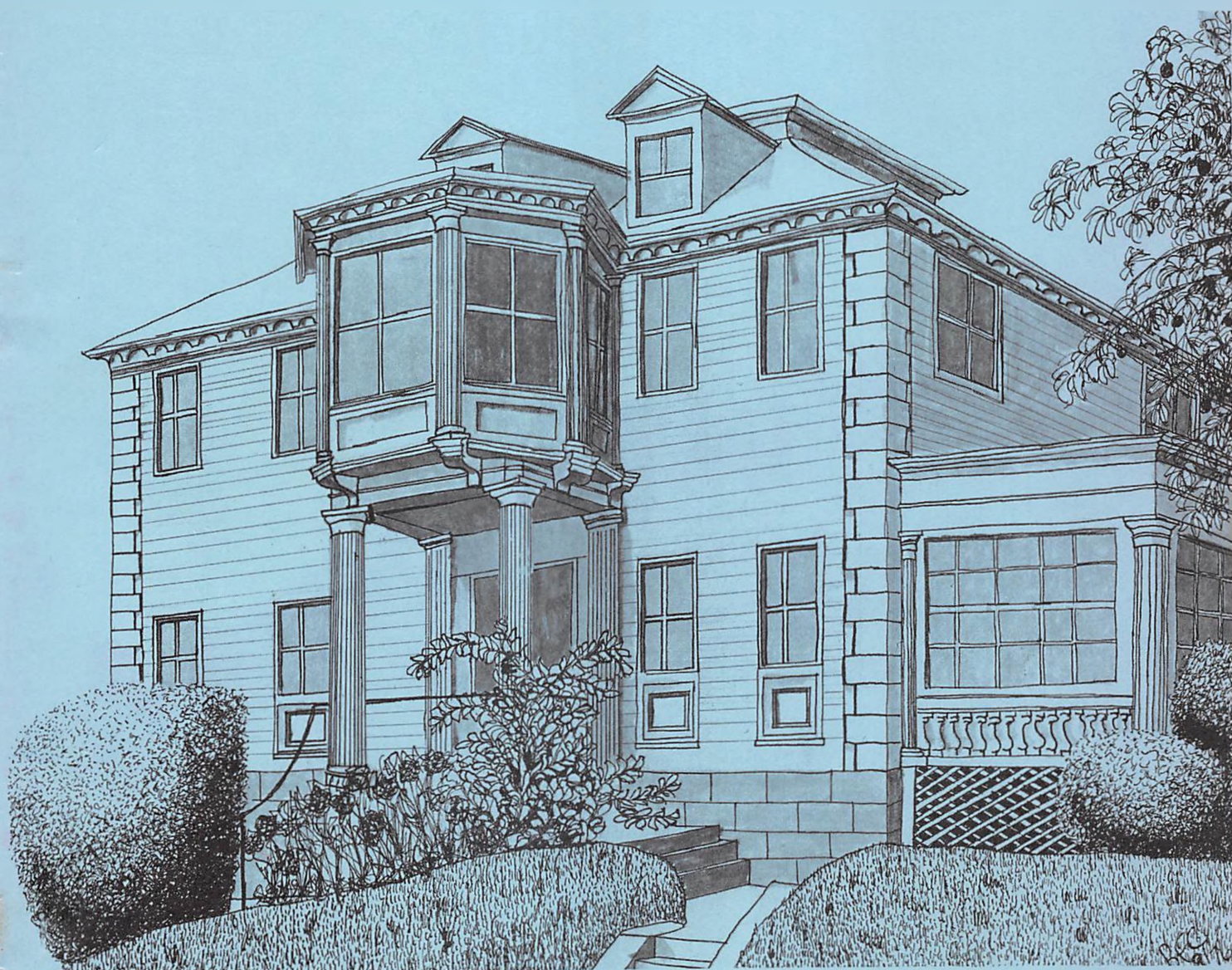


Mythologies

14



MYTHOLOGIES 14

don d'amma:editor

Editorial Address: 19 Angell Drive, East Providence, Rhode Island 02914
This is the overdue June 1978 issue. Circulation this issue will be about 500.

Repro: Sheila D'Amassa
Electrostencils: Victoria Vayne & Littles'

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MYTHOLOGIES is published irregularly and is available for \$2.00 per issue, or for contribution, editorial whim, or substantial letter of comment. All uncredited material and that which is enclosed like (((this))) is the fault of the editor.

Art Credits for this issue: Front cover by BETH COHEN
Back cover by TARAL

Interior Art: Dave Vereschagin -- P. 14
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"Then let us compare mythologies. I have learned my elaborate lie."
-- Leonard Cohen

CONTENTS

MYTH.....	Page 2
UTOPIAS & UCHRONIAS &.....	Page 7
THE HOUSE THAT SHULAMITH BUILT.....	Avedon Carol.....Page 8
SOME SPECULATIONS ON A NON-SEXIST SOCIETY.....	Jennifer Bankier.....Page 12
THE DIFFERENCES ARE CAUSE FOR JOY.....	Jessica Amanda Salmonson.....Page 21
FRAGMENT OF A LETTER FROM A NON-SEXIST SOCIETY.....	Evelyn Rogers.....Page 26
EQUALITY IN THE YEAR 1977.....	Arthur D. Hlavaty.....Page 28
DANGEROUS DREAMS.....	Chris Eblis.....Page 32
ESSAY ON LESBIANISM.....	Adrienne Fein.....Page 35
THE SEXUAL EQUALITY WORLD.....	Victoria Vayne.....Page 40
A SHORT RESPONSE.....	George Fergus.....Page 41
A LONG RESPONSE.....	George Fergus.....Page 42
PARABLE: A REVIEW.....	Page 59
ELABORATE LIES.....	The Readers.....Page 60
PLUGS AND CREDITS.....	Page 115

MYTH

During the past thirteen issues of MYTHOLOGIES, both the zine and its editor have seen and undergone a lot of changes. Those few of you who have been with me since the beginning know the obvious changes in MYTHOLOGIES, from ditto to mimeo, from bi-monthly to tri-yearly, from 16 pages with no interior art to 110+ pages and a smattering of interiors, from cartoon covers to genuine artwork, from a circulation of 50 to that of 500, from personalzine to discussion-oriented genzine.

Not so obvious, I assume, have been the changes in your ever-dutiful editor. I've aged from 28 to 32, but suspect that otherwise have prevented people from observing much of any change in me. The rather formal approach I often take in this zine no doubt contributes to this. I've had the same address since 1971, the same job title, and I haven't altered in height or weight since I was twelve. My sideburns are a bit longer.

But those obviously are externals. As the trite expression goes, life is change. You can't pee into the same river twice. The MYTH this time quite possibly should include a review of Gail Sheehy's book PASSAGES. I have purposely not read the book yet, although I'm familiar in general with the theories expressed therein, because I wanted to express my own opinions unmodified by those of someone else.

As I understand it, Sheehy and I (and many others) share a theory that the young adult years are not the only time in one's life when a major reorientation of personality takes place. I have been in the past few months increasingly aware of an ongoing process of realignment of my opinions, prejudices, biases, likes and dislikes, attitudes, and interests. I have, presumably, entered one of those transitional periods. Since we have in the past discussed in these pages the resistance of people to change, I thought it was probably about time to discuss it on a more specific level. Besides, people keep telling me that I keep myself too separate from the zine, that it is little more personal than LOCUS.

I think that what first made me aware that things were going on in my psyche was my re-awakened interest in music, all kinds of music, though there is an unusual and untypical shift toward some elements of rock. This is a subject I'm not interested in talking about in print (and won't) because I find discussing a piece of music in the absence of that music to be forced. Suffice it to say that in the past four months, I've bought over 70 albums, increasing my collection to something over 800, and that the new acquisitions have ranged from classical Japanese Koto music to Gregorian chants to Styx, Kansas, and the Electric Light Orchestra.

It was while I was trying to figure out what had set me off on a music buying spree that I began to realize the scale of the change in my attitudes and viewpoints. There seems to be no particular unconscious social motivation in my sudden devouring interest in music (though I have become considerably more gregarious); I don't dance, I don't talk about music in fanzines, and for the most part I am a solitary listener. Part of this is probably because I have such varied tastes, most people find my random switching from classical to rock to Moog to be unsettling, not perceiving the chains of similarities that I follow. Indeed, my favorite piece, Stravinsky's THE RITE OF SPRING, is the piece with which I most closely identify myself, and it's a piece I only play in the presence of my closest friends. While a sudden desire for nearly constant music may seem trivial in itself, it was out of character enough that I began checking to see if other things were altering in my gestalt.

One thing which I noticed almost immediately was something that really shouldn't be too surprising. With a change in my own interests, the things I wanted to talk about with friends - both fannish and mundane - have changed as well. I find that within each group I have been allocating my time differently. I started having some social relationship with some of the people with whom I work, which has never happened before. Within the local SF club, I have become more interested in one-on-one conversations with specific people than in the general conversations on general subjects which I used to seek out. This is probably not a function solely of my own developing interests; many of our circle have left, new ones have arrived, some have left and returned, and even those who have been most stable are changing themselves. There is an ever-changing flux in the inter-relationships among us. The local SF club has had a continuous existence for long enough now that I can actually spot changes in the personalities of some of the members, particularly those who have gone through their early 20's among us. My circle of friends then has not altered appreciably during the past several years, but the amount of time I spend with individuals, and they with me, and the things that pass between us, have changed enormously.

Similarly, my entire attitude at work has changed. I've never gone into much detail about the details of my job; among other things, much of the necessary background information involves people that none of you know, or degrees of complexity that would be boring to anyone not intimately connected with the job. But let's see if I can provide some understanding of what a production and inventory control manager does.

There are three major categories of inventory in a factory: raw materials, work in process, and finished goods. In normal companies, the sales department provides a twelve month forecast of what they plan to sell of each item manufactured. The P&I manager takes this list, plots it against available machine time, and develops an overall master schedule. Obviously this involves a great deal of authority, since it effectively means that the people actually running the departments in the factory do not have control of what work is in their department, or what will be worked on in what order.

Additionally, the P&I manager has to control the level at which the three categories of inventory rest. Interest amounts to approximately one penny per dollar of inventory per month, so if, as in our case, you are talking about an average inventory of three and one half million dollars, then the carrying cost on that is close to \$400,000. If I could cut that inventory by 25%, I would save the company \$100,000.

That's how a normal company is run, with the P&I Manager setting the levels of work in the factory. We don't work that way. Because of a long-standing fear of any kind of system, because the production manager and most of the department supervisors resent and resist any "interference" in their departments, we run differently. Raw materials I do control. The rest has been, until recently, subject to the whims of the production people. If they felt they needed more work to operate efficiently, then they got it. Inventories became inflated. We also ran another danger. The forecast of sales should, normally, be within 20% margin of error. Ours have been running about 50% off average. Now, if I'm issuing work to the factory three months in advance, and they forecast 50% too much, I may be stuck with, say, \$20,000 of excess inventory. But if I have to work six months in advance, then the excess would be double that. I've been working 6 - 8 months in advance.

Enough technical stuff. Finally, this year, a team of consultants was hired, just as my frustration level was getting to the point where I was considering quitting. The consultants' report effectively backed up the various criticisms I had been making all along, and at this point there is a strong probability that something more closely approximating a sane production and inventory control system will finally be put into effect.

Now, what relevance does all this have to our discussion? As part of the implementation of the new system, I have finally been given control of shipping, receiving, and the freight dock. This increased my employees from two to eighteen in a single day. And while I had been saying for some time that these departments really should report to me, I have to confess to some trepidation about it as well. For example, there are several problems inherent to this situation: (1) Two of the supervisors are barely on speaking terms, (2) One of the supervisors has some personal problems that are, to say the least, touchy (3) One of the supervisors is quite probably in cahoots with two or more of the union employees to "put one over on" the company. There are as well a number of young, rebellious workers in the shipping room, who have been taking advantage of the laxity of discipline in other departments to annoy and test their supervisor.

Having taken over, I didn't have much time to worry about things, and within two weeks had given four verbal warnings, a three-day suspension, and eliminated one position entirely. Plans are underway to combine two of the departments and eliminate one of the supervisors. I suspect that, had I been given this authority a year ago, I would have sunk into the same torporous apathy that infuses much of the factory, and would have had an easier, though less satisfying, couple of weeks.

What caused this change? I think it's a part of this process of change. In some ways I have become more conservative, in others more liberal. During the months of frustration that preceded this change in the company's authority structure, I had more than once considered chucking the whole thing in and starting out in a new field. You see, although I knew in theory how a production and inventory control department should work, I had never run an actual system (our outgoing system is so dependent on me that it is almost impossible for me to take time off). I'm in my thirties now, and if I'm going to have to change professions, I'm going to have to do it damn soon. Had this consultant team not been employed, I suspect I would have been gone in 12 to 18 months. Now I will wait at least until the system is in, working, and working well enough under my direction that I'm sure I can transfer the knowledge to another context.

I said I was in some ways more conservative, and I meant that in a political as well as a personal sense. In many areas of foreign policy, I've grown substantially more conservative - I don't trust the Russians (never did particularly) and suspect that a degree of strong talk is necessary in dealing with them. I'm more liberal with regard to China than I used to be. In domestic affairs, I'm closer to the radical left, as opposed to the liberals. I've become more concerned than ever with civil rights, but no longer for the same motivation. I no longer believe that with the advent of full civil rights, the population can somehow be transformed into a society of independent minded people. Now I favor them simply because I think the tiny minority of the population which is willing to face its own freedom deserves the opportunity to do so. The vast majority would be unhappy if forced to make their own decisions; if they wish to be lulled by TV and the established institutions of society, let them. But don't allow them to interfere with the rest of us. If this makes me an elitist, then so be it. I've also come to value most people's opinions a good deal less, and some people's opinions a good deal more. You'll pardon me for not being more specific, but the lettercolumn of MYTHOLOGIES has led to a great many of these changes.

Naturally this is affecting my attitude towards fandom and individual fans as well. In some ways I am growing less tolerant. That doesn't mean that I don't still believe people are entitled to their opinions, no matter how dumb, but simply that I no longer am willing to sit quietly by and not tell people (even people I respect and like) when I think they're full of crap. I have friends, for example, who dismiss guerilla raids in South Africa and Rhodesia as "just one of those things" but who expect me to get incredibly upset when the same thing happens in Chicago or Tel Aviv.

I've heard intelligent, likable people suggest that those sick Nazi marchers in the midwest are so evil that we should throw away the Bill of Rights and any sense of justice left in this country and either not let them show themselves as the idiots they are by marching, or should let them march, but ambush them along the way.

I think I'm finally learning something that I suspect people like Roy Tackett and Buck Coulson learned long ago - that it does no good to be polite and reasonable in the face of hostile or egocentric hostility. The only answer, if you bother to answer at all, is acerbic. So if my remarks herein and elsewhere seem to be getting a bit more caustic and opinionated than formerly, chalk it up to a realization that life is too short to suffer fools gladly, that I'm tired of trying to explain my position to people who want capitulation rather than explanation. I think it was Susan Wood who said somewhere that she was tired of explaining the feminist position to men, even men who were basically inclined to agree with her. I think I begin to see her point.

A couple of Boskones ago, Frank Balazs asked me why I was so nice in person and such a bastard in print. I don't know how I answered him at the time, because I didn't really know. I think now it was because the formal side of me was a bit ahead of the rest of me, and that even then the seed had been planted. After all, the rate of change may be faster now that I've entered some sort of critical phase of life, but it never really stops.

It is interesting to note that fandom, which considers itself so open (and in many ways it is the most open organization I know) is still very much fractionated and closed - increasingly so of late I fear. I don't refer specifically to the kind of polarization that has arisen in regard to, say, feminists, even the isolationist feminists. Nor do I refer to the ongoing conflict between fanzine fans and convention fans, which may well be a regional phenomenon. The overall problem is one, that by its very nature, I can't be too specific about. But I have begun receiving a higher and higher percentage of DNQ letters, and parts of letters, and I think they are all a part of this problem. Without naming the names, because I can't, let me provide a few examples that stick in my mind, and which are non-specific enough that I don't believe the identities can be guessed.

1. A moderately feminist fan wrote to tell me she agreed with my position in an argument with another feminist, but tells me not to quote her because she fears reprisals from her feminist friends. Two other women, who to me seem ambivalent on the issue, write agreeing, but don't want to be quoted because they're tired of being called "traitors to our sex".
2. In a discussion of the advisability of disobeying admittedly unfair laws, three people wrote to tell me they agreed with my position, but that I should keep their opinions confidential because they did not want to face the kind of "abusive" response I had been receiving. Another incidentally wrote to tell me he'd slug me if he ever caught me at a convention.
3. One very prominent fan wrote to tell me that he understood my misgivings about the space program and shares them, but that my stating them so strongly in public has probably made it impossible for me to ever win a Hugo, and that he refrains from discussing most controversial subjects for associated reasons.
4. Another wrote that, because of the nature of a letter he had published in MYTH, he has been anthematized by the local SF club and is considering moving to another city. Half of his letters since have been marked DNQ.

Is this consistent with the supposed tradition of openness and tolerance of fandom? I think not, though I'm not too sure that fandom has ever been as tolerant as we have fooled ourselves it was.

I stray a bit from my point, I'm afraid. That's one of the advantages of doing your own zine; you can stray from the point as much as you want to. Without boring you, I hope, I'll run down through a few more areas where I've noticed distinct changes.

Reading. I read slightly less, though not noticeably so. But I have grown less and less tolerant of the merely "readable" and more and more demanding of higher quality. I have also turned more and more to fantasy and horror and away from SF, but I'm not certain yet how much of this (if any) is a reorientation of my own views, and how much simply reflects the fact that most of the really interesting imaginative writing being done nowadays is not SF, it's stuff by Susan Cooper, Stephen Donaldson, Brian Daley, Stephen King. It is most certainly not being done by Philip Farmer, David Gerrold, and Philip Dick, all among my normal favorites.

I've been altering my forms of entertainment as well. I expect to start attending more conventions than I ever did before (assuming my car doesn't break down, he said tensely). A couple of times per month a few of us organize a movie party. During the period from 1974 to 1977 I doubt that I went to six movies. I've even started to spend an occasional night at a bar with friends from work for a drink or six. To Mike Glicksohn, this might seem hardly worth mentioning; to people who know me well, this is a radical behavior change.

I've abandoned my system of scheduling time for projects in advance. This has had the effect of cutting down my productivity (there used to be a regular article every ten days). I accomplish less, but I fancy the quality is slightly higher, and I know that I enjoy it more. And I've learned to say "No." I've grown tired of being taken for granted that I would love to have an article in the next issue of SILLY FAN STORIES QUARTERLY, or that of course I don't mind loaning someone my rare copy of RIDDLE OF THE SANDS or that I am perfectly willing to make room in my car for Judy Phan on the way to this year's Moscowcon.

In general I have become more self-assured and self-satisfied over the past few months. I no longer try to be the kind of person that people will like; I am now more interested in finding the kind of people that I will like and who will like me the way that I am, not the way I "ought" to be.

But what relevance, beyond the obvious, might this have. I am, after all, one person and my interaction with 95% of the people reading this is likely to be minimal. Some of you I will never even meet? So why bring the subject up?

For one thing, I estimate that I am older than 75% of you (which staggers me a bit just in itself). If Sheehy and others are right, this transitional phase between 28 and 35 is the rule rather than the exception, a period where people start to evaluate their lives to date, and determine whether or not they're on the right course. Three out of every four of you have yet to enter this period. And it can be awfully unsettling to suddenly wake up one day and find that you're not the same person who went to sleep the night before. It's something that one ought to think about and be prepared for.

The tendency to change radically as we mature is something which I think society should take more cognizance of. Now that people are beginning to question the role structuring of society, more and more people are going to suppress their changes in orientation. "After all, I've been a mother and housewife for years now; it's too late to change." will give way to, "So I made a mistake. But it's not too late to correct it. It will be inconvenient and unpleasant for many people but I have obligations to myself too." Political views will change too. Marriages will be thrown over, jobs sundered, sexual preferences will change, social movements will be redirected. People will begin to realize in vast numbers that they are leading lives

(continued on page 114)

UTOPIAS & UCHRONIAS &

The bulk of this issue consists of a number of articles on feminist subjects. My original idea was to have a number of well known fannish feminists write their own personal visions of what the world ought to be like. I had two purposes. The first was to depict in clear terms what various feminists thought the world should be like. The second was, hopefully, to show the diversity of opinion that exists within the feminist movement.

Not everyone responded, and a few who had intended to contribute were unable to. And my original letter was apparently rather ambiguous. So the articles that follow really don't fill the bill. This is not to say that the articles aren't excellent. They are. But the idea went off on a tangent of its own, and is maybe the better for having pursued its own course.

The article by Chris Eblis is a bit ragged. This is not her fault. I have chosen bits and pieces from personal correspondence between the two of us spanning several years. I have known Chris since before I was a fan, and her active participation in various gay rights and feminist movements over the past few decades has had a considerable impact on my own development of opinion in those areas.

A few of the contributions came in with no titles, so I have taken the liberty of assigning them.

It should, of course, go without saying that the opinions expressed herein are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the editor. I'll get my say in due course.

The House That Shulamith Built

by Avedon Carol

Ever since the first "new-leftist" complained that our society is an oppressive one, we have been hearing the question, "What would you replace it with?" I, personally, have always resented this question, as it always seemed to me it was enough merely to have found and identified some of the flaws in our society and tried to bring them to the attention of the general public. I suppose I must have assumed that others, more well-versed in technology and the ways of the world than I, would start considering the kind of changes that could be made in their own professions, or for their own needs, and submit them or act on them as they saw fit. I suppose I must have been very naive.

It never as much as occurred to me that this task might fall upon one such as I. My knowledge of electronics, mechanics, law, architecture, engineering, and so on is quite limited, and the best I can do is offer a couple of ideas. But I have been learning a bit about medicine, and if what I have learned in this area is any indication, the others may come easier than I imagined. It has become increasingly clear that much of the simpler procedures and more commonly needed pieces of medical knowledge can be taught to anyone, and I honestly believe that any fifteen year old ought to be able to perform an emergency tracheotomy. Everyone should know how to help deliver a child (or how to deliver by one's self) without having to go to special classes, if only the information is made more generally available. It has been my experience that most paraprofessionals in Gynecology know more about the field after three weeks of training than most certified Doctors know after 40 years of practice in the field. There seems little question that the many years doctors spend in med school are consumed primarily in time-wasting. There is no excuse for the kind of malpractice that goes on here, when one considers the far superior performance of people with little or no formal training. The mythology that surrounds the entire medical priesthood does more to impair our health than do the many diseases medicine is supposed to fight. Elimination of this adulatory and awed mind-set might do much to help our children learn more about their own bodies. I doubt that the problem is quite so severe in most other professions, but there may be more room than we imagine for people to learn more about taking care of our own needs, rather than relying so heavily upon expensive professionals. Nevertheless, I can only make a few generalized guesses in regard to the proper technological uses to which our capabilities can be put. I do not claim to be correct in every instance, but I think the total picture I will attempt to draw is essentially valid.

A problem that comes with trying to envision one's ideal world is one of "how do we get there from here?" It is not enough, I discovered, merely to suggest an alternative environment, but one must also consider the mode of transportation from reality to utopia. This presents one with a whole new set of problems, many of which seem to be insoluble. In addition, as one begins working on the problem of getting there, one may begin to find one's self taking numerous side-trips, hitting dead-ends, and even finding better roads. One can get lost and end up in an even better utopia than one had imagined. And one can become quite confused and depressed when, turning back from this vision to the problem of building the road to it, one finds that the obstacles before us are far harder to cope with in reality than they were in theory.

It is hard to dream utopia. 25 years of survival by manipulation, of using love as an excuse for doing or not doing things, of being trained to do nothing constructive, or being brainwashed into seeing children as a necessary evil, of being told that nearly everything to do with female reproduction is dirty, make it very

very difficult to look beyond the suburban tree-tops into a world in which the things I have been taught to value are no longer necessary, could be considered evil, and may not even exist. I could not really live there, I could not find a place for myself in this world, and certainly I could never have been borne into it. Revolutionaries are not needed in utopia. And yet, when I am alone, in my bath or drifting off to sleep, I dream myself into this world where sexism, agism, racism, war, poverty, and all of the evils I am fighting in my own world, do not exist. I imagine myself covered with sweat while weeding the rows and rows of asparagus, feeling muscles in my body which I have never developed in this body. I see myself surrounded by friends while I bring my child into the world (And I deliver this child. Not some doctor, while I lay stupified by some drug that will make me forget the pain I should never have felt in the first place.. Gravity will help me more than anyone else, and there will be no tearing, no infection, and no terrified screams), and those friends will not need to wear masks, will not need to be over 18 years of age, will not need to be approved by doctors and administrators. I see myself, with four or five others, some of them only eight or nine years of age, one of them perhaps 70 years, building a car--only not the kind of car you drive. A better car, maybe powered by solar energy. A car that will work, that we will keep maintenance on, and that will be driven by people I know and love (this also means that when I get behind the wheel of the car, I will know that the last time it was worked on, the job was done for the purpose of seeing to it that the car is kept in proper and safe running order, and I won't have to worry about whether the mechanic really made sure that the fuel line was in good shape, that the points were good, that the starter was all right, etc., and I won't be wondering if something funny is going on when the car is in the shop.). I imagine my baby daughter curled up in my arms, I dream her mouth on my nipple and I know that this child who is getting her nourishment from my body will never be called names by cruel boys, will never be raped, will never be ashamed of her own beautiful body, will never feel guilty or somehow like she is not quite a woman because her hair is black, and not blonde, and no amount of Nair will make her look right enough for the Gentlemen who prefer Haines. And I swear that someday some woman, maybe even my great great great granddaughter, or someone like her, will live that dream.

But how? How to turn a world that thinks there is something obscene about a woman nursing her child into one in which that dream can live?

I know that the buildings would have to be different. There must be room for many types of people, old, young, pregnant, healthy, crippled, lazy, able, active, selfish, strong, weak, human. No door or stair should impede the passage of one in a wheelchair or on crutches. There must be many people, so that all could share in the raising of children and the care of the infirm without imposing too great a burden upon those who might otherwise feel responsible because of some biological relationship. There can be no "master bedroom" for no one will be more important than anyone else, and therefore no one could be privileged enough to have a superior living space. There must be privacy for all, and thus every person, no matter what her relationship to another, would have her own room, where she could be alone, think, pick her toes, read, or just put up a "Do Not Disturb" sign when she can't deal with other people (as well as having a place for her own things, in case any other relationship should come to an end. This alleviates the problem of who has to move out when the affair is over, who gets the house, etc. If we assume that some kind of pairing will still take place, we must also assume that such pairings will continue to end occasionally). I don't know enough about architecture to design this home, but I got the idea that a geodesic dome might fill the bill, in lieu of any better suggestions. Someone has suggested plexiglass and I don't know of any good reason to object to that.

In order to maintain the highest level of freedom for each individual, while making sure that each person lives up to her responsibilities to the household--the children, the garden, etc., I felt it would be reasonable to throw out the clock. Oh, not literally, of course. But there seems to be a number of people in our

society who seem to believe that there is something unclean about a person who does not begin her day at 8:00 AM and retire before midnight. If everyone lives on the same schedule, it limits the time available for all activities, and requires greater resources (if everyone has to get up at the same time, they will all need the bathroom at the same time, soon you will need more bathrooms, etc.). But if we have a full 24 hours to work with, we may be able to find the time we need. Outdoor activities may require daylight, but household duties or studio work will not, and thus may be done easily at four in the morning. If, for example, the person who is an artist is at work late at night, she can be responsible for the care of any crying babies, and prevent any of the other members of the house from having to rouse from a sound sleep in order to take care of the child. Adequate soundproofing would be necessary in order that such things as sculpting or music could be done when others were sleeping, of course. An intercom would facilitate communication and would give the artist who is working in her studio an "ear" so that she wouldn't have to interrupt her work to check the children and so that she would be the first to detect any disturbances. A performer who would be doing concerts or whatever at night and sleeping until after noon would need assurance that no one in the household would wake her in the morning and that any needs on the part of her offspring would be met by the other members of the group at those times when she is asleep or away. I might, for example, get up at noon, do a little teaching in the nursery, spend about an hour sharing some of the workload out in the fields, sweep out the stables, shower, fiddle around with my guitar, do some reading or writing, and still be able to make it back to the concert hall, secure in the knowledge that (a) there are enough others doing the same work about the house so that my minor contribution will be met all around and the work I have done is adequate, (b) someone will be keeping an eye on my kid, (c) if this is a capitalist system, I will be able to bring in some money, and (d) no one is going to hassle me when I get back. On days when I don't have work outside of the home to do, I might take on larger projects, like getting together with a few of the others and starting work on that car. Maybe my kid will be helping me on that. And maybe my mom.

What I have in mind is not an extended family. It is much more than a commune, but not just because of the necessary commitment or the size of the enterprise. It is something which could exist right now., if someone had the money and the endurance to begin it. It would, presumably, change a great deal from one generation to the next. It would make maximum use of current technology while at the same time staying close to nature. It would go beyond anything we know in terms of "family", yet show more respect for the individual than has ever been known before. It might be a tribe, but it would not be like any tribal society that has gone before it.

And I want to build one. Just one. In my lifetime, I want to see one such unit become functional and self-sufficient. Perhaps if one could work, and people could see it work, then some others might be built. Perhaps someday it would be the primary mode of living, in much the same way the nuclear family is alleged to be now. And between each such dwelling there would be a free, safe, public transit system that would extend across the continent, so that we need never be separated from each other by distance and economics as we are now. Trains, planes, boats, buses, all operated by people who do the driving or flying just for the sheer joy of doing it, and of contributing their work to the society they are a part of. And maybe we wouldn't need money any more (as the old tribal societies did not need money). And maybe we would have time to develop those parts of us that are now a mystery--telepathy? A group mind? Communion with God? I don't know. I live here, and my vision is limited by my background. I can only see so far. I was raised to want a storybook romance with Prince Charming in our little castle, with our perfect little babies who never really grow up and become people in their own right. How can I see what will be created by children without that? Imagine, if you can, what it would be like to grow up in touch with your own body, where sex is not dirty, where love is not an excuse

for exploitation, where God is not the foundation of oppression, where there is no such thing as prostitution, no concept as anti-human as "illegitimacy", no "old maid" or "bad mother" is possible, because every human being believes that this is really a world that we all share, and we are all in this together. I can see it in snapshots, in panels of a comic book, I can make myself believe that humans are capable of such things. But can I really imagine what it would be like to live there?

I used to think that the answer to the problem was the invention of the artificial placenta, which would free women from childbirth and thereby equalize the situation. I no longer think that that is a good idea. For one thing, I have a sneaky suspicion that the biology might not work, and for another I'm not sure I trust the sociological consequences of such a thing. Some people have implied that men will continue to oppress women no matter what, and that the only answer is to get rid of them altogether. I'd like to believe that that is not true, but the number of people on both sides of the question, who insist that this is the "nature of Man" make it necessary to consider the alternatives. James Tiptree Jr. (Alice Sheldon) and Joanna Russ have both implied that societies without men are the only alternative--but Joanna, like me, doesn't seem to like that idea much. Marge Piercy has suggested a variation of the artificial placenta scenario, in which, while no one bears children, both parents can nurse and therefore serve as "mothers". My favorite "advanced technology" idea comes from John Varley, where everyone can get a sex change as easily as one would now have one's hair color changed. The law in his "Eight Worlds" stories seems to be that everyone can actually bear one (and only one) child, and "fatherhood", that is, the siring of children, is irrelevant (no one seems to even know who her father is). If everyone could experience femaleness (and maleness, I suppose), it seems unlikely that we would have the problems (like womb envy, for example) that we have faced for the last three thousand years. It is more important to me, however, to see human beings learn to treat each other like human beings without having to rely on so many strange and as yet inaccessible technological breakthroughs.

You ask me, Don, for a society which might include "the female who doesn't wish to adopt a liberated lifestyle." I have to ask myself, who is this female? If she has an opportunity to see her children grow up without the restrictions of role definition, without poverty, without war; why should she choose something else? What kind of woman is so selfish that she would subject her children to the oppressions of this culture when she has proof that there is a better life available to them? And is it fair to her children to allow this? One might like to argue in favor of the advantages, if there really are any concrete advantages of the ideal nuclear family situation, but in fact this rarely if ever exists. The advantages are far outweighed by the risks--that frustrated or emotionally disturbed parents, having complete authority over their children, can do almost unlimited damage to them before society can stop them. There is no manner in which society can police the home in order to effectively prevent such damage, as the case of "Sybil" shows. By placing full responsibility for the child's welfare into the hands of only the two biological parents, (in truth, into the hands of the mother with only token support outside of the material on the part of the father), the nuclear family oppresses both parents and child. The freedom of the parents is limited severely by this responsibility, and the child is entirely dependent on the good humor, emotional stability, and commitment of the parents. If one parent should leave or die, the child's life is in serious upheaval (at certain points in a baby's development, if the mother is removed, the trauma is so great that there can be no replacement, the child may become autistic or even die. If, however, there is more than one "mother" figure, this loss will not be so deeply felt. I need hardly point out that in the traditional, "unliberated" family situation, such closeness between the child and anyone other than the mother is by definition impossible.). If both parents die, the child is orphaned. Surely no mother who really wants to raise healthy children would put them in such danger of severe emotional trauma? Not, at least, if there is an alternative. What I propose here is just such an alternative to the dependence of a child on two specific individuals and the responsibilities of said individuals of the punitive characteristics of traditional parenthood.

Speculations on a Non-Sexist Society

by Jennifer Bankier

The first question to be answered before a picture of a non-sexist society can be drawn must be what is the nature of sexism? The word "sexism" is commonly used in two senses. The first use is a social one, referring to the structural nature and purpose of sexual oppression. In this sense, sexism is the institutionalized oppression of women as a class for the benefit of men as a class. The other use of the word refers to the destructive effect of both institutional and individual sexual oppression upon a particular individual of either sex.

Since individual sexism is the result of institutional sexism, it can only be eliminated when the oppressive social patterns have been destroyed. The long-run destruction of sexist institutions may require increased adverse effects upon particular individuals in the short run. It is because feminists recognize this unfortunate necessity that some of us support short-run hiring quotas for women to redress long-standing sexual imbalances which are part of the present structure of particular occupations, or women-only groups for purposes of defining the nature of our oppression and the measures which are most likely to correct it, even though these sexually drawn lines may adversely affect individual men and will unquestionably undercut the present privileged position of men as a group. Once the social structures that make these sex-linked tactics necessary have been eliminated, the remedial measures themselves will be abolished since their continued operation would then be sexist in both an institutional and an individual sense.

The main thrust of this paper will not, however, be toward the means by which sexism in both senses may be abolished. Instead it will attempt to paint a picture of what a society might be like in which this goal had been accomplished. At a minimum this would require both the destruction of certain sexist institutions or patterns of behavior in the areas of sexuality, reproduction, "family" life-styles ("bond-groupings"), child rearing, and employment, and also an end to the social conditioning through which individuals are pressured into conforming with these patterns.

Beyond this minimum, even individual feminists are likely to differ on what changes are required. I personally belong to the school of thought which holds that sexual liberation can only be brought about as part of a generalized egalitarian movement which would also involve the elimination of other inequalities of power and opportunity associated with racism and economic status, i.e. socialism of the decentralist variety. (It is, however, legitimate for particular groups to focus their primary efforts on the elimination of the particular kind of oppression which they personally experience.) I know, however, that even many women would disagree on this point, and I will therefore focus on only those economic changes which are absolutely essential, in my view, to the elimination of sexism alone.

Even given this limitation, it will still be necessary for me to make certain assumptions of fact as to the way that people will behave in the absence of sexism that cannot be proven positively or negatively until that state is achieved, and about which readers are likely to differ. I also intend to take minor liberties with Don D'Amassa's request that I assume that technology remains at its present state in areas where the possibility of change is highly likely and where it might have beneficial effects, although I will also specify the effect of the status quo in each case.

SEXUALITY

Sexism has two prongs in this area, which initially appear contradictory but have the common ground that they serve the interests of men.

The first is, of course, "woman as a property", or the infamous double standard. Traditional society expects that a woman who wishes to be "respectable", i.e. married, be chaste with all men except her legally married husband, while men are allowed, and in some historic periods almost expected, to be philanderers. This dual standard probably was an outgrowth of the institution of private property as perceived by wealthy men, once it was realized that men played any role in procreation at all. They wished to be able to pass on the wealth they had accumulated to their offspring. Since, however, throughout most of history there was no infallible means of proving paternity (as distinct from maternity) it was necessary to achieve this goal that women be required to have intercourse only with their husbands, and adultery by a woman was one of the earliest grounds for divorce by the husband. (It is interesting that for some time adultery by the husband was not grounds for divorce by the wife.)

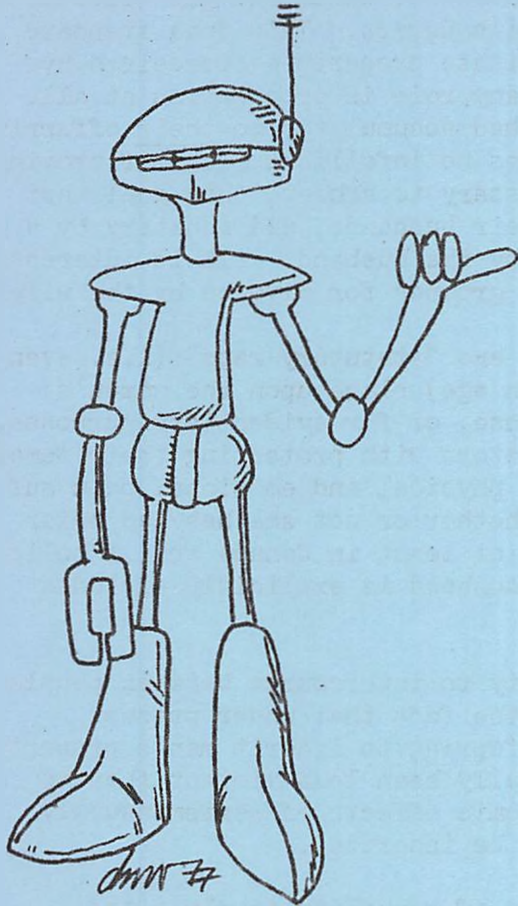
The excessive emphasis which the laws against rape and "statutory rape" (i.e. even consensual intercourse with a woman under a certain age) place upon the woman's previous chastity, either as a ground for the offense, or for evidentiary purposes, demonstrate a similar preoccupation by male legislators with protecting their female property and their bloodlines, instead of with the physical and emotional pain suffered by the raped woman, which is equally great whether or not she has had prior intercourse. It is also interesting to note that, at least in Canada and, I believe, in most US jurisdictions, forced intercourse by a husband is explicitly excluded from the definition of rape.

A substantial part (though not all) of the hostility to intercourse between people of the same sex is, I would suggest, derived from the fact that under present technology such intercourse cannot give rise to offspring to inherit men's property. The fact that opposition to lesbians has traditionally been less violent than to male homosexuality reflects the fact that the economic effects of sexism usually prevent most women from acquiring much property to be inherited.

The second prong of oppression of women in the area of sexuality involves the institutionalized portrayal and treatment of certain categories of women and, to a lesser extent, all women, as sexual appliances for servicing men. For "respectable" women this traditionally involved simultaneously being passive before, and thoughtful in servicing, the husband's needs, at the expense of her own, in return for economic support. This commercialization of women's sexuality as a commodity is at present most obvious, however, in the institutions of prostitution and "stripping" where "bad" women are literally used as dehumanized sexual appliances for men and ruthlessly exploited by pimps, corrupt policemen, and other men who prey upon them. The use of women's sexuality in advertising to sell products is a less obvious variant of the same thing, as is truly obscene pornography, of the kind that does not just portray intercourse between two human beings who at least respect each other's humanity, but instead actively encourages men to think of women as tools for what is essentially masturbation, using a woman instead of hands or a vibrator. (The objection to women being treated as "sexual objects" is not, as some people seem to think, directed toward any sexual response to a woman, but rather at this "woman as sexual appliance" philosophy.)

This same philosophy is one of the major underlying causes of rape, since it encourages men to think that they are entitled to make any use of any woman that they please, and discourages any perception of women as fellow human beings with feelings like men which deserve to be respected. This orientation is reinforced by the tendency of oppressors in general to fear the people they are oppressing, and to rationalize that fear into hostility that can be taken out on the victim through sexual or other assaults.

In contrast, in a non-sexist society it would be accepted that both women and men should be free to actively pursue their own sexual and emotional needs with as many people as their own nature and respect for others dictate. Heterosexism would also



be abolished, and it would be accepted that it is moral and legitimate to make love with people of the opposite sex, the same sex, or both, according to personal taste. (I suspect that in such a situation the majority of people would be bisexual, basing their relationship upon the attractiveness of and love for particular individuals of either sex.

The degradation of people through treating their sexuality as a commodity would be roundly condemned as the only form of sexual immorality. Children and adults would be encouraged through bond-groupings, the schools, and the media to adopt the view that every human being is entitled to a minimum of respect, in this as in other areas. This would not mean that people would be expected to sleep only with people they felt active affection for, but a minimum of thoughtfulness and courtesy and awareness of the other partner as a human being with feelings would be expected to accompany sexual attraction in every case.

Once these attitudes became sufficiently widespread the institutions of sexually-linked advertising, obscene publications (as defined above), stripping, prostitution, and rape could be expected to die out naturally, as people of both sexes found the underlying assumptions increasingly revolting. Improved sexual education in the area of masturbation and availability of relevant appliances would weaken any

temptation in people unable to find a consensual sexual partner to treat other people as sexual appliances, and hatred of women as a driving force in rape would dissolve with the oppression that fuels it.

