of the fanzine nominations this year, we might want to look to that.

We should be very careful what we wish for: splitting blogs and other online publications off into their own separate category might shine too bright a light on our own shortcomings. It would be a \*lot\* easier to abolish the Best Fanzine category if, by giving online publications their own category, we make it easier for fanzines' detractors to portray them as an dying art form.

Don't like blogs dominating the fanzine ballot? Make. Better. Fanzines.

**And I will respectfully disagree. The average fanzine is much better written than the average blog. Yes, there are stinkers, of course, but on the whole, the field still puts out some amazing stuff. There's Banana Wings, Challenger, Lake Geneva, Argentus, Breaking It All Down, Broken Toys, Chunga, and yeah, even Journey Planet. I can understand that there's a lot of insider stuff (what's that thing they say about Poems only being written for other Poets?), but really, the level of production right now is fantastic! I will say this, there is no shortage of good blogs either, but it's not because blogs are better, it's just that the field is larger.**

## David B. Williams

Hey Chris,

Thanks for publishing my “Whacky Ideas” in Drink Tank 378. I must say, it is a rare pleasure to write something and then see it in a fanzine in just a couple of weeks. Some sluggish fanzine editors have delayed my stuff for up many months, even a whole year.

I was a bit puzzled by the heading, however. There seems to be something missing. Maybe you could publish the rest of it in issue 379 as Part II.

### **Luckily, I fixed it!**

Thanks too for your mollifying words following by Phillipic. You made some reasonable points, with one exception. You suggested that this year’s Hugo administrator was forced to allow blogs as nominees because that’s what the committee did in the previous year. I will never accept “precedent” as an excuse for injustice. If precedent was the iron law of the land, we would still have racially segregated schools. Fortunately, we finally got a Supreme Court that said “To hell with precedent, we’re going to do what’s right.”

I hope the 2015 Hugo committee finds the same gumption, rears up on its hind legs, ignores popular outcry, and limits nominees for the Best Fanzine Hugo to actual fanzines, as required by the 2012 WSFS vote. Why do we have business sessions if subsequent Worldcons ignore their actions?

**THERE IS ONE POINT - The “equivilent in other media” clause could have led to the DQ of all blogs. There is an equivilent to ‘issues’ in other media. Issues (the Drink Tank has more than 378 of ‘em!).**

There’s another good reason for doing this. The best way to get rid of a bad law is to strictly enforce it. Until the blogs are denied the opportunity to parasitize the fanzine Hugo, there will be no incentive for them to demand a category of their own.

David B. Williams

**I don’t so much mind the blogs who just want to have a voice in the situation, it’s the ones that say that zines are no longer valid that annoy me!**

## Taral Wayne

Loc to Drink Tank 378, 17 July 2014

It was so obvious that a category needed to be created for on-line fanac, such as blogging, that you have to wonder why no Hugo committee addressed the problem. If adding blogs and blog writing to the existing “pod cast” category seemed inappropriate, then create new categories. QED.

So why hasn't this been done?

I'm going out onto a limb here, but I think the most plausible reason is the prevailing attitude among Worldcon runners. It may be that, in general, they believe the fan Hugos are not “real” Hugos. Oh, the rocket is the same, and the ceremony giving them is the same, but the reasons for giving Hugos to fans has lost its relevance. If the Hugo was being invented today, I doubt there would be any fan categories at all. Fandom has become fixated on the pro side of the genre, as it probably hasn't been since the 1930s. This would be why we're seeing a third phenomenon that David Williams didn't bring up – the invasion of professional writers and artists into the fan categories. Thinking about this, the average voter probably says to himself, “all right – finally someone I know, someone who matters!”

I suspect that the fan Hugos are the “Mickey Mouse” Hugos to the committees that manage them. The last thing they want to do is create more of them. That would mean more expense, and longer ceremonies with which to bore the vast majority of the audience ... who don't give a rat's ass any more than the committees.

As for the fanartist category being won by a jeweler, I've complained about that incessantly ... for all the good it does. Unless you can stand up at a business meeting at a Worldcon and air your grievances there, no one hears. By complaining in fanzines, you preach only to the converted ... who are powerless to do anything about it.

