
The Drink Tank

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ILLOGICON



Illogicon 2015



When you're the Guest of Honor, you've got a lot of reasons to be happy. They put you up, they fly you in, they may even design an entire track of programming around you. So, it's no surprise that I LOVED Illogicon in Raleigh.

What was something of a surprise was that even if I was just a regular attendee, I would have loved it because of the combination of youth, exuberance, and most of all, joy. It was a great con, a young con, and if there was ever a con-

vention that didn't seem to be suffering the Greying, it's Illogicon.

And thus, my story begins with a plane trip. I hate flying, and I'm betting you know this. I HATE turbulence, because I am genuinely terrified that I'm gonna fall out of the sky. The last time I flew to

VANESSA TO CHRIS

“Stop chewing on that. It’s mother won’t take it back now!”

Raleigh, I had the worst turbulence I have ever experienced, including having the masks drop! I was reading Steampunk Prime and a story about an airship crash at the time the air got really rough. We landed, safe, but I was shaken.

This flight was like gliding on glass.

Smooth as silk, and we got to Atlanta, changed planes easily, and headed over to Raleigh. We got picked up by Walter, the Ops guy for Illogicon. He dropped us at the hotel, the Embassy Suites, in Cary, North Carolina. Other than San Jose's Doubletree, this might be the perfect Con hotel. It's big, a large single atrium in the middle, and it has this lovely restaurant area with seat by a fake brook with koi in it. We checked in and walked around. It's a nice place, and the only things around it were a couple of really nice strip mall-y places with a Bass Pro Shop! There are few places on Earth that make me happier than a Bass Pro Shop. The food options were good, and we quickly grabbed a lunch at a small place around the corner.

Check in to the room (under the room Honor, Guest of) and then rested, taking a nap that lasted like 6 hours. Woke up refreshed and ready for our big dinner.

One of my favorite parts of every con is the pre-con dinner for the guests of honor. Sometimes they're elaborate affairs with all of staff invited, and others it's just a trip to a restaurant with the chair. Kellye Murphy, the con chair, took us and the other guest of honor, Jacqueline Carey, out for Indian food, with Warren Buff, our good pal, joining us with his fiance. The

CHRIS ROSS TO CHRIS
“Hey, let’s go misinterpret
Nietzsche over by Warren.”



place was excellent! They usually do a buffet, but they didn't that night, so we ordered family style a little bit of everything. And MY GHOD WAS IT GHOOD!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

The Tikka Masala and the Goat Biryani were both exceptionally good, and everything was medium-spicy. I loved it, and there were leftovers!

So, back to the hotel, a bit of time in the consuite, and then sleep, which was odd considering we'd spent all day basically sleeping.

The next day was Friday and it was the day the con started. The free breakfast at the hotel was pretty good, grits, can't go wrong. The team running the con were awesome. Gretchen McHenry, who went by Gerty, was the head of programming and she did a great job. Glug, my good pal Chris Hensley, was runnign Reg. They were SO AWESOME!

The first panel I was on was all about one of my favorite topics – Lying.

I came up with a panel title, The History of Everything You Wanna Know, and they put some wonderful folks on it with me: Mikey Mason, Gray Rinehart, Misty Massey, and John Kessel Basically, the audience asked us questions and I had random people answer those questions. It led to some very very humorous moments, especially from that GIANT of a man, John Kessel. It did get dark once in a while, and Gray and Misty were hilarious working together.

After that, it was wandering around, talkin' to folks. Lots of young people, and lots of costumes. That was

CHRIS TO WALTER

“Is there a fire axe
anywhere?”

one of the best parts, looking at all the great costumes. This is a sign of a young convention these days. If a largeish percentage of your con-goes are in costume, you're likely at a convention of the young!

I showed the Silicon Valley Science Fiction Short Film Festival, which went over well, and then enjoyed a panel on writing Smutty Fan Fic. I rarely go to panels, but that one was really entertaining! I enjoy FanFic and I really liked the fact that there were so many young folks there. That is something that a lot of cons miss. Young fans love fanfic, they have few of the hang-ups about it that a lot of the older generation of fans have, and I really wish there was more fanfic programming at cons.

Day ended with time in the Consuite, which had a lovely New Year's Soup, and then it was off to bed.

The morning that followed was early, even by my standards. Not sure why, but sleep is not easy these days. I got in a couple fo walks, brought Vanessa some yogurt and such, then went to my first panel: Should It Stay or Should It Go. That was a panel about what is worth preserving for the future, especailly if we get off the planet. There was the general idea that bringing things with us is a bad idea, but really, there is power in objects, especially when you're trying to preserve a culture you're no longer in direct contact with. The one thing that I know will be true is that all language instruction will be done through a single source, most likely a computer, and that will lead to two distinct languages developing – one that is 'official' and one that is the patois (or is it a creole?) of what people actually

**CHRIS IN RESPONSE TO
“SLEEPER CELLS
ACTIVATED” HEADLINE ON
CNN**

**“No wonder this place is so
busy for a Sunday breakfast.”**

Speak to one another. It's something that we've seen before, and it will be more evident once we get off this rock.

I had another one which was about Steampunk and Cyberpunk and I brought up the role that the old Boston club Man Ray played in the evolution of the Cyberpunk look as it relates to The Matrix and later the RomantiGoth, which slowly morphed and brought us to Steampunk. That is something I've rarely seen mentioned.

I also had a panel on Weird West Tales, and then there was a Podcasting panel, which was really good too. I liked the folks they were putting me on panels with, which was a good note to give Gerty. She gets it! That's an important aspect that often gets over-looked. It's not about coming up with great panel ideas; it's about getting people who can turn any panel into something good.

You know how I get all crazy weird on my theories on things like Jaws being a tale of hubris, or how JFK is really about the fall of the Roman Empire? Well, the Twin Peaks panel we did started with the argument that the series was really about the tension between the Baby Boomers and Generation X. That's the way the panel went down! It was a lot of fun, and we talked fun theories and about the up-coming re-boot. I was amazingly happy about the fact that I had the Twin Peaks issue of The Drink Tank to lean back on.

The last panel I had was The Sporting Geek, where a panel of five fans, who are also sports nuts. We'd just

CHRIS ON PANEL

“I can’t imagine why anyone would dismiss a show that was designed to piss them off.”

done the wonderful issue of Journey Planet on sports that was very useful!

Before that panel Jeff Binder and I wrestled. The picture on the cover was the start of that miniature match. He wore his singlet from high school and his old wrestling shoes. Despite my being utterly out of shape, at first I sprawled and almost had him in a facelock, but he was too fast and wiry for me. Chris 0, Jeff 1!

After that, we hung out in the ConSuite, ate more New Year's Soup, and whatever other leftovers there were, and just chatted with folks. I hadn't met a young lady named Whitney, who was perhaps the end-product of a genetic plan to create a perfectly snarky human. She was a blast.

After that, we headed home, and that was that. SO many great folks I got to meet or see again. There was Chris Ross, the linguist and funky homo sapien, who is always a hoot. Glug and Warren are always fun, and Ben Yalow came down for it! There was a surprise: Ed Meskeys showed up! I like that dude a lot, though I only got to talk with him briefly. Must find more time!