In the intervening period some legislative measures might be necessary. They would be fundamentally different in nature and in goals from those presently in force, however. The person charged in prostitution offences, for example, would not be the woman who has been driven to it through economic need derived from the low pay associated with "women's work" or welfare, or prior destruction of her self respect, but rather the man who takes advantage of her oppressed state to buy the use of her body, or the pimp who extorts from her most of what she gets in return. The property-oriented offense of sexual assault in which neither the sex of either party, their bond relationship, or prior chastity would be relevant. Selling techniques based upon the exploitation of sexuality would be outlawed. I have not yet made up my mind on the proper balance between freedom of speech and the control of obscene publications, but if such control were to be imposed it would be based upon the work's encouragement of a dehumanized and exploitative attitude toward sexual partners, and not the mere portrayal of sex in movies, television, or books when this is done humanely.

REPRODUCTION

The fundamental principle in this area would be that no woman should be obliged to bear a child against her will, since any alternative rule would again reduce women to things, in this case baby-machines. The factors that women would take into account in making their choice would also be different. In this society women are taught that it is unnatural for them not to want and love children. In a non-sexist society potential parents would be expected to fully familiarize themselves with all the heavy responsibilities involved, through such techniques as working for a time as volunteers in a child care center. It would be emphasized that the only people likely to make good parents are those who have the kind of personalities and social skills that make relating to small children with a variety of personalities a joy for its own sake. Such other motives as the desire for a child as a form of surrogate immortality, or as a symbol of a relationship, or as a source of love for the parent,, would be condemned as potentially dangerous to both parent and child, since a baby is in fact a distinct individual and not a tool to serve parental needs.

The achieving of these objectives requires access to contraception as a right, without regard to economic status. This would include both the dissemination of information to children through the schools, and adults through medical centers or the mass media, and free provision of the actual contraceptive devices or services. This is one of the areas where improved technology could be a boon. In particular, it would be ideal if reversible forms of sterilization through safe, physical means could be developed to replace chemical forms of contraception, to minimize disruption of the normal metabolism. A more radical alternative would be if the technology relating to "test-tube" babies developed to the point where either ova or sperm could be collected before non-reversible sterilizations and subsequently combined and brought to birth, or where two people of the same sex who had formed a bond could have offspring.

One would hope that with sufficient effort contraceptive effectiveness could be raised to the point where accidental pregnancies would never occur or would be rare. If such problems did arise, however, I believe that free abortion on the request of the woman alone would be appropriate. This involves the assumption that a fetus is not a human being, and also that the woman's right to not be reduced to a baby machine is of pre-eminent importance, which are topics on which most feminists and anti-abortionists will never agree, so that it might be preferable to avoid rehashing this particular point in MYTHOLOGIES. I would point out, however, that the development of "test-tube" facilities might provide a way out of the dilemma for the anti-abortionists, since it would move the point at which a fetus could be kept alive outside the woman's body and without oppressing her (at least if it is assumed that she has a right to be free of emotional or monetary claims from the former fetus when it becomes a person at a later time) to a much earlier stage of the reproductive process.

In situations where members of a bond group decide to adopt responsibilities toward children born to women in the group, the medical profession would be expected to adopt a much more supportive attitude to the non-pregnant members than doctors presently do toward husbands. It would be accepted that the ability to be a good parent is not linked to either sex or blood relationship, and that instruction on the medical aspects of pregnancy and child care and presence at and participation in the birth process itself should be available to all persons who expect to form a bond-relationship to the child.

BOND-GROUPS

Bond-groupings are the social institution that would replace the present sexist institution of marriage in a non-sexist society. At present Anglo-Canadian, and probably US law as well, defines marriage as the voluntary union for life of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others. The requirement that this

relationship be for life has, of course, been substantially invalidated by the creation of an effective right to divorce, but the other restrictions in the definition still stand. Thus there cannot be a legally recognized bonding between two people of the same sex, or among groups made up of more than two people. Moreover, any private contract designed to regulate the relationship between parties to a bonding that did not fall within the marriage definition would likely be invalidated as contrary to public policy if there was any sexual element to the relationship. Finally, in Canada the definition of the criminal offense of polygamy is broad enough that a commune, for example, might fall within it, although this is not certain.

Even where the people involved in a bonding are a man and a woman who are legally married within the present definition, however, the present institution of marriage is sexist, because it both legally imposes and socially reinforces a sexually stereotyped division of responsibilities. Until very recently the general rule was that only the man had a legally recognized duty to support the wife and children, while the wife had no such responsibility. In return the wife was expected to provide domestic and child-caring services as well as making her sexuality available to the husband and was not entitled to any compensation therefor, since these services were viewed as part of the husband's inherent marital rights. The legal domicile of the wife and that of the minor children was that of the husband, which meant, for example, that a wife seeking a divorce had to apply in the legal jurisdiction where the husband lived and not in her own home state or province. More recently there has been a trend to make the legal rights and duties of spouses more equal, but social pressures still tend to force women into the traditional "wife" role in marriage by suggesting that anything else is unnatural.

In contrast, in a non-sexist society there would be no one single valid form of emotional bonding between people. A bond-group would be formed whenever any number of people in any combination of sexes felt sufficient love and loyalty among themselves to voluntarily adopt any emotional or economic obligations to each other that they mutually agree upon.

Specific ceremonies would not be required for the formation of a bond group, but many people would probably create their own as a means of publicly declaring and rejoicing in their love, and to give their friends a chance to share their joy.

People entering into such an arrangement would be encouraged, however, to draw up an explicit contract setting out any agreement as to sharing of economic resources, division of domestic duties, duration of the relationship, the bearing and care of any children, and the legitimacy of sexual relationships with persons outside the group. Such resources would be divided if the bond group subsequently broke up. (Nothing more than the consent of the parties, or the decision of any one of them to leave would be required for this "divorce" unless there were children, although some of the changes described below with regard to the social obligation to support children would reduce the importance of some of the present problems in this latter field. People would also be taught that it is highly immoral to use children as weapons in a dispute between bond-parents.)

Even in a non-sexist society people would not be infallible, however, and at least some bond-groups would probably not draw up such an agreement. There would thus have to be some general rules of law or social practice to which resort could be had in settling disputes, in those cases where it is clear from the parties' conduct that the formation of a bond-group was intended even in the absence of a contract.

In the area of sexual relationships, jealousy would be condemned in the absence of an agreement providing for exclusivity, and people would be encouraged to respect each other's freedom and to view as legitimate the loving of as many people as a particular individual's personality permits. (Some people might well find them-

selves to be monogamous; one can only hope that there would be a sufficient number of people with similar tastes to meet their needs, since the restriction of a polygamous individual's freedom because of such a matter of personal taste would not be viewed as proper in the absence of mutual understandings or agreement.

In the absence of agreement on matters of support and division of domestic duties, including child care, the general expectation would be that each individual would support her or himself, and share the common chores equally. There would certainly be no stereotyped image of men and women's duties to the group such as exists at present. The general principle with regard to support would be qualified by a principle of unjust enrichment, so that when one individual had in fact given up income-earning opportunities to engage in domestic affairs that conferred a benefit on others, an obligation for either continuing support or a lump sum payment would be recognized even in the absence of a contract. (It should be noted that bond group members would not be expected to bear the burden of such "acts of God" as muscular dystrophy simply because they happened to be linked to the victim. These would be recognized as something beyond the control of the affected person and those who love her or him, and the burden of them would be shared by all members of society as an act of common humanity, instead of being imposed on the spouse(s) as at present.)

Questions as to sharing of property accumulated during the life of a bond-group would be so much a matter of individual taste in a society with no established pattern that it is hard to see what rule the law could follow except to look at the behavior of the parties and try to determine their intent. Principles of unjust enrichment would be relevant in this area as well.

Having set out the basic structures of bond-groupings in a non-sexist society, it is interesting to speculate as to the patterns that freedom of choice in this area would produce. In particular, Don D'Amassa asked for some speculation as to penalties imposed upon a woman who chose the role of housewife. At the outset I take issue with the assumption that it would be women making this choice. In the absence of sexist conditioning, such a choice would only be made as a result of personal taste, and if feminists are right in the assumption that there are no aspects of personality that are inherent in either sex one would expect that about equal numbers of men and women would choose this role, which might more appropriately be referred to as home-maker.

I would not expect any overt penalties to be placed upon people who made this choice, but I would expect it to be much rarer than it is at present for a variety of reasons. First, I would expect women's tastes as to the kind of work they would enjoy to be as varied as men's, so that, compared to the status quo, a greater number of women could be expected to prefer to join the paid labor force than the number of men who would choose to leave it. This tendency would be reinforced by the fact that most people would prefer the greater economic power and freedom from work in the general labor market to financial dependency upon even a bond-mate(s). (This assumes that "wages for housework" paid by society do not become a reality. I discuss the question of pay for child care in the home below, and would not rule out this possibility, but I think it is most unlikely that society as a whole would be willing to pay for other kinds of domestic chores that benefit only a single household.)

Reinforcing this tendency would be the fact that many people would find the kind of repetitive work involved in many household chores (e.g. doing the laundry, or washing the floor) extremely boring. Even in those areas where the work is potentially interesting, such as sewing, cooking or child care, the individual who is truly committed to working in these fields would find more varied opportunity to use their talents in working for a wide variety of people outside their bond-grouping.

Still another reinforcement would be the fact that the greater number of people working outside the home would increase the need for paid workers in both the boring and interesting aspects of domestic work, with a corresponding increase in wages that could be earned by such labor, so that a "demand-pull" force would be at work. For example, many housing projects or apartment complexes might have community dining-rooms or community laundries built in, or have a domestic cleaning staff, which would offer pay comparable to other sectors of the economy.

There would be a further factor working upon the person who feels a vocation to child care, which is that the truly intensive aspect of "home" child-care lasts only until the child enters school, and even the less intense aspects can be expected to take up only about twenty years out of a fifty year adult lifespan. If such a person wished to continue work of this kind (s)he would almost be forced to seek the training and skills necessary to be a professional child-care worker, and would likely stay in the labor force to help serve other children's needs even when (s)he had offspring of his or her own, in order to help meet the needs of other adults and children.

All these factors would tend to be reinforced by the continuing tendency for what were formerly domestic roles to become specialized skills in the general economy, simply because large scale production is more efficient through economies of scale. To the extent that this is true, society as a whole will benefit from increased output, as a result of this shift (although certain sectors of a capitalist society would be worse off, since it would no longer be possible to hide the full extent of unemployment by economically pushing women into and out of the household as their labor is needed.) For this reason, the home-maker's role would probably not be actively encouraged, although the freedom of those who choose it would be respected, and there would be no equivalent of the present-day put-down visited upon the woman who has in good faith adopted the role that society told her was appropriate, and who then is reduced to saying, when asked what she does, "Oh, I'm just a housewife."

There are a variety of situations, however, where some approximation of the present home-maker's role might be found, although the correspondence would not be identical. For example, a large bond-unit might find it economical to pay a competitive salary to one of its members to be a domestic specialist taking over all the domestic and some of the child-rearing chores of the others. Alternatively, a member of a smaller bond-grouping who had a long-run project, such as a novel, which would not pay any remuneration prior to its completion, or whose paid work was of a kind that it could be done at home without any seriously disruptive effect from domestic interruptions, might be willing to undertake the other partner's obligations (assuming a two person bond) in return for some kind of salary. The difference from present practice would be that the claim for remuneration for domestic services would be legally enforceable (at present a wife can claim support, but not salary or other compensation) and that usually the home-maker would have some other project as well. The size of the salary would presumably vary with the number of people whose domestic chores were being taken over, so that a person doing this kind of work for a small group or only one individual would presumably make less than someone doing the same work professionally for a large number of people.

CHILD CARE

One factor that would differ in a non-sexist society is that children would not be perceived as their parents' property as they are at present. (For example, a father is entitled to income earned by a child as his own, although considerable protection is given to a child wealthy enough to have property, as distinct from wages.)

Instead it would be recognized that every child has certain inherent rights. Most

generally, (s)he would have a right to an upbringing that met her or his needs, and not the ambitions or selfish needs of the bond parents. To accomplish this every child would be entitled to a guaranteed income from society. This would be paid to the bond-parents only as agents for the child, and if they used it for their own benefit, some other person with the child's well-being more at heart would be given the right to spend it to benefit the child. (Some people will respond to this suggestion by arguing that it would lead to a jump in the birth rate. To this I would reply that I believe that in a society where people are taught to appreciate the heavy obligations involved in giving birth to a child, and given a truly free choice in the matter, this limited income with its restricted use only for the child would not be a determining factor. Even if it was, however, I do not believe that punishing children who did not ask to be born by letting them grow up in need would be an ethical way of dealing with the problem.)

Children would have the right either to dispose of their own income, or to have it held in trust for them if they were very young. They would have a right to be exposed to the full range of religions, careers, and non-oppressive ethical systems, so that they could make their own choices in this area instead of having their bond-parents' preferences forced upon them. They would have a right to be educated to the limit of their abilities, or their preferences, if those were more limited. Finally, children would have the right to divorce their bond-parents for incompatibility. (This is one of the few Heinlein ideas I have ever liked -- I haven't yet made up my mind whether parents should have the right to divorce children.) In such a situation a new home would be found for the child with one or more individuals who had chosen to make a vocation of child care, and clearly demonstrated their ability to love a wide range of children, rather than just those related by blood.

Turning from the question of children's rights to those of child-care mechanisms, free, twenty-four hour child care centers would be available to every one. In each case there would be a corps of full time specialists in this field (of both sexes) each of whom would have a warm, empathetic personality and the best available training. Because of the importance of their work, and the high degree of skill required, this would probably be among the most highly paid and carefully tested professions. Some centers would be staffed entirely by professionals, while others would be run by a mixed group of professionals, volunteers, and bond-parents not linked to a specific child working part-time on a co-operative basis. They would be found in a variety of locations, including in housing complexes (both apartments and detached housing) and at large places of work, where provision would be made for workers to have some time off to join in the care of their children.

The pattern of child care within bond-groups would vary considerably. In those where all the bond-parents work full-time reliance upon the child-care centers would be relatively heavy. Also relatively common would be groups where all bond-parents wanted both to maintain some contact with their professions, but also wanted to experience the pleasures involved in caring for young children to a greater extent than a full-time job would permit. In such a situation all the bond-parents might work part-time, pooling their incomes to support the entire group. There might also be some groups where one or more members might choose not to work at all in order to enjoy the children's company, although this would require the agreement of the other members to provide the necessary support.

Even in the cases where parents were choosing to spend time looking after their children themselves I would expect that some use would be made of the child-care centers, partly because the parents would probably still want some time to themselves, and partly because I suspect that experience with really first-rate child care centers will demonstrate that it is beneficial for children to be exposed

to as many loving, empathetic adults as possible, as well as to other children. (It is already recognized in law that an affectionate environment is more important for a child than blood ties.)

The question of whether a non-sexist society should pay a salary to parents who pass up opportunities to earn income to care for a small number of bond-linked children is a difficult one. I think it is possible that such an arrangement might be viewed as benefitting primarily the parents concerned rather than the child, if in fact child care centers do prove to have unquestionably beneficial effects. If this attitude were taken, non-professional child care within a bond group might be viewed as a personal luxury, for which the parents should bear the economic burden. The cost to society of such an arrangement would also be higher if parents were paid the same rate as child care specialists, since more adults would be looking after the same number of children on a bond-group basis. An intermediate solution might be to link the pay scale to the number of children being cared for.

EMPLOYMENT

The fundamental change here would be that there would no longer be any stereotyped men's and women's jobs, with corresponding higher and lower wage scales. The proportion of men and women in any given job would probably reflect their relative share of the general population since personal taste for a given type of work would not be sex-linked either biologically or through artificial conditioning. Because of this distribution, wage rates would tend to a greater equalization between jobs involving a similar degree of skill, training and responsibility. The wage rates for boring jobs would probably rise relative to interesting jobs like law and medicine, since there would no longer be an artificial pool of people trapped with access only to dull work through sexism, racism, or classism, so that higher wages would have to be paid to compensate people for the unattractive nature of their employment.

Since the proportion of the population committed to the market sector of the economy (for the record, I am a workers' management/market socialist) would, as indicated earlier, probably increase as a result of the eradication of sexual stereotyping, there would likely be a reduction in the length of the normal working day in order to spread out the available work and income opportunities as equitably as possible. For example, in a plant operating twenty-four hours a day there might be four six-hour shifts instead of three eight hour ones.

In those bond-groups where members choose to pool their economic resources it might be common for people to take advantage of this by working part time, so as to have greater freedom to pursue private hobbies (such as fanzines). A similar state of affairs might arise where parental groups decided that they wanted a substantial degree of participation in child rearing. For this reason part-time work would be much more common and perceived as more legitimate than in our present society. Part-time workers would also receive greater protection since they would be entitled as of a right to a proportionate share of any fringe benefits, and to opportunities for promotion, where the nature of the work permits this.

The chains of promotion might also change substantially once sexually stereotyped perceptions of particular jobs are abolished. It might be accepted practice for the secretary to a person holding a particular position to be recognized as a trainee for that position who will take over when the present holder leaves. (Many secretaries that I have known, even in the present society, really run the office while male "bosses" come and go.) People interested in law, for example, might work as a legal secretary for a while to determine if they really would like the field before going to law school. Many nurses would be training to be doctors, and there would be broad exchanges between plant and office work.

There would also be some change in the distribution of kinds of work within offices.

Such social chores as making coffee would be shared by everyone, independent of rank. Touch typing skills would be expected of all employees, so that fast intra-office notes could be typed by the sender, leaving any typing specialists to concentrate on those materials that really have to be letter perfect. The training function of the secretary's job would also lead to the delegation of more research and policy making functions.

CONCLUSION

In concluding I should make it clear that this is not THE feminist picture of a non-sexist society. The women's movement is made up of a broad range of women working individually or in groups, with many different values and suggestions for change. The essay above merely embodies some of my own tentative conclusions, which may evolve further if someone puts forward a better alternative.

One excellent fictional picture of a non-sexist society is Marge Piercy's WOMAN ON THE EDGE OF TIME, which has not received the attention it deserves from the SF community. It is available in hardcover from Knopf, and in paperback from Fawcett Crest. The number of alternative visions available can be expected to increase with the growing number of feminist SF writers who are likely to weave images of such a society into at least some of their work as a matter of course.

Both fictional images and speculative essays may play a useful role in helping to establish goals for the growing number of people of good will who find the sexually-linked oppression of the present social order increasingly intolerable.

The Differences Are Cause For Joy

view from the year twenty-two hundred

essay in feminist theory

Jessica Amanda Salmonson

In the year twenty-two hundred most of the ills, fears, and prejudices of the past have been eradicated. Humankind is biologically unaltered yet behaves in no manner expected of a species having a long history of violence and destruction. The following dissertation is presented in an effort to explain this blissful phenomenon to persons of earlier and barbaric eras.

The population problem has inadvertently resolved itself. Women, in achieving parity with men, are no longer restricted to the roles of whores, housewives, and madonnas. Having taken equal responsibility for the management of a rational civilization, women suddenly have more to do than neurotically reproduce.

In the year twenty-two hundred, perhaps by a calendar different from your own, there is no longer war. The critical social changes that made it emotionally impossible for men to subjugate and rape women have made it equally impossible for men to loot, pillage, burn or to attempt proof of prowess over other nations. In the year twenty-two hundred there are no longer any nations.

For the same reasons, in the year twenty-two hundred the natural environment thrives unmolested, and humankind has become a direct and intrinsic part of it. Knowledge of technology is vast, but not geared toward mechanization. Although

unweakened by colonialism, areas of human habitation are ecologically contained; the concept of nationalism is unknown.

Maritime and caravan trade is at a stable height, though not as a profession. They are integrated with the cultural ways of life. To focus on the maritime trade as the primary example: every citizen of the United Earth has the option of volunteering a commitment of from six months to life, to any Maritime Collective or Coop. It is poor pay, but the necessities are provided, and it gives every woman and man the opportunity to see the world, or a great enough portion of it, without any cost beyond labor. ("Currency" is interchangeable with labor and produce; barter is the method of sales and purchase.) Many volunteers to Maritime Collectives sail for the adventure, before settling into a personal "family tribe". Others go in search of a land or environment most suited to their temperament or romanticism, which explains how so many family tribes come to include people of other races and national heritage. A few remaining lifelong sailors, the crews and their friends in many ports their only tribe.

Women and men merchants work side by side, as they do in all vocations and avocations, without the tensions or demands of sexuality interfering. Lovemaking is common for those who choose it, but there is no coercion or expectancy to such performance. Honesty has replaced innuendo in these matters, thus sexuality is never an on-job exhibition or intervention.

Though there are no nations in the year twenty-two hundred, the concept of "national heritage" is popular. Individual tribes adopt cultural habits and customs from the past, and alter these old customs to encompass the new morality of peaceful co-existence with all living things, and the ethic of universal equality. This is, then, a time of great diversity but no divisions.

With the resolution of the population problem, economic and environmental issues are stabilized. Formal government is virtually non-existent: tribes see to their own needs, the needs of neighboring tribes, always in a manner that is compatible with the needs of all tribes everywhere.

Agism, particularly the oppression of the elderly, has ended. In the tribal communities, isolation and alienation are impossible except when temporarily sought for meditation or reflective purposes. The oldest members of the tribe are viewed as the wisest, having the greatest living experience, and many of the most interesting stories. They are recognized as sexually appealing, as beauty is not equated only with youth in a non-agist society. There is, at times, a sort of expectation that youths will travel, and possibly relocate, which those who are adverse to adventure may consider a sort of agism against youth; there is, admittedly, subtle pressure urging young adults to be explorers, inventors, or scholars; and seek new experiences outside the tribe before settling. Few, however, feel this as coercion; rather, it is usually felt as encouragement.

Representatives, apprentices, students, scholars, and others often leave the tribes to visit the park-like educational centers, for short or extended periods, and occasionally for life. In these centers, the arts and sciences are accelerating under ideal new-Athenian research and study conditions.

All people live in sympathy with the ecological balances, though it is sometimes necessary to alter the balances in small areas. Environment may be augmented for agricultural purposes; but areas of agriculture are designed to complement rather than compete with the natural ecosystem. This is where technology, year twenty-two hundred style, has reached its greatest heights, molded neatly to art and philosophy. Always the needs of the native environment are met first, even if on occasion this means hardship for certain tribes, or, in some instances, tribe relocation to an area where it will be easier to maintain non-competitiveness with

the environment. In most areas, of course, this intense respect and interaction and compatibility with the ecosystem is tribally beneficial: a people is only as healthy as its environment.

Religion in the year twenty-two hundred is non-existent. There are many cultural myths, recited in the circles of the tribal gatherings; these reflect the mood and philosophy of the people, but are rarely taken literally. There is a fundamental respect for all aspects of the natural universe, who is occasionally personified as the Great Goddess, the Whole, the One of whom we are all a part. But this is strictly an abstract, most loved by poets and artists. The overriding "faith" is that all things large or small, wise or foolish, are equally important to the Whole. There is no emotional or intellectual or philosophic basis for bowing to any godhead or authority figure -- not in a universe where even gods, like ants, are no greater or lesser than any other thing.

Racism is inconceivable. Interracial marriages are profuse. Yet there is also an admiration for, rather than a fear of, the differences among peoples. This leads many to preserve racial bloodlines to one degree or another. This is sometimes done by artificial semination or agreed mating outside of or within the family tribe with someone of similar race, for the express purpose of preserving genotypes. There is no particular favor, nor stigma, nor prestige attached to such offspring, but there is a mutual joy between siblings who cherish one another's differences, just as there is a joy for the differences among tribes.

Marriage survives, but in much a different manner than practiced in previous times. Women are allowed to marry any number of men within the tribe, and occasionally men from other tribes or even transients. Men can accept proposals for marriage from as many women as they desire. There is no divorce, but since marriage implies no literal ties or exclusive commitments, this is unimportant. Marriage is no mere formality, however, and not entered on whim or frivolity. People are not allowed to copulate outside of their multiple marriages, nor are they allowed to marry the offspring of any woman in the multiple marriage even if it can be established that there is no blood-relationship. This is partly to provide genetic safeguards against the offspring of accidental interfamily mating. Persons with the same mother cannot marry "aunts", nor the children of "aunts", aunts being the additional wives of a mother's husbands. In all cases only copulation and marriage is taboo; other levels of incest are acceptable. There is no such thing as "legal enforcement" of these customs, but the regard for tradition is very deeply rooted in the people. The taboo provides incentive for travel and communion with other family tribes, where greater percentages of tribal members are available for marriages. This encourages youths to take advantage of the Maritime and Caravan Cooperatives, before their tribal ties are so firmly entrenched that travel and possible permanent relocation in a tribe of another land is unattractive.

Dispersion of family tribes in this manner establishes friendships and family ties throughout the world. Ships and caravans customarily transport written, recorded, and filmed communications between tribes -- at any distance -- without cost and with considerable reliability.

There is no marriage between women, or between men, because the unity of same-sexed persons is taken for granted; coupling between members of the same physical sex does not need the justification of marriage, nor safeguards against incest's children. Many a community bed is devoid of men, and many a community bed is devoid of women. The people are ostensibly ambi-sexual, at least in cultural terms, although individuals may restrict themselves to one or another sexual behavior as befits their personal nature; these differences are cause for joy.

Classism, in a universe without hierarchy, in the year twenty-two hundred, does not exist.

The "scientific" superstitions of psychology and psychiatry are extinct as earlier peoples knew them. A healthy people has little use for theories of that sort. Yet psychology survives as a concept much different from that which existed in previous times. Psychologists recognize several genders: Mam, female of a primarily cooperative nature; Lam, male of a primarily cooperative nature; Ram male of a primarily competitive nature; and Fora, female of a primarily competitive nature. In prior eras, competitiveness was seen as aggression and cooperation as passivity, but those were the perceptions of an unhealthy people. Neither aggression nor passivity is a virtue -- both competitiveness and cooperation can be virtues.

Mam, Lam, Ram, and Fora are the "new Jungian" archetypes, and may be somewhat less restricting and arbitrary definitions of world-cultural "norms", but are less restricting than archaic conceptions of a dualized, rather than quadrupled, universe. Combinations of the quad are recognized, and this wealth of difference and variance is cause for joy. Mamram is a Mam who finds her pleasure with Rams, and is considered heterosexual because of the cooperative woman being paired with the competitive male. Mamfora is a Mam who is attracted to Fora, and is also considered heterosexual because the cooperative woman is coupled with the competitive woman. Lamram is a Lam who is attracted to a Ram, and this is considered heterosexual because a cooperative male is paired with a competitive male; and Lamfora is heterosexual since the cooperative male is paired with the competitive female. All these heterosexual acts are considered normal, as are the following homosexual acts: Ramfora, a competitive man attracted to a competitive woman; Lammam, a cooperative man attracted to a cooperative woman; Forafora, a competitive woman attracted to a competitive woman; Lamlam, Ramram, and Mammam are self-explanatory. These are homosexual acts or persons. Additional heterosexual acts or persons not herein defined, but clearly definable if you understand basic psychology in the year 2200, are Rammam men, Foramam women, Ramlam men, and Foralam women.

In a society that rejoices in its own diversity, it is not surprising that even these complex-seeming sexual definitions are simplified and may be mixed in actual practice. Each individual defines herself as the mood suggests, and changes the definitions daily if so desired. These are not "labels" to which people must adhere, for obviously the above variations do not even allow for ambi-sexuality though it is the cultural norm. There is no special word for the cultural norm. All of the above defined variations are transitory and can be applied to anyone, without regard for actual chromosomal sex.

In practice, a woman may define herself as a Ram or competitive male if "he" wishes, or a Lamlam, a cooperative male interested in another cooperative male for spiritual, intellectual, sexual, or other communion. Gender is a malleable thing in the year 2200, recognized as entirely subjective. Androgyny is the cultural norm, but vast percentages of the population are not androgynous. There is no pressure toward conformity where the differences are cause for joy.

A generally-androgynous person may in one phase of her life be strongly masculine, and in another period of life become strongly feminine: it is easy to vary oneself from the androgynous "norm" or "starting point". Some people never vary from either masculine or feminine but always remain one or the other; others work back and forth through the general spectrum constantly, while others change only rarely. Possibly the greatest percentage of people, however, are consistently androgynous; it is often impossible to know instantly whether a person is male or female (or if you think you know, you may be wrong). In this society, persons are what they tell you they are, not what you want them to be. People relate to people and not to chromosomes or genitalia, so there is never any real confusion or ambiguity. No one is expected to be any certain way, nor even to conform to self-imposed transitory titles. It is, in fact, very handy to be androgynous, or even to seem ambiguous, in

a society of people who change gender-titles as often as from one day to the next. People communicate each day's orientation via many verbal and sometimes physical cues, both obvious and subtle, so that no individual has trouble telling whether per is, today, a Ram, Mam, Lam, Fora, any combination of these, all, or none. Each individual is what that individual decides, permanently or temporarily. In this society then, it is perfectly conceivable, and not at all remarkable, that some women have testicles and some men have vaginas. Such differences are cause for celebration.



Besides the four archetypes, there are also those who prefer to be called Neu, celibate, or Vo, virgin.

Enunciation of these two words implies the degree of truth to it, and this is somewhat true of all genderal and sexual terms used. There is a tangent understanding that all these transient self-labels are lies (since the universe is not really quadruplized, but singular); this is indicative of a society that finds humor in itself, laughs easily, yet never fails to respect each lie for its duration. In regard to sexuality and gender, there are only lies: there is no truth. It is not paradoxical that where there is no such thing as truth, there can be no lies either; all true logic is circular, a straight line eventually closes on itself, and all true lies are cause for joy and laughter.

The only thing approaching a hierarchy in this society is the accepted assertion that the cooperative nature reigns over the competitive nature. The competitive nature is cause for joy, yes, but is utterly subject to the Mam and Lam, which is within every individual so there is no one to be oppressed or suppressed; there is, rather, self-control. The universal acceptance that the cooperative nature overrides the competitive has done away with the need of formal government, war, exploitation; it has ended the necessity of legislating protection of one group against another; it has made law by custom a responsible, workable alternative to centralized rule.

Ram and Fora, the competitive aspects of each human, are highly regarded, respected, necessary, and encouraged to flourish through adventure, valor, sport; but never do these subjugate the cooperative forces of Mam and Lam. Only when the competitive is subject to the cooperative can balance be maintained and people remain intricate to the Whole, to the Goddess, to sanity.

This of course is a matrilinear society, heirs being determined through the Mothers. Fathers are generally unknown, and in any event the concept is unimpor-

tant. The term "father" is archaic. Both men and women among the tribe are considered "moms" by the children, and no one is exempt from childrearing. Every member of the tribe is maternal; it is sometimes expected that men will be slightly more maternal, in fairness if not logicity, to balance the extra responsibilities of Mothers in brooding. Mothers do not singly raise their own blood-children, and in fact the recognition of a "blood" Mother is mainly for establishing heirships and who, when the children are grown, is accessible for marriages. The tribe raises the children collectively. Babies are members of the family tribe immediately upon birth, with as many Mothers nursing as currently give milk, and a great many more moms sharing in the general care. As soon as the children are no longer nursing or (among some tribes) as soon as they walk, they are full citizens with ever-increasing responsibility for themselves and no one who would dare claim "ownership" of any given child. Everyone grows up with very large families, a great many role-models to choose from, and no concept of "strangers".

Because the society of the year 2200 is so very different from any of the past, it may be hard for persons from those times to perceive the full scope of said society. Yet to the people of that future year, all of the above is so basic and simple that it need not even be taught. It is inherent. To these people, understanding societies and psychologies of earlier epics is difficult, though anthropology is popular among the citizens and they do try to comprehend past attitudes and civilizations. Anthropology is known commonly as the "science of tragedy".

It may be difficult even to accept that this society of the year 2200 is real. Yet to believe it takes only one gram of optimism: simply believe that humanity is not irrevocably and inherently evil, that trends toward murder, rape, destruction and all the villainy of prejudiced, hating so-called civilization can and will be overcome. A society that has successfully overcome these things, that does not pollute and wantonly destroy and kill, is not simply a "little" different, not merely "subtly" changed, not "almost the same" in all respects save by the peaceful co-existence with each other and with nature. There is no slight change that will eliminate insanity. That peaceful, decent society of the year 2200 is so different -- from its central core to its galaxy's edge -- that peoples of the past may not even recognize it as themselves.

I I I

Source: The major source of the above essay is years of thinking and conversations, most recently tempered and influenced by Merlin Stone's WHEN GOD WAS A WOMAN and similar works by Diner, Davis, Graves, etc., Marge Piercy's WOMAN ON THE EDGE OF TIME and other feminist science fiction, my step-mother Lumchuan Salmonson's discussions of her Buddhist faith and my further studies of the Tao, personal infuriation with the cultural popularity of Jungian thought and the lack of alternatives currently available, and the findings of various recent studies on prenatal causes of gender traits and sexual orientation. When I've got this place down pat, I'm going to vanish into it schizophrenically.

Fragment of a Letter.....

by Evelyn Rogers

.....Oh, it is a wonderful life here in the United States of Isabella. Your stories, dear Evelyn, of life in a sexist society fill me with horror and outrage. We are quite unable here to imagine such depravity. All our Citizens are equal from birth, and remain so throughout their lives until Retirement. No healthy and

intelligent person has ever been denied access to education, social or political groups, job opportunities or anything!

From the time they landed here centuries ago, our ancestors realized that in order to survive and grow their community needed the physical and intellectual resources of all its members, male and female alike. They resolved therefore to banish sexual discrimination in every way possible..

And they succeeded! Succeeded so well, in fact, that we their descendents cannot imagine a world in which women are not doctors and plumbers and lawyers and bureaucrats!

When you come right down to it, physical and mental noncapability cut right across sexual lines. These days our postnatal screening statistics show that both male and female infants are culled in approximately the same proportions as their percentage of the population at large. Moreover, the same proportions hold true in the post-puberty Screening, when the Citizens are determined and the Marginals sterilized. So discrimination by sex just makes no sense, does it? It's...it's downright stupid!

We are still, alas, unable to avoid the fact that in order to reproduce ourselves we must still rely on the time and pain and effort of women. Our finest scientific minds are hard at work on experiments with artificial wombs and cloning and other means of reproduction which would enable us to avoid this terrible imposition (for those, of course, who desire to avoid it), but results are, so far, imperfect.

We do try to make things as easy and pleasant as possible for women who desire to be mothers. They are, after all, making possible the continuation of the community, and so the community owes them a great deal. From the time a Citizen announces her intention to conceive, every care and consideration is lavished upon her and those with whom she wishes to share her experience. She and her Significant Other(s) -- if any -- are guaranteed an income sufficient to meet their needs and prepare for the Great Event. Health care is free, and genetic counseling and screening are available as part of the maternity benefits. If the father is to be part of the child's life, he too is freed from other responsibilities to prepare himself for parenthood.

The whole of the maternity-oriented medical establishment is aimed at making birth a safe and joyous occasion. The mother's wishes about the atmosphere, people present, medication administered, are law! Our infants are born into a loving and happy atmosphere.

Post natal practice is just as important. Most mothers choose to nurse their babies. The health benefits to both mother and child are enormous. If the child survives the post-natal screening, an experienced baby nurse (usually a strongly maternal Marginal; they make excellent child care specialists) is available at community expense to the mother if she wants help for the first few months. Or, of course, the mother has the option of placing the child for adoption or in a community child-rearing facility. If the infant has to be culled, there is psychiatric help available for an unlimited time to the bereaved family.

When the mother has recovered from the birth, she may choose to resume her job, or she may stay at home to assist in rearing her child. The community provides free child care in the first case, or financial assistance in the second. Medical care for the child is free, and so is an excellent education. And at any point, if the mother feels trapped or incapable of continuing to care for the child, she is free to surrender it to the community.

At puberty children are Screened again, and sorted into Citizens and Marginals. The

Marginals, those unfit physically or mentally for Citizenship, are sterilized, given extensive aptitude tests and counseling, and are given a choice of jobs suited to their physical and intellectual capabilities. AT NO TIME ARE THEIR OPPORTUNITIES LIMITED BY THEIR SEX! The only criteria for a job is the ability to do it!

The healthy and intelligent children are granted Citizenship. They are educated free to the extent of their abilities and ambition, and enter the job market free to be anything they desire and are capable of achieving. From puberty onward they are free to live with whomever they wish; conception control is available and free. Until a Citizen has finished his or her formal education, he or she receives an allowance from the community; after that each Citizen is responsible for his or her own maintenance until Retirement. When two or more Citizens live together, the division of financial and domestic responsibilities is solely for them to determine. No one is obliged to trade sex for financial security. Sick leave and temporary disability benefits are liberal and available to either sex. Should a citizen be permanently disabled, there is always the option of Retirement...

end fragment

You did say a society free from sexual discrimination? Here's one, isn't it wonderful? Have a good time with your project, and be sure to send me a copy.

Equality in the Year 1977

An Expository Lump

by Arthur D. Hlavaty

Things could have been very different. Imagine if you will that William Acton, while still an adolescent, had been caught playing with himself. His father, in many ways a typical early-19th-century clergyman, would probably have told the boy that he was not only sinning against God, but endangering his health. That could have warped young Acton for life. Perhaps he would have perverted his medical genius to the writing of tracts on The Evils of Masturbation and Why No Lady Ever Has Sexual Feelings & similar ridiculous topics.

As we all know, that didn't happen. In his autobiography, MY SECRET LIFE, Acton describes how he grew up with positive feelings about sex & vowed to help spread sexual pleasure. He developed the birth control pill in the 1850s. He tested it on women from London's lower classes, and they survived (and many reported that they enjoyed sex more). By 1877, the Pill was about as good as it is today.

Of course, there was opposition. Conservatives said that it would destroy the Fabric of Society As We Know It. (They were right.) Members of the clergy quoted the Bible against it. (The story of Onan was particularly popular, though some insisted that it applied only to male contraception.) But there were forces of change at work that could not be stopped. The Pill was increasing sexual freedom, and thus sexual activity. Women found themselves enjoying sex much more with the fear of pregnancy gone, and thus many men began enjoying the act more. Soon the clergy were in retreat. More & more churches began accepting birth control. The last major bastion fell at the turn of the century, with Pope Hadrian VII's famous bull, CONTRA NATURAM, which stated that contraception is permissible and in some cases a Christian duty. Today there are only a few sects, like the schismatic True Catholic Faith, which believe that birth control is a sin, and they are generally taken no more seriously than the Flat Earthers.

In retrospect, we can see that sexual freedom caused sexual equality and vice versa. As Isaac Asimov has pointed out in his historical essay, "Uncertain, Coy, and Hard to Please", the oppression of women was largely based on (or at least justified by) the fact that women were likely to become pregnant. Once they were free of the tyranny of reproduction, women began demanding equality of opportunity. Before long, the battle was won. A generation which grew up taking for granted that women could control their own reproductive processes found it hard to see why women should be discriminated against.

Attitudes toward the sexual act itself changed. Until Dr. Acton, it had frequently been assumed that sex was largely for the pleasure of the male. Soon people knew better. One reason for this change was that women no longer had to fear unwanted pregnancy and thus could give themselves wholeheartedly to the pleasure of fucking. But more than that, as the assumption of gross universal differences fell by the wayside, it was soon obvious that the assumption of the difficulty of female orgasm was just another of the old fantasies. Of course, some men had to be retrained to perform the sexual act in a manner that would please women. Much of this teaching was done one-to-one, but some women wrote books on sexual technique. (Marie Stopes's profusely illustrated THE JOY OF SEX (1910) was a landmark.)

Attitudes toward formerly forbidden sexual practices changed, too. One consequence of the blurring of irrelevant sexual distinctions was that those who blurred the relevant ones were no longer punished for so doing. Oscar Wilde was a bit ahead of his time; his "Gay Society" was laughed at. (In a more sexually repressive society, he might have been imprisoned.) But for the last 60 years or so, it has been taken for granted that some people most of the time and most people some of the time will prefer homosexual relations, and this fact is considered no more remarkable than the fact that people have different tastes in food or other entertainments.

The transition to sexual equality was not without hardships. Some historians refer to the first quarter of this century as "The Era of Sexual Confusion". At first there was such a rush by women to formerly male roles that some wondered if there would be anybody left to stayhome and have and raise the children. This danger was ended by the emergence of the "feminist" movement -- women who wished to stay with the "feminine" (traditionally female) roles of child-rearing and housekeeping.

Some of their pronouncements sound funny today -- the more radical feminists insisted that all women should stick to being wives and mothers -- but they had a point, and they established their ideas. Soon it was taken for granted that some women did indeed find fulfillment in the traditional woman's role.

As feminism became more popular, groups of male feminists sprang up, pointing out that if it was



logical for some women to find happiness in the business world, it made sense that some men should find their true role in the home. These, too, were quickly accepted. The first generation of working women were almost all childfree, as they felt they had to show their equality with men. But as the idea became established that pregnancy was now a voluntary condition on the part of women, people began to accept the idea of pregnant women working. Thus women would remain at their jobs except for the day or so needed for actual childbirth, and then would turn the children over to their husbands.

No longer did men have to be "masculine" (i.e., strong, courageous, assertive, decisive, etc.). This of course was a triumph for the human spirit. One does not know whether to laugh or to cry at the thought of so many of our ancestors being forced into utterly inappropriate behavior patterns on the basis of their genitals. In fact, the very words "masculine" and "feminine" were disappearing, and rightly so. They were as silly as calling behavior patterns "Caucasian" and "Negro".