My admiration for the numerous craftsmen in fandom is boundless, but like David's “apples and oranges” argument, it's clear that those skills in fandom need their own categories. Costumers in effect already have an award for their efforts – the prizes given

by the costume show at Worldcons. They aren't called Hugos, but could be. As for the jewelers, prop builders, model makers, sculptors, leather workers, cartographers, blade smiths and everyone else who make up the art shows and dealers' rooms at Worldcons these days, I have a question.

What makes you amateurs? Can you give me examples of your giving your work, or at least the use of it, to anyone? Or is your work only for sale at conventions? That would be like a fan-artist charging fanzines to publish his work ... like a professional artist does. Have any of you craftsmen done the equivalent ... say, lend a hand-inscribed dagger to a costumer, or build props for some fan's pod cast? Doubtless there are cases, but I think it's safe to say that they would be the exception rather than the rule. You guys may be in a dealer's room or art show, but you are no more amateurs than are Tor Books or Rick Sternbach, who are also in the dealers' room or the art show right next to you.

I, for one, however, see the writing on the wall. Traditional fandom is old and has lost its grip on the institutions it created. The old school of fandom has been declared officially irrelevant to the vast majority of under-40 fans, who want their Pokemon, their Dr. Who, their Stargate, their Game of Thrones, their vampires, zombies and Robot Chickens and don't care about the Breendoggle or what Bob Tucker said to Chuck Harris, or Ted White's record collection or the TAFF war. What matters in today's fandom is that Silverberg and Harlan are pros, not that they were ever fans. Forrest J. Ackerman is face of the past, not Walt Willis.

So I, for one, have tried to give up the bad habit of caring. Not very successfully, I'm afraid to say... but I haven't yet given up trying to give up.

**A lot to chew on in this letter, Taral! I do have to say I sit here in total agreement with you on most of your thoughts, though one or two I see a bit differently. I do like the idea of building props for a Podcast! I can't argue with you that a lot of younger fans just don't care about Fan History, though I think fans have always also cared about Media concerns. I mean, how many pages on Doctor Who were in 1970s zines?**

## Milt Stevens

Dear Chris,

The subject of gender identity in Drink Tank #378 reminded me of an idea from one of my college classes of long ago. The idea was that every male personality has a female shadow image and every female personality has a male shadow image. Romantic love is based on the search for the shadow image of your own personality. The idea is from Jung, and there are names for the shadow images.

The instructor was reluctant to talk about the idea. He seemed to fear it would offend someone. Nobody in the class seemed to be offended. It was just an idea, and there are lots of ideas about human psychology. Most of them range from sorta true to sorta false.

I went back and read David B. Williams article in Drink Tank #355. He certainly is emphatic. I've changed my mind since the WSFS business meeting of last year. At that time, I thought the Fan Hugos should be abolished. I now think the Hugos should be abolished altogether. There is no point to doing anything with the WSFS business meeting. Discussions on the SMOFS elist are only for people who like to waste their own time.

The purpose of awards in the SF field is to publicize the organization giving the awards. In most cases, the organizations are inconsequential and the awards are inconsequential. The Hugos, Nebulas, and Locus Awards are the only ones I ever notice. I ignore all others. I must work on ignoring these awards as well.

Yours truly,

Milt Stevens

**Now, the hoarding collector in me wants the Hugos to go away so the Rocket I've got will be more valuable, but the guy who literally was taken off his feet when he won said Hugo really hopes that we never seriously consider getting rid of them. They are a marvelous thing and they can change lives.**



