**From Swift to Star Wars to Steampunk:  
The Funny Dark Sides of Celtic Geek Musician Marc Gunn**

by Jamie Lyn Weigt

Marc Gunn, also known as the Celtfather, is a popular Celtic Geek musician and podcaster beloved by fans all over the world. But did you know that this happy-go-lucky autoharpist also has a dark side?

I recently chatted with Marc about his upcoming CD, Dragons vs. Pirates[[1]](#footnote-1), and I discovered some nuggets that could curl even the most hardened pirate's toes!

In the early days, Marc tells me, he gravitated to the Irish masters of satire. "I was singing some songs by Tom Lehrer, [like] the ‘Irish Ballad,’ which I always loved,” he says, and “Johnathan Swift and his Modest Proposal for Ireland was a big influence" for him as well.

For those who might not be familiar with these two works, Lehrer's “Irish Ballad” is a "black humor" song which Marc describes on his website (where you can find the full lyrics[[2]](#footnote-2)) as a "comically gruesome song about a girl [who] kills her entire family on a whim, then casually admits it to the police because lying is a sin." Meanwhile, Johnathan Swift's Modest Proposal[[3]](#footnote-3) is a famous satirical piece written in 1729, wherein Swift suggests that the poor Irish sell their children to be used as food for the rich!

And it doesn't stop there. Marc's released more than two dozen solo and collaborative albums, including the popular Sci-Fi Drinking Songs,[[4]](#footnote-4) on which you can hear gems like "Isn't it Grand Boys, to be Walking Undead," a D&D parody called "Those Characters Died," and Marc's song (with his Brobdignagian Bards[[5]](#footnote-5) collaborator Andrew McKee) called "A Jedi Drinking Song Prequel," a catchy tune about Anakin Skywalker – who, of course, becomes Darth Vader, master of the Dark Side.

Marc also told me that when he "heard the news that Disney was buying Star Wars" a few years ago, he and Andrew decided to "satarize the event" by writing a sequel to his “Sequel,” called "Mickey's Jedi Drinking Song," which he hopes they will have recorded in time for next year's DragonCon in September, 2016. Stay tuned.

But by far Marc's funniest 'dark secret' comes in the form of an alter-ego he created years ago, a "despicable" singing pirate by the name of Captain Black Jack Murphy. Marc has big plans for a three album character study of Captain Murphy, the first CD of which was released in 2008 called "Pogue Mahone Means Kiss My Arse.[[6]](#footnote-6)" It's "an album of sea shanties and drinking songs and pirate music," in Black Jack Murphy's voice, and it's a fine lead up to the second CD in the series, "Dragons vs. Pirates.”

In this installment, Captain Black Jack Murphy has become a steampunk-style Airship Pirate, soaring the skies and hunting for dragons. The CD is packaged as a chronicle of the time Marc was shanghaied by Murphy and forced to tell the pirate's tale, and "combines rousing sea shanties about pirates being pirates with songs about the majesty of dragons." With lyrics written by Marc's collaborator Rei Sheridan Rose[[7]](#footnote-7), it's a "big story" that's been "a lot of fun doing," Marc tells me. The CD is scheduled for release in March, 2016.

Marc Gunn is champion of indie Celtic music, an award winning podcaster, a monthly live streaming internet concert player, a Renaissance Faire and geek convention performer, and even a tour guide – he travels every summer to such places as Scotland or Ireland or, next year, Cornwall, England to lead his Celtic Invasions Vacations[[8]](#footnote-8) tour group. All this, with a wife, five year old daughter, and new baby at home.

To find out more about Marc's light and dark sides, you can visit his websites at MarcGunn.com[[9]](#footnote-9) and CelticMusicPodcast.com[[10]](#footnote-10). You can find his current podcasts, the Irish and Celtic Music Podcast[[11]](#footnote-11) and The Celtfather[[12]](#footnote-12), there or through your favorite podcatcher, you can follow him on Facebook[[13]](#footnote-13), Twitter[[14]](#footnote-14), Instagram[[15]](#footnote-15), Google+[[16]](#footnote-16), or YouTube[[17]](#footnote-17), and you can catch him in person at ShadowCon in Memphis, TN on January 8-9, 2016. More tour dates are listed and always being added to his website. As Marc would say, “Slainte!”

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Jamie Lyn Weigt is a geek and writer in Minneapolis, Minnesota, working on her first novel and dipping her toe into article writing on the side. When she was little and people would ask her “What do you want to be when you grow up?” her mother taught her to respond happily with “a feminist,” and although she didn’t know what it meant then, she has certainly done so. Check out her blog at [www.writingdragonsblog.com](http://www.writingdragonsblog.com).

1. <https://www.kickstarter.com/projects/marcgunn/dragons-vs-pirates-by-marc-gunn-the-celtfather> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. <http://www.thebards.net/music/lyrics/Irish_Ballad.shtml> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A_Modest_Proposal> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. <http://marcgunn.com/2015/listen-to-sci-fi-drinking-songs/> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. <http://thebards.net/> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. <http://www.irishsong.net/pogue_mahone.shtml> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. <http://riewriter.com/> [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. <http://www.celticinvasion.com/> [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. <http://marcgunn.com/> [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. <http://celticmusicpodcast.com/> [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. <http://celticmusicpodcast.com/> [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. <http://marcgunn.com/podcasts/celtic-geek/> [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
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16. <https://plus.google.com/+MarcGunn> [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. <https://www.youtube.com/user/bellobard> [↑](#footnote-ref-17)