But there were problems. For one thing, there were people (of both sexes) who were fairly well described as either "masculine" or "feminine". More important, there were a large number of people who felt perplexed. With their anatomy no longer their destiny, they sought guidance from experts and authorities on what lifestyles they should pursue. It was here that Dr. Robert Putney Drake stepped in.

Drake, as we know, had studied psychology under C.G. Jung, and had picked up much Oriental lore from the Old Wise Man of Switzerland. One day, he realized that the Chinese words "yin" and "yang" were the answer to the new problems of sexual identity. Henceforth, "yin" would replace "feminine" and "yang" "Masculine". Drake designed a psychological test to determine the individual's polarity. Yang people tended to be happiest doing competitive work and/or work which required physical strength; yins tended to prefer working in the home, doing crafts, etc.

One sign of how quickly Drake's concepts were accepted can be found in popular fiction, which quickly divided up into Yin and Yang genres. The yin genres, like romances and gothics, featured yin characters finding their true (yang) mates. (There is an ugly rumor that unscrupulous publishers will print the same books as both men's and women's gothics, with only the genders of the characters changed.) The new genre of science fiction started out very yang (sometimes ludicrously so, as with the uniformly brave and strong boys and girls of E.E. Smith's books), but has changed somewhat. There were also highly yang adventure stories, such as the tales of Sam Spade and Phyllis Marlowe.

One literary genre all but disappeared as a result of all these changes -- the highly popular (though unlawful) 19th century form known as "pornography", which consisted almost entirely of descriptions of fucking. Of course some major writers today -- such as John Updike and Florence King -- put lots of sexual descriptions in their books, and others do not, but that is largely a matter for the literary critics.

Today, polarity is almost universally accepted. A modified form of the original Drake Polarity Test is still in use in many of our nation's elementary schools. For instance, a boy who scores high in yin will be encouraged to learn yin skills, such as Home Economics. He will most likely wear pastel clothing, rather than the somber blacks and blues favored by yangs. (Though fashions change, with greater or lesser differences between the polarities from year to year. Occasionally, the fashion leaders attempt to revive the old custom of dresses for yins.) And he will be most likely to seek out a yang woman as a mate.

Here lies one of the problems that the polarity approach has caused. Once polarity

was accepted, the idea quickly grew in psychiatric circles that choosing a mate of the opposite polarity should be the norm. Some took this approach to ridiculous lengths. One fanatic even decided that anyone who had ever had sex with a person of the same polarity was mentally ill, and wrote a book called NEUROTIC COUNTERFEIT SEX, stridently defending this view. Almost no one took her seriously, though. Others believed that a consistent pattern of homopolar relations, or a single long-term one, was a sign of mental dysfunction. Fortunately that theory too has fallen out of fashion, due to the obvious presence of many happy and successful yin-yin or yang-yang pairings. (No one today finds it particularly surprising that President Carter's husband is a successful peanut merchant.)

There were problems with the polarity tests, of course. It was soon discovered that women statistically tended to score higher in yin on Drake's original test. This was corrected by eliminating all questions in which one sex consistently scored higher than the other, as they do with IQ tests.

Then there is the fact that polarity tests do not predict with absolute accuracy. Some people will score high in yin, then go on to lead very yang lives, and vice versa. Of course, this problem comes up in any sort of testing. In IQ, there are "over-achievers" who do far better in intellectual pursuits than their IQ scores would indicate, as well as "underachievers" who do worse.

Finally there is the problem of bipolars. No matter how carefully the tests are drawn up, there will be some people who score about half yin and half yang. Followup tests have indicated that some bipolars eventually take up a lifestyle of one or the other polarity, but others do not. There is some controversy over whether bipolars are more prone to crime and deviancy.

In spite of its imperfections, most people would agree that polarity seems to work fairly well. The many successful women in formerly male fields and men in formerly female fields attest to this. There are even efforts to deal with the problem of those who do not clearly belong on one side or the other. But recently three groups have sprung up to challenge polarity: the Yinists, the Sexists, and the Bipolarists.

The Yinists agree with the basic assumptions of polarity, but draw the opposite conclusion. They maintain that the prevalence of yangs in positions of power is the cause of all the world's problems, from war to poverty to the alleged destruction of the environment. They maintain that if the world were run by yins, we would have an attitude of love for all of creation, that equality would reign, and that humanity would have no desire to tamper with the balance of nature. Perhaps, but they are faced with the problem that yangs, by their very nature, are drawn to positions of power. The best answer the Yinists have come up with is a system wherein the state would teach everyone to be yin (or as they say, would encourage our naturally yin nature). No one has yet suggested a plausible way of getting from here to there.

The Sexists, led by Father Norman Mailer of the True Catholic Faith, maintain that women should be yin, and men should be yang. When confronted with the fact that many people of the "wrong" polarity appear to be happy, successful, and productive, they insist that such problems are caused by "brainwashing" in the schools, or by hormonal imbalances (as yet undetectable by science).

I have the most sympathy with the Bipolarists. Their slogan is "We are all bipolar." They maintain that the yin/yang distinction is an arbitrary one, that the tests are self-fulfilling prophecies, imposing rather than predicting behavior.

And I do believe they have a piece of the truth. Certainly no one is 100% yin or 100% yang. (Incidentally, Drake, a subtle thinker who has been oversimplified by

both his followers and his detractors, never said that people were all one or all the other.) And just as with IQ tests, polarity tests may have a self-fulfilling component. Still, many people do need external guides to behavior, and the tests help them make up their minds. I do agree that people who come out bipolar on the tests should not be stigmatized as "deviant" or "queer".

A character in SEMI-TOUGH, by Diana Jenkins, says, "What could have happened, did." Still, it is interesting to speculate on What Might Have Been. Suppose Dr. Acton hadn't invented the pill. Or suppose Dr. Drake hadn't discovered polarity? Would things have been different? Would we have had two world wars in this century? Would we still have had a Great Depression in the 30's? Would we have discovered the atom bomb anyways? Would the Black civil rights movement have begun earlier than the 50's? Would America still have involved itself in the stupid, vicious, self-destructive Vietnam War? We will never know.

Dangerous Dreams

by Chris Eblis

One of the major errors in the directing of humankind's development was the binding of marriage and love into the same package. Life would be so much more sensible and rewarding if people realized that their personal living arrangements and their individualized emotional fulfillments are two separate entities and should be treated as such. If a particular pair of people can satisfy both sets of conditions between themselves, that's fine, but the present insistence that one should live only with the person one loves and love only the person with whom one lives is asinine. As a society, it may prove to be suicidal.

There really are people who are basically domestic - both male and female. My last male lover was a compulsively orderly person - quite in contrast to myself - and he derived a great deal of personal enjoyment from cleaning up my unfiled correspondence, washing floors and dishes and, god help him, the windows. He'd make someone a wonderful wife if he could cook worth a damn. There's no reason why "marriages" couldn't exist between men (no, I don't mean gay ones specifically.) for purposes of maintaining a household. This would leave each person to dispense love and other affection elsewhere without the current burden of guilt. If I were building our brave new world, the word "marriage" would imply only a contract for limited communal living arrangements.

The idea that love is something that arises between two people to the exclusion of everyone else is abhorrent to me. That's a basically selfish attitude that has been so strongly ingrained into us that it's nearly impossible to ignore. It derives from the idea that people within marriages are basically each other's property ("his wife and her husband"). Love has no clearly defined delimitation; it's not a one-time gift with finite limits that can be dispensed a single time and only to the opposite sex. It's a function of the linkage between affection and sex, or affection and lust to be more honest about it, another psychosocial perversion of our culture. There are any number of people of either sex I'd like to share a bed with, but that I'd find tedious or nauseating to talk to. And the opposite holds true as well.

* * *

I'm awfully suspicious of people (of either sex) who plan in terms of people rather than persons, a distinction I picked up from your letters. The Marxist tendency to speak for the masses is an insidiously self-destructing construct. Firestone commits

this sin increasingly; it's a middleclass socialist phenomenon particularly evident among the Mary-come-lately feminists who get most of the publicity now. They lose sight of the fact that people's emotional satisfaction cannot be achieved through mass prescription. In a non-sexist, non-racist world, there would be probably as many men doing tedious domestic duties as women, but there would still be people trapped in that role, and others who revelled in it. Doing away with exploitation on the basis of any one parameter (sex, race, age, etc.) is not going to fundamentally alter or even reduce the amount of exploitation in the world.

Feminists therefore are, for the most part, seeking to improve their position in the structure of exploitation. This is necessarily going to cause a balancing deterioration of someone else's position. Don't knock it, though. That's the name of the game. All of us are climbing at the expense of others. It's a perfectly legitimate human activity, and the fact that most people are too self-delusive to admit it even to themselves doesn't destroy its validity or its usefulness. This is why revolutionary movements almost always go to extremes; you take all the ground you can get, because some has to be lost subsequently when the next push comes from below. That's not going to change just because one type of discrimination is eliminated.

* * *

It's quite possible that men and women have brains that work differently in some areas. I've not seen the literature you describe, but I remain open-minded on the subject. I don't see any reason to consider such a fact (if fact it is) to be potentially harmful, unless misconstrued, and people are going to misconstrue anything. The truth is important, in an abstract sort of way. If those tests really do show a difference in orientation, then I think the potential for diversity outweighs any adverse misinterpretation possible.

Maybe in some future society men will excel in some fields and women in others, without any derogatory classification system attached. As you point out, women just aren't going to be able to play on men's teams in professional football, and if our society continues to consider such "sports" worth doing, then they'll continue to be male preserves.

On the other hand, maybe the differences in perception described are the result of generations of unconscious selective breeding, not that that makes them any less valid. It stands to reason, statistically at least, that there would be some gross differences between the sexes.

I remember a while back, someone theorized that the reason there were so many Blacks in sports was that their heritage consisted of a thorough breeding out of non-physical types. That's a rather silly theory, of course, and the real reason is probably that sports are one of the few areas where the color bar is effectively gone. But I remember Whitney Young objecting loudly to the statement not because it was false, but because it ought not to be true, that it could only further stereotype Blacks. While his observations were no doubt true, that struck me as hardly a valid reply to the argument. If you deny your opponent the use of fact, you've just assigned equal validity to the most rabid tract by the KKK. I fear the feminist movement may begin to suffer from this. I ran into some people in Houston that made my skin crawl.

* * *

If sexual stereotyping and its concomitant power structure were to disappear, I'd imagine there would indeed be an alteration in the gay world. A lot of gays really are sick. They're not gay because of the individuals they love; they're gay because this is their way of striking back or because their whole emotional structure has been warped by society. This is the kind of gay that gave rise to the stereotyped lurker in public restrooms. They aren't any more successful being gay than when they were straight, and the gay community as a whole is embarrassed

by them.

But while this type would probably disappear in our brave new world, I think the relaxation of sex-role division would lead to more sexual experimentation. In fact, the division between gay and straight would probably blur out of recognition, with the vast majority becoming bisexual while young and gradually settling down into more permanent relationships as they mature.

* * *

I don't really have any way of knowing what the predominant method of child-rearing would be. I can suggest a few things. I would expect there to be a great diversity of arrangements. Since I expect there would be a great increase in the number of communal organizations, I'd expect some form of creche or child-care center to become popular. We'd probably see a lot of extended families being created in small communes, maybe even something like the line-marriages Heinlein suggested. There'd still be some nuclear families, of course, and probably a far more efficient and large scale adoptive organization to shunt kids to families where they could better fit in. There might even be a system of assigning the child's care to a single parent, with the child moving from one marriage-commune-other construct along with the child. This would all largely be a matter of social pressure, structural needs, and individual taste.

Realistically, there is no way to apprehend that aspect of society in advance. There has not been enough experimentation in child-rearing within a technological welfare society on a large scale. Small social experiments (e.g. Summerhill, Oxton Farms, or the New Mexico communes) are only partially valid, because they represent a small, closed society. Whole new instrumentalities would probably have to develop. All of society might become a fluid, ever-changing thing, without the ridiculous stratification and delimitations that exist now. It would be a living, evolving social order with ever-changing attributes.

* * *

There's basically nothing wrong with pornography; it's just symptomatic of the underlying sexual sickness of society. Remove the sickness and no one would have any use for the porn. I have no patience for those who go to elaborate lengths (Brownmiller et al) to explain why porn exploits women or to define the difference between porn and acceptable sexually oriented material (erotica?). Porn exploits the poor slob who can't get turned on any other way because of his sexual hang-ups. If all the porn in the world were to disappear, it would have no discernible effect on the incapacity of people to deal with their sexual urges in an adult manner. And most people define porn as sexual material they find offensive, and sexual material that isn't offensive to them personally, isn't porn. They're trying to treat some chimerical symptom instead of coming to grips with the underlying disease.

I just can't get excited about it; there are too many other things to work for or against. If we ever get a sexually undifferentiated society, there might well be more porn than less, but it would be more varied, designed to appeal more to women and gays as well as men. It's not just straight males who have unsatiated sex drives, you know.

* * *

It's often difficult to be patient with recent converts to feminism (male feminists are usually worse than women, I might point out. Guilt, no doubt.) They usually come from upper middle class families, and set out to minister to the poor, down-trodden lower class women. Well, I was one of those downtrodden women and it bored the hell out of me to be patronized by them. I couldn't even resent it, at the time..

Most of them spout pseudo-socialist nonsense about the disappearance of war, class distinctions, poverty, and all of the other evils of the world. Some of them even volunteer to get their hands dirty in some agrarian commune or another. Most give up when they find that the work really is back-breaking. The few that stick it out fancy that they've been accepted into some sort of egalitarian sisterhood. The truth is that they are resented for the simple fact that generally they can retreat at any time to their families. They don't suffer from the insecurity and constant fear, the depressing sameness of day to day life, that characterized the lower classes (men and women). They are not compelled to live by mindless, relentless labor, with no hope of an escape to cushy family fortunes. Even those who have permanently severed their relationship with their former lives are suspect at best. They often carry their martyrdom around like a badge of honor. See how willing I am to lower myself to your level for the sake of my ideals. They are tolerated, of course, because even their feeble contributions to the workload diminishes that of someone else. But if they were ever to prove unproductive, they'd be cast aside without a second thought. Mercifully, none of them seem to realize this until after they've disabused themselves of their idealistic beliefs. Someone once suggested that the reason I became an activist was just to get out of the grind (My parents once decided to try picking cotton instead of fruit. That was the year I decided I'd do anything to escape being a migrant worker.), and in my more self-critical moments, I know they're at least half right.

Erase sexism and racism today, and there will be just as much poverty, injustice, war, and prejudice tomorrow. The sides will line up a bit differently, but the end result is the same. In many ways, a non-sexist world would only be superficially distinguishable from our own. You need to alter psychological pressures more basic than specific prejudices for that - you need to understand and have solutions for alienation, anomie, anxiety, egocentrism, and things like that. We're a long way from that.

Essay on Lesbianism

by Adrienne Fein

There's no question in my mind that there is such a thing as heterosexual privilege -- though the term may need some definition.

There seems to be a sort of "male chauvinist establishment" that basically considers women to be nasty and possibly sinful and all that, but for certain women, they make exceptions. One is privileged to be an exception to the general idea of women as depraved and inferior. And one is supposed to be grateful for the privilege: that is the difference between a right and a privilege; the privilege can be withdrawn at any time unless it is paid for.

I am always taken for a nice, sweet (well usually -- I have a temper at work when people do dumb things), normal young thing...which has advantages and disadvantages.

In a very small town, where normal was defined as Christian-Methodist -- so of course that's what I must be, since I look like a nice normal person, right? -- being defined as "normal" had me mad enough to be spitting sparks.

I once bought a button which says "HOW DARE YOU PRESUME I'D RATHER BE THIN" -- and I fully intend to wear it when I reach my ideal "thin" weight. Along with a section of an envelope addressed to Mr. A. Fein, rubber-stamped "HOW DARE YOU PRESUME I'M MALE"...I may even wear a button that says "HOW DARE YOU PRESUME I'M STRAIGHT-

HETERO"...I hate being pushed into some tight little assumed space.

I used to dislike it when people would use swear words at college, and then turn around and apologize to me. Or when the dorm mother offered me a cigarette, and then said, "Oh, no you don't smoke." Well it's perfectly true that I don't inhale cigarette smoke very often, but I start to feel like "I don't smoke I don't drink I don't curse...GODDAMNIT, I left my cigarettes in the bar!" There is still a stereotype that women who smoke are "fast".

I hate type-casting by stereotype.

Once a friend of mine -- make that "friend" -- yelled at someone who walked in front of his car, "You crippled Jew, get out of my way." When I yelled at him for such a bigoted thing to say, he said that comment had nothing to do with me -- using Jew as an insult word had nothing to do with people of the Jewish religion. BULLSHIT. Then he said, "How about if I yell "drunken nigger"?" I yelled at him.

Then he said, "How about 'drunken Arab'?" and I said, "That's no good either" -- in the most unconvincing tone of voice I have ever heard in my life. (I hereby apologize to any Arabs who may be reading this; I try to keep my prejudices decently under control; I don't claim to be magically free from them...)

If you follow the Rabbi series by Harry Kemmelman, there's one book in which the Rabbi goes to Israel and meets an old friend who moved there because it's the only place he didn't have to worry about being Jewish, could just be a person instead of being super-aware of "Jewishness"...the only place he wouldn't overhear nasty little anti-semitic comments and jokes, because he didn't "look Jewish"...because people assumed that he wasn't one.

I hear some very nasty comments about lesbians--some of them I'm ashamed to say, from professed feminists (though come to think of it, the person who made the nastiest remarks, the time I have in mind, later turned out to have more or less embezzled money from the local N.O.W. chapter...which rather disqualifies her from being called "feminist") on the assumption that "none of us nice normal people taking part in the conversation could possibly be one of them" and the people making the comments are including me among the "nice, normal" ones and I get very angry at that tone of talking about people behind their backs, thinking that no one who looks "normal" will take offense...

Then one time I found myself attracted to a woman I knew was a dyke. (I also knew she was involved with someone at the time). ("Dyke", by the way, was the word she used.)

And I found myself getting somewhat disconcerted at the fact that I was attracted to a woman in that way--and even more disconcerted that I was disconcerted. I thought I was more "liberal" than that.

The woman was an interesting person whom I would have wanted to listen to in any case; the kind of person whom I would feel sympathy for, in any case--whether I felt my feelings were very different from that, just because I knew she was gay, I dunno...But I caught myself thinking along the lines of:

I've been through enough shit, enough kinds of shit, for everything from being Jewish, to being female, the wrong age, even for being overweight...(Though one is discriminated against for being overweight mostly in connection with being female--not living up to the feminine stereotype of beauty...)I don't need to attract another load of shit (especially since that would probably be the worst yet) by identifying myself as a lesbian.

But the political implications of belonging to a minority really have remarkably little to do with whether I might love another woman in a sexual way.

However, being lesbian these days means being self-identified as such; like Antigone, one not only does what one thinks is right, but makes damn sure everyone knows about it...

I may some day find that my conscience demands I identify myself as a lesbian simply because I don't like being on the "privileged/oppressor" side of the fence. I don't want to be treated much better than some of my sisters, simply because my sexual preferences--or what people take for granted are my sexual preferences--are more acceptable (for no good reasons) to the ruling class.

Where I stand. In the middle of a state of confusion.

The whole business of who has sex with whom can be terribly complex...especially when it gets into sharing sexuality...

I've heard dormitory discussions among women (of hetero-sex) that were specific and stimulating enough so that those discussions were almost a form of group masturbation...(Masturbation in the nice Betty Dodson sense of exploring one's own sexuality).

There have come to be a hell of a lot more meanings of "lesbian" than the strict "sexual-preference" one of a woman who prefers other women as sexual partners. Sometimes it has been applied pejoratively to any woman who doesn't fit the "feminine mystique" stereotype. Therefor, some women who don't fit the stereotype and are proud of not doing so, say "Right--we're lesbians."

There is, unfortunately, some division in the women's movement. Having been oppressed as a woman does not always make, say, a white woman understand that she may be acting oppressively toward a black woman...or a straight-hetero woman realize that she may be acting oppressively toward a gay woman. That second instance of possible "in-group" oppression is complicated by the fact that male chauvinist types tend to accuse all feminists of being lesbians, in the sense that they are mentally disturbed and that's why they think women should have rights--or the sense that sexual frustration is the only possible legitimate complaint a woman can have in our society...and some hetero women, who are that and see no reason to be ashamed of it, deeply resent being typecast as something they are not. They resent the male chauvinist view: if women like each other, we must be "queer"--because who could like a woman?--or women are supposed to compete for men.

So the situation gets to be a whole mess. I think that since lesbians are oppressed partly because they are women who thoroughly reject the feminine mystique of women dependent on men, that since any woman is as vulnerable--or can become so--as the most vulnerable among us...and for other reasons, like not treating someone else the way you have been (badly) treated, lesbianism is very much a "women's issue" rather than just a "civil rights" issue.

But because of these complexities a woman who says she is a lesbian may mean:

- 1) She has been raised/conditioned as hetero, and feels comfortable with men--but has suddenly realized that she might feel equally comfortable (even sexually) with women.
- 2) She has read/heard about lesbians and their relationships and suddenly said -- "Hey, that sounds nice..."

3) She has heard about, tried, and liked...sometimes partly as a lifestyle and/or political commitment.

4) She has made the political commitment to have her emotional relationships and support networks with other women, which may not include sex.

5) She has been happily bisexual but suddenly realized that no one objects to an occasional bisexual fling as an exotic erotic practice, but the idea of really rejecting men as sexual partners...by implication rejecting a great deal of the feminine role...Well, as someone said to Kate Millett, "You and others are not oppressed for bisexuality, but for daring to have sex with other women--you're oppressed as a lesbian." And Millett

said that in that context she thought the woman was right, and so she would identify herself as a lesbian.

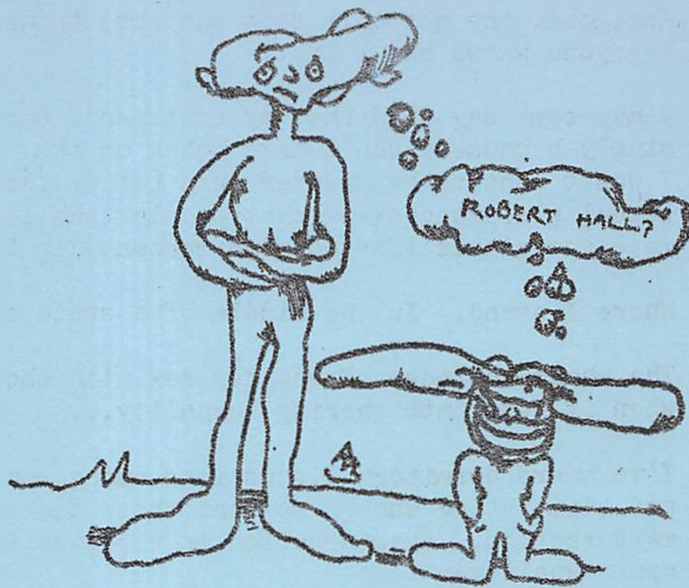
6) She is a woman who simply happens to fall in love -- not with "another woman" but with a particular person who happens to be a woman (and/or she has overcome the conditioning against loving sexually someone of the same sex).

7) She may be thinking of identifying herself as "lesbian" a little like saying no, Black isn't ugly, Black is beautiful. Or like Edna Ferber (I think) who said that being an old maid was like drowning; really quite a pleasant sensation when one became reconciled. Sort of like dealing with both men's paranoia that all feminists are dykes, and women's paranoia about being called dykes if they act as feminists by saying: Yes we are and so what and what are you going to do about it and now that that's over we can concentrate on the important stuff.

The last is obviously a political statement that has little or nothing to do with "personal" preference.

There are women who define lesbianism -- by extension of the original definition -- as building one's life around women, looking to women for emotional support, supporting other women in that fashion, even if one is not having sex with anyone at all.

There are women who simply feel that we are all--all women are--oppressed as women; that women who actually are hetero and have lifestyles close to the "feminine mystique" stereotype are not "safer" than lesbians; if a woman's boss is a bigot, and believes she is a dyke, s/he will fire her--not ask her psychiatrist or doctor if she really is--There is a feeling that in order for all women, for each woman to have her rights, we do in fact have to make sure all women have rights...A feeling that "as you do to the 'least' of us, to any woman, so also you do to me and to all of us" attitude, which leads some women to identify ourselves as lesbians, simply to show we don't claim "hetero privilege" and the "right" to disassociate ourselves from some of our sisters...that we don't feel "superior" to our gay sisters, and



won't let them be oppressed even when we could escape.

During World War II, a fair number of Christians--especially in Denmark (and they deserve to be remembered)--tied armbands with the star of David on the statues of Christ in the churches, and wore them themselves...as a way of saying to the Nazis that they rejected the whole philosophy of "Aryan superiority" and that they would not let some people among them be singled out for greater oppression; that they would rather risk the worst consequences for themselves, then stand by and not get involved while others were being tortured and murdered.

I don't think it is quite so bad, if one must talk about measuring pain, for gay people in the United States as it was for the Jews (and gays and other minorities also) in Nazi-occupied territory...But it is bad enough on occasion.

Bad enough that I might pay back my debt to some Danes whose names I don't know by wearing a gay armband at a political rally. That is not a personal sexual choice, nor is it just "women being friends with each other" or something like that. It is a political statement, and many women would call that political statement "lesbianism".

There are men who have rejected the "privileges" of the "masculine mystique"; I can think of one example written up in MS (and feel bad about not remembering the man's name) of a man who resigned from a job that women had not been considered for. Making that a public statement of sympathy for the feminist cause. There are men who say that they think men as a class have been given certain privileges, and they reject those privileges for themselves. They may make a point of getting emotional support from other men--even sexual emotional support--rather than expecting women to be the all-giving creatures of the feminine mystique: this frees women's energies for political activities. There may be men who are gay, or they may have no desire to have sex with other men, but feel that the continual attitude maintaining this huge IMAGE so that no one could possibly think they are gay is too much trouble. That it isn't worth the energy and stamina, that could be used for more creative purposes, simply to avoid an insult-word which shouldn't even be an insult.

One name for this general complex of attitudes is effeminism.

There is a difference between saying men as a class have been granted privileges, and saying all men are guilty. Frankly, I think that the privileges accrue to the "masculine mystique" while actual male people are more likely to be hurt by the stereotypes... And if I weren't trying to say that in clumsy words (though language is all we have for that kind of communication) that would be clearer.

I certainly don't subscribe to the "everyone is guilty" theory.

I noticed that--to go back to the analogy I used earlier--in a book about the capture of a Nazi war criminal. The policeman who found him felt that arresting this nice, normal-looking person, who had built a reasonably constructive life for himself, , in no way answered the horror of what the Nazis had done. He thought that possibly it was that the whole world was guilty, and would have to atone.

BULLSHIT. Yes, the world in general had some responsibility for standing by and letting the Holocaust happen--but some people in positions of power had a great deal more contributory responsibility than others, and contributory responsibility isn't the same, anyway, as the actual guilt of the criminal who actually committed a specific crime and could have chosen not to do so no matter how many bystanders failed to act to prevent him (her).

If in some vague mystical way "everyone is guilty" then that blurs the distinction between someone who was alive at the time but lived in another country and didn't write enough letters to Congress and an actual concentration camp guard who shot 17

people who were trying to escape and is guilty of murder. For that matter, one blurs the distinction between a person who lived in Germany at the time, thought of actively opposing the Nazis, but was afraid to do so but didn't actively support them either, and a person who wasn't even born at the time.

So that if "everyone is guilty" what that really amounts to is "no one is guilty". Because there is no specific guilt assigned to actual specific acts.

The class of men may be "guilty" of oppressing women, but there is a big difference between a man who just doesn't realize that he has "his" job partly because the firm refused to hire women and so cut his potential competition in half, and the man who knowingly makes a fortune selling cancer-causing cosmetics to women.

I once ran into a man who was moaning about how all men are so terribly guilty and he was so terribly guilty for what had been done to women--and I thought he was putting on airs, being conceited--I doubt that his guilt is as large as that of a rapist, or even a man who refuses to hire women "because his customers prefer male salesmen". It isn't/shouldn't be effiminism to absolutely wallow in guilt for having been born male, or even for things which one really didn't have much power to change--it is effiminism to take such constructive action as one can, to accept responsibility for one's specific acts, to make one's position publicly known, so that the male chauvinists can't assume "all men agree with me because they haven't said otherwise".

The Sexual Equality World

by Victoria Wayne

The world in which the sexes are truly equal will not be uptight about the matter of male-ness or female-ness, about roles and positions and pecking orders, and the only difference seen will be that dictated by basic biology. I can't say this too strongly: in the truly equal world, nobody will think about whether the person they are interacting with is male or female any more than they will consider race in an absolutely non-racist world. Except, maybe, if they are looking for a sexual liaison and happen to be in the mood specifically for a homo or hetero sexual experience.

A person with moderate feminist sympathies like myself would like to see a world where the wrongs have been righted without the creation of further wrongs. I do not find that this ideal world can be brought about by the tactics of the more extreme feminists, those of revenge upon and hatred for men and the induction of mass guilt in all men for the mere fact of being male.

In the ideal equal world, no one will feel guilty or superior by reason of sex. An individual's fitness for a specific line of work would be determined solely by his intelligence, interests, special talents, and in some cases, physical strength or endurance. Only in the latter is there likely to be a difference in the number of men to women attracted to specific lines of work, and this is unavoidable. And yet, with a decreased emphasis on silly norms of society on what constitutes physical attractiveness, some women may work on developing their strength to the point where more of them can compete directly with men for physical labor. And no one will think this is strange, any more than they will wonder at a person's education toward work in any other field, however esoteric.

Some influence might be seen on the proportions of men to women in certain roles by

basic psychological differences between the sexes that precede any cultural conditioning, if these differences turn out to exist--something that at present is pretty well unknown. Apart from this possibility, in the equal world one will see people of either sex in positions ranging from the president'chief/guru/emperor variety right down to sewer workers and lint pickers. That includes household roles: if a standard family lifestyle is assumed for most people, in this society the breadwinner if there is only one might be either the man or woman of the couple, and both would work out some sort of job sharing based more on what both like than on what today's real society considers normal. More likely, in this equal society, a much looser homelife would exist, allowing group care of children, or interfamily visiting, or rearing of kids by homosexual couples.

Also, in this equal world, you might well see households of nuclear families the same as today in the real world, with the housewife in the home raising the kids; except that in that world, there would be no uptightness about it -- the woman would be doing it because she liked to, and there would be no feminists trying to raise her consciousness: it would be merely one of many acceptable alternatives.

Hopefully the individual would have more free rein in this society, free from feeling he or she has to conform to the asinine fashions and fads that plague the real world today(and probably always). Sexual conduct would also be freer, with individuals able to opt for promiscuity, polygamy, monogamy, or complete celibacy without being hassled over it by others; just as homo, hetero, and bisexuality will all be accepted options.

There will always be rednecks, and sexists in this society will be in a class with racists; unlike in the real world where people who don't tolerate racism often behave themselves in extremely sexist ways. Sexists in the ideal world (which may not be all so totally ideal yet) would be dealt with in the same varieties of ways that racists are presently dealt with in the real world. (Although in this argument we are assuming a world in which women have attained a better and more equal position than blacks have today in the real world.)

A Short Response

by George Fergus

The basic difference in such a society, as I see it, would be that instead of a husband being expected to work outside the home for 8 hours a day, both partners would be expected to do outside work for 4 hours each. Although it is difficult to figure out how such a social setup would have developed naturally, technology now allows infants to be fed during intervals when the mother is absent, so that fathers would have no difficulty in taking care of the children during their wives' work shifts, which would always be in alternate time periods than their husbands'. The shorter workday outside the home would probably have made people a little less bored with and sick of their jobs, and would probably have resulted in families living closer to their workplaces and experiencing less segregation of activities into job-related vs home-related.

I do not have great hopes that this would necessarily reduce international hostility and warfare. There would presumably be less chance for the development of the single-minded warrior class temperament, but also greater development of insular communities that would be intolerant of others. I'm not sure whether or not mass communications media would forestall this.

Some occupations require relatively full-time participation. I expect that these would be filled by single people or those whose children are sufficiently grown to allow both partners to be working simultaneously. I doubt that any aberrant pattern such as one partner working outside the home full-time and the other being confined to housework would occur with any greater frequency than our own society has marriages where the husband stays home and the wife has the outside job. That is to say, I think that the citizens of this parallel world would try just as hard to live up to the dual roles their society expected of them as we try to live up to our roles of husband-breadwinner and wife-homemaker even though our temperaments may not ideally suit us for those roles.

It seems to me that the above are the minimal changes that would occur, and that to consider others would be to engage in wish-fulfillment utopia-building. Not to say that this would be bad -- I just don't like to do it much myself.

A similar minimal change would be for women to retain their original names when they marry, with children taking the last name of their same sex parent, perhaps.

A Long Response

by George Fergus

((A further response to the ongoing discussion of the differences between men and women.)))

Dave Szurek brings up the matter of our social progress not keeping up with our technological progress. He wonders if we shouldn't sacrifice a few years of technological development for the sake of our development as human beings. To me this seems like fuzzy utopianism. What sort of social "progress" is being envisioned here, and what is supposed to be the cause of it? Most of the social changes I can think of offhand were largely changes in economics and the division of labor that would not have occurred without the developments of technology. We might still have widespread slavery if machines hadn't been invented to take over the chores.

How much can we learn to change our basic behavior? Don't once-oppressed peoples who come into power, such as Jews or Afrikaaners, have a tendency to oppress others in turn like Arabs or blacks? Jews in the Chicago suburb of Skokie are now trying to curtail the right of some American Nazis to practice free speech.

Although it is good to maintain an attitude of skepticism toward some of the "scientific" research in human behavior, it seems to me that Arthur Hlavaty is wrong in dismissing the biological roots of the behavioral problems that are lumped under the MBD label. (Which, by the way, stands for Minimal Brain Dysfunction, not Minimal Brain Damage as Arthur says. Not that this makes much difference, but we may as well get our terms straight.)

Arthur suggests that children who are diagnosed as hyperkinetic are simply restless because of boredom with schoolwork. This is false. Hyperkinesis in the form of listless, non-goal-directed activity and short attention span is just as evident in the home as in the school. There is now sufficient research on humans and animals to indicate that hyperkinesis involves a deficiency of responsiveness to a chemical neurotransmitter in a particular part of the brain that is necessary for short-term memory and sustained attention span. A sufficient dose of an amphetamine will stimulate the release of this neurotransmitter enough that the body's natural mechanisms keep the chemicals in balance. An amphetamine overdose, however,

will unbalance the system in the opposite direction, resulting in psychological withdrawal and stereotyped behavior. This effect is similar to that of digitalis, which may benefit persons with congestive heart failure but be a harmful overdose to those whose hearts are normal.

Teachers and even some doctors who have no experience with hyperkinetic children may have some difficulty distinguishing between hyperkinesis, other biological disorders, and normal restlessness. Indeed a large percentage of those for whom medication is suggested do not respond to it, indicating that their problem, if any, lies elsewhere. One can only hope that a chemical test will be developed in the near future, so that increasing numbers of children are not falsely labelled as hyperkinetic. However, since they are given stimulants, not tranquilizers, it can hardly be asserted that children who do not conform are being doped into submission.

Fortunately, most of these hyperkinetic children who require medication to function normally are able to do without it at a later age, indicating either that their maturing biochemistry has corrected itself, or that they have learned to cope with their impulsivity by psychological means. A standard monitoring technique is to give medication during the day but not in the evening. Then when the child consistently fails to suffer an evening relapse, the medication can be discontinued.

I am not suggesting that one be credulous about all biological explanations for behavioral problems, particularly when a simpler explanation is available. For example, at one time it was asserted that preventing people from dreaming caused behavioral disturbances. This was based on a few experiments in which people were woken up whenever they reached the REM stage of sleep. The commonsense explanation, that people simply become disturbed if they are continually woken up from a deep sleep, has since proved to be the correct explanation, since suppression of REM sleep by means of drugs has been found not to produce any appreciable effects.

On the other hand, I can't go along with George Flynn's commonsense suggestion that the lack of female heroes in SF is "simply that most authors are male and write of what they know best". This hardly explains why women have also written about men, for the most part, until quite recently. The highest rated woman in the field, Ursula LeGuin, almost never writes about women. The most well-known writer to consistently feature female protagonists is probably James Schmitz!

Although I agree with Jerry Pournelle that the relative position of Mycenaean women was probably below that of Cretan women, I am still under the impression that it was much higher than that which prevailed in Greece after the Mycenaean collapse, particularly in the classical period of Athens with which we are most familiar.

Jerry mentions reaching his conclusions as a result of his extended travels to ancient sites in the area. Yet a professor of classical studies describing the queen's wing of the palace at Pylos reports gaining a different impression: "The architectural plan for women fits the picture of their rather free and open life gained from paintings found on the walls of this and other palaces." (Alan Samuel, *THE MYCENAEANS IN HISTORY*, 1966, p59).

But perhaps his impression is wrong and Jerry's is right. I do not have enough knowledge in the field of ancient history to find or evaluate the primary source material, and so have to rely on opinions of authorities whose reliability is not known to me. I tried to make allowance for my relative ignorance by confining my statements on the subject to a single paragraph and using qualifiers such as "apparently", "appears", "are believed to", and "alleged". (In contrast to what Jerry has called my "flat assertions" and "attitude of infallibility" in the rest of the article, which are due to my familiarity with the relevant research in anthropology, behavioral biology, and developmental psychology--the major fields dealt with therein. I do not notice Jerry being any less assertive in areas with which he is familiar, even when his statements are wrong.)

But let me cite a couple of the sources I consulted which seemed relatively unlikely to represent a biased or uninformed view. The first is THE PRAEGER ENCYCLOPEDIA OF ANCIENT GREEK CIVILIZATION (1967), a reference volume one would not expect to contain particularly controversial statements, which states (p487) that "During the Minoan and Mycenaean ages, women seem to have enjoyed equality or near equality with men." In the second source, SOME PROBLEMS OF GREEK HISTORY (1969, p353) Arnold Toynbee actually imagines a modern "emancipated" woman traveling back in time to observe the status of her sex at various times and places, in order to determine where she would feel most at home: "In the royal palaces at Knossos and Mycenae in the 16th or 15th century B.C., our present-day visitor will meet women whose ethos and outlook are like enough to her own to enable her to put herself en rapport with them."

Such writers apparently believe that the relatively barbaric early Greek invaders were heavily influenced by the elaborate and prosperous Minoan culture. It has been noted, in particular, that the fashion of formal dress for Mycenaean women closely imitated the Minoan style, and did not change appreciably throughout the entire Mycenaean age. (Lord William Taylor, THE MYCENAEANS, 1964, p121; Jacquetta Hawkes, DAWN OF THE GODS, 1968, p206) The social status of women is also alleged to have been high among the Pelasgians, indigenous pre-Greek peoples of the mainland, who presumably also contributed in some degree to the eventual Mycenaean culture. (George D. Thomson, STUDIES IN ANCIENT GREEK SOCIETY: THE PREHISTORIC AEGEAN, 1949, Charles Seltman, THE TWELVE OLYMPIANS, 1952, p32)

It may be that all of the artistic representations of Mycenaean women doing un-housewifely things can be explained away. The portable items such as rings and vases could have been imports from Minoan Crete. The reliefs may, as Jerry suggests, merely represent clean-shaven men or beardless youths. The frescoes, though less open to question because Mycenaean artists apparently followed the Egyptian convention of painting women in white and men in red, can be dismissed as describing women who existed only in mythology. Nevertheless, the fresco from Tiryns showing a couple of ladies going off alone in a chariot, or the apinting showing a woman intercepting the boar with her javelin (Verena Zinserling, WOMEN IN GREECE AND ROME, 1972, p12) presumably did not spring full-blown like Athena from the heads of the artists. Female athleticism, in fact, is documented in the book that Jerry cites (Donald Sobol, THE AMAZONS OF GREEK MYTHOLOGY, 1972, p126-136) as part of a discussion of the theory that the Amazon myth was simple exaggeration of the "real-life doings of hyperathletic young women". As Sobol says, the legend of warrior women living somewhere far away across the sea "is not an isolated example in Greek mythology of women outdoing men."

Jerry cites the Homeric epics as evidence of the lowly position of women in the Bronze Age, but it is questionable how much we can infer about Mycenaean women from Homer. There was a gap of 4 or 5 centuries between the original events and the composition of the poems, and then another couple of centuries passed before they were written down in final form. According to Denys Page, THE ILIAD "reflects nothing of its Mycenaean past except misty outlines and a few dim-seen details..." (HISTORY AND THE HOMERIC ILIAD, 1959, p179) Jerry mentions having corresponded with "Dennis Page", but this can't have been too extensive if Jerry doesn't even remember how to spell the man's first name.