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TATTOO

EST. 1989

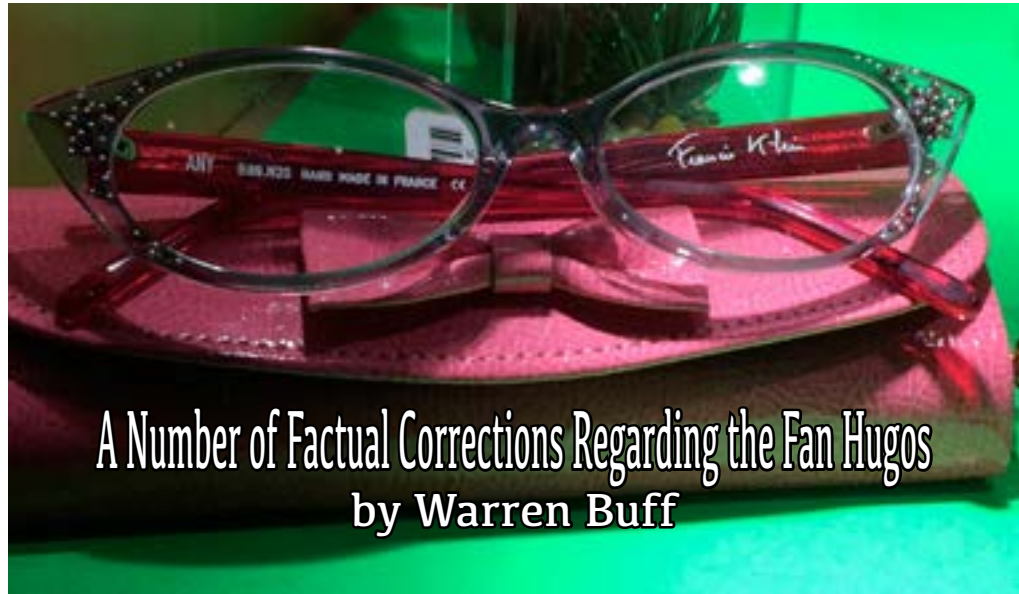


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## A Number of Factual Corrections Regarding the Fan Hugos by Warren Buff

I have to point out a number of matters on which David B. Williams is incorrect. The vote at the 2012 WSFS Business Meeting did not ratify the changes proposed in 2011 unchanged. While Rich Lynch had managed to hone the Best Fanzine category to exclude blogs in 2011, Joshua Kronengold managed to convince the 2012 meeting to return the “equivalent in other media” language which had allowed blogs in the first place. This was ruled to be a lesser change, which meant that the amended text did not need ratification in 2013.

I was at both meetings, and voted for Rich’s text and against Joshua’s amendment to it, but still voted in favor of the final amended text, because it solved a pressing problem: we had a fiction zine that paid for content win a fanzine Hugo, and the new rules would ensure that never happened again. We also got the podcasts out into their own separate category, ensuring that words and images would be competing with words and images, even if we failed to settle a divide between the static and dynamic presentations of such. We fixed two of the three problems facing the Best Fanzine category, and I’d much rather fix two than none.

Dave McCarty has, in these categories, executed his duty correctly. He interpreted the text he was given based on the argu-

ments given during ratification, and he did so correctly. That the text is flawed is no fault of his (the vote to return the “equivalent in other media” clause wasn’t even close, so even if he voted for that – and I don’t know if he did – he’s not particularly culpable).

Further, the assertion that a jeweler won Best Fan Artist is off-base. Spring Schoenhuth was nominated but did not win, losing out to Galen Dara, who does in fact produce static two-dimensional images. There was a motion at the WSFS Business Meeting last year to explicitly recognize artistic creations such as costuming as eligible, which was voted down. I generally agree with the sentiment that such things be included as art, though we may ultimately need a category such as Best Fan Performance to honor costume presentations and filk. I’m not proposing that at the moment, but I could see a use for it down the road.

The Best Semiprozine category has also included fiction zines from rather early in its history. Whispers made the inaugural ballot in the category (and the second), then Interzone had a run from 1986-2012. Thus, there have always been fiction zines in Best Semiprozine. As the “big fanzines” for which the category was created dwindled or turned fully professional (while hanging around the category until we fixed its definition to explicitly exclude such fully professional efforts), the semi-professional fiction zines proliferated, and their editors mounted a drive to save the category. It was initially a category created to solve a problem, but as the world of fiction publishing changed, it became a useful category for honoring the fiction zines in between pure labors of love and professional operations which can still harbor the likes of New York Review of Science Fiction (which I would love to see nominated again).

Finally, the committees and Hugo Administrators have no authority as to what to call categories. Those names are determined by the WSFS Constitution, voted on in the WSFS Business Meeting. The whole membership is eligible to attend and vote there, but only a fraction do. Want to see them change? Show up and propose change (though proposals need to be submitted in advance these days – check the website of the Worldcon in question for deadlines for this). I’d love to see the Best Fanzine category fixed entirely, but for now, the votes aren’t there.