Now, some information can be assumed to have been transmitted fairly accurately down through the centuries to Homer's time by generations of bards -- famous battle scenes, the names of gods and heroes, their places of origin, frequently used epithets describing them, and so forth. But as one professor of ancient history at Oxford says, "...so far as the structure of society is concerned, we should treat Homer as evidence of a period well after the Mycenaean collapse, not as evidence for the great days of the thirteenth century." (Antony Andrewes, THE GREEKS, 1967, p28)

It is still common practice among SF writers, when telling wondrous tales of the future, to simply transplant their own culture to the time period of the story, even though they may take elaborate pains to make their scientific extrapolations accurate. Can we expect Homer to have done any better? Actually, he appears to do worse, for he has gods and goddesses coming onto the stage and influencing the events at every turn. And he gives no hint of the immense bureaucracy shown by the Linear B tablets from Pylos, nor the burial practices that make the Mycenaeans so archaeologically distinguishable. (They built family tombs and piled them with grave goods. Homer always shows on-the-spot cremation, with the ashes merely buried under a mound.) More to the subject, the typical clothes of Homer's women bear little resemblance to Mycenaean dress. (Alan Wace & Frank Stubbings, eds, *A COMPANION TO HOMER*, 1962, p502)

However, Homeric studies have indicated that there are sometimes survivals of an earlier age in the poems, side by side with later elements. Leonard Cottrell notes that "superficially Homer's world seems predominantly male-dominated. This was probably true by the time the poems reached their present Greek society, but they contain sufficient remains of the older Mycenaean world to suggest that when Agamemnon and Menelaus ruled, women shared in the social life of men to an extent unknown in later Greece." (*REALMS OF GOLD: A JOURNEY IN SEARCH OF THE MYCENAEANS*, 1963, pl74) This is also suggested by E.A. Butterworth in *SOME TRACES OF THE PRE-OLYMPIAN WORLD IN GREEK LITERATURE AND MYTH* (1966) and by Kaarle Hirvonen in "Matriarchal Survivals and Certain Trends in Homer's Female Characters" (which I have not been able to find, but is cited in Bullough, *THE SUBORDINATE SEX*, p56). To the Victorian novelist Samuel Butler, *THE ODYSSEY* featured so many strong women characters that it had to have been written by a woman (*THE AUTHORESS OF THE ODYSSEY*, 1897, repr 1967). This idea was later picked up by Robert Graves in *HOMER'S DAUGHTER* (1955).

An example would be Queen Arete of Scheria. It is she, not the king, who Athena advises Odysseus to petition when he arrives at the palace. Indeed, King Alcinous "honored her as no other woman in the world is honored, of all that nowadays keep house under the hand of their lords." (*ODYSSEY* VII, 99) He became king in the first place by marrying her, and though they have five sons the next king will again be the man who marries their daughter Nausicaa.

Even in *THE ILIAD*, where there are few female characters, Hector's wife Andromache is no shrinking violet. A servant trails behind her, carrying their baby son, as she dashes up to the battlements of Troy to see how the battle is going; then she gives Hector some military advice, telling him not to go out and get himself killed by Achilles, but rather to gather up some men and guard the weak part of the wall where the Achaeans have already tried to break through three times. (*ILIAD*, VI, 433) And we really have no alternative but to conclude that Helen either was an extremely important personage in the Mycenaean world, or that the real reason for the war was economic and that Homer's account is therefore inaccurate in one of its major elements. (The latter case is probably the more likely, since Paris himself seems to be a rather late addition to the tale. His name does not appear in the catalog of Trojan warriors in the second book of *THE ILIAD*, which is considered to be one of the oldest and most reliable portions.)

One writer, noting that Menelaus had become king of Sparta by marrying Helen (who supposedly had two brothers who might have inherited the throne), has suggested a novel explanation for his seemingly having started a 10-year war simply to retrieve his errant wife--he may have needed her back in order to legitimize his continued kingship. (Sarah Pomeroy, *GODDESSES, WHORES, WIVES, AND SLAVES: WOMEN IN CLASSICAL ANTIQUITY*, 1975, pl8-21)

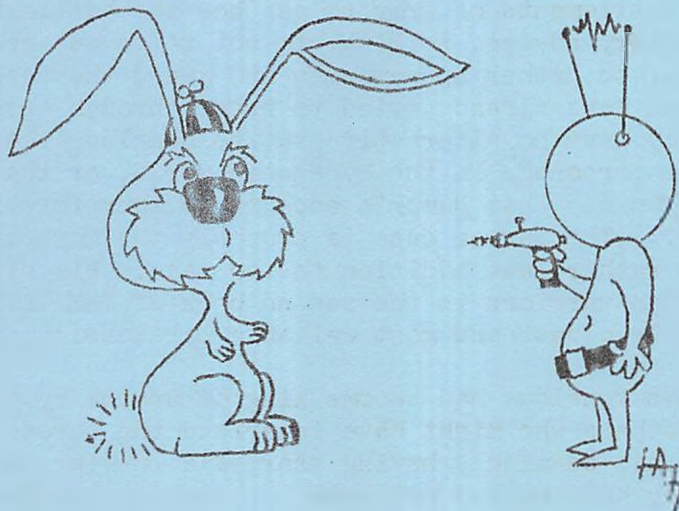
Jerry also takes exception to my statement about the Greek historians' descriptions of Amazons being based on the Sarmatians. This may be because he makes too broad

an interpretation of my statement, which was not meant to apply to the original Bronze Age myths, since the Greek historians were writing eight centuries or more after the fact. The first Greek account we have of the Sarmatians is by Herodotus (the father of history) in the 5th Century B.C., whereas the most famous Amazon escapade, their attack on Athens, is supposed to have occurred in the 13th Century B.C., at which time the ancestors of the Sarmatians had not yet crossed into Europe from the steppes of central Asia. The earliest description found by Herodotus of these peoples comes from the legendary journeys of Aristaeas in the 7th Century B.C., who apparently crossed the southerly part of the Ural mountains to encounter a tribe he calls the Issedones, in the same area where the Sarmatians are now believed to have originated. He reportedly found that "the women have equal power with the men". (Herodotus, HISTORIES, Book IV, Chapters 16 & 26; also J.D.P. Bolton, ARISTEAS OF PROCONNESUS, 1962)

However, Herodotus did not realize that there was any connection between Aristaeas' Issedones and the ancestors of the Sarmatians. Instead, he gives an account of the legend that the Sarmatians were the descendants of a lost group of Amazons who had intermarried with men of Scythia (the general Greek term for lands north of the Black Sea). What is notable about this story is not its doubtful validity, but the fact that as a result of it, everything the early Greek writers said about the Sarmatians appears to have been incorporated, either then or later, into the Amazon mythology.

Donald Sobol, whose book on the Amazons was cited by Jerry, makes the reasonable suggestion that Herodotus (or one of the sources he consulted on his trip to Scythia) invented this connection to explain the warlike ways of the Sarmatian women, who "ride a-hunting with their men or without them; they go to war, and wear the same dress as the men...no virgin weds till she has slain a man of the enemy..." (Herodotus, HISTORIES, IV, 116-117)

DON'T ZAP ME ~
I'M ONLY THE FANED!



I would go even further to suggest that the entire story of the origin of the Amazons was modified to fit what was known about the history of the Sarmatians. Soviet archaeologists say that the Sarmatian peoples originated on the Kazakh Plateau and gradually moved westward, eventually absorbing the former Scythians by the end of the 2nd Century BC. Herodotus describes their location in his time as follows: "Across the Tanais it is no longer Scythia; the first of the divisions belongs to the Sauromatae, whose country begins at the inner end of Lake Meotis and stretches 15 days' journey to the north..." (HISTORIES, IV, 21)

Compare this to the Amazon origin story: They "sprang up in the area northeast of the Caucasian mountain barrier...They organized an all-woman state in the region of Lake Meotis...by the river Amazon...The river was later named the Tanais..." The story then has them move over the Caucasus mountains to found a city on the southeast shore of the Black Sea which became the Amazon capital referred to in the myths. (Sobol, p32-34)

The second Greek account of the Sarmatians is by Herodotus' younger contemporary, the famous physician Hippocrates, who also traveled to Scythia. He says that the Sarmatian women could marry only after killing three enemies. Being more interested in anatomy, he adds that Sarmatian women seared the right breast in infancy so as to transfer its growth potential to the right arm, whose strength was needed for the bow and the javelin. (Hippocrates, AIRS, WATERS, PLACES, Ch. 17) He gives no other details of Sarmatian life, so his information may be unreliable hearsay, and nowhere does he make any comparison with Amazons. Yet later historians, presumably because of Herodotus' suggestion that the Sarmatians were descended from them, came to attribute this practice to the Amazons, even though no such thing is mentioned in the original mythology or represented in works of art. (Sobol, p111)

Another reason to believe that the descriptions of Amazons that have reached us were largely based on the Sarmatians is that almost all of them say the Amazons fought from horseback. Although the Sarmatians certainly did so, there is some doubt that Bronze Age Amazons would have. The horsemanship required in fighting from the saddle did not develop until about the 9th Century BC, and was not brought to Asia Minor until the Scythians arrived and displaced the Cimmerians in the 7th Century. (Frank Trippett, THE FIRST HORSEMEN, 1974, P66,74)

The main reason for Sobol's discounting this identification of the Amazons with the Sarmatians is that it does nothing to explain the genesis of the original Bronze Age Amazons. There is, of course, the possibility that some earlier relatives of the Sarmatians could have given rise to the original stories, if these had any historical basis at all. Nomads from the steppes invaded Asia Minor and Europe several times in early history. Although we are more familiar with the Goths and Huns who came later, the Cimmerians conquered the Phrygians and occupied part of Asia Minor for a time in the 7th Century BC, and it is possible that such incursions occurred in earlier times as well.

The earliest reference to Amazons in Homer is old Priam's remark that the army gathered outside the gates of Troy was bigger than any he had ever seen, even when he was a volunteer with the Phrygians "on the day when the Amazons came, those women as good as men." (ILIAD, III, 184) It is even possible that this passage actually refers to the Cimmerian women, and was added to the poem by a 7th Century bard who wanted to give his listeners something familiar with which to compare the size of the Achaean host. (What one might call the Authorized Edition of Homer was not established and written down until late in the 6th Century BC)

None of the alternative explanations that have been put forward are particularly believable. The notion that the Greeks continually mistook clean-shaven Hittite men for women appears untenable, since they were surely familiar with clean-shaven Cretan men. It also seems rather unlikely that the Greeks were so unfamiliar with

Hittite warriors as to mistake their sex. Hittite records reveal that even though many Hittite queens conducted their own independent negotiations with foreign powers, there were diplomatic contacts between the Hittite and Greek kings beginning in the mid-14th Century as a result of the Greek settlements on the southwestern coast of Asia Minor and the island of Rhodes. Further, these records reveal no military expedition that could possibly represent an invasion of Athens. If anything, the Amazons are more likely to be among those who brought about the downfall of the Hittite empire.

Perhaps the most likely explanation is that every foreign woman warrior or armed priestess ever encountered by the Greeks or found among the dead bodies after a battle, was later labelled as one of the Amazon "race", just as most of the consorts of local goddesses were eventually said to be merely Zeus in disguise. One bit of evidence consistent with this explanation is the story that in order to make their famous attack on Athens the Amazons marched east and then up all the way around the Black Sea in order to link up with their allies in Scythia, from whom they obtained horses for transportation. Their combined forces were then supposed to have advanced on Athens from the north. As Sobol points out (p137), this doesn't seem to make much sense. It could, however, mean that Athens was once attacked by warriors from Scythia, some of whom were women, and later Greeks simply assumed that these female warriors were the same as those reported from Asia Minor.

Be that as it may, of all the theories about a possible historical basis for the Amazon legend, the Sarmatian theory is the only one cited by the editors of the Encyclopedia Britannica (in 1974 and in later editions) and the editors of Time-Life Books (who mention it in their 1975 human behavior series volume MEN AND WOMEN). The Sarmatians are the only people for whom women warriors can definitely be identified both historically and archaeologically.

Sobol does not appear to be quite up to date on Soviet Scytho-Sarmatian archaeology, except for the brief popular account that Jerry mentions. This is not surprising, since Sobol is merely a journalist, and despite what Jerry says his book can hardly be called part of the "professional literature". (For example, on p137 Sobol comments on the striking resemblance between the name of the African Amazons' capital city Cherronesus and the name of a location on the Asian Amazons' path to Athens, Cherronesus. He has apparently forgotten that these are both merely variations of the Greek word for peninsula. He also persists in talking about the "Libyan Amazons" as if they were located in the area of modern Libya, whereas Libya was the Greek appellation for all of Africa west and south of Egypt. These facts would presumably be known to any real classical scholar.) But Sobol cannot really be blamed, since most of what is known about the Sarmatians' social structure was not discovered until the excavation of the late 60's, and was not generally known in the US until the publication of Tadeusz Sulimirski's THE SARMATIANS (Praeger, 1970), which does not make any claims about their relationship to the Greeks' Amazons.

Jerry's assertion that "the Soviets do not seem to have much evidence for the view beyond a strong desire that it be true" is simply not so, either with respect to their desire or their evidence. Jerry could have avoided making such a misstatement if he had read Sobol's book a bit more carefully. It concludes with the suggestion that the Amazon riddle will probably be solved only when someone "uncovers the charred remains of a Bronze-Age female interred with a crescent shield and a wave-patterned quiver by her side..." (p147) Then, in a note apparently added shortly before publication (#7, p152) he belatedly reports that "Confirmation of the existence of Scythian Amazons may have been found by Soviet archaeologists. Graves recently discovered near the town of Ordzhonikidze in the southern Ukraine revealed female skeletons lying besides lances, bows, and arrows. See TIME (January 17, 1972) p. 36"

This news item was the result of a West German archaeologist's participating in a dig with the Soviets in 1971 and returning to confirm their previous reports about the

Sarmatians. (It is worth reiterating, however, that none of these graves are Bronze-Age.) Sulimirski gives a more quantitative report on those graves from the 5th and 6th Centuries BC that had been uncovered by the late 60's: "Though chiefly an attribute of male burials, weapons are also found in up to 20% of the female graves investigated." (p48) In one female grave, a suit of scale armor was found as well (p105).

People speaking a language related to ancient Sarmatian, the Ossetes, still inhabit the central part of the Caucasus mountains. Notably, the central character in their heroic epics is a woman. (V.I. Abaev, UNESCO COURIER, Dec 1976, p48-49)

I don't know exactly what elements Jerry considers controversial about day care. He mentions something about an early intervention program for the disadvantaged--presumably the University of Wisconsin's "Milwaukee Project" -- but that is irrelevant to the question of whether day care has any worrisome consequences.

Until fairly recently, many child development experts were afraid of its possible adverse effects on emotional and intellectual development. To some extent their worries reflected the national guilt felt by those parents who were forced to seek day care services. But largely their attitude was the result of research in the 50's and 60's by John Bowlby, Mary Ainsworth, and others on the emotional health of children who had undergone either temporary or permanent separation from their parents. A horrible example was provided by the pitiful results of many programs of institutional care for orphans. There were also some disturbing, though controversial, reports about the effects of communal child rearing as practiced by the Israeli kibbutz and the Soviet Union, which may stifle individualism and produce excessive peer dependency.

However, public interest in day care continued to increase. Although everyone agreed that bad day care was harmful--there were plenty of examples--this said no more about the general advisability of day care than the existence of bad parenting said about the general desirability of parents. Quality day care might be an enriching experience for children of "disadvantaged" families, but what psychological harm might it not do to normal kids? Accordingly, research was begun in the late 60's to determine if conscientiously implemented day care really did have any intrinsically bad effects. These studies typically involve the comparison of the cognitive and affective development of children who have spent several years in a high quality day care center with that of matched controls--children from similar families in the same community who cared for their children exclusively at home.

The results began to be reported in the early 70's and were soon incorporated into books on day care and then into books on general child development:

DAY CARE FOR INFANTS by E. Belle Evans & George E. Saia (1972) p8:

"...recent studies comparing the development of infants in child-care settings with those reared exclusively in conventional family environments have shown no significant developmental differences between the two groups."

UNDERSTANDING YOUR CHILD FROM BIRTH TO THREE by Joseph Church (1973) p217:

"The best experimental day care centers...have shown to everybody's satisfaction that babies can thrive in day care, in some cases doing better emotionally and intellectually than babies reared at home."

This view has now come to be expressed in most summaries of child development research. The most recent books I have seen are:

A PRIMER OF INFANT DEVELOPMENT by T.G.R. Bower (1977) p154:

"Day care was roundly condemned in the 1950's. More recent work indicates

that it has no adverse effects on either cognitive or social development, and may, in fact, have clearly good effects."

HARVARD DEVELOPING CHILD SERIES: DISTRESS AND COMFORT by Judy Dunn (1977) p111:
"Group day-care situations, when well organized, have been shown to have no immediate adverse effects on the development of children...At present there is no good reason to believe that the children of working mothers suffer in later life."

And it is now becoming a part even of mass-market child care manuals. Dr. Spock, previously an outspoken opponent of day care, has eliminated his former criticism from the 1976 revision of BABY AND CHILD CARE, replacing it with the statement (p425) "I am in favor of government support for all preschool or day care centers--of good quality--for all children whose parents wish them..." He follows this with guidelines on how to choose a good day care center or family day care home.

Does Jerry want me to cite specifically the dozen or so reports that form the basis for these conclusions? Most have been published in journals or presented at conferences that render them relatively inaccessible to the general public, and from Jerry's slur on social "scientists" I do not know if he would pay attention to them anyway. (Although I must say that with respect to many disciplines I tend to agree with Jerry--they are overpopulated with armchair philosophers who don't really know what they are talking about.) The easiest reports to check are by Jerome Kagan, a well-known authority who continued to be opposed to day care until he completed his own study, and so made quite a splash when he finally gave in. (See SCIENCE NEWS, Feb 28, 1976, p133; PARENTS' MAGAZINE, April 1977, p40)

The remaining question to be answered about day care is methodological: How can the present nightmare of day care organization and funding be straightened out? What different types of day care should be available? Should day care be segregated from existing school systems? How can high parental involvement and supervision be insured? How should day care be integrated into neighborhoods and workplaces? How much of the home environment needs to be simulated in a large day care center? Is there a vulnerable age interval, such as between the years 1 and 2, when infants should not be changed from home to day care? Should children play in mixed-age rather than same-age groups? Should children be actively taught, or simply maintained in a stimulating environment? How can more men be brought into caregiving roles? Etc.

Perhaps the most significant issue for the future of day care in the US is whether costs can be kept to manageable levels without sacrificing quality. The best large-scale day care in the world today is that provided by the Scandinavian countries, and although costly, it is not unmanageably so. (See, for example, THE DANISH NATIONAL CHILD CARE SYSTEM: MODEL FOR THE RECONSTRUCTION OF AMERICAN CHILD CARE by Marsden & Mary Wagner, 1976). In a sense, we are returning to the concept of the extended family, but basing it on social ties rather than on kinship. Day care may be successful in relation to how closely it approximates the environment of an extended family.

I do not know to what extent Jerry and I can reach a meeting of minds even on these peripheral issues, but I hope that in the future he will simply present his sources of information and ask for mine, rather than arrogantly accusing me of making statements that are "simply not so".

I would like to hear more about Jerry's experiences with chimpanzees at Oklahoma University, and of course particularly about the extreme behavioral dimorphism between the sexes that he observed. I was under the impression that there is relatively little, with the possible exception of the male "display" that is activated when they become excited. (And such an excitable temper reportedly occurs only in one species, the common chimp, rather than in the pygmy chimp that is physically and biochemically

more closely related to us.)

Jerry mentions having wondered what the chimps he observed thought about sex roles in humans. Presumably he forgot to ask during his "conversation with the world's most intelligent chimpanzee". Since I have to guess which chimp this is supposed to be, I will pick the Temerlins' Lucy. If it was indeed she that Jerry would have asked, he probably would not have been pleased with the answer, since according to Maurice Temerlin in *LUCY: GROWING UP HUMAN* (1975), the hundred-word vocabulary she had at the time did not include any words at all having to do with gender, so that it could not have been a particularly important attribute to her. Since Jerry describes the chimps' teacher as "very obviously female", I can only assume that he did not notice that the hallmarks of femaleness in humans are not the same as those in chimpanzees, and thus might be somewhat difficult for them to recognize. Temerlin gives no indication anywhere in the book that chimpanzees make any general distinction between men and women, and specifically notes that when in heat once a month, Lucy attempted to masturbate by rubbing her genitals against the bodies of both men and women without regard to sex. (Although she is fascinated by men's penises in *PLAYGIRL*.)

In comparison to Jerry's description, it is interesting that Temerlin says the exact opposite: "I had freed myself of sex-role stereotyping with the help of Lucy", whose "sexual behavior is flexible because she was not shaped by the chimpanzee equivalent of sex-role stereotyping in childhood." (p2 & 204)

Jeff Frane brings up the comparison of humans to baboons because the latter "thrive in a habitat similar to that which our ancestors lived in". Although this view was fairly popular about ten years ago, I do not think it can be supported in the light of present knowledge. In the first place, related species living in the same environment have usually adapted to different ecological niches, and so may have significantly different behavior patterns. Much of the dominance of male hamadrayas baboons is absent in the savanna baboon, and the behavior of both males and females is different in the gelada or the patas monkey, both of which are even more terrestrial than the savanna baboon (which still returns to the trees to sleep). (2) Species closely related to baboons but which never venture out of the forest (mandrills, black mangabeys, pigtailed and crab-eating macaques) exhibit behavior similar to that of the savanna baboons. It has become clear that the considerable differences between baboon and chimpanzee social structure are due as much or more to phylogeny as to ecology. (3) Chimpanzees, which were formerly thought to be exclusively forest-living, are now known to spend considerable time themselves in savanna areas during the dry season. It has been proposed that chimpanzees are today largely confined to forested areas only because they would be in too much competition with humans if they spent more time in the open. Any assertion that chimpanzees are at a disadvantage compared to baboons in the dangerous savanna must falter in face of the fact that it is chimpanzees who have been observed to hunt and kill baboons, not the other way around. (4) The major evolutionary adaptation of the hominid line, involving the joint exploitation of both savanna and forest floor, appears from the dental evidence to be most similar not to that of the hamadrayas or savanna baboons, but rather to that of the gelada, where males are not particularly dominant and it is the females who lead group movements. The specifically human food-getting adaptation, which typically involved females continuing to gather vegetable foodstuffs while males went off hunting for meat, presumably would have eliminated any latent tendency for human females to depend on males for protection from predators. (5) As hominids continued to increase their range of activity into more open country, they developed larger size, presumably for increased protection against predators. However, although in other terrestrial species the females remained small in order to be inconspicuous, among humans both sexes increased in size. We exhibit less sexual dimorphism of physical size than any other primate that lives primarily in open country. Also, even in many of these genera where females have a significant size disadvantage (gelada, patas, vervet, langur), they readily band together against

individual males in dominance encounters.

With regard to the relative helplessness of human infants, I do not know of any clear justification for Jeff's contention that this is "directly related to the anatomical necessities of upright posture". It's true that if humans were born at the same stage of development as other apes, they would be likely to spend perhaps as much as 9 additional months in the womb. However, our early emergence is due more to our heads being unusually big than our pelvic openings being unusually small. And even if we were born 9 months later, we would still be fairly helpless. I believe that the main reason babies cannot care for themselves for several years after birth is because it is advantageous for members of our species to learn as much as possible of their behavior.

It cannot be assumed that infant helplessness caused or intensified the development of biologically-based sex differences in humans. Among chimpanzees, "the chief social distinction is between childless and child-rearing adults rather than between males and females." (Adrian Kortlandt, "Chimpanzees in the Wild", SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN, May 1962, p132) A similar division of roles between females with infants and those not so encumbered has been found in another ground-living species, the vervet. Vervet mothers have even been observed to drop their infants off with a "babysitter" in order to join other members of the group in threatening an approaching predator. (Jane Lancaster, PRIMATE BEHAVIOR AND THE EMERGENCE OF HUMAN CULTURE, 1975, p39-40) In humans, however, cultural training dominates biological function to the extent that women without children traditionally do much the same things as women who do have infants to breast-feed,

It may also be noted that humans are unique among terrestrial primates in having developed monogamy. (Or in not having developed polygamy, if one assumes that early hominids were similar to today's small-bodied arboreal apes, the gibbon and siamang.) This is most probably a result of the increased parental care required for human infants, just as role sharing by males and females is more common among birds with altricial rather than precocial young. This probably also encouraged the development of the sexes' complementary roles in food getting, which are also unique to humans. Thus the human male probably has more responsibility to his offspring than any other terrestrial primate.

Although I concur with Jeff on Jerry's use of the expression "primitive tribes", I cannot agree that the term "primitive" is scientifically meaningless. It is perfectly valid, for example, when used to classify societies as far as their good-getting technology.

Gary Grady objects to "blanket assertions about things that happened between men and women in prehistoric times". This seems to me equivalent to a blanket condemnation of evolutionary anthropology, and I can only suggest that he read up on the subject. It has been established that previous to the domestication of plants about 10,000 years ago, all humans were hunter-gatherers, although the relative contributions of meat and vegetables to the diet varied with the climate. Observation of the many cultures around the globe that continued to practice this way of life until modern times has allowed us to make generalizations about the roles of men and women. With respect to "the behavior we think of as characteristically masculine or feminine", I was referring to the traditional differentiation of roles into breadwinner and homemaker. Does Gary feel that some other dichotomization of the behavior of the sexes is more characteristic?

I am very skeptical about any research suggesting that hetero or homosexuality is established by hormones before birth. Jessica Salmonson mentions this as a tentative conclusion made at last year's International Congress of Sexology. I have not seen the proceedings of this yet, which run to 1400 pages and cost \$80, but none of the research that I am familiar with gives much support to such a conclusion. Earlier reports that homosexuals could be hormonally distinguished from heterosex-

uals by plasma testosterone level or urinary androsterone/etiocholanolone ratio have since been proven untrue, and the latest round of discussion seems to be based solely on unverified reports from East Germany.

I do not know exactly what Gary Grady means by saying that I took "swipes at homosexuals". All I can figure is that Gary is referring to my calling homosexuality an "aberration", which can only be considered a put-down if one views social deviancy as intrinsically bad. I hardly expected to see such a viewpoint in an SF fan, since we are all pretty "deviant" by the usual standards.

Don Ayres notes that masturbation was also considered as deviant behavior for a very long time. But I think he falls flat in trying to use this to criticize social scientists for insufficient observation of behavior. In the first place, Kinsey's reports were based not on observation but rather on people's self-reports, a relatively unreliable procedure. Furthermore, Kinsey was not the first to discover that masturbation is normal. He simply came along at the right time and had enough determination to popularize something that was previously known only to a limited number of professionals. By the time of Kinsey's reports, childhood masturbation had already been observationally established as a cross-culturally universal phenomenon. (See references in Clellan Ford and Frank Beach, PATTERNS OF SEXUAL BEHAVIOR, 1951) What Kinsey did was to make it acceptable to study sexual behavior in the United States and to discuss one's work. He did not give up even though repeated attempts were made to curtail his research funds and his family was subjected to social ostracism.

I am completely unable to follow Don Ayres' argument that the behavioral sciences do too much experimentation and not enough observation. I'm not even sure how he manages to draw a line between the two. Does not experimentation involve the manipulation of events so as to facilitate observation? I don't know what he thinks that anthropologists, sociologists, developmental psychologists, etc., do, but it damned well involves a lot of observation. And if observation alone made a science, then astrology would be the granddaddy of them all.

The rest of Don's letter seemed to consist of misinterpreting what I said ("unwittingly", as Don terms it) so as to produce obviously ridiculous statements with which he then takes issue. I didn't know he was that desperate for comment hooks.

One of the things that Don Ayres picks on me for is my bothering to discuss the notion that individuals with an overdose of chromosomal maleness (XYY) are more aggressive than normal men. He is ready to dispute the existence of any connection between "masculine" and "violent" behavior, but if he is really interested in measurement criteria, sample sizes, and extent of replication, then I don't know why he failed to look up the survey by Maccoby and Jacklin that I cited.

However, since Gary Grady argues later in the same letter column that there is widespread acceptance by psychologists of "a sex-linked tendency for aggression", I will let Gary and Don argue with each other. I can use a rest. Gary says I implied that no serious scientist accepts the proposition of a sex-linked tendency for aggression. This is untrue, as reference to page 30 of my original article will show. What I did say is that none of the known biological mechanisms of sex differentiation appear to be able to account for the observed psychological differences.

To forestall some confusion, let me note here that what is usually conceptualized as aggression is actually a composite of three independent traits: hostility, assertiveness, and lack of self-control. Failure to distinguish between them often leads to erroneous assertions that women's social inferiority is biologically based, whereas the suggestion of a biological factor receives support only for the first of these traits, and the only one that has been linked with XYY men is the third.

Carolyn Doyle's assertion that there "has never been a report of a male with multiple personalities" is incorrect. About 15% of the few cases reported have been males.

The first in-depth study, however, appeared only recently--Henry Hawksworth's THE FIVE OF ME (1977).

The principal reason for my writing an article about sex differences was to provide an overview of the existing research so as to raise fandom's arguments on this subject to the level of factually-based speculations rather than unsupported personal opinion. I apparently did not succeed very well, as only Mark Keller's response was really on the level I was looking for.

I looked up the article Mark cited (Kenneth Lamott, "Why Men and Women Think Differently", HORIZON, May 1977), which purports to present "new research". However, I am familiar with all of the research described, even though the author gives no specific references, and in general it is neither new nor an accurate reflection of recent studies. Because of Mark's apparent interest in the subject, I will go into this in some detail.

First Lamott cites a finding that African boys who were physically feminized by kwashiorkor (a protein deficiency disease that limits the liver's ability to get rid of the estrogens normally produced in the male body) develop greater verbal ability and poorer spatial and numerical abilities than other males. What Lamott does not point out (perhaps having taken his information from a secondary source rather than looking up the original article) is that the variation in these abilities in the general male population was found to relate strongly to the degree of autonomy they were allowed as children, and that the extreme and often fatal malnutrition and deformities of the kwashiorkor victims causes excessive dependency and inhibits autonomy. (John L.M. Dawson, "Cultural and physiological influences upon spatial-perceptual processes in West Africa", INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF PSYCHOLOGY, 1967, Vol 2 p115-128, 171-185)

Even when Lamott makes a fairly direct reference to a source, such as Maccoby and Jacklin's recent PSYCHOLOGY OF SEX DIFFERENCES (1974), he appears not to have read it at all closely. When he gets down to specifics, he goes back to an earlier summary of research by Maccoby that is more than a decade out of date, which he says tends to support Corinne Hutt's contention that girls are poorer than boys at analytic reasoning, both spatial and verbal. He makes no mention of the fact that in their more recent summary Maccoby and Jacklin specifically take exception to Hutt's views (p113) and conclude that the sexes do not differ in general analytic ability or style, with girls actually being slightly superior in some studies of analytic reasoning involving verbal material (p350-351).

Lamott appears to be interested simply in citing as many sex differences as he can find, rather than putting them in a conceptual framework that would increase our understanding. For example, he notes that (1) girls' nervous systems mature faster, (2) newborn girls display a slightly greater percentage of coordinated movements compared to whole-body "startles", and (3) girls develop left-brain-hemisphere dominance for speech functions earlier than boys do. He fails to note that the latter two differences are almost certainly mere effects of the first, and that none of them can be taken as indicative of any permanent biological differences between the sexes in central nervous system organization. (This latter truth becomes obvious if we recall that around the age of 12 the average girl is bigger than the average boy, but adult women are not larger than adult men.)

I might note that, in commenting on nervous system development, Mark Keller makes a slight misinterpretation of the article by Sandra Witelson. The right hemisphere in girls does not specialize for spatial tasks at age 13. This is merely the maximum age of the subjects in her sample, and is generally considered to be an age at which neural maturation is either complete or nearly so. After this age, a brain hemisphere can no longer be retrained to perform new functions if the other should be damaged. However, even if such damage should occur at an early age, the originally

less specialized hemisphere is usually not able to do quite as good a job. Mark is incorrect in stating that the hemispheres are "equipotential" at birth. Differences have been shown not only in terms of gross anatomy (Witelson & Pallie, "Left hemisphere specialization for language in the newborn: neuroanatomical evidence of asymmetry", *BRAIN*, 1973, Vol 96 p641-646; Juhn A. Wada, et al, "Cerebral hemispheric asymmetry in humans: cortical speech zones in 100 adult and 100 infant brains", *ARCHIVES OF NEUROLOGY*, 1975, Vol 32, P239-246) but also in terms of electrical activity. (Dennis L. Molfese, *CEREBRAL ASYMMETRY IN INFANTS, CHILDREN, AND ADULTS: AUDITORY EVOKED RESPONSES TO SPEECH AND NOISE STIMULI*, 1973, doctoral dissertation; Alan E. Davis, *SPECTRAL ANALYSIS OF HUMAN EVOKED POTENTIALS*, 1975, doctoral dissertation; and ongoing work by Wada and Davis reported as "Brain asymmetry present at birth" in *SCIENCE NEWS*, Oct 30, 1976, P277-278)

Lamott also makes a misstatement of fact--he asserts that in left-handed people the functions of the cerebral hemispheres are reversed. Actually, most left-handers simply show a reduction in the degree of brain lateralization, with more than 60% of them still having left-hemisphere dominance for language. Indeed, it has recently been shown that this correlates with the adoption of the "hooked" writing position by most left-handers (Levy & Reid, "Variations in Writing Posture and Cerebral Organization", *SCIENCE*, 1976, Vol 194 P337-339), though which is the cause and which the effect is not yet clear.

Lamott does present a good summary of Bock and Kolakowski's work ("Further evidence of sex-linked major-gene influence on human spatial visualizing ability", *AMERICAN JOURNAL OF HUMAN GENETICS*, 1973, Vol 25 pl-14), which gives some strong evidence that the right hemisphere's specialization for spatial perception is genetically more likely to occur in men than in women. However he fails to note the more recent studies which have failed to support the X-linked hypothesis. (DeFries, J.C. et al, "Parent-offspring resemblance for specific cognitive abilities in two ethnic groups", *NATURE*, 1976, Vol 261 P131-133; Williams, T., "Family Resemblance in Abilities: The Wechsler Scales", *BEHAVIOR GENETICS*, 1975, Vol 5 P405-409; Bouchard, Thomas, "Sex differences in human spatial ability: not an X-linked recessive gene effect", unpublished manuscript 1976; Sherman & Fennema, "Distribution of spatial visualization and mathematical problem solving scores: a test of the sex-linked hypothesis", unpublished manuscript 1976) Julia Sherman, who reviews these and others in her forthcoming book on cognitive differences between the sexes, concludes that "the empirical support for the X-linked hypothesis has crumbled."

Recently, spatial ability was found to correlate with the within-sex variation in maturation rate (Deborah Waber, "Sex differences in cognition: a function of maturation rate?", *SCIENCE*, 1976, Vol 192 P572-574; *DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY*, Jan 1977, Vol 13 p29-38) which earlier research has also indicated is controlled by the X-chromosome. (Garn & Rohmann, "X-linked inheritance of developmental timing in man", *NATURE*, 1962, Vol 196 P695-696) The normal sex difference in maturation rate discussed earlier appears to be determined by an analogous portion of the Y chromosome. (J.M. Tanner et al, "Genes on the Y-chromosome influencing rate of maturation in man", *THE LANCET*, Aug 22, 1959, P141-144; E.A. Espiner et al, "Familial Syndrome of streak gonads and normal male karyotype in 5 phenotypic females", *NEW ENGLAND JOURNAL OF MEDICINE*, 1970, Vol 283 P6-11)

Maturation rate could affect spatial ability either by a direct physical effect on the organization of the brain, or by means of Sherman's "bent twig" hypothesis, which suggests that early maturers are more likely to develop verbal strategies for problem solving (concentrated in the left hemisphere), with subsequent failure to develop facility in right-hemisphere spatial functions. (Julia Sherman, *ON THE PSYCHOLOGY OF WOMEN*, 1971)

The suggestion that there is a direct physical effect on brain organization is somewhat supported by evidence from women with one of their X-chromosomes absent or

defective, who typically exhibit both retarded maturation and an extreme form of spatial visualization disability (John Money, "Cytogenetic and psychosexual incongruities with a note on space-form blindness", AMERICAN JOURNAL OF PSYCHIATRY, 1963, Vol 199 P820-827; Money & Alexander, "Turner's Syndrome: Further Demonstration of the Presence of Specific Cognitive Deficiencies", JOURNAL OF MEDICAL GENETICS, 1966, Vol 3 p47-48) which is comparable to that occurring with actual brain damage to the parietal lobes (Alexander & Money, "Turner's Syndrome and Gerstmann's Syndrome: Neuropsychologic Comparisons", NEUROPSYCHOLOGIA, 1966, Vol 4 p265-272).

With respect to the related factor of mathematical ability, the report from Sweden that Mark asks about is A. Svensson's RELATIVE ACHIEVEMENT: SCHOOL PERFORMANCE IN RELATION TO INTELLIGENCE, SEX, AND HOME ENVIRONMENT (Stockholm, 1971, cited in Maccoby and Jacklin p85) which found average sex differences in mathematical reasoning of less than one fifth of the standard deviation for a sample of about 15000 13-year-olds. One writer makes the flat statement that there are no sex differences in mathematical ability among the Swedes, but gives no reference. (Jack Fincher, HUMAN INTELLIGENCE, 1976, p274) He may be basing his conclusion on this one study, which I do not think is justified without additional corroborative data. One US study of 28000 14-17 year-olds found a similarly low sex difference (R.C. Droege, "Sex Differences in aptitude maturation during high school", JOURNAL OF COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY, 1967, Vol 14 p407-411), even though the general US pattern is of considerable male superiority.

Although I did not originally make any statement about the distribution of math "genius" in the Swedish study, I can estimate the relative achievement of the top scorers by calculating the mean plus twice the standard deviation for each sex. Using this measure, the top scoring boys and girls still differ by less than 0.3 of the standard deviation. This is much less than the difference reported in the Baltimore study to which Mark refers. (Which I assume is the 1972 contest reported in Stanley, Keating, & Fox, MATHEMATICAL TALENT: DISCOVERY, DESCRIPTION, AND DEVELOPMENT, 1974) Julia Sherman, whose work I have referred to, has for several years been studying the causes of the sexes' differential achievements in mathematics. She reports that when sex role expectations and early life experiences are factored out of the psychological profile, the differences between the sexes disappear. Although her new book is not finished yet, her excellent evaluation of biological factors is available in WOMEN AND MATHEMATICS: RESEARCH PERSPECTIVES FOR CHANGE, edited by Judy Shoemaker (US Govt Printing Office, 1977)

To return to Lamott, perhaps his most unforgiveable error in reporting "new research" is his contention that prenatal exposure to male hormones causes high IQ. Members of the research group at Johns Hopkins whose work he cites have long since repudiated their earlier tentative conclusions in this regard, as a result of a more careful study. (See papers by Baker & Ehrhardt reprinted in SEX DIFFERENCES IN BEHAVIOR, ed. Richard Friedman et al, 1974) Another group of researchers has independently confirmed the absence of any elevated IQ in such individuals. (McGuire & Omenn, "Congenital Adrenal Hyperplasia, I Family Studies of IQ", BEHAVIOR GENETICS, 1975, Vol 5, p165-173)

Another "new" item of research reported by Lamott is the fact that the behavior of rats differs between the sexes because of the action of testosterone on the brains of newborn males during a critical period. This has been known for over a decade, and far from having "enormous potential for increasing our understanding of why the sexes think the way they do", it is relatively useless because it is now known that the process of sexual differentiation of the brain in primates proceeds by a different hormonal pathway than is involved in most rodents. Testosterone itself is not particularly active--it must first be converted either to dihydrotestosterone or to estradiol. In rodents, it is the latter (which is, paradoxically a "female" hormone in adults) that causes masculinization of the brain of the

newborn animal. (Bruce McEwen, "Interactions between hormones and nerve tissue", SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN, July 1976, p48-58)

In humans, however, this prenatal conversion to estradiol has no apparent effect. There is a syndrome called "androgen insensitivity" or "testicular feminization" in which there is an inherited defect in either the cellular receptor for dihydrotestosterone or the enzyme (5-alpha reductase) which converts testosterone to dihydrotestosterone. This produces individuals who are genetic males with testes, but which have completely female appearing genitals. They grow up with a completely feminine personality (John Money et al, "Fetal Feminization induced by androgen insensitivity in the testicular feminizing syndrome: effect on marriage and maternalism", JOHNS HOPKINS MEDICAL JOURNAL, 1968, Vol 123 p105-114; Daniel Masica et al, "Fetal Feminization and Female Gender Identity in the testicular feminizing syndrome of androgen insensitivity", ARCHIVES OF SEXUAL BEHAVIOR, 1971, Vol 100 p197-200)

Lamott's last citation is of research from 1956, which even he admits is somewhat outdated. The fact that, at this time, women professors with Phd's, even unmarried ones, published substantially less than their male colleagues, is given as evidence that women are innately unassertive in pursuing their goals. However, this appears to be because women had not held their professional positions as long as most men, and were more likely to be employed at smaller colleges where both men and women publish less than at universities. When academic affiliation and length of career are taken into account, there is no difference in productivity between men and women. (R.J. Simon et al, "The Woman Ph. D.: A recent profile", SOCIAL PROBLEMS, 1967, Vol 15 p221-236; Jesse Bernard, ACADEMIC WOMEN, 1964; Guyer & Fidell, "Publications of men and women psychologists", AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGIST, 1973, Vol 28 p157-160)

To conclude, I am going to pick on the editor of MYTHOLOGIES himself: Don says in #12 that "More than half of the women in the country oppose the ERA" (p60 & 68) and "Support for the ERA is considerably higher among men than among women, you know." (p59) When I challenged Don on this, he said he got the information from a poll reported on TV, the details of which he does not remember. In contrast, may I cite the last two Gallup polls on the Equal Rights Amendment:

	<u>March 1975</u>	<u>March 1976</u>	<u>MEN (Mar 76)</u>	<u>WOMEN (Mar 76)</u>
Favor	58%	57%	59%	55%
Oppose	24	24	23	26
No Opinion	18	19	18	19

The results of the Harris poll are somewhat more variable. In 1976 the question was asked in the same straightforward manner as in the Gallup surveys, but in 1975 and 1977 was preceded by the statement along the lines of "Opponents of the ERA have said that it would..." The results (which Harris did not break down by sex in the reports I have seen) are as follows:

	<u>Dec 75</u>	<u>Oct 76</u>	<u>Apr 77</u>
Favor	51	65	56
Oppose	36	27	35
No Opinion	13	8	9

You will note that there appears to be a "swing" vote of about 10% which remains in the "No Opinion" category in the Gallup polls but shifts back and forth from pro to con in the Harris surveys depending on how the question is asked. In any case, none of the data appears to support either of Don's statements.

A poll in Florida, commissioned by the Democratic National Committee around the time that the ERA was defeated in the state legislature, found that the populace supported it:

62% in favor, 16% opposed, 22% undecided. This would seem to indicate that whatever else representative government is doing it is not faithfully representing us.

Thus I'm having trouble going along with the suggestion that a representative democracy is better than a pure democracy because it provides a buffer against "the vacillating will of the populace". I think that the influence of special interests in the legislature may be worse than the uncertain will of the people. That vote on the pi bill by the Indiana legislature isn't very encouraging either. Enough of this.

The references in parentheses in the preceding pages are of the type that I would have put in my original article on sex differences if I had taken the advise of those who have complained about my not having references. It doesn't seem to me that they particularly add anything except to make everything very cumbersome.



REVIEW

DYING OF THE LIGHT by George R.R. Martin: Simon & Schuster, 1977, \$9.95.

George R.R. Martin's first full length novel (published in shorter form in ANALOG as AFTER THE FESTIVAL) is a brooding, entertaining novel with exotic settings and characters. It is set on Worlorn, a world receding into the twilight, soon to be totally inhospitable to human life. There exists on Worlorn the remnants of a gigantic festival held by most of the civilized worlds of the galaxy, and isolated groups of individuals still inhabit the ruins, despite the collapse of any centralized peacekeeping authority.

The world of High Kavalaan is home to a bloody culture that for generations divided humans into hunters and prey. Although contact with other worlds has somewhat ameliorated their paranoia, many conservatives regret the loss of the right to hunt humans, and several have come to Worlorn to set up their own society and continue to practice their traditions. One of the reformers, Jaan Jaanthony of Ironjade, has come to thwart them.

Jaan has an outworld wife, Gwen Delvano, who is psychologically bound as well into a bond that makes her virtually the property of Jaan. She is followed by Dirk T'larien, her ex-lover, who is convinced that she wants him to free her from Jaan's domination. Dirk becomes enmeshed not only in their marital affairs, but in the growing tension between the two strongholds.

There are a number of fascinating elements in the novel. Martin has improved his characterization appreciably in the longer form. Garse Janacek and Jaan are both finely drawn. Gwen comes close to achieving full dimension, although her inability to act in her own behalf (at least on-stage) is a flaw that is repeated in Dirk, who proves to be impulsive, stubborn, inconsiderate, ineffectual, incompetent, and egotistical. The machinations of another minor character, Arkin Ruark, are never adequately explained either, apparently sacrificed in favor of their surprise revelation late in the novel.

Martin is at his best in creating exotic settings, and the many glimpses we are provided of Worlorn are fascinating. The chase inside a deserted robot city is the high point of the book's action, although there is a more emotional climax later, when Jaan himself becomes the prey and his friend Garse becomes the ostensible hunter.

There is a tangled web of personal obligations and rights that lends great depth to the novel, a depth whose exploration suffers from the unequal treatment of the various characters. Nevertheless, it's one of the more interesting books of the past year or two. Martin is one of the very few writers who seems capable of marrying the wondrous settings and scientific interest of the traditional SF writer with the concern for psychology, personality, ethics, and non-physical conflict that has dominated the newer writer in the field. The blend is such that the appeal to readers should be more universal.

Pocket Books has apparently already purchased the paperback rights, so it might not be worth your while to pay for the hardcover, but the novel is one that will probably live to see several reprintings. It bodes well for the future as well, for Martin has shown that his novels will not just be longer versions of his shorter pieces, but new creations in their own right. This is a distinction that many new writers fail to establish.

ELABORATE LIES

SCIENCE FICTION

(DOUG ZAREOUR)

Tony Dalmyn presents his arguments well and also, heaven help us, makes a case for some real value in MOTE by showing that the Moties were so carefully designed. But then I've never felt that MOTE was not good in its presentation of the Moties (indeed one could, I feel, easily argue that Niven & Pournelle did a much better job with the Moties than Asimov did with his aliens in his award winner a few years ago); where it fell down was with the humans, but we've been through that one too often, haven't we?

"Crouched on the Borderline" was interesting to me only because of the reference to "completists". I mean you show me conclusively enough that Joe Foyer's work is so far beneath my notice I don't even need to read you on him, yet you, and I assume others, want for some arcane reason to know of and possibly read all his work. I am torn between awe and laughter.

((Foyer is actually a competent, though uninspired writer. One can learn from his stuff many things about why a story fails to be really good. Come now, Doug, certainly you have read, possibly even done research, on mediocre poets. How else do you recognize the truly good ones?)))

(BRIAN EARL BROWN)

You're right about ghost stories being so rigidly structured. I was surprised to notice while reading Leiber's OUR LADY OF DARKNESS that, for a novel and by one of our master fantastists, it still followed the structure of a typical ghost story. First there was the mysterious occurrences, then some book or person conveniently and in one expository lump explains everything, and then the story is resolved. The other nice thing about that novel was that it took most of Lovecraft's shticks or obsessions -- like his love of his hometown, his dislike of progress, his mixing of real and pseudobooks, use of mathematics, etc.--and produced what is really a Lovecraftian pastiche without the awful pastiche Lovecraft prose.

(LEE CARSON)

Found your piece on Wyndham interesting. If I may add to the early harbingers of women's liberation in SF, recent study of an old Buck Rogers serial convinces me that Wilma Deering, an officer and leading Hidden City revolutionary against the regime of a tyrant played by a two-bit Clark Gable type, could kick out the jams just like Princess Leia.

(GEORGE FLYNN)

May I point out that Blish's book is DOCTOR MIRABILIS. I haven't read the book, but I have the impression that historians don't think much of the sort of Roger Bacon legends it's based on. (Let me tell you how I came to be reading about Roger Bacon: I was idly wondering how much of the specialized SF vocabulary had made it into the dictionaries, so I looked up a few words. I was startled to find that "android" didn't originate in SF, but has been around since the 18th century to designate an automaton. What's more, there was a legend - probably quite modern - that Albertus Magnus had constructed an androides. Out of curiosity I looked up Albertus, and

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since Roger Bacon is adjacent to him in the history books...As you can see, I am a victim of chronic library-mania.) By the way, though I'm not prepared to argue the point strongly, I have the impression that the Pope in A CASE OF CONSCIENCE is in a way just as heretical as Ruiz-Sanchez.

I don't recall a film of "Consider Her Ways". On the other hand, one called "Quest for Love" was made from Wyndham's "Random Quest"; it's fairly soap-operaish, but one of the very few films to use the idea of parallel worlds. Of course, there were two films based on THE MIDWICH CUCKOOS. Do you plan to compare the US and British editions of all other SF stories, in hopes of discovering other discrepancies?

While "Consider Her Ways" certainly does make a strong case against the present organization of the world, it seems to me that the all-female world isn't presented as very attractive either; maybe I should reread it.

((I plan to compare anything I have time and opportunity to. Who knows what else I might find? The film of "Consider Her Ways" was an episode of ALFRED HITCHCOCK, and someone ought to get it for a con film program. Why don't you pass the idea along to Bill Carton? While the all-female world might be repulsive to you or I, all of the citizens of it were described as honestly happy. I suspect that Wyndham deliberately tried to make it appear to us to be unpleasant to (1) increase the shock effect when it is ably defended, and (2) show a world that might be a perfectly legitimate demi-utopia, but which had values totally alien to our own. In response to an earlier article I did on A CASE OF CONSCIENCE, Blish wrote that Ruiz-Sanchez was guilty of a lot more sins against his religion than just heresy, but never said anything about the Pope.)))

(DAVID FRYXELL)

I'm glad to find someone else who thinks REBIRTH is a heck of a novel, Wyndham's best. I read it first many years ago in that TREASURY OF GREAT SCIENCE FICTION the SF Book Club pushes. Reading that first and then, in the second volume, THE WEAPON SHOPS OF ISHER, I knew that SF had something no other assemblage of words on paper could match. I'm also glad to see some appreciation for BLACK EASTER, James Blish's stunningly terrifying apocalyptic novel of magic. I remember that book with more dread fondness than anything else Blish did; it's been sadly ignored. I was haunting the witchcraft and superstition section of the library for weeks after reading it, seeking more.

(GLENN GARRETT)

A comment about Brett Cox's statement on Michael Bishop's poem. Kurt Vonnegut did not write the poem "Nice, Nice, Very Nice" for the rock group Ambrosia. He wrote it as a part of CAT'S CRADLE many years before that rock group existed, which reminds me that the Jefferson Airplane plagiarized John Wyndham's book REBIRTH with the words to their song, "Crown of Creation". They stole the idea that the "Zealand" woman was expressing to the children in the story. For example, "They are the crown of creation...they have nowhere to go. But life is change. That is how it differs from the rocks..." Also from Wyndham's book comes "Soon they will attain the stability they strive for, in the only form it is granted, a place among the fossils." That is on page 168 of the Walker & Co edition. On page 181 of REBIRTH I found, "In loyalty to their kind they cannot tolerate our rise; in loyalty to our kind, we cannot tolerate their obstruction."

I know that the group and Paul Kantner are still making money from that song, and was wondering if Wyndham's estate could take Kantner to court for plagiarism, assuming they don't know about it.

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Here are the words to Kantner's song:

"You are the crown of creation, You are the crown of creation, And you got no place to go -
 Soon you'll attain the stability you strive for
 In the only way it's ranted
 In a place among the fossils of our time.
 In loyalty to their kind they cannot tolerate our minds
 And in loyalty to our kind we cannot tolerate their obstruction.
 Life is change
 How it differs from the rocks
 I've see their ways too often for my liking..."

((The song is clearly derivative, and the album has no reference to Wyndham at all. It's possible, but unlikely that they paid the estate. Maybe someone among the readers here can clear things up?)))

(ARTHUR D. HLAVATY)

I have two disagreements with Mark Keller's article on the American Monomyth. The first is that I don't think that he makes it clear enough that a myth can be objectively true. For instance, if you say, "The sun goes around the earth", most people will reject your statement blindly and dogmatically. Many of them will not be able to come up with a single argument, other than that authority figures have told them different. They are right, of course, but they are still treating science as a myth.

The other thing is that I suspect that the monomyth model is so general that it can be fitted to almost any story, just as Sheryl Smith says that any novel can be seen as a bildungsroman. Nevertheless, STAR WARS seems to fit it less closely than most. Obi-Wan Kenobi is not an outsider. Quite the opposite; he is the former commander of the Jedi Knights, kicked out by the bad guys. Luke Skywalker is likewise shown as a member of the society, and Han Solo is hardly the hero type. (And contrary to the monomyth image, he shows a sexual interest in Leia.) In any event, the victory over the bad guys is shown as very much a team effort. In fact, I would say that the monomyth applies to very few SF classics--not to THE LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS, THE FOUNDATION TRILOGY, CHILDHOOD'S END...

Perhaps I overstated the extent of New Wave hostility to the Old Wave in my letter, but I think there are some examples of generalized distaste for any SF written before Moorcock took over NEW WORLDS. M. John Harrison's reviews seem to display that sort of feeling, as does Thomas Disch's article in SCIENCE FICTION AT LARGE, which actually manages to be unfairly nasty to STARSHIP TROOPERS, a feat I had considered impossible.

Speaking of excellent fiction writers who are lousy critics, I agree with you on Stanislaw Lem, even down to specific books. Lem is his own worst enemy. (Pause here to allow several people to say, "Not while I'm alive.") He's very limited in character and plotting; his criticism is terrible (especially considering that he is not affiliated with a Department of Literature); and he and his clique have polarized the field with their abusive, overgeneralized, and often ignorant comments on American SF. (Here I can document the charge. See Lem's contribution to PHILIP K. DICK: ELECTRIC SHEPHERD; the article - reprinted in SF STUDIES - that got his honorary SFWA membership revoked; or almost anything by #1 acolyte Herr Doktor Professor Franz Rottensteiner.) Nevertheless, he is extremely good at philosophical speculation, comparable at his best to Borges. I also like THE CYBERIAD and THE FUTUROLOGICAL CONFERENCE, and I would recommend THE STAR DIARIES, which is quite similar.

And that reminds me. I'd like to put in a plug for another writer, very much like Lem and Borges, who rarely gets mentioned in SF circles. Italo Calvino is considered a major mainstream writer in Italy. He has written at least three books which might be called SF -- COSMICOMICS, the adventures of one of the creators of the universe; T ZERO, more of the same and mathematical/philosophical fiction; and INVISIBLE CITIES, hard to categorize, but hardly mimetic.

((((I liked the first two, haven't read the third, and understood that there's a recent fourth book that is fantasy as well.)))

(BROD KLINGER)

The article on John Wyndham was quite good, but I will take issue with you about the idea that the heroine of "The Eternal Eve" did not have a duty to reproduce. The heroine, Amanda Vark, being one of the few surviving women after an unspecified calamity was being pressured by some men to copulate and give birth, and she refused. Indeed, she killed a man to keep herself from being impregnated, and then justified her attitude and her murder by claiming that she had a right to refuse.

I can understand how this would appeal to both feminists and libertarians, but I believe it to be wrong. Individual preferences and rights are not always paramount; if they were we would not have any laws. Also, witness the countless times when soldiers, scouts, parents, neighbors, and even unknowns have sacrificed themselves for the preservation of the group. I contend that when a person is a member of a group, he has a duty to preserve that group, and that duty transcends the rights of the individual up to and including self-preservation. Hobbes, Locke, and most other political philosophers have said the same, albeit more eloquently. To paraphrase Heinlein, a person becomes an adult only when he or she embraces the welfare of the group as being more important than his or her own survival.

I most emphatically do not want to make enemies, but surely giving birth is less odious than being killed. Given a situation where only a few humans are alive, it is the duty of the survivors to continue the human race. Offhand I cannot think of any higher duty or right. In this situation any woman has a duty to conceive, be she a nun or married to an infertile man, just as a man, even a priest, has a duty to impregnate. I realize that the woman bears the burden of pregnancy, childbirth, and nursing, but that is simply a biological fact and is irrelevant to the argument. I would also argue that if either a man or woman refuses they can be coerced into copulation, and by any means necessary. This seems harsh, but the individual's duty is compelling, and certainly transcends an individual's rights.

An obvious question is how few women would have to be alive before the morality would go into effect, and I truthfully do not know the answer. One woman? Yes, of course, she is the key to the future. One thousand women? No, I don't think so. I do not know where the cut-off level is, but I could expand this in a further way if you wish.

Do not misconstrue my argument to mean that I favor coercion or rape. The woman should be allowed sufficient time to choose a mate if she wishes, and she should be made to realize that the alternative to voluntary sex would be involuntary sex. Finally, I would like to assure you that I do not believe that this ethical code has a place in present day society, only in extraordinary times would this code be operable.

((((Thank god for small favors, at least. I have to honestly say that I've rarely read a more repulsive personal philosophy of ethics. Using the example of someone willing to sacrifice self in order to justify the willful sacrifice of others is an injustice to all those who have surrendered their own rights for the welfare of

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others. You speak repeatedly of a "duty". To whom is this duty owed? In the situation we are discussing, the welfare of the survivors is not at stake. There is no duty owed by Amanda Vark to the people seeking to rape and impregnate her. If this duty is to the future generations, or the "race", you can use that same argument with reference to almost any activity at almost any time in history. A duty is something one assumes, in any case, not something that can be thrust upon you. You say that she accepted this duty when she became part of the "group", but she did not, she left the group and lived apart, and was forced to use violence to defend her rights. If humanity needs to debase itself in order to continue, then it should probably cease. I suggest strongly that you read D.F. Jones' excellent and repulsive novel, *IMPLOSION*, and reconsider your argument.)))

(ANDY RICHARDS)

I found your article on John Wyndham most interesting and would like to add just a couple of general observations which weren't mentioned and would probably have been unapparent to most American SF fans.

Over here in England, John Wyndham holds with H.G. Wells a unique position amongst British SF writers: his work has won critical acceptance from academia, and with Wells he represents the acceptable side of SF. But this literary standing he enjoys is combined with great popular appeal. I think I can safely say that most people in England know his name and are aware of several (at the least) of his novels. Ask people over here to name as many English SF authors as they have come across, and most of them will mention Wyndham and Wells and then grind to a halt. Even Brian Aldiss, with the success of his *THE HAND REARED BOY* and *A SOLDIER ERECT*, and Ballard and Moorcock, who have regular reviews in the mainstream book review sections of the literary magazines and newspapers, are not as well known as John Wyndham.

His reputation is probably higher outside the genre than it is inside it. On the one hand literary acceptance puts him on a par with Wells, Kipling, and Conan Doyle, and on the other his great popular appeal with the non-SF reading public links his name to authors like Ian Fleming and Harold Robbins.

His novels are recommended reading in most schools - along with Jane Austen, Kipling, Doyle, and Salinger and all those other authors whom we are pressed upon to read during adolescence by our teachers. No need to hide a John Wyndham novel inside a math text book to escape detection by a teacher...I also remember that "Survival" was included in a testbook of modern English short stories that we studied at school.

This of course probably accounts for his great popularity - most of us have come across Wyndham at an early age -- 12-14 years old -- and most of us are able to name him so readily in later years, whether or not we have gone on to read any more SF by other authors.

Thomas Disch, in an essay in *SF AT LARGE* edited by Peter Nichols, puts forward his theory that SF is merely a branch of children's literature - English academia seems to think likewise - they are certainly eager to put John Wyndham's novels into this category, ideal reading for adolescents. But they expect and hope to see most of us going on to more "serious" and "relevant" authors as we grow up. A pat on the back at 14 will become a clip round the ear at 34?

Perhaps Bradbury and Vonnegut are in a similar situation in America. Both are very popular with high school and college students, have won literary recognition from the litcrit boys, and have "escaped" from the SF tag to reach a much greater and deserving audience.

Philip Strick, in *FOUNDATION 2*, a British SF journal: "I felt that for too long

the accepted standards had been set by 1984, or on a different level by the popularity of John Wyndham and Nigel Kneale" (author of the Quatermass series). And in MAYA 10, Christopher Priest, on types of SF fans: "the person who declares himself a lifelong fan and avid reader of SF...it will soon become clear that his reading has been confined to John Wyndham, Eric von Daniken and Brinsley le Poer Trench." These two quotes I have recently come across by accident, and they reflect accurately my feelings toward John Wyndham.

((((It is unfortunate that the term "popular appeal" is often used in a derogatory context. At his best, Wyndham wrote better than most in any field. Incidentally, I was once told that he had had a couple of mystery novels published. Does anyone know titles, publishers, or where I could get copies?)))

(DARRELL SCHWEITZER)

Mark Keller's tying on of his American myth with STAR TREK is amusing. I think a lot of people out there would like to think that STAR TREK was true. As a consequence, I have worked out a scenario for a religion based on it. Just spread this at the next Trekkie gathering. It's a mixture of millennialism and a cargo cult -- STAR TREK is real, of course, and Out There Somewhere there really is a Federation, a planet Vulcan, and so on. The world is scheduled to end in the year 2000, but the Faithful, i.e. those who have sufficiently enriched the coffers of the church by purchase of books, fanzines Enterprise uniforms, etc will be saved. At the last minute, as they sell all their goods, giving the money to the Vulcon in 2001 Committee, and sit around reading Alan Dean Foster ST novelizations, the Enterprise will beam them to safety, and make every last one a crew member. This latter doctrine is known as the Infinite Enterprise teaching, derived from the fact that the ship allegedly has some 400 crew members, the vast majority of whom are never seen to do anything. So there's always room for a few more.

(MICHAEL SHOEMAKER)

It's been eleven years since I read DAY OF THE TRIFFIDS. I liked it, but I was also disappointed, though it's been too long now to remember the cause of my feeling of dissatisfaction. Perhaps because I felt it was too derivative of Wells. I suspect I would like it much better today, although the coincidence it hinges on is more of an irritant today than eleven years ago. REBIRTH has been on my stack of novels to be read Real Soon longer than any other. I like some of Wyndham's early stories much better than you. "The Man From Beyond", "Exiles on Asperus", and "The Lost Machine" were especially advanced for their time for the attitudes displayed. Perhaps, though, I would not find them to hold up on rereading; it has been about ten years since I read them.

On the question of best first SF novels, I prefer EARTH ABIDES, BRAVE NEW WORLD, and 1984 to your choice of A CANTICLE FOR LEIBOWITZ, but of course, these come from non-genre writers and perhaps shouldn't be counted. I also prefer THE ISLAND OF DR MOREAU and THE TIME MACHINE (depending on whether or not the latter can be called a novel). More clearly within the genre, I would pick THE DEMOLISHED MAN and GATHER, DARKNESS, and to a lesser extent perhaps SLAN. Of course, Leiber had written the horror novel CONJURE WIFE earlier.

The question of who to resurrect to write one last novel is an interesting one. I missed it in #12 but I'd like to take the opportunity to answer it now. In SF, my answer is Kuttner. His FURY is one of my favorites, but he never wrote a novel in his latter, presumably more mature years. The reason my answer is not Wells is because I doubt, based on his late novels, that he would have anything more of worth to say. Outside of SF: It would be interesting to have Kafka finish THE CASTLE. I would also like to see Synge come back and write some more plays. But above all, perhaps, I'd like to see Stephen Crane resurrected. He died so young, and considering

his years, left an enormous body of outstanding work: "The Monster", THE RED BADGE OF COURAGE (which I didn't care for in high school but which improves with every rereading), "The Blue Hotel", the Whillomville stories, etc. I sense too in reading Crane that he still had a great deal to say when death took him.

I don't find it surprising that horror stories are often better written than SF. Horror stories depend on the mood, and thus the writing, for their effect; whereas in SF, the focus is generally on the idea. My own favorites are Blackwood, LeFanu, and James, though this may change as I've yet to read all of Onions.

Harry Warner's comment about the lack of great serious ghost movies is interesting. THE UNINVITED (1946 or '47 with Ray Milland, from the novel by Dorothy MacArdle I think), which you mentioned, is a particular favorite of mine. I found it very scary the first time I saw it. While pondering Warner's comment, I realized that offhand I can't think of any other ghost movies in which the ghost is both real and serious. I'm sure there are some but I can't remember any. Curiously, there have been on TV a number of exceptional ghost story adaptations. When I was very young, at least 15 years ago, I saw on TV, on one of those many Playhouse shows which are unfortunately no longer with us, the scariest dramatization I've ever seen. It was a faithful adaptation of "The Monkey's Paw". About five years ago the CBS Mystery Movie had a series of adaptations called "The Classic Ghosts". These were done on video tape (which I think is superior to film for horror stories, though I'm not sure why) and were the BEST dramatized horror stories I've ever seen. The ones I saw were "What Was It?" retitled "The Deadly Visitor", "The Screaming Skull", and a 2 part, 3 hour version of THE TURN OF THE SCREW, which was good beyond description. I also saw a less good episode whose title I can't remember, except that it had the word "Bones" in it. Not too long ago there was a half hour series introduced by Orson Welles which was an offshoot, I think, of the above. On the Welles show I saw "The Furnished Room" and "The Terribly Strange Bed". This is just the kind of show I'd love to see on network TV, an hour video anthology horror series which adapts the classics. I'd love to see adaptations of "The Wendigo", "The Haunters and the Haunted", "Oh Whistle and I'll Come to You My Lad", etc.

((Definitely agree with your closing remark. I'd nominate "Couching by the Door", "Logoda's Heads", "Voice in the Night", and many others for inclusion. In the discussion of best first novel, I meant just that, not specifically their first SF novels. This would disqualify the Huxley, Orwell, and Stewart novels you mentioned. My recollection is that Leiber's first novel was DESTINY TIMES THREE, not CONJURE WIFE.)))

(ROY TACKETT)

Fie on Mark Keller. Frodo Baggins a SF hero indeed. Science fiction may well be a part of fantasy -- and I won't argue that -- but fantasy is hardly a part of science fiction and THE LORD OF THE RINGS is pure fantasy. And certainly STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND is wish-fulfillment fantasy; isn't it all? Don't we all, at one time or another, see ourselves as the hero of the Monomyth? That's why it is such a strong myth and why it has such staying power. It is the basic one. What are the stories of Jesus or Mohammed, for example, except retellings of the Monomyth? It is the oldest story mankind has.

(ROBERT WHITAKER)

I find Blish's BLACK EASTER to be sketchy, talky and void of any human emotion except curiosity, which the situation in the novel calls for, but that is it. No fear, no twinge of conscience, nothing. The whole book was gabby to the point of silliness. Blish did get the rituals properly written, and his background information is correct, but where was the great fear of tapping the unknown and what was considered blasphemous?

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Knowledge is not a form of evil. Evil itself is an odd creature, capable of many varied identifications and interpretations. People name and tag things as good and/or evil. People are programmed into accepting something as one or the other -- all the information is given a tag as it goes in, or is given a tag later, when all this information (as a human) is given a new situation to react to, it comes up with one tag to call it.

((I suspect that Blish could have made the element of terror more universal by spending more time developing a cast of admirable characters, with at least one of whom we could identify. As a matter of fact, I don't think of BLACK EASTER as a novel, so much as a fictional essay. I'd probably have a hard time justifying that, though.)))

(ALEXANDER DONIPHAN WALLACE)

In A CASE OF CONSCIENCE Blish used a "real" religion, as opposed to the conglomerations of bits and pieces generally found under the name "religion" in most of SF&F. Of course neither religion or morality can come solely from logic; as Newton put it, without hypotheses there can be no conclusions. It is an assumption that logic (of whatever kind) is applicable to "faith". One must first have faith that logic is applicable.

There is a Hindu myth that evil was invented to ameliorate the overcrowding in Heaven, which sounds rather silly until one compares this with the expulsion of Lucifer (Satan) from Heaven.

Manichean duality suffers from the lack of an ultimate teleology. One must admit that God (good) invented Devil (evil), or that Devil invented God, unless one accepts that there is another god superior to both who invented both. ("Created" if you will.) But common "logic" or "commonsense", denies that good can come from evil, or conversely. Thus a contradiction if a superior god is not posited. (One must be careful to use Devil, not "a" or "the" Devil, just as one uses God.)

A scientist might contend that evil is merely lack of good, as cold is lack of heat -- a thermodynamic religion. Nernst's Law would then state that absolute evil exists but is unattainable. On the other hand, accepting $E = mc^2$ (heat is a form of energy) there is an attainable absolute good. (This paragraph is manifestly not serious.)

I thank Sheryl Smith for defending my position on "passion for the dim and distant past". Note also that post-catastrophe novels are frequently a return to a more primitive culture -- Edmund Cooper's CLOUD WALKER, Leigh Brackett's THE LONG TOMORROW, and many others. The same is true of some wrecked-on-a-desert-isle stories, as in Alan Dean Foster's ICERIGGER, and others. Here of course the culture is not chronologically primitive but only comparatively so, but still it has the flavor of the past, and perhaps intentionally so.

(PATRICK L. MCGUIRE)

I recently reread A CASE OF CONSCIENCE and was surprised at how leaky the theology was--specifically at how much of it depends on extrapolations which are not particularly plausible rather than on developments contemporary with Blish. But it's all a little arcane to go into here.

You, Don, and I would agree that self-awareness implies having a soul, and I have so argued in regard to a Poul Anderson story. But come to think of it, I don't think any of CASE does take place inside Egtverchi's head. Isn't Ruiz-Sanchez always the viewpoint character? The fact that Egtverchi says he's self-aware proves nothing--a computer program or one of Saberhagen's berserkers could say the same thing,

and be "lying". Anyway I think some older theologians might deny that self-awareness implies soul (though I don't see how they can argue it): it was commonly accepted in the Middle Ages that fairies were self-aware but soul-less. On the other hand, doesn't the KORAN say specifically that djinn have souls?

Since I have been busy with other things lately, and since I had no indication you intended to use "Miscellanea Technica" any time soon, I neglected to pass onto you some additional information I learned since writing it. Sandra Miesel's Introduction to the Gregg Press PEOPLE OF THE WIND calls Cajal's religion "orthodox" (i.e. Roman) Catholicism, and Poul let Sandra get away with it, as opposed to what he had told me earlier. (Feminine wiles in the service of Holy Mother Church?) Her introduction to Gregg's WAR OF THE WINGMEN incorporates the information in "Maker of Universes" and the bibliography includes three Ythrian stories I haven't managed to get hold of yet. There also exists a bibliography with a chronology called THE COLLECTOR'S POUL ANDERSON, which I haven't managed to obtain either. Two Flandry stories (Empire stories anyhow) "Outpost of Empire" and "The Game of Glory" make reference to variants of Christianity which aren't obviously Catholic or Orthodox. None of this induces me to make any very radical changes, of course.

Mark Keller's article this time around was a step down from his usual high standard. I do disagree with all his supposed infractions of fannish myths, but none of them brings out the violent reaction he predicts. More seriously, a monomyth is supposed to show up everywhere, and in Keller's version what seems significant is how much SF is free of his monomyth. STAR WARS fits his standard version and is more SFtional than his example of Tolkien. Many Heinlein juveniles would fit, and so forth. But that won't cover the entire field, and neither will the revised American version of the gunslinger coming into town. (It will, however, cover a lot of modern American political life.) The revised myth seems from Keller's account to be worth placing next to the standard myth as a standard plot, but it fails to be the One Big Myth in the way Keller claims.

((Within the context of the book, I think Blish posits self-awareness as proof of a soul, although in unpublished correspondence, he says he left as many options of interpretation for the reader as possible. Egtverchi is the viewpoint character for a period of time. I quote from page 85 of the Ballantine paperback:

"At first Egtverchi knew nothing, in the peculiarly regular and chilly womb where he floated, except his name. That was inherited, and marked in a twist of desoxyribonucleic acid upon one of his genes...At the moment he had begun his independent life, as a zygote or fertilized egg, that had been written down in letters of chromatin...No gene that he carried bore his mother's name, but he knew--not in his brain, for he had none yet, but by feel, with purely chemical revulsion--whose child he was, of what race he was, and where he should be: NOT HERE."

Later on Egtverchi even indicates an ability to judge right and wrong, in some extra-human context, which he could not have done on Lithia, where sin is unknown. To me, this indicates a soul, in Blish's context,)))

- 68 -

((What does one do when, after finishing an entire letter column, one finds that he stopped typing ten lines too soon on one of his pages? Well, I looked all around for a very short illo, and couldn't find one, and I thought of calling someone to come over and doodle in the available space, or taking a very short ad or even labelling it "Ed Cox doodle here" or some similar fannish phrase, and finally I just said, piss on it.)))

(HARRY WARNER JR)

Mark Keller might have pointed out one other thing about the monomyth. That basic pattern which he cites in western fiction, STAR TREK, adventure films, and so on, is nothing more than a slight reworking of the basic belief of Christianity: in the good world which God created the devil interferes and from the distance comes Christ who fights the evils, eventually disappearing after providing a way for believers to defeat this villain-devil themselves as a happy ending. Maybe the rise of the monomyth in fiction and the movies during the 19th and 20th centuries has a relationship to the decline in the number of fundamentalist Christians during those same years. Just as astrology, psychic practitioners and other far-out pseudosciences are becoming popular in more recent decades while people profess to have lost their faith: in both situations, there seems to be a need for the people who no longer have complete faith in religion to turn to some other sort of reminders that there is something more to life than the materialistic realities that are clearly visible.

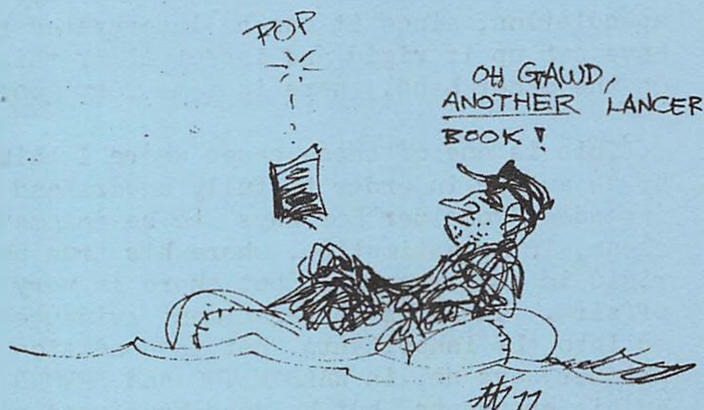
I share Mark Sharpe's impatience with the people who analyze too diligently science fiction stories. I see no harm in it when the story is strong enough to withstand this kind of autopsy. But I suspect that the popularity of significance-finding, psychoanalysis of authors through their fiction, and other critical pastimes has tended in recent years to cause fanzine writers to neglect a more important matter. Isn't it possible that more attention to what made a fine story so excellent is needed? Besides keeping critics busy, this sort of investigation might have the added benefit of helping aspiring writers to learn what separates the hacks from the masters of science fiction writing, causing the newcomers to write as well as their potential permits instead of imitating the wrong things when they use published stories as models.

((Ah, but people don't agree about just what does make a good story, SF or any genre. That's the fly in the whole ointment, and it's the reason why all of those different approaches ("significance finding" included) are valuable. There are good and bad stories, and there are good and bad critical analyses, but the school of criticism is no more innately at fault than the genre of SF.)))

(BUCK COULSON)

Keller has some interesting statements, but with my dislike of myth I apparently haven't been conditioned to it. People who have eaten cat - or any carnivore - report that it isn't good eating...I don't know enough about the 13th century to refute his statement at all, and I could go on for pages listing rational reasons for space travel.

Not having been born of royal stock myself, I always dislike Heros who are, unless the writer is very good at making him likable. (And Frodo Baggins has nothing to do with SF, if one wants to get technical.)



(JEFF HECHT)

If anything, I think you understate the "feminist" attitude of John Wyndham. You have to look at him in the context of his time, and that, for women, was a rather dismal time. Women simply were not characters in 50s SF. Even FODKAYNE OF MARS, dreadful though it was, was a step in the right direction simply because a female played an important role rather than standing in the background as another card-board prop. That was the era when Mildred Clingerman and Judith Merrill were novelties as writers. As a matter of fact, I don't seem to recall any of their stories in which the roles of women were examined as critically as in Wyndham's "Consider Her Ways", a story which has stayed vividly in my mind even though I read it years ago, perhaps around 1964. To be fair, however, none of Clingerman's or Merrill's stories have stayed in my mind well enough for me to recall them in a quick check through my very small collection of books.

I don't know to what extent these limitations were imposed by the marketplace and to what by the writers (male and female) themselves. Granted, Wyndham had a respected, and masculine, name when he published "Consider Her Ways" (Where, by the way, was it published originally?) There was one original market - AMAZING/FANTASTIC - edited by a woman, Cele Goldsmith (lalli), and the most prestigious annual "Best" was edited by Merrill. Merrill and Goldsmith may have had limitations placed upon them by their publishers, but they had more significant editorial positions than any woman does in the field now. (I'm not counting book editing jobs, since I don't have a list of present editors.) Could it be perhaps just a consequence of the small number of influential positions in the field? Or does it reflect some deeper-seated problem in the publishing industry?

((Leaving out book publishers skews your data. Ballantine is now edited by Judy-Lynn Del Rey, and was formerly controlled by Ian and Betty Ballantine. I have heard that Elsie Wollheim has some influence with DAW Books. There are definitely problems with sexual discrimination in the publishing world, just as in any business lately, although I suspect this is beginning to decline. "Consider Her Ways" was first published in SOMETIME, NEVER, a collection of three original novellas published by Ballantine, edited anonymously. It may well have been Betty Ballantine that selected it. It appears in Wyndham's collection, THE INFINITE MOMENT.)))

(ADRIENNE FEIN)

I found REBIRTH to be somewhat disappointing on re-reading; it is mostly a chase sequence -- plus the background of the future world. On the other hand, I think SF writing generally has gotten more sophisticated, and there is more "body" to a lot of the recent novels. "Consider Her Ways" of course makes a fascinating topic for speculation, since it can be interpreted in several ways. The society the women have set up is rigid and insect like; this can be taken as an anti-feminist comment. On the other hand, there is some very good material about the oppression of women.

((This is one of those cases where I think it is necessary to examine other work by an author in order to fully understand the novella in question. I think Wyndham intended "Consider Her Ways" to be enigmatic, but the rest of his fiction makes it clear, in my estimation, where his true beliefs lie. Remember, the society is rigid in some respects, but there is very evident satisfaction with the state of affairs. There is no resentment evidenced in the story. Presumably it is conditioned into the inhabitants, but is conditioned happiness necessarily evil? B.F. Skinner says no, in WALDEN TWO and BEYOND FREEDOM AND DIGNITY. I am not convinced by his arguments, but he does have good points, and there is a tendency to say that it "feels" wrong rather than to point out logical reasons for resistance to the idea. Wyndham is not a simple writer, despite frequent appearances of simplicity. He's easy to underestimate.)))

(DAVE HULAN)

I think George Flynn is more nearly correct than you are regarding a standard of rational behavior. If individuals or races include a desire for death, dissolution, and loss of self as goals, then rational behavior for those individuals or races would include self-destructive behavior - in fact, would include nothing else. Such races or individuals wouldn't be around long, of course, but they wouldn't be irrational. Stupid, maybe, but that's not the same thing. Ultimate goals and aspirations are inherently non-rational in nature - neither rational nor irrational. Even survival is not a rational goal; it's a built-in urge in every known species and race, because those that didn't have it didn't survive, but there's nothing rational about it. Intermediate goals may be rational, in the sense that they facilitate the achievement of ultimate goals, or irrational, in the sense that they hinder the achievement of those goals, but there is always a point where there is a goal that can't be defended rationally. And if that goal differs between two individuals, or races, what is rational behavior to one is not to the other, and vice versa.

Whether the Moties are "irrational" by their own standards is another question; I've only read the book once, and while I enjoyed it mildly, I have no desire to go back and study it closely enough to try to decide the answer to that kind of question. (If it's even possible - Niven and Pournelle are intelligent men, but one doubts they're so good that everything about their universe meshes perfectly, if you get deeply enough into it.)

(ALLAN CHEN)

You might be interested in hearing about a class that I took last quarter, with reference to your article "After Such Knowledge". The introductory physics classes here have an adjunct seminar called "Physics through Science Fiction". It's aim is to teach physics through the reading of SF, but we do occasionally get to the humanistic side of SF. Last quarter, one class session was spent on Science and Religion, and one of the required readings was a portion of A CASE OF CONSCIENCE. The basic question raised was "Is there a conflict between science and religion, are the two worldviews essentially different and irreconcilable, or are science and religion just two ways of looking at the same thing?"

You would not be surprised to learn, I think, that most of the students in that seminar held a decidedly orthodox view of the question. The majority of people felt that the two were essentially different, and that scientific knowledge had little or nothing to do with religious belief. There were the usual cliches about "objective" reason, and faith, etc. I tried in vain to point out that the scientific method, by which that objective truth is pursued, is only internally consistent. You need to have faith in the method of science, and in logic and objectivity, and so ultimately everything we do or believe reduces to a matter of faith.

I have the feeling that this remark wasn't well received -- the stony silences and blank faces seemed to confirm that. I wonder if society wouldn't currently be undergoing its anti-intellectualist convulsions if our view of that conflict was different. My feeling is that science and religious belief are ultimately reconcilable, that they have to be to exist in the same universe. And if we had a more balanced, unified view of knowledge, perhaps people would see that the humanistic (sacred and secular) knowledge isn't all that different from the scientific-technical worldview that we've been taught to espouse so highly.

((The blank faces probably resulted from total incomprehension. People nowadays really don't like to rationally explore moral or ethical questions, because most people today don't feel constrained to act in accordance with an external code. This is a perversion of what is usually called "situation ethics". It is obviously

to us that what is a "right" action in one context is a "wrong" action in another. But this has been perverted so that people can feel free to disobey laws not out of moral conviction, but out of trivial motives. Intelligent fans have said that they see no ethical ideological difference between smoking pot in the presence of minors, and Martin Luther King's illegal marches. Others have justified "ripping off" utility companies on the basis that the companies also engage in illegal activities, never bothering to mention that their "rip off" is just passed on to other customers, including some barely struggling to get by. "Situation ethics" has been used to justify egocentric hedonism, and while I enjoy hedonism myself, I don't believe I have an unlimited right to pleasure at the expense of my fellow human. But if you try to argue this point, you get violent responses from most, so violent, in fact, that the last time the issue arose, I had three people write and tell me they agreed with me, but that I shouldn't quote them because they didn't want to take the abuse I was receiving.)))

(DAVE SZUREK)

I'd have to be pretty far out of it not to know that movies were made of DAY OF THE TRIFFIDS and THE MIDWICH CUCKOOS, but am surprised to learn that "Consider Her Ways" was even proposed. Was it completed? (((See earlier comment.))) If you were referring to all Wyndham novels which were even considered, the list is incomplete. Also announced several years ago was OUT OF THE DEEPS, but in light of the usual Hollywood touch, that wasn't the most promising of his titles. Conceivably it would have been exploited into a run of the mill "monster from the sea" script. We all know what happened when the sympathetic theme of "The Foghorn" was twisted around to make an ordinary "monster on the rampage" yarn sound more prestigious. For all I know, OUT OF THE DEEPS might have been finished and released as something like THE CRATER LAKE MONSTER, keeping in mind how faithful movies remain to the reputed source.

If every Wyndham title chosen for screen translation had made it, his name would have become a household word. Back when I paid attention to shooting schedules, I read of flicks called STOWAWAY TO MARS and THE CHRYSALIDS on the boards. Never read anything but the titles, and didn't even know at the time that the latter was REBIRTH, so they could have been based on some other sources, but there's a chance that they weren't.

This is as good a time as any to add to your comments on ghosts in films. It is true that movies have largely ignored the more macabre possibilities. There have been a tiny handful of pictures depicting wraiths as menacing, but only a handful, ranging in calibre from THE UNINVITED to CURSE OF THE CAT PEOPLE and STRANGLER OF THE SWAMP. There have also been a few in which they menace their killers (MAN IN THE TRUNK, THE TORMENTED) and some in which they've been heroes, more or less, protecting the innocent from their enemies (as in the English INVISIBLE CREATURE, the American RETURN OF PETER GRIMM, THIRTEEN GHOSTS, and THE SCREAMING SKULL).

CARNIVAL OF SOULS utilized the element in a particularly offbeat manner, and in spite of the non-existent budget, proved a pretty eerie little novelty. Those involving re-animated corpses don't count, and zombie flicks certainly don't, while those in which the ghosts take on quasi-physical form or possess the body of a living person are "borderline" examples (and there have been several, THE HAUNTED PALACE, TOMB OF LIGEIA, THE PHANTOM SPEAKS, POSSESSION OF JOEL DELANEY, DARK INTRUDER, J.D.'s REVENGE, HOUSE OF THE SEVEN CORPSES, THE SUPERNATURAL, etc.)

In addition to the humorous ghosts, another habit has been to "explain them away" in the finale, and a number of misnomered pedestrian mysteries have falsely implied their presence in title or publicity (watch out for GHOST DIVER, GHOST OF THE CHINA

SEAS, or THE GHOSTLY FACE). The one you bring up is, I believe, GHOST SHIP, a minor British entry from the early fifties. Your description of it as "chilling" doesn't register well. I found GHOST SHIP to be an incredibly vacuous, boring, and pointless failure of the type made for no visible reason beyond filling out a double bill, curiously devoid of atmosphere and vastly inferior to the usual UK production.

((Different strokes for different folks, as they say. Actually, I saw it so many years ago I may well be confusing it with something else.)))

(SETH GOLDBERG)

Mark Keller has a very interesting article. Myself I have tended to like the SF story about real people much more than the traditional space opera story. I think I may have a mild though not absolute aversion to the monomyth type story. Also Mark is correct in calling these wish-fulfillment stories more than they are SF. Much as I found STAR WARS cute and enjoyable, I worry about the reaction to the film. For some damn reason everytime something has a universal appeal it gets turned into a religion complete with the lack of sophistication and awareness that makes popular religions. Be interesting to see what would happen if an excellent serious SF movie were to be made (I do not know of any 2001 fandoms though there were claims of religious experiences with film and everyone going "goshwow" in connection with what I felt was one of the less significant parts of the film - the "ultimate trip" segment).

Ray Davis (p.67) has an excellent point in noting that Old and New Wave writers can reach similar conclusions and can be just two ways of getting at the same thing (a good story).

A CANTICLE FOR LEIBOWITZ was a first novel! It was so good I figured Miller had to have done something somewhere else (not SF) before. I am curious, but did he ever write another novel or book since CANTICLE and what happened to him?

((I heard rumors back in the mid-1960's that Miller was working on a novel called MARSPLAN, which never appeared. Then I heard rumors he'd had a complete mental breakdown, and was confined to an institution for life. Then I had someone tell me that he occasionally showed up at West Coast conventions, but just gave up writing. I have no idea which if any of these are true, and welcome enlightenment.)))

(RICK BROOKS)

I'm tempted to agree with Mark Sharpe on articles tearing apart an SF story. I recently did an article on Phil Farmer's Maker of Universes series. The series was one of my favorites. But after digging into it, I was forced to do a hatchet job on it. I'm not so happy about that.

((I don't understand. There are many novels that I really enjoy that have major flaws in them. It doesn't lessen my enjoyment of, say, A PRINCESS OF MARS, AT THE MOUNTAINS OF MADNESS, THE ATLANTIC ABOMINATION, or others to talk about what is wrong with them. Damon Knight, who demolished THE WORLD OF NULL A, later wrote that he was sorry that he hadn't pointed out all of the good things in van Vogt while he was showing that the plot was essentially nonsense.)))

(GARY DEINDORFER)

I wonder why such religions as Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism haven't been treated in depth in a science fiction or fantasy context. We have the three "After Such Knowledge" books of Blish, Miller's A CANTICLE FOR LEIBOWITZ, and C.S. Lewis' trilogy for Christianity. Let's see some canny writer transfer, say, Tibetan Buddhism to an SF context. (Hmm, DUNE is based on Islam, come to think of it.)

I dimly remember reading various Wyndham things, but they never stuck in my memory. But then I have a different kind of memory than you do. Yours is all-encompassing and bibliographic. Mine is very strong in certain ways and very weak in others. Let us say that the overall impression I have of Wyndham's writing is an understated, wry, ironic quality that puts me in mind of the hypothetical distillation of the best British science horror movies ever made, since it could never be as good as anything actually imminentized as the Eschaton. It is good to learn about one of SF's lesser lights...at least insofar as his impact on me. (If asked what writer in the genre has had the most impact on me I can answer without hesitation: Sturgeon. I still think he's the greatest of them all. I still don't think anybody else in SF or out of it has managed to say as well what Sturgeon said in MORE THAN HUMAN).

I think Keller's is just the crust of the monomyth. In its deepest, most felt form, I think the monomyth is what has manifested itself as Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam: God become Man, Heaven moving within Earth; Yang quickening Yin.

((I agree absolutely on Sturgeon. I considered doing a comprehensive article on Sturgeon for MYTHOLOGIES at one time, and estimated it would run well over 200 pages. And that was probably too superficial.)))

(GARY DEINDORFER again)

I see no reason why a science fiction story can't be explored in depth in a fanzine. It all depends on how well it is done. A great writer, someone of immense perception, could perhaps take a typical pulp SF potboiler from the 30s and write a book which related this piece of bad writing to philosophy, psychology, dreams, reality, illusion, magic both real and imagined and ghod knows what else. On the other hand, it is quite possible to take a masterpiece like Gardner Dozois' story, "The Last Day of July" and write a real piece of shit about it. It all depends on how it's done. But since literature is one of the aspects of existence, I see no reason why it can't be written about in a very illuminating way.

The so-called non-traditionalists like Silverberg, LeGuin, and Ellison already seem quite traditional to me. Eric Mayer made a good point in a TITLE column that the SF writers aren't really talking about some of the things perking in the coffeepot of the world that are still sub rosa. I guess I'm spoiled since I plunged into Proust. He tells me about those really secret places of mind and life and time that I had forgotten I knew about until I began to read SWANN'S WAY last week. Suddenly SF, old wave or new wave, seems like a dim memory of a tired rehash in the moody moonlit light cast by the mind of this reclusive genius.

((Most of us, I suspect, have favorite books outside the genre that make the field seem pale by comparison. My own list would include THE SUN ALSO RISES, FRANNY AND ZOOEY, and WUTHERING HEIGHTS, my favorite novel of all time.)))

(JOHN LELAND)

As regards A CASE OF CONSCIENCE, I have criticized it elsewhere on several grounds. My chief points were (1) Blish has his priest cite as Lithian virtues (or pseudo-virtues) not true Christian virtues but Anglo-American traditions like due process of law. (2) The church has never denied that some people were virtuous without knowledge of Revelation: this is one of the standard theological problems and discovering a planetfull of such people would not create any more of a problem on a theoretical level than already exists, especially since Egtverchi demonstrates that Lithian virtue is not inherent but the product of social conditioning. (Dante dealt with virtuous pagans by putting them in Limbo; I am not sure what the modern Catholic Church's views are. Not being a Catholic I can only say that my own view, since as a Presbyterian I have no Limbo, is that pagans of sufficient virtue may be saved

by the direct election of God. (3) The possibility of an Unfallen World is not necessarily heretical: C.S. Lewis in a fascinating essay reprinted in *OF OTHER WORLDS* considers this is one of the possibilities we may meet. His view, of course, need not be that of the Catholic Church, but so far as I know the church has never denied the possibility. Lewis in his fiction assumes that all worlds except Earth are unfallen. I doubt that very much, but the matter must await further evidence.

On the Anderson article, which I very much enjoyed, there are two minor points I would suggest (subject to correction by Mr Anderson, of course). First, the "Jerusalem Catholics" may have been suggested by the *JERUSALEM BIBLE*, a recent version which owes much of its popularity to the rather tenuous connection it had with Professor J.R.R. Tolkien. It is, in a sense, a "Catholic" Bible, since it includes books regarded by most Protestants as Apocryphal.

Second, if Aytharaych's name is meant to be HRH, I suspect it may owe more to the well-known early English fantasy writer H. Rider Haggard than to "His Royal Highness".

On Mark Keller's brief article, I was struck by his choice of the proposition "The best and happiest century for mankind was the Thirteenth in Europe" as one that most men would unhesitatingly reject. There is, as he may know, a book actually called *THE THIRTEENTH: GREATEST OF CENTURIES* and as pre-modern times go it was a good period; not only a cultural high (St Francis, St Thomas Aquinas, lots of fine Gothic architecture, etc.) but even the peasants were relatively well off (apparently). On the other hand, I must admit most informed people probably would not want to spend their lives before modern medicine; they just wouldn't have enough life on the average to make it worthwhile. (A reporter put the question to the SCA group here a while back: would you prefer to live then, and everyone said no for exactly that reason).

I think I was too sweeping in saying wars were generally decided by sheer numbers; even though I did say I admitted exceptions. It would be fairer to include the proviso "given approximate technological equality". I do not really see the relevance of your remarks to Coney to my arguments, unless you intend to imply that I should not condemn Anderson or Pournelle on the basis of one story. I should say, if so, that I enjoy both authors and have read very considerable quantities of their work, so I do not feel I am speaking unfairly; however in fact I was not really debating their general attitudes but mentioning Anderson's position in passing while discussing one specific work of Pournelle and Niven, viz. *MOTE*.

On the question of what dead author should be raised to write again, for me the answer is inescapable: E.R. Eddison to complete *THE MEZENTIAN GATE*, the most frustrating fragment since *EDWIN DROOD*. It could have had all the magnificent sweep of *LORD OF THE RINGS*, enlivened by the passions Tolkien chose to omit. But all Eddison has completed were the philosophical chapters, leaving undone the wars, plots and other delightful things. And he had already begun to plan a sequel...

((I'm inordinately fond of Eddison myself. I'll make enemies saying this, but I have felt all along that Tolkien was vastly overrated, that his trilogy was on a level with Lloyd Alexander's *PRYDAIN* books, or Susan Cooper's more recent series. Eddison and Mervyn Peake surpass him easily, and he is equalled in accomplishment, if not in scope, by William Goldman and Peter Beagle. More recently, I have read Stephen Donaldson's trilogy, *THE CHRONICLES OF THOMAS COVENANT THE UNBELIEVER*, which rival Tolkien in themselves, and which promise greater accomplishments in the future from a writer who has just turned thirty. And you've put your finger on Tolkien's missing dimension - human emotion.)))

(DOUG BARBOUR)

I don't know either Curlovich or Keller so my feelings aren't really involved in their "debate". Therefore I loved it -- even the name-calling. Arguments are so much fun as long as you're witnessing them. I would like to side with Curlovich because there's a part of me would like to be able to blame the church for all the wrongs he heaps upon its head (not the religion, mind you; I suspect that early Christianity especially was truly awe inspiring). After reading both sides, however, I have to go with Mark Keller as the person who most effectively arrays his arguments before me. The whole was fascinating to read, however; I keep learning things in your fanzine and I'm not sure that's kosher for a fanzine.

(JOHN BARTELT)

In the paragraph where Curlovich is refuting that he confused the Huns and Germans (and where Curlovich overstates Keller's remark: a classic ploy to make your opponent look foolish), he goes on to talk about the Germans and Goths. (Actually "Germans" is a bad term. The various tribes - including the Goths - should be referred to as German-speaking people or Germanic peoples, particularly since the groups known as the "Germani" and "Teutone" were originally Celtic, and that's a whole other story. That's just one example of how a large group can retain a name while the composition changes, since the Germani and others were later speaking the language named for them.) Anyway, the point I'm trying to get to is with respect to Curlovich's blithe statement that "the Goths originated in Scandinavia". This must be the biggest myth concerning the German-speaking peoples. The best evidence indicates that the various groups of Germanic peoples came from the East, and probably inhabited the area which is now Poland and/or the Baltic States. And to cite Tacitus' GERMANIA (I assume that's what Curlovich meant by GERMANICA) is very dangerous, since Tacitus is wrong about so much. I'm surprised that anyone with a knowledge of history would try to perpetuate this myth.

(GEORGE FLYNN)

Partially contrary to what Eric Miller says, I believe the Romans did rely heavily on cavalry in the very late empire; of course, by then the army was mostly barbarian anyway.

Glad to see John Leland backing up most of the same points I made. I was also looking at a book on what's known about the Huns. Among other things, it made clear how little the ancient historians can be trusted on nomenclature (Goths vs Germans, etc.): in the 5th century many writers still called all the northern barbarians by names such as Scythians, since that was what Herodotus had called the people in the same area. The historians also tended to get carried away when they had an ax to grind; look at Procopius accusing Justinian and Theodora of more crimes than any human beings could have managed (certainly is fun to read, though). And then there are all the horror stories lovingly selected by Tacitus et al, currently disseminated every week on I, CLAUDIUS (Mind you, most of it is true, but...)

(ARTHUR D. HLAVATY)

On Mary's virginity: The Orthodox Christian attitude was that virginity was the ideal, but that those who could not live up to the ideal should be fruitful and multiply. St Paul said, "It is good for a man not to touch a woman. Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband." (I Corinthians 7:1-2) Many Christians have tended to see sex as a grim necessity to keep the species going, and some have even flirted with the blasphemy of questioning the Lord's judgment in choosing such a dirty method. To that sort of mind, someone like Mary, who could reproduce without all that nasty stuff, would be the ideal.

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(LYNNE HOLDOM)

To Curlovich: The Greeks and Romans didn't seem (in plays, etc.) to praise the military virtues so much as take them for granted. This was a necessary part of manliness. VIRTUS, the word that has come down in English as virtue, means manliness or courage (from Latin vir=man). Pius originally dutiful as such it was given to the Young Pompey when he avenged his father's death. This hardly implies a lack of interest in military virtues. In fact when Antonius Hybrida was being prosecuted for misgovernment, one of the most telling points against him was that he had been caught militarily unprepared. As for the Greeks, well consider the role of "Guardians" in Plato's REPUBLIC? A lot of writers denounced the excesses of war but few condemned war itself. It was bad only to be on the losing side as it could, and often did, mean slavery, another ancient institution that was rarely condemned if only because most thinkers couldn't imagine what to replace it with. And Curlovich might consider the Gladitorial games and the role they played in Roman society and imagine what a populace that had such games as their principal form for amusement must be like. Peace was unknown from the time of Numa to Augustus in Rome so naturally it was praised as it was so scarce. Consider that the Romans praised Hannibal's military genius which hardly means they thought it unimportant.

Then to Mark Keller: On the whole I agree with him more except with regard to religion. Christianity in the early Patristic period was anti-pleasure. This was partly in response to what the Romans considered pleasure: orgies, gladitorial games, pagan festivals, baths that were little more than massage parlours and brothels. However they were not the only ones. The Neo-Platonists, Stoics, and numerous mystery religions were taking the same line. Christianity was not the only religion around in the later Roman Empire. Mithrism was popular as were all sorts of cults. Astrology became very popular. Fate was worshipped more and more as people felt they were powerless to control their own destiny. Consider THE GOLDEN ASS. The hero Lucius Apelleus becomes a priest of Isis and goes through numerous initiation ceremonies. This is a far cry from the worship of the old Roman Gods. These cults did not begin to decline until the Christians took over the Empire and suppressed them just as they suppressed "heretical" versions of Christianity. Origen was declared heretical, as he believed in reincarnation. Castration was also condemned by the church and no eunuch could serve as a priest. (Incidentally priests could marry until the time of the Hildebrandine Papacy -- about 1000 AD). However the anti-women attitude is all through the writing of the Church Fathers such as Clement of Alexandria, Augustine, Ambrose, Jerome, etc. Many debated whether or not married people could attain heaven or whether they should be allowed to take the sacraments, etc. Augustine stated that Original Sin was perpetuated in sexual intercourse as without Eve's sin, God would have arranged a "purer" way for mankind to reproduce. People (mostly men) ran off to the desert and buried themselves alive or perched on pillars to gain holiness. No, this was not the central Christian tradition but it was not condemned by the church either. Anthony was one of these saints. These attitudes are just the surface of a general zeitgeist that Christianity benefitted from. The population of the Empire halved in the century following Marcus Aurelius. Children were scarce. Roman laws gave benefits for those who had at least three children and few did. Some of the real disillusionment can be seen in the fact that the rural population declined as well and Diocletian passed laws to keep the people where they were (starting serfdom according to many historians.) Considering all this, it is not surprising that reproduction was considered to be the only real goal of sex. The Romans gave the early Church such a bad example of other usages. Ovid in his ART OF LOVE tells a man all the ways to seduce a woman but adds that if they don't work, try rape. This does not quite suggest the civilized manners that a lot of historians would have you believe.

I seem to be straying from the point which is that the Christians themselves did not

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cause the Fall of Rome. They were a symptom of the whole inner rot that struck the Empire and left it open for the barbarians to loot and conquer. The fourth and fifth centuries were filled with population movements. Among other things, the climate seems to have gotten dryer. Then there is the lead pipe theory for the Fall -- the Romans went slightly senile from progressive lead poisoning due to the fact that all their plumbing was lead. Romans never made hay either. Finally, there is the Mack Reynolds theory -- the Romans spent so much on gladiatorial games, thus keeping the population in idle amusement, that they went broke. But a population used to gladiatorial games for amusement is not going to study or be interested in philosophy. It's more likely to turn to some mystery religion that promises quick salvation and there were lots of those around.

Back to Curlovich: Apollonius of Tyana was a 2nd century religious leader who claimed to be the virgin born son of (I think) Apollo, who preached a lot, performed a lot of miracles including raising someone from the dead. He attracted a lot of followers. The early Christian Church hated him because his life was a close parallel to that of Christ. In fact the Church claimed that the Devil had been working overtime to create so many parallels between various pagan cults and Christianity just so pagans could point these out and dissuade belief.

The Medieval Church naturally looked backwards fondly toward Rome where there was more law and order (especially in retrospect). Violence was all too apt to end in the burning of churches. Those barbarians were violent and they were pagan. Incidentally, the Church was strongest in the cities. Pagan originally meant countryman and heathen meant heath dweller.

(ROY TACKETT)

Eric Miller wonders about the lack of inventiveness on the part of the Romans and suggests the explanation lies with their educational system. In part, but one must look beyond that to see why their educational system was what it was. It wasn't really a lack of inventiveness nor was it exclusive with the Romans. Rome was, after all, Hellenistic and the Greek attitude toward such things as technology hung heavily on Rome. And that attitude, both Greek and Roman, was lack of interest. No true gentleman of those times would deign to work with his hands. Artisans, craftsmen, tradesmen were the lowest of the low, useful at times, of course, but not fit company for citizens. Consider Lucian's story of the time he wondered (briefly) if he should become a sculptor or an intellectual. "If you become a sculptor," he was warned, "hunched over your work, your eyes and mind on the ground, low as low can be, you will never lift your head to think the thoughts of a true man or a free spirit." Aristotle said: "the finest type of city will not make an artisan a citizen." Technology in the ancient world was sometimes a pastime but never something to be taken seriously. As a later aristocracy put it: "It just isn't done, you know." Besides there was the feeling that it was generally against the gods (consider the position of Hephaestus in the pantheon). Science attempts to understand nature; technology tampers with it and that isn't done either, you know.

No true citizen of the Hellenistic world would look on industry as a source of wealth. True wealth, they felt, came only from the land (and that attitude isn't completely dead yet either). Commerce could be carried on by Easterners such as the Phoenicians or Jews but no Roman would dirty his hands with it. So, yes, the basic knowledge was there but the Romans did not develop a technological or industrial system simply because they didn't want to.

And do I need to add that I have found the Curlovich-Keller thing quite amusing?

((((It frequently amazes me how seriously people can be in their emotional involvement in an argument the resolution of which has little to do with their personal status.)))

.....

(DON FITCH)

"...the savage tribes erected no buildings, conducted no trade, created no art." That should not go unchallenged. Examined literally, it is clearly untrue; surely even the layman is aware of archaeological discoveries of buildings of considerable size, though done in wood and/or mud, rather than lasting stone. They may have been architecturally impressive and aesthetically satisfying, even though the "savage" people lacked the manpower from slaves which marked the "great civilizations". Prehistoric -- even stone age -- trade routes across Europe and much of Asia are now being traced with growing astonishment. The Scythians are, I assume, to be considered "barbarian savages"; yet five minutes' examination of photographs of their gold jewelry should convince anyone that they had an Art quite capable of standing up against anything produced since then. And apparently all these letterwriters -- John Curlovich, Mark Keller, & Jim Mann -- agree that Quality, Greatness, or anything worth consideration, necessarily implies Size, Ostentation, Complexity, and Permanence...a fine example of cultural conditioning. We may point with pride (though we had nothing to do with it) to the Greatness of early Greek literature, which produced THE ODYSSEY and THE ILIAD, but we have no good reason to assume that their "savage" neighbors did not have an even more superb oral literature which never chanced to get written down.

(DAVE HULAN)

The analogy between arguing about a chemical formula and about an interpretation of history isn't particularly valid, imho. Chemistry has a well-defined methodology, which has been mastered by a negligible handful of non-chemists; you very rarely find qualified chemists disagreeing on chemical questions, and when they do it's immediately the subject of a lot of research to settle the question once and for all. History is an entirely different sort of discipline; there is no generally accepted methodology for interpreting history, eminent historians disagree wildly even about questions of fact (who killed the princes in the Tower?), and there is even less agreement regarding questions of interpretation. In that kind of situation, there's no reason to believe that the interpretation of a well-read non-historian would be of less value than that of a person with impressive academic credentials. Granted, a person with a graduate degree in history can be assumed to have at least studied a certain minimum amount of history -- but a lot of people with no academic credentials whatever may have studied as much or more, especially when you narrow it down to a particular area of history. (I probably know more about Jewish history than 90% of the PhD's in university history departments in this country, although my academic study of history is confined to one year of History of Western Civilization and one semester of History of Russia.) Unlike chemistry, which requires rather expensive laboratory equipment for effective study, history is accessible to anyone who can read and has access to a library, if he's interested in the subject.

You say that the veneration of Mary is not so much because of her virginity as because she bore a child while still a virgin. But in that case, why was it proclaimed back in the late 40s or early 50s to be official Church dogma that Mary was still a virgin at the time of her ascension into Heaven? I'm almost positive that I remember something of the sort in the news of the time; perhaps some Roman Catholic will elaborate on this. (If it's denied, I'll have to do some research, because I'm practically sure I'm right, but unless someone disagrees with me that the dogma does exist, there's no need for me to go to the trouble; my house doesn't exactly overflow with books on Roman Catholic dogma.)

To Eric Miller: Rome was as technologically progressive as Greece, which isn't saying a great deal, of course. Rome invented the dome and the arch, for instance, which were lacking from Greek architecture, and Roman roads and aqueducts were well beyond anything the Greeks did. It's true that things were invented in the Dark Ages that

the Romans never dreamed of, but this is in keeping with the frequently-made observation that before the advent of Western Civilization (starting about 1500) the progress of technology had next to nothing to do with the level of civilization as measured by achievement in the humanities. Some of the most important inventions in history - the use of the horse to draw chariots, for instance, and later the stirrup - were products of pure illiterate barbarian cultures. Most ancient civilizations were pretty conservative technologically; that wasn't an unusual characteristic of the Romans. An interesting hypothesis that just occurred to me is that technological innovation is unlikely to occur to any great extent in a society with an economic base in slavery, which was true of almost all the ancient civilizations. Since the point of most technological improvements is to reduce the amount of labor that goes into producing a particular effect, there is no real incentive for it in a slave based economy. The slaves have nothing to gain by inventing things, since they'll have to work just as hard and will get no benefit; on the other hand, the slave owners, since they don't do the work, have no real idea what would be a useful invention. The one major period of technological innovation in the Greco-Roman world was the brief Hellenistic period between the time that Alexander shattered the city-state economy of the Hellenic period and the time that Rome reimposed uniformity on the Mediterranean world.

I reiterate that this is just a hypothesis that occurred to me as I was writing the above paragraph, and I don't know how well it would stand the test of comparison with actual societies. I've read a lot of history, but it's been 90% or more concentrated on English and Jewish history, and neither was ever predominantly based on a slave economy. I'd be interested in what others with more expertise in other facets of history think of the idea.

A great deal of thought has been expended on the question of why Rome fell; perhaps a somewhat different angle of attack would be from the aspect of why Rome rose in the first place? If that question could be answered believably, an obvious reason for its fall would be the failure of whatever made it rise. The Roman Empire was a very peculiar entity compared to anything that had gone before (or since, for that matter); none of the other early empires came close to controlling a territory that size for more than a century or so. The Persian Empire had been the most successful, and it lasted only about 200 years between Cyrus' conquest of Babylonia and Darius II's defeat by Alexander. The Roman Empire (and its predecessor Republic) ruled vast territories for three times that long before the end of the rule from Rome itself, and its successor state in Constantinople continued to be influential for about as long again. What was the quality of the early Roman state that let it successfully annex and rule such a diverse empire for so much longer than any state had done previously? It wasn't a technological innovation; the Romans were economically less successful than the Persians had been, and used about the same technology. Decide which qualities of the Roman state let it rise; then see which of them disappeared at the time the decline began.

(JOHN LELAND)

Eric Miller's view on the fall of Rome resembles one put forward by L.S.L. de Camp and others. My own feeling is that although artistically the Romans were imitative they were good practical engineers and their technological development was as good as could be expected. It's certainly true that an industrial revolution would have helped them -- rapid communication would have been extremely useful for example -- but I do not think that the Romans were close enough to, say, the electric telegraph that they can be said to have really missed a chance when they failed to develop it.

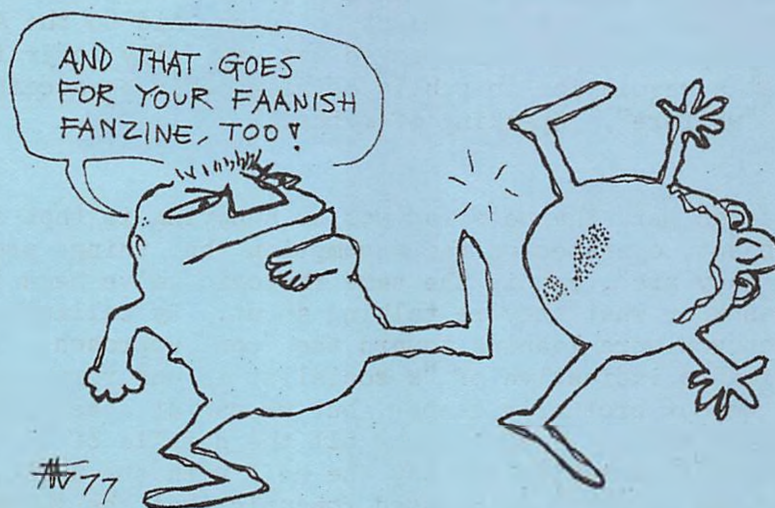
The example of the Roman army is rather a poor one for Miller's case, since it underwent considerable alteration over the four or five hundred years of major Roman

history, and was rapidly converted to a cavalry force when it became apparent in the sixth century that this was what was needed; it was this conversion that saved the Eastern Roman Empire (which, after all, was the bigger, richer half) and even permitted it briefly under Justinian to reconquer much of the West.

My own feeling is that fundamentally Rome simply had too many problems all at once, and it is this multiplicity of difficulties which prevented them from concentrating on and perhaps solving any given problem. The feel of the time is, I think, caught very well by the game FALL OF ROME, put out by SPI: you beat the Germans and the Persians invade; you beat the Persians and Egypt revolts; you never have enough men where you need them or enough money to pay them, and if you manage to hobble along for a few years without total collapse you are considered a "winner".

On the question of the use of primary vs secondary sources for discussion of ancient attitudes, it seems to me that any scholarly discussion must ultimately rest on the surviving ancient material, fragmentary and biased as it no doubt is; it is still all the evidence that we have. On the other hand, for a semi-popular discussion like this one, a reliable secondary compilation may be able to furnish a more objective overview of the whole ancient civilization (or more accurately, series of civilizations) while quotations from individual ancient authors may be unrepresentative and misleading. Care is needed.

((((It strikes me that the basic question in the argument, originally at least, was not so much what caused the fall of Rome so much as, is the best source of material about a civilization to be found in its artists and historians, or is it to be found in the writing of current historians. If one assumes the former, then Curlovich has to be right. If one assumes the latter, then Keller is more clearly correct. The truth obviously lies somewhere in the middle. For what it's worth, my own opinion is that things are never as simple as "X caused Y" in terms of historical changes, so I ascribe to your opinion, that Rome faced too many problems at once.)))



GOVERNMENT

(ALAN BOSTICK)

I liked your comment to Marty Levine in the lettercolumn that anarchy is "the most restrictive form of government, because there are as many governments as there are citizens." In my own view, anarchy cannot be viable as a government for this very reason. It's just fine for only one person, but for more than one, conflict will always take place, even if only to a mild degree, and some sort of system will evolve where conflict can be resolved. It could be anything from hitting the other guy over the head with a big stick to compromise and cooperation. In any case, both parties must make concessions of some sort to maintain order (in the first case, even the guy with the stick must take time out now and then to wallop his buddy, so that the status quo is maintained). For large groups of people in an anarchistic state, there will be banding together, either to take advantage of the rest of the people or for mutual defense against violently inclined people or groups of people. Eventually these groups of people. Eventually these groups will crystallize into tribes, villages, or whatever, with a definite social structure. Voila! No more anarchy!

(((Precisely.)))

(JOHN BOSTON)

Mark Sharpe's comments on welfare reflect a fairly common mixture of ignorance and stereotyping. As you indirectly point out, the majority of welfare recipients are persons who are incapable of working even if they could find jobs: invalids, psychiatric cases, children, the elderly. Another enormous category is mothers with young children, who are de facto incapable of working in the absence of adequate child care. (Day care facilities that do exist in New York are heavily populated with working mothers, and every time a center is closed the papers are full of interviews with despairing mothers who don't want to go back on welfare.)

This particular misunderstanding is extremely widespread, of course. There was an amusing survey conducted by the NEW YORK TIMES a year or so ago in which the respondents were asked their opinion of "welfare". A large proportion disapproved. Then they were asked their opinions of each of the programs which, taken together, make up "welfare": Aid to Families with Dependent Children, Aid to the Aged, Blind and Disabled, etc. The proportion who disapproved was radically lower for every one of them. I suspect that a revolution in public opinion could be accomplished simply by abolishing the word "welfare". Speaking of myths...

(DAVE SZUREK)

Perhaps the basic reason Mark Sharpe's rap was so annoying is that it stems from ignorance of the subject, operates on the assumption that things are "as they should be" rather than "as they are", and is the same rhetoric we've been inundated with by people who don't even know what they're talking about. By calling welfare a "mixed blessing" I'd suspect you were leaning toward the "con" approach, whereas Mark interpreted the description as indicative of "a socialist in our very ranks". No, we aren't obligated to be our brother's keeper, but we can at least give a tinker's damn. Let's hope Mark is just naive. I don't know all the details of his mind set, but occasionally have run into fanatics who say the hell with the unfit, who find the idea of "only the strong survive" so blasted romantic that the thought of mass death via starvation and deprivation doesn't bother them nearly so much as an individual receiving his or her monthly pittance without holding a job. This is very extreme of course, extreme even for the right wing sector, but it's an attitude shared by a fairly sizable minority, and I doubt that your answer would do much to move them away from this stance. I wouldn't jump to the conclusion that Sharpe's beliefs go that far out on a limb, but inasmuch as he expects hopeless invalids, infants, and the

elderly to go out and find jobs too, I wouldn't entirely dismiss the possibility. It happens that I am, at present, one of those lowly welfare bums you hear about every so often. I've had it with the attitude expressed by people like Sharpe, especially as it most frequently is advanced by the misinformed and often fed by some of the most ridiculous rumors conceivable. All that absurd Welfare Cadillac bull and the like. I originally applied because I was unable to find a job, and even spot labor was becoming rare. I didn't at the time plan to stay on the rolls as long as I have, but neither did it fill me with shame and remorse. I do not feel that this situation lowered my value as a human being, and while considering it a temporary thing, was in no frantic haste to return immediately to the string of unsatisfying employment I'd experienced prior. I equate self-improvement more with something internal than with one's socio-economic position, how much money he or she brings in, or how well they fill cultural expectations. Spiritual independence means to me more than the financial. I'd long had my quarrels with the work ethic, particularly when it becomes an actual "ethic" observed more as a method of justifying one's existence than as a means of livelihood, and steady employment has always had bad effects on my head. Time and freedom from rigid structure are more precious in my personal value system than either money or status.

((At this point, Dave went into a long discussion of some medical problems that made it impossible for him to return to work. While these may be valid in his particular case, I think they muddy the waters of the argument he has made above. Needless to say, I hope, I disagree with the last few remarks. This is precisely why I referred to welfare as a "mixed" blessing. Dave seems to be saying that if it is his personal desire not to work, that he feels no compunction about letting society support him. That would be fine if society were some amorphous mechanism not supported by those of us who do work. But I see no reason why I should put up with my own unpleasant job, in order to siphon off a portion to allow Dave to pander to his own desires for self-enrichment.

It doesn't bother me the least to pay substantially for those legitimately collecting welfare, the vast majority, but I do resent the small minority of freeloaders, not only because they're freeloading at my expense, but because their existence has put the legitimate needs of welfare recipients under a cloud. They're not only stealing from me, they're stealing from the invalid, the elderly, and the children. I cannot accept even the slightest bit of Dave's argument that people who don't agree with the work ethic should be allowed to collect, because that's hypocrisy. They're taking advantage of the ethic of others without contributing themselves. If they don't believe in the work ethic, let them remove themselves from the system.

Mark Sharpe and Dave Szurek strike me as opposite sides of the same coin. Their arguments both stem from egocentrism and selfishness. One is saying "don't take from me without my personal permission" and the other is saying "you must give me whether you want to or not".)))

FANATICS

(MICHAEL SHOEMAKER)

I have to doubt whether Carol has ever read THE TRUE BELIEVER. How else can one explain her bizarre belief that Hoffer is "attacking fanaticism", "patronizing", "putting down", or "ridiculing". Even a cursory look would reveal that neither his intentions (preface) nor conclusions ("Good and Bad Mass Movements") corroborate such an attitude. In fact, the tone is remarkably detached from its subject and rather impersonal.

((From a conversation we had at Autoclave, it is clear she had not read Hoffer but was interpreting from my remarks.)))

(AVEDON CAROL)

Perhaps my reaction to your thing about fanatics was one of those "I've been scratched here before" things. Nevertheless, I still feel that one must be very careful about the use of such words. I hear it so often from people that it makes me despair of ever getting people to deal frankly with the issues. Seems to me that the people who use the word "fanatic" the most fit pretty well your definition of fanatics. That is, they are fanatical in their refusal to accept the possibility that my feminism may very well have a valid basis. I am often astounded at the lengths to which people will go to convince themselves that men are superior to women.

Do you honestly believe that the Panthers could have had the kind of impact they did if they had started with community activities of the sort they now practice? I think it's a sign that they were successful if they lasted long enough to evolve this way. Different means for different times. Obviously, their former methods would be counterproductive now. But they served a purpose at the time. They harnessed a segment of the black population which was not satisfied with less violent means, for one thing. It could have been a lot worse. The Panthers gave some direction to many people who had none, who might otherwise simply have rioted, even less effectively, and much more destructively. They gave their people a pride that had been alien to them before. Now, having gained that, they can get into community activities. They would have been just another civic group had they tried that in the sixties.

((That argument is a form of retrospective justification, and I had thought you had a better perspective than that. Many of us who were college age in the days of the Black Panthers felt that they were noble warriors fighting the Evil Establishment. We believed the glib words of Hampton, Cleaver, Seale, and others; we wanted to free Huey Newton. OK, we were fooled. We ought to have the courage to admit our mistakes. It was possible to move non-violently and be effective. Malcolm X proved that, and had he not been killed, there would have been little point to the Black Panthers, their energies would have been channeled into more constructive areas, and the two bit hoodlums who dominated the organization in those early years would have been recognized for what they were. I see no point in glorifying a bunch of jerks simply because they filled romantic rolls in my comparative youth. As you yourself have pointed out, people like Jerry Rubin, Abbie Hoffman, and the other darlings of the student movement turned out to be no better than the people they were attacking, in subsidiary areas. The same is true for many of the Black Revolutionaries, and I suspect that it will be obvious eventually that even some of the leading feminists have their ideological faults. A friend of mine who is quite close to some of the nationally known feminist leaders tells me that at least one familiar name is openly anti-semitic, among other things.)))

PSYCHOLOGY

(DON AYRES)

In your remarks on Hlavaty's letter, you mention a treatment based on the theory that an event which elicits a response is not trivial. Over the last few years in particular I've become most interested in what I call "functional reality", which boils down to that same sort of thing. If my girlfriend believes that my failure to call at a certain time is proof that I don't love her, then it is and no interaction with that individual can begin without recognition (if not acceptance) of that assumption, and the fact that I was dead at the time has nothing to do with that perception of reality; when this new datum is told her, she may modify her reality. I guess what I'm trying to say is that one's perception of a situation is infinitely more important than the reality of the situation. At least you start there when it comes to interpersonal relations; sometimes, as in the case of Hitler, you may want to try to bring the perception more in line with reality, and that's where the trouble starts.

(GRAHAM ENGLAND)

Recently I bought some GALAXY's and found a novel called GATEWAY by Pohl in them. This is explicitly psychological, and the persona of the computer analyst is recognizable. However well written it is, it's about people I don't like, and who do not cope with their problems. Pohl's description of a black hole may be OK; there's enough odd about them for me to believe him, and the society is like other high pressure research establishments. Both CERN and Lawrence Radiation Lab have newsletters that look a little like the Gateway Newsletter. The characters in the book do not cope well, and do not resolve situations, or grow. There's enough trouble in my everyday life anyway, so why read about others making as bad a mess as me?

Still, reading about other people's messes need not be a complete waste. Lida (my wife) bought PASSAGES by Gail Sheehy not long ago. The lives it describes therein are familiar, though life in Britain differs from that in the USA. One point that struck hard was that many had been to psychoanalysts and got next to nothing out of it. This would support your comments on psychoanalysis. In qualification, I've been going to a marriage guidance councillor for the last six months, and it has noticeably changed the way I do things. I can cope more, and others notice that too. My current boss has even put this in writing in my annual appraisal. Lida is less certain. A more balanced judgment might be that it depends on the patient how effective the cure is. An often made criticism of me is that I want others to do things for me rather than doing them myself. That's another point you've made before, since it seems that many others do this too. Ms Sheehy's way of approaching the problem might even be an effective one, if we could recognize ourselves in others' lives. The lady has verbal diarrhea. In trying to escape from saying things too quickly, and not being noticed, she drives each point home with far too many examples.

((I've skimmed through PASSAGES but not yet read it. The editorial this issue deals with some of her major points, which I had coincidentally made myself recently.)))

(FRED JAKOBCIC)

Re Michael Kalen Smith: Loners, as I see them, are people whose emotions are not readily visible. One could say that they are unemotional, indifferent or calm, cool and collected -- maybe they have a grip on their emotions and just do not see the necessity of showing them. For the most part, I don't get very excited, but that does not mean I don't care or have feelings, although some may think so. Just what good would it do and why should I get upset or excited?

((Some loners are emotionally self-sufficient to a great extent. Others are isolated emotionally against their conscious or unconscious will. There is apparently a certain amount of regionalism in this as well. I found people in the Midwest to be very closed emotionally compared to what I am used to, but friends from the west coast tell me that they see the same on the east, and friends from the east who have spent time in California tell me it's an emotional ocean.)))

(REBECCA LESSES)

I found your editorial on psychology to be quite interesting, and have only a few minor quibbles with you. First off, I disagree with you on the value of psychotherapy. I have myself been in therapy (not psychoanalysis) and have found it quite useful. While friends and bartenders and clergymen can be good people to talk to in times of trouble, they often cannot help when one is having a really hard time, because they really cannot see the problems objectively, as a therapist can, and do not have the training to see the tangles that one can get into in one's mind. This is of course not scientific proof, but I do not think it is an indication that therapy is totally worthless.

Second of all, while Rollo May may believe that the emotion/reason split has existed only since the beginning of the Twentieth Century, I think that evidence of it can be found earlier. In the REPUBLIC, Plato commends such a split and says that reason ought to rule the base emotions. More recently, Descartes describes the mind as being wholly cut off from the body, and the only part of a man not subject to natural laws and hence the only part capable of free will. To him, a man's body was a machine because of its enslavement to natural laws. He considered man the only being capable of free will because only his mind had free will; animals were wholly machines. Speaking of free will, why don't you consider trying that as a subject of an editorial - you could open quite a can of worms that way.

((I never said that individuals could not find help through psychotherapy. I do suspect that the kind of people who are smart enough to seek help in that fashion are smart enough to find some sort of help regardless of the existence of a formal psychotherapeutic situation. No flattery intended. I also recognize that there are talented individuals who are able to help other people with their psychological problems, and that they are aided by having formal background in psychology. But I don't think that the majority of psychotherapists are doing much to help the majority of their patients in a fashion that they wouldn't have been helped through other instrumentalities if the psychotherapeutic ones weren't available. This may reflect a childish faith in people's abilities to cure/help themselves, but it is nonetheless the way I feel.)))

SEXISM

(ALAN BOSTICK)

I'm afraid that I must disagree with you to an extent with regards to your responses to Jessica Salmonson's and Jennifer Bankier's letters. You are probably not guilty of conscious chauvinist behavior towards women, as you remark in your response to Jessica, but quite a lot of behavior patterns that feminists object to are not committed on the level you seem to be referring to. Much MCP type behavior is on the level where the man never gives it a second thought, or even if he does, doesn't consider it to be sexist, when it quite possibly is. This sort of thing is the root of the feminist issue, and passage of the ERA a hundred times over is not going to affect it that much. I know I've behaved in such a manner (and still do, unfortunately, not knowing precisely what actions they are that offend, so that I might make an attempt to correct them), and you do too, unless you are a very openminded and rational person, which I'm inclined to doubt, judging from what you write. And women do it too, even feminists. Since the problem is one of fundamental attitudes, it's going to be a long time before things are set right, if they ever are.

((I'm going to break a rule and interject here. First of all, I have never felt any particular desire to justify myself on chauvinist terms. I think you've set up a closed system by saying that things can be sexist whether or not a particular person agrees with the definition, because I think you're prejudging my opinions without ever hearing them. Let's see if I can give an example. John Smith and Mary Smith are co-workers. John has a powerful personality and often bullies Mary in such a way as to increase his productivity (and pay) and decrease hers. Many feminists would describe this as sexist. In some cases, it may be. But it is not necessarily, because John might well have bullied Sam Jones, another co-worker, in the same fashion. Similarly, if I apply for a job in a field that is predominantly male, and am hired, it might well be that the sexism of our system allowed me to get the inside track for that job. On the other hand, in a sexually equal society, I might also have gotten that job, and the act of sexism was on the part of those that hired me, not the person being hired. I think it is far better to become a manager and start promoting women into jobs commensurate with their abilities than to refuse to take a management job on the basis that women are unrepresented in management in

proportion to their numbers. This is going to sound like I'm puffing my own position, but the hell with it, I'm tired of being criticized as a sexist (mostly by males, strangely enough). I recently stuck my rather good job on the line by refusing point blank orders from my boss to engage in discriminatory pay practices between men and women during our annual inventory. I threatened legal action and forced them to consult legal experts, who luckily backed my position. That is what males should be doing, not quitting their jobs because their company is slewed sexwise. If you abandon the field to the enemy, how the hell can you expect to win. "Oh, but on paper, it was a splendid victory." I'm tired of those splendid big victories. I had my bellyful of them when I marched and picketed and sat-in. In the real world, you don't win that kind of struggle with a few romantic big battles. You win, if you do, by winning more of the small ones than you lose, and not getting discouraged by the latter.

Male feminists seem to come predominantly in two types. First there are the chest beaters. "Oh, look at me, I have sinned. I am a product of our evil capitalist society and I'm not responsible for what I do. But I should be. Oh, how I have sinned." There's a number of fans who fit this class. They're useless to feminists as well as to themselves. You don't change things by prattling about your sins; you change things by correcting them. And the ones you correct first are those nearest to you, your own. Sure, we all make mistakes. I not only have probably taken advantage of women, I am certain of it. I also take advantage of Blacks, Chicanos, the poor, the elderly, the young, the fit, the rich, the feminists, the chauvinists, and everyone else. You can't live without taking advantage of people in at least some ways. That doesn't make you a racist, a chauvinist, or anything else. It makes you a human being.

The second kind (also found among fans) are those that say, "Look, I'm a feminist. Want to sleep with me?" I'm very suspicious of any male who claims to be a feminist. I don't. I never did. I claim to be a humanist. I dislike all people equally, and if that makes me a misogynist, so be it. One of the reasons I've enjoyed fandom for many years has been that there is such a comparatively high level of tolerable people in it. The level has been dropping lately. When I joined fandom, it was nowhere near as elitist as it is now - some of it self-defensive because of the influx of fringe fandoms. But it goes further than that.

Several times I've made the point that the worst aspect of sexism, from my point of view, is that it cuts off one half of the human race from potential close friendship with me. This is obviously a selfish way to look at things, but we all look at things selfishly, but few of us are willing to admit it. In any case, the factionalization of fandom (usually in camps that have nothing inherently involving fandom) appalls me. I can understand when people like Susan Wood say that they are tired of saying the same things over and over again, explaining to males why their actions are offensive. I cannot understand why this therefore justifies women-only parties at world-cons (particularly as official functions) such as has been suggested in the past by people who should damn well know better. If fandom is in fact so totally filled with males whose only purpose at conventions is to find a good lay, then maybe we should give serious thought to limiting attendance to conventions. But we certainly should not start segregating our functions sexually. What would happen if someone suggested a males only party, for example?

I've strayed from the point, as well as completely destroying the flow of Alan's letter, for which I apologize. Some things can't wait. Let me just finish by saying that it is just as wrong to assume that a male is a chauvinist as it is to assume that women are inherently submissive. Goddamn, it amazes me how people can commit the same sin they are condemning in the same sentence.)))

(ALAN BOSTICK continued)

Lesbianism is a political issue related to women's rights in our society. I know of quite a few women who are lesbians not because they are basically attracted to other women more than they are to men, but because they find the behavior of men to be so inhuman that they refuse to have sex with them. They're lesbians because they are feminists. Of course, there's a great number of lesbians who are that way because they do prefer women to men, but that has little to do with the question at hand. You say political sex strikes you as a perversion? Well, I don't feel as strongly as you about the idea, but I still think it's a bad idea; however, that doesn't affect whether or not it exists, or how widespread it is.

In your response to Jennifer's letter, you give the impression that women are equally culpable for oppression of the sexes as men are. While I find the view that it is men and only men who do the oppressing to be a silly one, there is merit to the claim that the roots of sexism in our society were brought about when, back in the fabled days of a Long Time Ago, males started taking on the dominant role in society. Both sexes are oppressed, I agree, and both are responsible for oppression, but males seem to do a lot more of it than women do, by virtue of the fact that they are in the dominant position.

((My position has been all along that men and women are probably equally responsible for role assignment, and that this is responsible for the "oppression" that exists. It has also been my position all along that human misery is impossible to quantify, but that doesn't matter. It is not important whether the percent of misery is 60% male to 40% female or any other proportion. The fact is that our role assignment is responsible for a large amount of human misery and should be changed on that basis, not on the basis that any one particular minority is oppressed. I accept Thoreau's statement. While one person is oppressed, we are all oppressed. None of us is in a position to accurately distribute blame or grief, so it is pointless to engage in silly arguments about it.

In my discussion with Jessica, I was using a very narrow definition of the word "politics". As mentioned, this seems to be the basic problem in our difference of statements (since I think our opinions are closer than Jessica does). I am in nearly complete agreement with Adrienne Fein's excellent article on the subject earlier in this issue, and in the terms she uses, I would agree that female homosexuality is, for many people, a definitely political decision. I still feel, as you do, that it's a hell of a reason for choosing partners, but I can see their point.)))

(BRIAN EARL BROWN)

I find myself staking out a position somewhat to the left of yours and the right of Salmonson's. I think you miss the point when Salmonson says that lesbianism is a revolutionary concept, and not just a political gesture. A lesbian is saying that no man can fulfill her spiritually and sexually; only a woman can. Not merely is a lesbian dissenting from a society that seems structured for the benefits of its male citizens, but is going past mere equality to deny that males have any use at all except maybe as mobile sperm banks. That is a revolutionary restructuring of the social order.

((See remarks directly above to Alan Bostick on the political aspects of lesbians. The polarization you mention is exactly what I've been bitching about. Such a woman has had half of the human race removed from the possibility of close friendship, in all likelihood. I don't disagree with her. She might well find that a vanishingly small number of males were worth knowing. But she has still removed that potential, and frankly, the percentage of worthwhile females isn't likely to be higher.)))

(AVEDON CAROL)

Wayne Hooks says women do rape men, but I'd like to see the proof, myself. I've heard of one case, so far. I've also heard of one case of a woman named Lizzie Borden who chopped up her family or something. I heard of one President who hadn't slept with his wife in fifteen years. Those numbers aren't big enough to make generalizations about women or about Presidents. On the other hand, a reported rape of a woman by a man occurs every fifteen minutes. That's a much more impressive figure upon which to base, if nothing else, the plural.

In MYTHOLOGIES 12, Don, you said that you suspect the reason women don't rape men is that women don't have the necessary equipment. That's bull. We have most of the equipment that men have used to rape women available to us. I'm sure you were thinking of the penis, but that's not the only thing we've had used on us. Any two women could probably rape the average guy with the same implements that women have had shoved into them -- bottles, knives, brooms, guns, fists -- I'm sure others can think of more. I say that women have been socialized so differently from men that it seldom occurs to us to seriously go out and do such things.

Which brings me back to Wayne Hooks. Given the physical ability of women to rape men in the same horrible fashion that men use against us (which is not the same as a mere seduction, although some seductions might easily come across as rape -- if it's a man seducing a woman. Let's face it, it is very unusual for a woman to have the same kind of power over a man that a man has over a woman in a similar situation. Women will often allow themselves to be "seduced" because they are afraid of making a man mad enough to use violence -- how often are men in such a position?) How do you account for the scarcity of rapes by women? And what the hell is your point anyway? I think you're way out of your depth here. You ought to read Susan Brownmiller's AGAINST OUR WILL.

I'd like to know just what these things are that women are happier doing than men are. So far, the only things I've found that I personally do well that men in general cannot are either things that women in general cannot do well either, or things that men have suffered from being socialized out of. That is, I can sing well (the percentage of men and women who are any better at this than I am is small on both sides), write reasonably well (I haven't seen many signs of men finding this any harder than I do where women aren't equally inept at it), and have very little trouble driving my car (while women tend to be better at this, men seem to like doing it even more than women do). The only "female" type thing I do that men seem to be more uncomfortable with is crying. I don't feel so repressed as men seem to about crying, but this hardly proves that men are innately unsuited to it. As a matter of fact, I think men would be a lot better off if they could cry more easily.

Nobody hates housework as much as I do, on the other hand. It's no accident that my lovers tend to be good cooks who keep their environment reasonably clean and don't expect me to do an equal share of the housework. I used to be fat until my mother stopped cooking for me. I get migraines from clerical work and junk jobs (last year I passed out in front of the cash register I was working. So much for my moonlighting.) The fact is, I'm not only lousy at shitwork, but I literally can't stand to do it. I'll bet you a dollar that Jerry Pournelle outlasts me at any kind of shitwork he thinks is "less hateful" to women than to men.

((((Chris Eblis, whose article appears elsewhere, used to kid that she only took lovers who had been toilet-trained too early, hence were compulsively neat, because she cannot abide housecleaning.///I didn't have just the penis in mind. I was thinking as well of the heavier musculature and the fact that it is difficult to force a male to have an erection. But I grant you all your points anyway. Social conditioning is probably the deciding factor.)))

(DAVID FRYXELL)

Avedon Carol's letter was somehow very sad, especially coming after and on top of Jessica Salmonson's. There is something tragic in such fervent feminism, perhaps in its apparent elevation of Politics over Life. Feminism has become a religion and like most religions it requires a Satan/Set/Scapegoat to explain its failure to bring about Utopia. Men are, of course, the natural candidates. Anything which is wrong in the world must be the fault of men. It's like the Salem witchcraft trials with sexes reversed, and equally irrational. "Burn, witch, burn!" has been replaced by "Burn, sexist, burn!". "Sexism" becomes an enormously handy label to bandy about, precisely because it is now essentially meaningless, or at least so protean in meaning that it becomes a code word for whatever one wants to criticize -- as witness your debate with Jessica Salmonson.

Essentially, feminism has fallen into the same trap that most of our society has: attempting to deal with people as groups, or labels, rather than as individuals. This is most damaging when feminists begin to treat themselves in the same way. Attempting to define one's identity in terms of one's woman-ness is as self-abnegating as defining oneself in terms of one's identity as a man, or a white, or a construction worker. In the rush to group identification, the individual -- the most precious thing any one of us possesses -- is lost. Isn't it enough -- really, isn't it



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better -- that I come to respect Jessica or Avedon as an individual, rather than as some sort of feminist figurehead? I used to think that the whole purpose of feminism -- and civil rights, for that matter -- was to allow one to find and claim an identity as an individual human being, rather than just as a Woman (place in the home!) or a black (got rhythm) or an Indian (get out the beads, Harry). But that was before Women's Studies and the Black All-American Football Team. Why is it that I fail to see escape into a ghetto as any kind of escape at all?

((OK, in broad terms, I agree with you. Not in specifics. Women's Studies and such are (I hate this term) consciousness-raising devices. Used simply to make women aware that they really are competent, contributing members of society, it is useful for instilling confidence and pride of self. Similarly for any group-oriented structure of that sort. The danger is that once moderately embarked in this, that we lose sight of the ultimate goal in the intermediate means.

Also, to take Jessica's side for the moment, I have seen some pretty shitty remarks aimed in her direction in the fan press, remarks aimed not at destroying her arguments, but at destroying her as a person, at causing her personal pain. So it is understandable if she occasionally flies into a rage at what might seem an innocuous remark in another context. None of the foregoing means that I agree with everything she says, and I do think that she frequently over-reacts. But there is some justification for it. At least she still bothers to state her opinion. Some radical feminist separatists have stopped doing even that. I overheard two feminists at a recent convention (I won't tell you who) trying to work out a rating system to evaluate how truly "feminine and feminist" various prominent fans are. They tentatively decided Jessica wasn't, and were still arguing about whether Avedon was when I moved away to avoid laughing.)))

(ALEXIS GILLILAND)

Your discussion with Jessica was interesting but rather like parallel monologues. Her use of the word "lesbian" for instance makes the phrase "Women's Libbers and other lesbians" a description like "Democrats and other progressives" or "Communists and other socialists". The phrase is an epithet hurled with considerable effect by the radical anti-ERA forces at Jessica's comrades, and she is not helping them or the cause they support by her intellectual arrogance.

The Feminists, like other ideologues in this century, are intolerant of any ideas in opposition to their own, and the thought that they might need your support or mine to get anywhere sends them right up the wall. That is, the idea is more dear to them than any possible program they might enact in the real world.

((Well, if you put the qualifier "some" before "Feminists", I'll agree. Pure ideologues are rarely, if ever, successful. The idea of compromise is heresy to them. That's why the government of Cambodia will either change or fall. It's why any number of "revolutionary" groups have not begun to chalk up small successes until they recognized that one big victory just wasn't going to happen. No matter how "good" your cause, you have to make some compromise with "evil" if you want to get any where at all.)))

(LYNNE HOLDOM)

If Jessica Salmonson doesn't think men can be victimized by society, she should have been in on my brother's divorce. Divorce laws favor women. My brother makes less per week take home pay than his ex-wife, but he has to pay alimony. This is because the judge thought he should be making more. Mind you, this is alimony, not child support. He has to pay that too.

I do get mad about rape laws though. The courts will accept my word under oath that a man is a murderer or a thief but not that he is a rapist. For that I need corroboration. Sure there are women who will lie about rape but there are men and women who will lie about robbery or murder too. My sister in law signed statement after statement that Ken was a wife beater and child batterer. When she had to repeat these under oath and was read the penalty for perjury, she forgot a lot of things. Now she could get raped and have a court not believe her on past performance. Yet I believe most women don't really want to go to court. It's embarrassing.

((While not for one minute disagreeing with you about the criminal injustice in rape trials, I think you err in one respect. If you and I and Avedon Carol are alone in a room, and you shoot Avedon, the court will not accept your word against mine in the absence of any other evidence. The problem in many rape cases is that the man obviously takes pains to be alone, and when it boils down to the woman's unsupported word against the man's, then there's a problem. The number of women who would use such tactics to get back at an innocent man are vanishingly small, yet they exist, and I'd find it difficult to find a man guilty on that evidence alone. The solution is, I think, a thorough program of education in how to preserve evidence of rapes, and far stiffer penalties for those convicted. I'd personally put most rape in the same category as assault with intent to kill, but that may be personal prejudice. Nevertheless, evidentiary problems are a bit stickier than I think you state above.)))

(TIM MARION)

Foul Anderson has some interesting, rational thoughts to express on sexism, but for some reason I think he has the wrong idea when he says, "...we have so few hard data on inherent differences or non-differences between the sexes of man." (Emphasis mine.) Oh, I dunno, I'm a man, and there's not very much difference between my sexes...I guess what I'm trying to say is that we are all human, but most of us are not a man. Very important distinction.

For Ray Davis to say that men who fit generalizations as oppressors are merely being forced into their roles too is true, although an escape. Society has forced us all, to a certain extent, into roles. However, society is almost completely controlled (in a loose sense of the word) by men. It's a vicious cycle, but as long as we have a patriarchy in this world, some men (at least) are responsible for oppression. Not only of women, but of children, drug-users, minorities, etc.

I would like to know the basis for some of Wayne Hooks' comments. He claims, "For every ten beaten wives, there is at least one abused husband." What does he base this on? I agree that it is certainly possible for women to beat their husbands, but his ratio leaves me completely baffled. What does Wayne do? Visit one out of ten households? And even as informative as all this is, I fail to see the point of it. Does that make the other nine cases any less of a bad thing? I do not believe that Wayne is saying anything that hasn't already been assumed before.

Wayne continues with, "Worst of all, he has nowhere to turn. In our society, he is an object of ridicule." Well, I really bleed. And what are the other nine out of ten wives supposed to do? Is it just my imagination, or does Wayne think he is successfully ridiculing feminism with these statements? If only people could realize that feminism is actually humanism. If only people could see that all these problems should be conquered, and not simply ignored.

He goes on to say, "Women do punish men who don't fit the macho stereotype. Most women react unfavorably when the male they are with is not "masculine"." So what?

I doubt if the women who object to their men not being macho enough are the same women who are complaining to men for expecting their women to be more "feminine", so what difference does it make?

One good thing here is that it seems that women are learning to break out of their roles better than men. Perhaps after the oppressors are defeated, the oppressors can realize they don't have to tie themselves down to roles as well. Better yet, perhaps both will happen at once. But sometimes I really wonder if there really is any use in being idealistic, in hoping for a better future, when I continue to see grossly ignorant statements around me every day. Fortunately, the statements I see in fanzines are getting progressively less ignorant, and I certainly hope that is really saying something.

((You see, Tim, as I have theorized before, most people really don't want to be free. That goes for women as well as men. Most people really want to have roles pre-assigned to them, prescribing proper and improper forms of behavior. I don't believe that it is particularly important to make all of these people free spirits. What is important is providing the means by which those of us who feel competent to choose our own lifestyles can do so without being hampered by idiots who think homosexuals are child molesters, or that feminists are ball-breakers, or that Blacks and Whites are not supposed to mix.

Of course women are shucking out of their role models in larger numbers than men. There is a rather active movement telling them that they are oppressed, and that they should free themselves. Conversely, men not only have no such campaign, but are told that they are on top in a pecking order. They've been brainwashed into feeling that they are running the world, and that the liberation of women is at their expense, as in some terms it will be. But if a large scale, well-organized campaign was launched telling men that they have been victimized by society as well, that they have much to gain from throwing aside their role models, you'd see the same general movement. Still a minority, mind you, remember, most people enjoy enslavement.)))

(ADRIENNE FEIN)

Women are directed to validate themselves through men's opinions of them; men are directed to self-validate themselves by the fact that they can get a woman -- not through women's opinions of them. The situation is not quite so parallel as your wording suggests.

As long as one can be put in jail for lesbianism or male homosexuality, as long as the society/government thinks it has a right to legislate about such things, gayness certainly is a political issue and a political act if one chooses to defy the law. In a sensible society that did not have repressive laws, one's personal sexual choices would be only personal sexual choices. In our society, they are something more.

At one of the few parties I attended of mostly married couples, the women did a little cleaning up in the kitchen, then sat down to discuss the education system and the problems of the world, educating retarded children and/or emotionally disturbed children, and the differences between the American and European educational systems. Some of us had or were in the process of earning Masters degrees, some of us had taught or tutored children with problems, some of us had attended European universities and found them very different from those in the US, a whole different approach to education. Meanwhile, the men were in the living room discussing rock music and cars. So the cultural stereotype I tend to think of is backwards from the one most people have: women are interested in ideas and intellectual topics and

philosophy, which may even include the philosophy of eroticism as well as feminism; while men are interested in cars and sex and gadgets and sports.

On Poul Anderson's comments on women artists and composers: there have been many; their reputations have often been buried under the name of a male artist with whom they were associated -- or there works were flat-out published under their brothers' or fathers' names. Writing is more a vocation one can pursue independently, while the set-up for artists, until recently, meant that most worked in a studio "headed" by a particular master. There may well have been far fewer really great women artists; there definitely has been a lot done which kept the good and great women artists there have been from becoming well known. I don't claim there is a conscious conspiracy but...

The women's movement has only come about simultaneously with the advent of modern medicine and technology if one defines all those things in very limited ways. There have been certain trends which could be considered as a part of the woman's movement throughout all of history. I could easily write a 125 page paper on this...

((First let me apologize for not being altogether coherent at Boskone. I was looking forward to a chance to talk to you in person, and the loss of a rather substantially filled wallet, and other contributory factors, made me so preoccupied that I cannot recall one bit of our conversation, and therefore assume it was unmemorable. It was certainly brief.

I must say that the kind of men you describe are (1) just as boring as you imply, and (2) prevalent. Unfortunately, the women you describe are very rare as well. Hang onto that group; it's a rare treat. The local SF club is, I think, relatively unencumbered by the sort of sexual segregation you describe. It may be because virtually everyone in RISFA comes from a college-socialized background, but we have had -- and feminists in the group seem to feel the same -- virtually none of the sort of classification by sex that is so obvious elsewhere. I know that the people I deal with at work would be threatened by the females I associate with at RISFA. They're "pushy", i.e., don't wait for men to tell them how to think. Possibly part of the reason I perceive the world somewhat differently from most fannish feminist men is because I've happened to fall into a less than usually discriminatory group. I don't envy them their circles of acquaintance, if this is so.)))

(DAVE HULAN)

The conditions Beverly Kanter describes are quite illegal, and were quite illegal at the time, in California. Why no one complained to the state authorities I don't know; in a lot of cases it's because the employees are mostly illegal aliens who are afraid to come into contact with the law, but Beverly at least wasn't one. Manufacturers in some lines of business will try to get away with anything they can; only if someone is willing to blow the whistle on them can anything be done about it. Beverly's particular experience seems to reveal sexist bias; however, similar conditions apply in many cases to males, when they are in no position to protest (as in the case of illegal aliens.)

(ALLAN CHEN)

I would like to raise an unpleasant point which upsets me very much, and which may make me some enemies. You've probably heard it before -- what if nature in some way "designed" females, through evolutionary processes, to play a subservient role to males? Perhaps the male-female partnership, with the male at the lead is a survival advantage in human society, perhaps we can never break out of our sex stereotyping, and perhaps we're all just deluding ourselves into believing that women are making any progress in society. Roughly the same reasoning seems to apply

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for the genetics and IQ debate. Perhaps blacks are naturally less intelligent than whites for genetic reasons, etc.

I hasten to add that I don't believe either of those ideas, and I hope that, overtly at least, I can successfully expurgate any racist and sexist ideas that I possess. We can also take some comfort from the idea that even if this were so, that shouldn't mean we should stop trying to fight prejudice and develop a more egalitarian society. Civilization, after all, is a very unnatural thing, and the human race operates by contradicting nature -- locally reversing entropy and building up over the long run, instead of breaking down. If there is a perceived inequality in society, natural or not, we have a responsibility to correct it. But I can't help wondering what effect the answer to those questions would have on our efforts.

((Well, in my decidedly unhumble opinion, even if it were demonstrably true that the average black was less intelligent than the average white (assuming we could ever define intelligence in the first place) it should still make no difference. We are not dealing with average people when deciding between one and another. An above average black is still more desirable than a below average white. The instrumentalities of society should be color blind. From this, one might assume - with some justice - that I should be philosophically opposed to any form of quota system, e.g. busing. Well, philosophically, I am. In practice, I think it's the lesser of many evils, and will support it until a better alternative is found.)))

(STELLA NEMETH)

One thing that Jessica Salmonson and a lot of feminists like her fail to have is a sense of historical perspective. The women who lived during the 20's saw changes in their lives that today's women refuse to recognize. Those changes were real. You have to be aware of how little freedom the average middle class Victorian woman had to realize the extent of those changes. Just looking at the clothes should tell you something. Clothes frequently indicate more than we give them credit for. To the woman of today the clothes of the 20's might seem stifling and restricting, but to the women of the period the word was freedom. Freedom to move, to walk, to run and to work. All of a sudden it was permitted for women, even unmarried women, to move around unescorted, to hold jobs or to be educated. That wasn't true a generation before.

Yes, I am aware that there were still very few jobs that a woman could do in the 20's. Most of those were hard, dirty work. Nevertheless that clerical job that Jessica hates so much would have been a victory for a woman of that earlier time.

It takes time to get used to changes in lifestyle. It takes time to assimilate them. To make them seem the normal, natural way of doing things. The second wave of feminism could only take place when the victories of the first wave had become commonplace. It doesn't do any good to castigate the women who knew that and created a breathing space.

I see that Maureen Leshendok said that feminism began when women began to lose their economic position. Now that is a piece of the truth that is seldom recognized. It works for the first wave of feminism too. That began when the factories of the industrial revolution had taken over most of the jobs that had been done by women at home for centuries. Obvious examples -- weaving and soapmaking. Not so obvious examples -- the manufacture of rugs and bedding. Nevertheless, during the 20's thru 50's there was still plenty to do at home. Taking care of kids takes time. How strange that the second wave of feminism began at about the same time as the big drop in birth rates that we have been experiencing for the last 15 - 18 years. I'm not saying that they are cause and effect -- although they may be -- but they did

happen at the same time. And no one, not even the school officials, were aware that the drop had taken place until 8 - 10 years after it happened. Suddenly there were all these empty classrooms. And the following year even more.

((Actually, there is nothing inherently dull in clerical work. My office is primarily concerned with processing statistics, cluttered with forms and cardfiles and visirecord systems, calculating re-order points, minimum and maximum inventory levels, economic run-size amounts, machine efficiency, loading, & scheduling, and such. I attempt to automate those that are irritatingly mindless and long, so that my clerical staff will not become bored. I think most clerks would be far less dissatisfied with their jobs if (1) they were treated as the important parts of a company that they really are, and were paid and recognized accordingly, (2) were administered in such a fashion that they understood the gestalt of the business, so that the unending stream of numbers meant something, rather than just another column to total.

I attempt to do just that, and the result is that my clerk has a feel for the numbers. She can usually tell when something "feels" wrong, even though the figures might appear to jive. In general, even where I work, clerks are viewed as pieces of office equipment, rather than people, though.)))

(SETH GOLDBERG)

While I may be wrong in this, I get the feeling there is a negative vote by you and others for sex without love and a positive one for love without sex. While I agree with the latter, I disagree with the former, though it requires a lot of maturity to do it right (i.e. without causing undue psychological damage). To do sex without love right requires more maturity than love without sex.

((I don't think there is any ideal linkage between the two. It's nice when they go together, but not necessary. I am not a prude. Neither am I a hedonistic libertine. To each his or her own.)))

THE ART

(BRIAN EARL BROWN)

Mark Keller's title page drawing for the Bishop poem was quite nice and well done. I never thought much about hand-stencilled art until I saw some of Ross Chamberlain's efforts for SWOON, which led me to better appreciate the efforts of Waller and Fletcher and Stu Shiffman. There is a unique and distinctive style to hand-stencilled art that makes the effort worth doing.

(LAURINE WHITE)

Bonnie Dalzell's drawings of those Borzoi are beautiful. I can't tell whether the one on the cover is coursing the unicorn or if they are just playing. In the series by Paul Kenyon, the Baroness has two Borzoi that have saved her life more than once. Sercon thinkers may not have high opinions of the modern pulp series like the Baroness, but it was in a Baroness story that I first heard of "snuffers", porn films in which people are actually killed. That was months before newspapers informed us about such films.

((I read somewhere a piece by Bob Vardeman in which he mentioned that the Baroness stories had been written by a very competent writer. Some sort of legal problems are currently holding up the continuation of the series, which Bob has been hired to write. All of the first eight were vaguely science fictional, which made me wonder if Lyle Kenyon Engel, the promoter, had snagged another SF writer. He has used Joe Haldeman, Gerald Conway, John Jakes, Ray Nelson, Robert Jory, and others in the past.)))

(PAULINE PALMER)

A fat issue of MYTHOLOGIES -- so much to read and to think about. And another very fine Dalzell cover to admire plus lovely interior illos for her gentle, poignant poem. Perhaps your secret, Don, is that when you have artwork like that, you don't need much of it for the issue to be visually memorable.

FAN WRITING

(MIKE GLICKSOHN)

Obviously I enjoyed reading your thoughts and opinions and to a very large extent I agree with you completely. But I do feel you've rather drastically misrepresented my remarks on that panel at Autoclave. I cannot honestly say that I remember word for word what went on during that discussion, but even accounting for the drug and fatigue induced haze that I'm generally in through most conventions, I doubt I'd have said precisely what you attribute to me here. I'm assuming you're trusting to memory in conveying the impression of my remarks and I hope that it's your memory and not mine that's a little off.

I don't think, for example, that I'd ever say there are no really good new fanwriters around because I agree with your list of people who qualify for that description. What I hope I said was that there don't seem to be any great new fanwriters around and that's a whole lot different. There don't seem to be the writers whose quality and quantity of output matches some of the legendary names of the past such as those you mention along with people like Terry Carr and Ted White and John Berry, etc. The closest we have to such a writer is Susan Wood, I think, and her output has been quite limited in the last two or three years. Your mentioning of individual articles that are undeniably excellent doesn't negate my point; I'm talking about writers who consistently achieve such excellence over a period of years and in dozens of articles. And I really don't think we have people whose writing can be called great, whose articles will hold up as well as many from the past. (I am not one of those who worships the fannish past and seriously believes in a Golden Age that'll never be duplicated. I think the best fanzines of today can hold their own with most of the fanzines of the past. But, for several of the reasons you propose, we don't have writers who dominate fanzines the way we used to.)

Naturally any remarks I made were entirely subjective. I think that's understood to be true of any fan panel. But I also think that it's a telling commentary on the nature of fan writing that most if not all of the writing that remains well-known, that enjoys, if you will, the reputation of being "classic" fanwriting, is of the "fannish" type, either humorous or personal or both. Certainly there have been truly excellent serious writers and critics working for fanzines ever since Day One but how many of them are known today? How much of the serious writing is truly memorable? How many reviews or critical analyses are reprinted because someone thinks they are as relevant or interesting today as they were twenty or more years ago? Some, to be sure, but a small percentage indeed. The human condition is, I believe, inherently more interesting to most readers than criticism and at any given time in fanzine history there seem to have been more writers who excelled at producing such general interest material than who wrote serious lasting criticism.

I disagree fully with your suggestion that dilution makes today's good writing harder to spot. I think the reverse is true: dilution floods the fanzine market with so much crap that anything resembling decent writing stands out immediately. If anything the lowering of the standards of published material (a point on which I'm glad to see we agree even though I'm aware completely that since we see only the best of the writing from the past, we have to be very careful about not falling into the trap of thinking all such writing was good) has also lowered the standards of writing

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"excellence" as many people perceive them. Something "good" in comparison with the rest of today's output may not stand up so well against higher standards.

Certainly I'd never disagree with your claim that there are a lot of competent writers around today nor with your suggestion that many "promising new writers" are emerging. But competence and promise don't equate with greatness in my mind and when I read several hundred fanzines in, for example, 1976, the three articles that impressed me the most (and also impressed a great many other people and got reprinted in a variety of places) were by Bob Shaw, James White, and Lee Hoffman, not by Jeff Frane, Avedon Carol, or Tony Dalmyn. Subjective? Of course, but in this area what else can we offer?

You're undoubtedly correct that there's been and probably will continue to be a swing toward more serious writing in fanzines. But how much truly great writing it will produce I don't know. Let us consider MYTHOLOGIES as an excellent example. It's filled with a lot of intelligent, thoughtful, articulate discussion. But great writing? I'm sorry, not in my eyes. The writers in MYTHOLOGIES are usually competent stylists, they offer their arguments in an uncluttered way, but it is the content that is most important not the presentation. Content oriented material is, to me, very very rarely inspired writing. Critics and those arguing a cause want to present their thoughts in a clear logical fashion which takes talent and intelligence and a mastery of basic writing, but usually requires less creativity than personal or humorous writing. I'm generalizing, naturally, but I think that's unavoidable in a discussion such as this. And unlike a mathematical postulate, one counter-example certainly doesn't invalidate the theory.

The myth-making question is more Ben Zuhl's area of interest than it is mine but I essentially agree with him. When fandom was smaller and simpler and less subdivided than it is today there were common threads that bound most fanzine fans together. Perhaps we've simply outgrown the days when such myths were possible. But I'll tell you one thing: while some of the myths of the past may have originated spontaneously they didn't survive as myths without a lot of people consciously working at having them do so. If no fans had ever written about the Tower of Bheercans to the Moon it would have disappeared from general fannish knowledge. Again, what I hope that I said on that panel is not that I actively attempt to create fannish myths (as you say, it's almost a contradiction in terms) but that I work towards perpetuating them, which I think is entirely different. So I mention such things as Spayed Gerbils and Bowers' laziness and my prowess in imbibing and Lime Jello and other such links to the (recent) past when it seems appropriate to do so in letters or articles and perhaps, because we write about them, some of these things may eventually achieve the level of fannish myths, become an understood part of the fannish background of newer fans. You're correct that posterity will choose what it wishes to remember of fandom in the Seventies, but it'll pick from the things that you and I and Ben and hundreds of others have chosen to write about. In that sense we all have a hand in "creating" the myths of today's fandom. Minneapolis in '73, anyone?

I don't really disagree with you on most of what you say but undoubtedly we have slightly different concepts of all the terms involved in this discussion. Perhaps to you fanwriting is "anything written by a fan and published in a fanzine". And that's certainly a valid definition. To me, though, there's something of a modifying clause; I tend to enjoy most and thus tend to think of fanwriting as being writing that has to do with science fiction or with fandom. Articles about economics, religion, sexism, politics, etc can be found outside of fanzines and I've never hidden the fact that I'm not at all that interested in such material when it does appear in a fanzine. Not that I suggest people shouldn't write it if they want to, but I'd

much prefer to read about fandom and fans first and SF second. I expect that preference colors my remarks on fanwriting and should be understood as inherent in anything I might say on the subject. And having said all that I still feel we are lacking in great writers!

((First of all, I worked from notes taken during that panel, at Autoclave. A substantial portion of that article was written at Autoclave; it was an alternate version of the speech I almost gave, but discarded because it seemed too formal and basic. I don't doubt that I made some minor errors of interpretation, but I think I captured the basic thrust of your remarks, as interpreted at the time by myself and many others. There was a seminar later with Don Thompson in which many of the points were raised again.

I don't think it changes your basic argument to substitute "great" for "good". The question is whether or not the best fan writers today are equal in ability to the best fan writers of days past. I say they are, and that "great" writing has never appeared in fanzines. If it were that good, it would probably have been sold professionally.

Neither do I consider it fair to judge the quality of a piece by its frequency of reprinting. Edgar Rice Burroughs is reprinted far more often than Brian Aldiss or Poul Anderson. Does that make him a better writer? The most frequently reprinted fan piece I can recall is Jon Inouye's "The Smell of Pulps". Is that, therefore, the greatest piece of fanwriting ever?

In fact, most of the reprints of "classic" fanwriting are in fanzines devoted specifically to that purpose, so they really shouldn't be counted. My own most reprinted piece was a discussion of Blish's A CASE OF CONSCIENCE. The only fannish humor I've had reprinted I did myself. Several of my other season pieces were reprinted. I don't think you can use that as a criterion for judging the value of the piece. How often does any fanwriting of any quality reappear?

Why are there more good fannish writers than good sercon writers? My inclination was at first to say that it resulted from the former being easier to do. To be fair, there is probably an equal degree of skill involved in each, but the urge to talk about oneself and one's friends is probably more common than the urge to discuss a book in great detail, particularly in a field where most of the literature isn't worth a whole lot of talk.)))

(CAROLYN DOYLE)

I can't disagree too well with Mike's first remark, about most of the good fanwriters being older fen. The kind of funny (yet many times with kernels of truth or practical value) writing people like Shaw do isn't too common. Some of the younger fen seem to write different things. (I think part of the explanation for the quality of these people is that they've been in fandom a while, and have had time to get better.)

His second argument, on the lack of fannish fads and myths -- I see truth there too. I won't go around defending the present fandom, holding up an example or two to show that fandom, as much as the very people our society makes that become a part of it, has changed.

Fandom is bigger than ever. We've come a way from the closer groups of previous years, where everybody knew everybody -- this alone can explain a lack of in-jokes and myths -- instead of being fandom-wide, they're likely, if they exist, to be known in a small subset of fandom, Weird Winnipeg, comix fandom, or a particular fanzine, such as TITL. People can make jokes about C.D. Doyle's sweetness and light, Ben Indick's hair, or Superfan, and be understood.

(GEORGE FLYNN)

After that Autoclave panel I had a well-thought-out opinion on the basic question you raise...but I didn't write it down. However let's see how much I can reconstruct. I think the main point I wanted to make was that "fannish humor" is more specific to fandom, at least the large portion of it that's in-jokish. Serious material about fandom, on the other hand (present company excepted), has a strong tendency to be extremely dull - I should know; I've perpetrated enough of it. Also, humor is more memorable: it's a lot easier to reproduce a pun than a critical argument. And serious writing, to be effective, probably requires a higher level of absolute quality than humor does. Which brings us to your point about fans regarding writing as a game rather than a craft. Well, I regard writing as a craft all right; I make my living at it, and I agonize over every sentence. But I certainly don't put the same kind of effort into fannish writing, which is after all a recreation.

But I'm wandering from the point, if I was ever there. I think the kind of fanwriting Mike likes is inherently more likely to be successful in its own terms - partly because, no matter how good it is, there's little market for it outside fandom. In the "Golden Age" it got about as good as it could, and as in any field latecomers have to do a lot better to outshine those who got there first. The dilution effect you mention reinforces this. (It's only fair to add that my taste has much similarity to Mike's.) What about mythmaking? I can't agree that it's dead (having contributed to a couple of myths myself); but it may well be less effective than in the old days, simply because fandom is so much more heterogeneous. In other words, there was a time when the in-jokes I mentioned above were "in" to just about everyone in fandom, and this made fannish humor - the kind of humor that is more effective to a fan than to an outsider - easier to write well. For better or worse, this is no longer the case. So I conclude, I suppose, not that the quality of fannish writing has declined, but that fandom has become a tougher audience to write for.

I've discussed awards at disgusting length elsewhere, and will summarize drastically: the Hugos give a way for one group of fans to honor what they like; the FAANs give a way for another group to honor what they like; let a hundred flowers bloom.

(TIM MARION)

Did Mike Glicksohn really moan the lack of good fanwriters such as those in the "Golden Days" of fandom? I'm sorry to hear that...if for no other reason than because it's been said so many times before, and its repetition has never negated its invalidity. Perhaps you didn't mention this because it is so obvious, but the reason why many of the good fanwriters nowadays are people who have been fans for years is because during their time in fandom they have had lots of chances to mature and hone their writing skills. Experience is the key here. Even so, we still get many people who join fandom and immediately start distinguishing themselves as excellent writers. I honestly and truly believe that these days are the "Golden Days"; that these days we are doing things and saying things that have never been done before. I myself am - in most ways - very satisfied with today's fanzine fandom. Of course, that doesn't mean that I frown on fanhistory; it too has its place...and one of those places is my voluminous fanzine collection, containing many of those hits of yesteryear. There have indeed been many beautiful fanzines written before, just as there are many beautiful fanzines being written now. I live for the present.

(DARRELL SCHWEITZER)

I'm not entirely sure there has been any decline in genzines. There is always a period of lying fallow between the arrival of really major efforts like ENERGUMEN, but aside from that, things seem pretty stable to me. Perhaps the genzines seem to decline because SFR and ALGOL have gone professional, and are not being counted. Earlier Geis' efforts were always the leading fanzines of the day. He won Hugos

WELL before he started paying for material. The only effect paying for material has is drawing away much of the best sercon material, leaving the amateur fanzines to settle for second best. I don't think there are many people out there who would prefer to appear in an amateur magazine and not be paid when they could just as easily sell the same stuff professionally. I know I don't. One reason my fanzine contributions have fallen off over the past couple of years is I am selling exactly the same sorts of things I used to do for free, and/or I am engaged in professional projects which take up writing time and effort which would otherwise be devoted to fanzine stuff. If there were a professional "fannish" fanzine, the same thing would result.

I don't think a vast number of fanzines lowers the overall average quality much. If there are that many zines, it means an increase in the population of fanzine fandom, hence more people writing and drawing for the things. There have always been crudzines and topnotch zines. I suppose with a vast array of fanzines a piece rejected a dozen times may still be published if the perpetrator is persistent, and a slapdash writer can get into print without trying too hard, but still the best fanzines publish high quality material. This is sufficient to inspire some people to do their best. Some are naturally conscientious, and the rest seek the fame and ego-boob of being published regularly in the top zines, not just any old rag. To do that, one has to write well. It's what goes on in the best fanzines that counts. After all, the average fanzines of the past were no better than those of today, and in many respects worse. We only remember the best. In 1990 they'll only remember our best, and probably conclude the 1970's was a golden age of fandom. Golden ages are seldom more than a temporaæ version of the Greener Pastures Syndrome.

(MICHAEL SHOEMAKER)

I agree almost completely with your MYTH in #13. I suspect the biggest factor in the disappearance of genzines is the expense; certainly this was true for me. I do not agree that TITLE is or was a personal zine. Way back, it used to be more like a monthly apa; today it is like a miniature genzine. The biggest difference is that TITLE used to be like a family, while today the personalities of the participants don't come through as well. There has been myth-making but that which occurs has not been developed, or gained a proper foothold to prove viable. We all know about Ed Cagle's passion for wild pickles and beer, that Ben Indick has red hair, that Mike Glycer is a sumo wrestler who rips Volkswagens in half, that A Well Known Gafiate almost conquered fandom a few years ago in the pages of APA-H, and more. An important factor I believe is that in Glicksohn's Golden Age of Myth-making there was a relatively open field for invention. Today's attempts have more difficulty taking root because they are in competition with the old myths. Frankly, of all the so-called legendary fanwriters, I think only Willis is equal to his reputation. I would trade all of them for Mae Strelkov.

(ROY TACKETT)

Whither fanzines? I don't know. Some of us will keep plugging along just for the hell of it. The urge to publish fades a bit at times but never completely. DYNATRON, for example, is re-emerging after a lull of a couple of years which saw only a couple of issues in FAPA -- and poor ones they were. What I do with it depends upon the response I get to the current issue.

Many of the fanzines I receive these days are impressive physically. They are either offset or exceptionally well mimeographed. Thick fanzines on good paper. Lots of artwork...and uniformly dull. And I can't say that I feel that way because I've become tired of fanzines after reading...how many thousands?...over the years. There are still a few I find refreshing and interesting and look forward to reading. Your own MYTHOLOGIES is one of those. I can usually find something of interest in

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Brazier's TITLE or Lindsay's GEGENSCHWEIN. Wally Stoelting's FAN'S ZINE isn't anything to write home about, as it were, but he manages to get something of interest in each issue. So I don't really think it is a case of thinking fanzines are dull these days because I am an old fan and tired...they are dull.

Yes, apas have drained off a lot of the talent. Particularly regional apas such as Apa-L which has almost killed general fan publishing in the Los Angeles area. Glycer gives us SCIENTIFRICTION which is excellent and Pelz puts out PROFANITY now and then but the rest of the LArea talent seems to be strictly turned towards Apa-L which is a great loss for fandom in general.

I am and always have been primarily a fanzine oriented fan, and I completely agree with your comments on artwork at the top of page 5. I begin to suspect that you and I are in agreement on more things than I would at first have thought possible.

((((The question is, am I getting more crotchety, or are you mellowing? This is probably a good time as well to apologize for prematurely killing off PROFANITY and KNIGHTS in that editorial. KNIGHTS is Mike Bracken's fault. I had read half of the issue in which he announced its demise, then typed the editorial, then read the remainder of the issue, where he revoked it. I have no idea why I typed PROFANITY in; I was thinking of something else. In view of subsequent events, I probably would have replaced it with TITLE, since Donn Brazier has folded that noted publication.)))

(VICTORIA VAYNE)

I think I'll go along with you that myth-making is not that much a conscious act. Merely writing about and promoting something is no guarantee that it will go into the fannish canon. Something that affects me personally is an automatic negative reaction against any group pushing their own in-joke into fannish mythology, especially when I'm not a part of that in-group. If this happens with other people it could explain partially why "forced" mythmaking occasionally fails. A lot of these things are, when examined closely, pretty silly.



I have to disagree with you about art in fanzines. Art may not be "needed" but I feel it is a nice thing to have within the zine's pages; and I'm especially fond of art specifically intended for a particular article, done to order, and pieces of artwork intended to stand "on their own", on full par with articles in the fanzine.

What you describe as the ideal, though, is a generally well done fanzine designed for generally wide appeal. This is okay, but shouldn't it be done the way the editor particularly likes? Generally wide appeal is fine if the purpose is to produce a commercial product intended eventually to turn a profit; I would think that something like MYTHOLOGIES is much more the editor's own brainchild, and that most "hobby" fanzines would tend to conform closely to the editor's visions without worrying about the "market appeal".

On the matter of personalzines versus genzines, and your question why anyone would "pay to print and reap egoboo for others" -- this depends on the particular bent of the writer/editor; so that one may occasionally see a beautifully produced elaborate personalzine (Taral's DELTA PSI to give one outstanding recent example) from a fan who is a writer/artist/graphics artist who likes to produce a large scale zine; but more likely personalzines are more modest in scale. For less universally talented fans, who aren't prolific in writing output and can't draw, but like the graphic challenge of a large scale elaborate publishing project, the genzine is a good solution, and this is where things like SIMULACRUM can come in. Genzines appeal because of the artistic challenge they present; to design and print the zine attractively and present something durable and hopefully collectable. The ideal genzine should garner plenty of egoboo for the writers and artists, but also some for the editor/publisher for the presentation and editorial taste.

((I think I probably understated the fact that this was not designed to be a prescription for fanzines, but an overall description of genzine publishing in general. I don't expect MYTHOLOGIES to ever win the FAAN simply because I'm not interested in graphics and extensive artwork. It'll be a cold day in hell before I change my format just because of that, though, and I suspect (hope) most fans feel the same.)))

(PATRICK MCGUIRE)

I think I agree with you more than Mike Glicksohn re fan writing. Another fairly recent writer of the humorous school is Rosemary Ulliot, who first came to my notice in Mike's own ENERGUMEN. But things could be better, and as you say, part of the problem is dilution. Part of it as well is the practice of many faneditors. The payment for fanwriting is egoboo (plus free fanzines, but you can get those at less effort with a loc). Egoboo deteriorates with age, and all too many faneds have either gafiated on me or at least taken forever to use material. The publication of my article in MYTH 13 is an example of relative promptness; I think it came out in the very next issue after my submission, but even that meant getting a publication of February for an article written I think in June. Gillespie recently ran an article I had submitted to him in 1974! (He had written me in the meantime to ask if I wanted it back since it was taking him so long to use it.) June to February is eight months -- I've had prozine publications a lot faster than that, and I think even my one book appearance to date wasn't much longer. If I'm not getting money, couldn't I reasonably expect from fandom the pleasure of seeing my work in print before I've half-forgotten what I've said? Before his gafiation, Denis Quane and NOTES used to publish frequently. Some of my stuff for that was excessively hasty, but for a faneditor who would print what I wrote I was only too eager to write. Not so in the majority of cases today. In the latest SELDON's PLAN, Cy Chauvin complained about an un-lively lettercol. What kind of liveliness can you reasonably expect when you run two or three issues a year?

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Another drain on at least certain kinds of fanwriting is the current pro and semipro market. It used to be that, save for short book reviews, the only place you could write about SF was in fanzines. Now a number of people are willing to pay a penny a word or so for certain kinds of articles. That's not enough incentive to go write one for purely mercenary motives, but it is incentive to take some extra time and care, and put a somewhat more general slant on an article that might otherwise go to a fanzine. (This applies principally to the fanwriter with serconnish tendencies, like me, of course -- there is little SF market for humorous or personal writing, though I think some fanwriters could place their work in mainstream publications.)

I dunno. Maybe fanzines should go back to the ancient custom of charging for issues. If I couldn't get them free for substantial locs, maybe I'd write more articles. Maybe faneds would last longer or publish more frequently if their losses were less, or if they could afford to hire out the drudge work of reproduction. Or, contrariwise, maybe then they'd be in direct competition with the relatively high circulation semiprozines, and would lose out.

((Yes, I used your article right away. In fact, I don't believe I've ever kept a submission beyond the issue that followed the one in process at the time I received the submission. I have a one page piece and some odds and ends of artwork ready for the next issue, in fact, and nothing else.

MYTHOLOGIES is likewise less frequent than I would like it to be. I went from bi-monthly to quarterly to the present 2-3 times per year, although the total pages printed each year will remain the same or greater. Each individual issue just gets thicker. I can't think of a solution; lack of time and money are nearly insuperable obstacles. Although I'd have to disagree that letter columns aren't lively at that schedule. I'm prejudiced, of course, but I think this has been a pretty lively last fifty pages.)))

(ROBERT COULSON)

A nitpick or two on your editorial in MYTHOLOGIES. You left out the oldest genzine; Bill Danner's STEFANTASY. (Which is limited circulation, true, but available to anyone, neofan or veteran, who can convince Bill that he/she is the sort of person Bill wants to send the fanzine to.) Personally I never thought of SIMULACRUM as "long-standing", but that could just be my antediluvian viewpoint. But SF REVIEW is older, as are Ed Conner's SF ECHO, DON-O-SAUR (I suppose that could be classed as a personalzine), SCIENTIFRICTION, LOKI (admittedly that one just emerged from years of hibernation), GEGENSCHIEIN and SCOTTISHE.

I wonder if Mike was thinking of "faan" writing, as opposed to fan writing? But any writing requires some sort of practice - Bob Leman is the only fan I ever encountered who produced an absolutely marvelous personalzine the first time he tried it, and Liz Fishman the only other fan I can think of offhand whose articles were brilliant from the start. (Mike's weren't, certainly - and neither were mine.) And Liz had spent some time in "Star Trek" fandom before moving up to ours; never having seen her work there, I can't say if she was great the first time she wrote anything at all.

It doesn't cost a lot of money if you insist on subscriptions instead of giving away free copies for letters of comment, and restrict your trades. (That attitude will get you the reputation of being a curmudgeon, of course, but it can be done. It also means that you start out with a very small circulation, and build only as subs come in, instead of trying to dazzle all fandom with your brilliance from the beginning. There is an initial investment - mimeographs are expensive and used ones sometimes hard to locate, especially for the neofan, who doesn't know where to look. But

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yearly expenses can be kept within reason. I keep fairly accurate records on YANDRO for tax purposes - it's the only fanzine that's operated as a tax loss - and the annual loss is pretty small.) I started to say that it would have been nice if we could have afforded to spend a lot of money on the fanzine, but on second thought I'm not sure it would have been. It's lasted longer, certainly, because it wasn't all that much of a drain on our income. (And now, at any given time we would have to refund several hundred dollars in subscription money if we ever folded; we can't afford to quit publishing.)

Why should anyone pay to print and reap egoboo for the work of someone else? Well, by and large, because the people who contribute to YANDRO are our friends. Or, if not friends - I have a strict and exclusive definition of that word - at least, people we like. And doing favors for people you like is certainly no great hardship. Fans who drop out of genzine publishing because they aren't getting personal egoboo are simply selfish.

(JEFF HECHT)

I haven't been involved in fandom long enough - or deeply enough - to see all the shifts you mention in MYTH. But I can't help but wonder if a significant source of the change is in the demographics of fandom. Among the fans I know are a significant number of refugees from the "counterculture" of the late 60's. Others are too young to have been a part of it, but seem to have grasped at fandom to fulfill the need for community and commonality that some of my generation thought they found in the counterculture. One result is a simple increase in numbers.

Another is the increase in, well I think the best word is sloppiness. The counterculture - or the "Movement" or whatever you want to call it - was characterized by sloppiness in many of its efforts. I'm not talking about physical sloppiness, but about mental sloppiness -- a failure to think things out to their logical conclusion or, more simply, to do one's homework. There also were serious flaws in logic, like the idea that because Allen Ginsberg took LSD and wrote brilliant poetry, anybody else who took LSD could become an instant poet (or artist or musician or whatever.) Perhaps the sloppiness merely reflected impatience, but if you're looking for symptoms you see sloppiness.

((Absolutely. Kunen's THE STRAWBERRY STATEMENT pointed out many of the reservations I had for the student movement. The majority of student activists merely wanted to replace one kind of repression and idiocy with another, even more simplistic, one.)))

(ANJI VALENZA)

I can't really say I understand why there is (and I have never noticed one) a friction between "fanzine fans" and "convention fans". In fact, I never thought of fandom as being divided in that way, but there is one thing I have been noticing more and more as time passes. In all the fanzines I receive, I open to the locs and I see the same names that appeared in the last issue.

((There definitely is friction between the two in the Boston area; it's been obvious at the last few Boskones. I am told that it holds true in Toronto, Minneapolis, and one or two other areas. As far as repetition of letter writers, people who write are most likely to get on mailing lists for other zines. And most people don't write at all. I send out 300 copies, and get back less than half that many letters. I imagine there are some faneds who will print well known writers' letters first, but I think most publish well written letters first. It just happens that the well known letter writers usually write the best letters; that's how they get to be well known. I don't know how you could change it, and I wouldn't suggest doing it even if you could.)))

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(HARRY WARNER JR)

Your editorial deals with a topic very close to my heart, the scarcity of absolutely topnotch writing in fanzines. Unfortunately for me, you are so thorough in your analysis of the problem that it's hard to say anything without plagiarizing your essay. One aspect which you didn't cover is really another part of the problem rather than a possible explanation. It's the fact that many of today's best fanzine writers have this nasty habit of writing very little or restricting what they write to an exclusive audience. I've bewailed elsewhere this situation, and contrasted it with the extreme fertility of almost all the people who are usually cited when people start reminiscing about the fine fanzine writing of the 1940s and 1950s. I think you entered FAPA in time to read Howard Devore's fine article about the late Martin Alger. Almost everyone in fandom knows Howard as the convention fan and huckster; how many fans outside FAPA know that he can write well when he wants to? Jay Kay Klein is known almost solely as a con-goer and photographer who likes to show his slides to audiences. But he published a few first rate conreports years back; another fine writer who would rather do other forms of fanac. There's Tom Digby, who might become known as fandom's Lafferty if he contributed with any frequency to non-Apa-L fanzines. Bill Rotsler must have published millions of words by now in his very small circulation perszine but his successes with pro fiction surprised a lot of fans who thought of him only as a cartoonist.

I don't know why this is so, unless one matter which you didn't discuss could conceivably be a factor. Maybe it's the growth of fandom and of the professional field which is inhibiting some people from contributing the highest quality material in vast masses to fanzines. I find myself wondering what's the use at times, when someone asks me to write an article for a fanzine on a specific topic. No matter what the topic is, I wonder if it's any use because I know how many fans will have no knowledge of or interest in that particular matter; their fannish concerns are elsewhere. Until the 1960s, it was easy for any reasonably active fan, to keep his finger on virtually everything that was making any kind of impact on fandom. It can't be done today. The pro explosion is an allied matter. In this MYTHOLOGIES, for example, I can't make any comments on Patrick McGuire's article on Poul Anderson's series or on your analysis of some Blish books: I just haven't read enough of the fiction involved. I have read more of the Wyndham novels you discuss and I could make some knowledgeable remarks on that article if you hadn't gone and done it again, accomplishing such a thorough job that you've left little opportunity for supplementary remarks. I do wonder, though, if anyone has ever ferreted out the factors that caused the British writer to set higher goals suddenly and to accomplish writing of a calibre that his early fiction didn't foretell.

(BEN INDICK)

As for the "Golden Age" of fanzines, I found your article very well expressed. Most of the revered articles were indeed humor pieces, which, like SF itself, gave way in later years to new styles, often more adult and of an inquiring and interpretive nature. Your own essays, concerning known and more frequently unknown writers in pro ranks are a good example, trying to add to fan writing critical examination previously lost in mere joking or in adulatory writing. Thus what you sought was serious consideration of the genre itself as well as responsible criticism. Currently we are in a more personal phase, perhaps a reflection of the times, when uncertainty about life and occupation is so much a part of the consciousness of young people (and most fans are young; I would imagine the typical fan as being 20-25 in age, and at this time they must be concerned about their future outside their hobby.

I do not think you meant to say, however, that fans are "less talented", in their fan writing; less practiced, perhaps. If any of the new generation cares to develop skill, they need only stay with it, and it should surely come in the majority of

cases. However, the preoccupation now is with personal matters -- lately divorce seems to be overtaking bheer parties! (That "h" as you know expresses my personal distaste for that type of writing, although it has a place in fan writing too. Hobbies should include fun, after all.)

(DONN BRAZIER)

TITLE wasn't a personalzine. It was a genzine with a lot of editorial opinion, either stated or reflected by the quotes reprinted. How could you put TITLE and DON-O-SAUR, say, in the same category? Makes no difference anyway except that one day I'll do a personalzine and it won't be anything like TITLE.

The success (?) of TITLE was due not to format but to egoboo. Lately there was complaint as longer articles and columns done by one person replaced all the brief bits from approximately 100 names per issue. Had I used 300 names, TITLE would have kept up in circulation with that figure. I did not of course plan to do my zine as an egoboo outlet. I think it really worked out that way accidentally.

Your editorial missed one point -- like the definition of an expert as a person from out of town, a good writer is a person from some years ago. Just because of that -- not because the writers were better. Nowhere do I see reports today on the highly effective writing of Eric Mayer. But a few years from now I'll see the reports. Did you read his column in TITLE? Did you not catch his use of words, his ability to evoke emotion, his apt and original figures of speech? (Of course, his subject matter was not risque! or adolescent -- two prime requisites for well-liked fan writing.

((Although I do agree that the last few TITLES were more of a genzine than a personalzine, I still feel that it was more personally oriented than, say, SIMULACRUM. Even Don Thompson has been running articles by other people on a regular basis, as well as fan fiction, so that's hardly a good criterion. But since I don't really think the label is particularly significant, I won't belabor the point.)))

(SETH GOLDBERG)

I think that what makes Mike Glicksohn make comments like "there are no good new fan writers" is two things mainly. First is that just as in judging pro writers, there is a tendency to not recognize the good ones until after they have been around for ten years. Thus all the "good" writers seem to have been around for years. They almost have to for one to believe that they really are good. Human beings seem to have a tendency to resist the new and unfamiliar, including SF fans. Second is what you noted yourself, the large increase in the number of fanzines today. Judging from what I have read of fandom in times past, the SF community was much smaller then than now. Since fandom was so much smaller, it was closer knit, giving the illusion of greater significance to all the events that occurred. This intensity may have made things seem better than they were (I cannot say whether they are better or worse having not read sufficient samples of older fan material to judge). Also this may incidentally account for more myth-making. Though having more fans does give a greater base from which to create myths so this may be counteracted. As you pointed out though, only time will tell how much myth-making occurred.

(PAULINE PALMER)

I tend to agree with your analysis of the fanwriting question, though I think there is another possible factor that you haven't taken into account; in general fans are probably more likely to remember the genuinely humorous/entertaining articles more readily and for a longer period of time than an equally well-written serious piece. Also, the well-written humor of the "golden age" is just as viable an entertainment now as then, whereas interest in sercon material from then would seem to be primarily academic/historical.

The contention that a fanzine needs art to "break up the monotonous pages of print" is mostly, I think, a graphics/design concept -- white space, balance, flow, etc. There's certainly nothing wrong with that, but most of us will read book after book with little thought for "relief" from all that type. (By "most of us" I guess I mean readers; many people are not readers and don't read books that are primarily text. Or newspapers. Or magazines. But even a lot of magazines that give the reader very carefully designed graphic lead-ins to articles/stories will send you off to the back pages where the type is broken only by ad copy if at all, expecting that once you're into the article/story/whatever, you'll continue to read it.

I do know that when I first get a fanzine and flip through it to see what it looks like, I'm looking at the art, the headings, the general "graphic" appearance. (So Bonnie's poem was the first thing I read in this issue because I was attracted to it by the drawings.) But the truth is that when I read, once I'm beyond any lead-in art, I usually don't notice fillos scattered through the layout. So usually I go back, once I've read a zine, and page through it one more time specifically to look at all the art.

That you spend \$1500 a year on MYTH really startled me. I tend to think of WILD FENNEL as being a rather expensive hobby (though not nearly as expensive as many others are these days), but I see I'm getting off easy in comparison. It cost under \$200 to get out the last WF, although it's true that keeping it down to 32 pages (under two ounces) saved considerably on both the printing bill and the postage over last issue. Looking back at my mailing records, a 20 percent turnover is a pretty close estimate for WF, but I'm not sure what -- if anything -- that may signify.

(MIKE BRACKEN)

Fanzine fandom and convention fandom may not be at odds, but I'm not so sure they overlap as much as you suggest. Last year I sat on the faneditors' panel at ARCHON I in St Louis. As far as I can tell I was on the panel only because a fairly well-known fan, who was one of the attractions of the con, requested it. I don't think I'm an unknown fan (I've been around for four years and KNIGHTS has a circulation of 300+), but only one person on the concommittee had ever seen a copy of KNIGHTS, and that was a long, long time ago back when I was publishing issues I'd rather forget about.

Looking back on it I realize that the concom could have cared less who they threw up on the faneditors' panel in terms of their editing experience (though with Mike Glicksohn, Fred Haskell, and last minute panel member Jackie Causgrove it was some pretty classy company). The major qualification seemed to be how many conventions they'd been to and what their convention connections were. Donn Brazier moderated the panel, but I think the choice there was made mainly because Donn was a local fan who seems to have built up a reputation for not attending cons.

I'll admit unashamedly that I'm a fanzine fan. I get bored to death at SF club meetings where the topic of conversation is "did you hear what so and so did as such and such a con?"

MISCELLANEOUS

(LAURINE WHITE)

Speaking of General Custer, which some of us were a few months ago, I read THE COURT MARTIAL OF GEORGE ARMSTRONG CUSTER and saw the Hallmark Special on December 1. The book did not explain why Custer was the only survivor of the Little Bighorn. The opening scenes of the TV show had the wounded Custer being found on the battlefield, but didn't explain the why of it either. I was hoping that Custer would

demonstrate his insanity in wild courtroom outbursts. He did not. What I liked most about the story was the way in which the events leading to the Little Bighorn were chronicled and mapped for the reader. Someone watching TONKA or LITTLE BIG MAN or the TV special wouldn't be able to explain what happened as well as a reader of the book. The sketches by the author that were supposed to be newspaper sketches of the witnesses added a nice authentic touch. A hundred years later trial sketches still are shown on television news.

(TIM MARION)

Bonnie Dalzell's poem was remarkable; she obviously speaks with great love for her hounds. Her past article on coursing, however, was almost scary...

(DON AYRES)

The mistake I referred to in MOTE would not be a mistake at all except to an involved taxonomist. On page 40 of the Book Club edition the authors state:

"'People breed horses. And dogs," Rod observed.

"'Yes. But they haven't got a new species. Ever...'"

Well, I've seen this argument when I've tackled the anti-evolutionists, but it all revolves around the acceptability of the definition of "species", of which Pour-nelle's citation of "a group of interbreeding organisms which produce fertile offspring" is a fairly typical example.

It is however about as accurate as existing definitions of SF. For example, it has virtually no basis of applicability outside of sexually reproducing organisms -- which is to say that it can't be applied to most of the Invertebrata and a fair number of plants.

Dr. R.E. Blackwelder once suggested that a species was "anything an experienced taxonomist named as such". Though many people might resent the looseness of the definition, it is not inappropriate. As my major professor said, "The animals don't know they have these rules they're supposed to adhere to and they go on happy as a hooty owl doing whatever they want."

As you correctly interject, I did not intend to imply that the St Bernard and the Mexican Hairless were separate species from the other canines, but that a fairly solid argument could be made for assignment of the one to a species different from the other. Granted, they can produce non-sterile offspring, but so can many of the Ambystoma salamanders which we have no trouble distinguishing from one another. And most of which are geographically incapable of interbreeding. In the case of the hound, we merely accept them as varieties because it serves no useful purpose to separate them and because we know much of their phylogeny; if we knew the same of most of the animal kingdom, we might reduce the number of recognized species by half.

Species are an artifact of time and sampling -- if we had a complete phylogeny, we might easily unite all the creatures within it as varieties of a single species. As we don't know this, we don't make any synthesis (though it is interesting to note that most Cenozoic fossils referable to modern genera are usually referred to modern species as well. Fossil reptiles, that is.

On the other hand, mammalogists have traditionally been among the worst of the "splitters" -- several taxonomists once complained that, the way things were going, every population of ground squirrels in the country was going to have its own subspecific name. Why none ever took up the case of the Domestic Dog, aside from probable ridicule, is beyond me.

But the problem, on the whole, is the inadequacy of the definitions. The anti-evolutionists are quite happy to ignore the fact that archaeopteryx is a genuine transitional form with numerous reptilian characters because the fact that it has feathers "makes" it a bird. The fact that the assumptions of Linnaean classification include a concreteness of form based on contemporary life which is refuted theoretically by Darwinian evolution and factually by fossils. As soon as you declare Zinjanthropus to be man-ape or ape-man, you're already weighting the dice and it won't take long for someone to declare that, because it's more closely resembling a baboon, it is one and therefore cannot be a primitive "man".

It must be nice to have such a literal untroubled mind as some of these anti-evolutionists do (nor do I mean to include, even by implication, Pournelle in their company). For myself, I've concocted an alternate-view definition you probably won't find in any dictionary or textbook: "Science is the art of learning to live with uncertainty." I sometimes wonder if that would have occurred to me if I'd been in the physical rather than the life sciences.

(RICK BROOKS)

There already is a safe effective male contraceptive. It tested out perfectly in the lab. But in outside use, it was found that it mixed with booze to make a man very sick to the stomach. A pity most people need liquor to "wash down" sex with.

I'd like to see just what you consider the other "tools available to mankind". And why you seem too opposed to spaceflight to discuss it here.

((I'm not opposed to spaceflight; I'm opposed to much of the shape of the space program as conducted by the US government. The reason I refrain from discussing it here is that most fans are not rational on the subject, and any criticism of space travel is viewed as heresy. What results then is not an interchange of views but a barrage of cliches ("spinoffs", etc) that don't mean anything. I don't pee into the wind unless I'm in the mood.

Other tools? How about applied psychology? Sociology? Appreciation of beauty? A sense of humor? Maybe even psi?)))

(GLENN GARRETT)

Just a short comment about Alan Bosco's comments on page 58. I really never thought I'd find anything concerned with forestry in an SF zine. My memory from my college forestry courses is not that good, but when I read the statement about trees having to go through a forest fire to germinate being a simplification, I took notice. It is not a simplification -- it is a false statement. Trees do not germinate. Seeds germinate. Seeds can develop into seedlings with a canopy overhead, but chances for survival for many species (such as most pines) are slim. The trees forming the overhead canopy can be removed by thinning or a clearcut, thus providing the seedling with more sunlight. But you can cause a seed to germinate by scarifying the surface of the seed and not have any sunlight at all.

(ADRIENNE FEIN)

I can't think of any very interesting comment about Bonnie Dalzell's poem -- just a lot of words like "excellent" or "how true" or...You get the idea. I wish I could say something about it, as good as the poem itself. Especially the middle section, the difference between loss and known death.

(DAVID FRYXELL)

The best discussion of rebellion is found in Albert Camus' THE REBEL, an incredibly deep book which considers rebellion in its political, literary, and metaphysical

manifestations. Rebellion is more than just the simple act of, say, taking over a building. Rebellion is a way of thinking about the world. It is saying, with Dr. Rieux, the protagonist of Camus' *THE PLAGUE*, "Until my dying day I shall refuse to love a scheme of things in which children are put to torture." It is saying, with Camus, "In the midst of winter, I found within myself an invincible summer." Camus had perhaps the clearest vision of the crisis of our times, and of the role of the rebel in it; I'd commend his works to anyone interested in thinking about such things. For a brief, startlingly clear introduction, the little essay *THE MYTH OF SISYPHUS* is unmatched: "Sisyphus teaches the higher fidelity that negates the gods and raises rocks."

((I think you could get a number of arguments about the accuracy of *THE REBEL*. Most of the French existentialists with whom Camus was in much sympathy attacked it. Camus himself found the world ridiculous, for the most part, and his early pessimism infuses his interpretations in *THE REBEL*, which, in my opinion anyway, was too much taken up with Camus' trepidations of evil in the communist rebellion. I did re-read his work before writing the essay; I just didn't consider the bulk of it relevant to the points I wanted to make.)))

(WAYNE HOOKS)

Re Mark Sharpe on welfare. What Mark fails to realize is that welfare is a form of social control exerted by the political structure (Alinsky). In other words, give the people a crumb so they don't take the whole cake. It is estimated that 10% of people on welfare are chiselers. These people are usually middle class capitalists (like the scandal in Chicago with social workers and postmen getting welfare). 90% of the people on welfare are young, old, disabled, or mothers with children. If Mark thinks it's easy to chisel, he should try applying some day. Welfare is capitalistic, not socialistic. In a pure socialist society, there would be no welfare. Every person would have a right to a share, not a dole. Welfare provides capitalism with a ready labor pool (when jobs are plentiful, welfare requirements are tightened up). Also, every dollar given in welfare generates \$4 in commerce.

I was amused to see Mark considers himself a capitalist. From a limited knowledge of economics, I think of a capitalist as an entrepreneur in a free market system with minimum government control. Mark is in the navy. In this, he receives a salary, is in a seniority system and is very much under government control and contributes to a pension and is fed and housed by the government. Almost sounds like a welfare system, doesn't it, except for the seniority? If Mark were truly a capitalist, it would seem that he should be freelancing as a pimp or pusher.

((I think you got a bit carried away there. I assume Mark meant that ideologically he is a capitalist, which would operate independent of his own economic status. And you can be a capitalist merely by owning one share of stock in some corporation. A capitalist is merely someone who controls capital in a commercial enterprise.)))

(JOHN LELAND)

Re Seth Goldberg's comment on polygamy. It is true that political maneuvering about statehood was part of it, but the immediate ground for the declaration of the Mormon President against polygamy was the simple, practical one that they had appealed a case all the way to the Supreme Court and lost. He specifically cites the decision by the "court of last resort" in his anti-polygamy order as being the motivating factor. I suspect it was because the decision was taken on these frankly pragmatic grounds that polygamists tend to feel they are still spiritually justified despite the official condemnation of the church. I might note that this applies only to the largest of the Mormon churches. There is also the Reorganized Church of the Latter Day Saints which is led by more direct descendants of the Prophet than the larger

one; the Reorganized Saints have never practiced polygamy, and deny (with how much justice I cannot say) that Joseph Smith himself ever preached or practiced it: they maintain this was an evil innovation by Brigham Young. I might add that I personally see no objection to polygamy, polyandry, or any other arrangement entered into with the full knowledge and consent of all parties: what is usually prosecuted as bigamy is a form of fraud in which one of the parties represents him/herself falsely as single, and this is indeed a crime (given that people like to count on the fidelity of their mates), but open polygamy does not bother me. (I might add that I know of no Biblical grounds for denouncing it. Paul says that bishops should have only one wife, but even he was not so strict with the common parishioners; I understand some of the African churches have at least debated allowing polygamy).

(ARTHUR D. HLAVATY)

A loud cheer for Mark Keller's comments on cooperation in war. I would add two things though. Arthur Koestler points out in *THE GHOST IN THE MACHINE* that the reason the Hitlers and Stalins are able to get support for their bloodthirsty adventures is precisely that they appeal to the human desire for collective action and cooperation, especially in a "good cause". The other is something Alan Watts pointed out. A selfish, greedy army which invades another country to steal the land, the livestock, and the women will at least not wantonly destroy the land, the livestock, and the women. An army which is fighting for a good cause is under no such constraints.

LATE LETTERS

(ALAIN CHABOT)

The Wyndham article was of real interest to me. It would have been useful if you could have given some kind of reference for all the stories you cited in your essay.

I take exception with your opinion of Wyndham not being a particularly capable short story writer. Especially during the second part of his career, the man was simply magnificent. At a time when many of the best-known SF writers were still quite short on style and skill more preoccupied with the "Sense of Wonder" than with believable plots, Wyndham was introducing the first believable and fully three-dimensional female character, Amanda Vark of "The Eternal Eve". I will simply mention the following stories to prove that point, "Chronoclasm", "Pillar to Post", "Compassion Circuit", and "A Stitch in Time".

What you call Wyndham's pessimistic view of the interaction between intelligent species and his cynicism about humanity may well have been caused by a cold examination of his surroundings. Wyndham was probably affected rather deeply by World War II; the emergence of the superpowers and the early Cold War were possibly instrumental in that perception of mankind you credit him with. It must be remembered that Wyndham never fell to that mindless activity of writing stories about Us and Them.

While *THE DAY OF THE TRIFFIDS*, *THE MIDWICH CUCKOOS*, and *THE KRAKEN WAKES* are some of the best SF novels ever, I agree that *THE CHRYSALIDS*, *CHOCKY*, and *TROUBLE WITH LICHEN* are not as good. However each of the last three explores, in an at the time unusual way, an otherwise old theme. Particularly *TROUBLE WITH LICHEN* casts an unexpected new light on the old mad scientist theme.

((A misconception there. *THE CHRYSALIDS/RE-BIRTH* is, I think, Wyndham's best novel, and *TROUBLE WITH LICHEN* is as good as *TRIFFIDS* and *KRAKEN*. *MIDWICH* is decidedly inferior to the others. I have been told by L.W. Currey, incidentally, that there are text differences between US and UK editions on all of Wyndham's novels, so I have to find Penguin editions of them all. And I stand by my opinion of Wyndham's relative inability as a short story writer, your stated examples notwithstanding.)))

.....

(IAN COVELL)

Terry Carr's Ballantine anthology BEST SF OF THE YEAR 5 has been split into two volumes and the first just published by Peacock books. The point is that Peacock is the juvenile subsidiary of Penguin and is aimed at the 11+ range. The stories in the volume are by Smith, Varley, Wolfe, Budrys, Ellison, and Benford. My question is, is this reduction from a major anthology in the states to a minor juvenile book in the UK indicative of better taste in the English young or the fact that the anthology is insipid?

I wrote a set of reviews of the work of one Walter Harris, whose best work is a ghost story (a novel, THE DAY I DIED) but who writes SF on the borderline (the North Sea collapses due to oil drilling, the UK tilts, a future prime minister is assassinated and his widow proceeds to cement international relations, and there are robots and a controlled USA and an underground in the UK). It was returned from a possible market with the comment that Harris wasn't too important a writer,

I am told that DYING INSIDE is optimistic, or Silverberg says it is, and I can only think he is then implying incest - which I do not particularly object to - and if so, I would probably agree it was happy. However, I must pointedly disagree that Selig was well drawn. It may be that identifying with him, you endowed him with more substantiality than Silverberg presented, but overall Selig is a virtually anonymous man who is unmemorable. The plot is unforgettable because it is so obvious, but Selig not.

Since I am a fan of Edmund Cooper, will someone mind saying just what the US fan attitude is to his work. He is rarely discussed in England. He admits to a belief that women are different from men, and that, since his heroes are always himself, that he draws women from those he knows, but I have heard him called sexist.

From the SUN, Mar 10, 78: An unmarried Swedish girl is claiming damages from Uri Geller because she claims that when watching Geller bend cutlery on TV while simultaneously making love (interesting thought) her contraceptive coil suddenly warped and she became pregnant.

((Cooper's THE CLOUD WALKER was very well received here, as were a few of his other books. He is in disfavor in many eyes as the result of WHO NEEDS MEN?/ GENDER GENOCIDE and FIVE TO TWELVE, both of which seem to imply that women can't function well without men. I also read an interview in CIPHER a year or three ago with Cooper which convinced me that I detest the man, but I cannot recall the details. I'll look it up some time.

You may not find Selig memorable, but that may well have something to do with your particular mind set. If you don't feel he was well drawn, then for you he wasn't. For me he was. And I totally fail to comprehend what your reference to incest has anything to do with.

I've never heard of Walter Harris, but I have a vague recollection of seeing the name somewhere. What are the other titles? I do these relatively unknown author studies for a variety of reasons: (1) People publish them (2) It gives me an excuse to reread things and find out which stories are worth remembering in a systematic way (3) I try to warn off/recommend to readers, as appropriate, from the lesser known works of lesser known writers. I enjoy doing it, and fully intend to persevere.

And so ends another lettercolumn. WAHF Hank Heath, Judy Kopman, David Hull, John Robinson, John Thiel, Owen Hammer, Tony Renner, Rick Stoker, Barry Hunter, Roger Dutcher, and Mary Long.

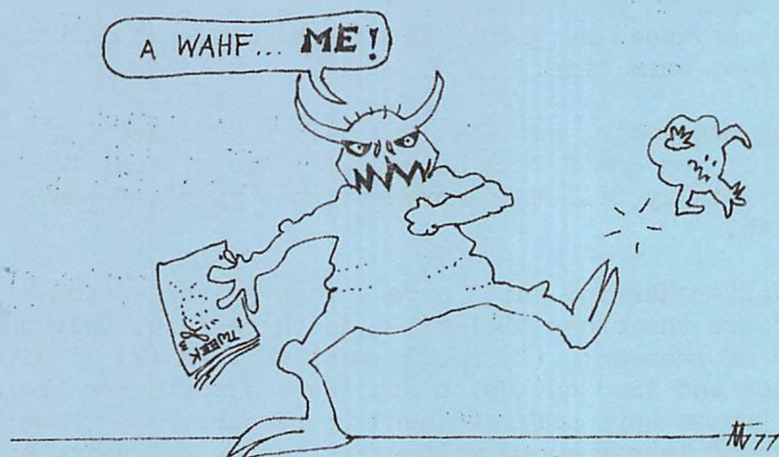
that were designed by their younger, alien selves. And they will in increasing numbers overthrow that earlier judgement and insist on alternatives.

I suspect that time will show that life consists of a series of these changes, that after intervals of years, nearly everyone - consciously or unconsciously - evaluates his or her life and makes judgments about it, throwing out old ideas and building new ones.

But people fear change. They fear change within themselves in particular. The unsettling nature of intrapersonal change is probably responsible for many breakdowns as people are rendered incapable of reconciling their old and new beliefs, or are faced for one reason or another with the impossibility of rebuilding their life structure to accomodate their new personalities.

One final note. I have actually had some people write and complain about the gaps between issues of MYTHOLOGIES. Now, I suppose I should be flattered that people notice it enough to recognize its prolonged absence. But at the same time, I can no longer (if I ever could) even guarantee the continued appearance of MYTHOLOGIES. For one thing, it's very expensive. For another, it consumes an awful lot of time, between writing, editing letters, typing stencils, running it off - mostly Sheila, collating, stapling, addressing envelopes, and even in just mailing it. And I don't know if the emerging version of me will continue to find it worth the effort to put it out. This is one of the reasons why I don't accept subscriptions. I don't want to, refuse to, feel a duty to publish anything. This is supposed to be fun, and it will be done, if at all, at my leisure and to my inclination. People who want to send art or articles should keep that in mind as well. I publish very soon after receipt - almost always the very next issue - but that could still be some time off.

So be patient people. When I find out who I am and what I want to do, I'll let you know.



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I think this is everybody. If I've forgotten you, please accept my apologies.

A few plugs should be inserted here:

Del Rey Books sent me a complimentary copy of LORD FOUL'S BANE by Stephen Donaldson. I thank them, but I would have plugged it anyway. The trilogy which this begins is perhaps not as rich in background as Tolkien, but the writing is at least his equal and the story is far superior. And the first volume is the weakest of the three. By all means buy it.

William Goldman's new pseudo-horror novel, MAGIC, is not quite the equal of Stephen King's THE SHINING, but it is in the same class. It's out in paperback, and if you never read Goldman, read THE PRINCESS BRIDE first, then MAGIC, then everything else.

For pure beauty of bookishness, the Lovecraft collection A WINTER'S WISH, edited by Tom Collins, has rarely been surpassed. I'm not really qualified to judge the skill and accuracy of Tom's work on Lovecraft, but the material itself is interesting and well presented. It provides glimpses of a side of Lovecraft with which I, at least, was not familiar.

Susan Cooper's pentology which climaxes with SILVER ON THE TREE is far superior to most juveniles, and for my money, it's far better than Lloyd Alexander's excellent Prydain series. It's written for children of all ages.

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As has been mentioned before, MYTHOLOGIES costs a lot of money to produce, particularly at this greater length. So I'm going to continue pruning the mailing list of people who aren't participating. I won't generally give warning to people in danger of being dropped unless they are people I'm really interested in keeping. I'm hoping to be able to sell enough copies at conventions to pay for postage at least on those I send out for free, and maybe defray some of the costs involved as well.

For those whom I really want to hear from, and who are in danger of being expunged from my mailing list, I provide an "X" in the space below. Please write.

Closing notes. Better than two dozen copies of MYTHOLOGIES were returned to me last time marked "undeliverable" from good addresses. I suspect others didn't get through at all. It took four tries to get one to George Fergus. Overseas readers received theirs very late because the dock strike held up mailing for three months and, to be honest, when the strike ended, I forgot for a while that I hadn't shipped them. Sorry about the delays, those my fault and otherwise.

WAHF: Hank Heath, Judy Kopman, John Robinson, John Thiel, Owen Hammer, Tony Renner, Rick Stoker, Barry Hunter, Terry Jeeves, Ron Dutcher, and Mary Long.

