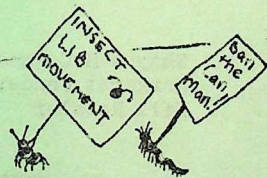
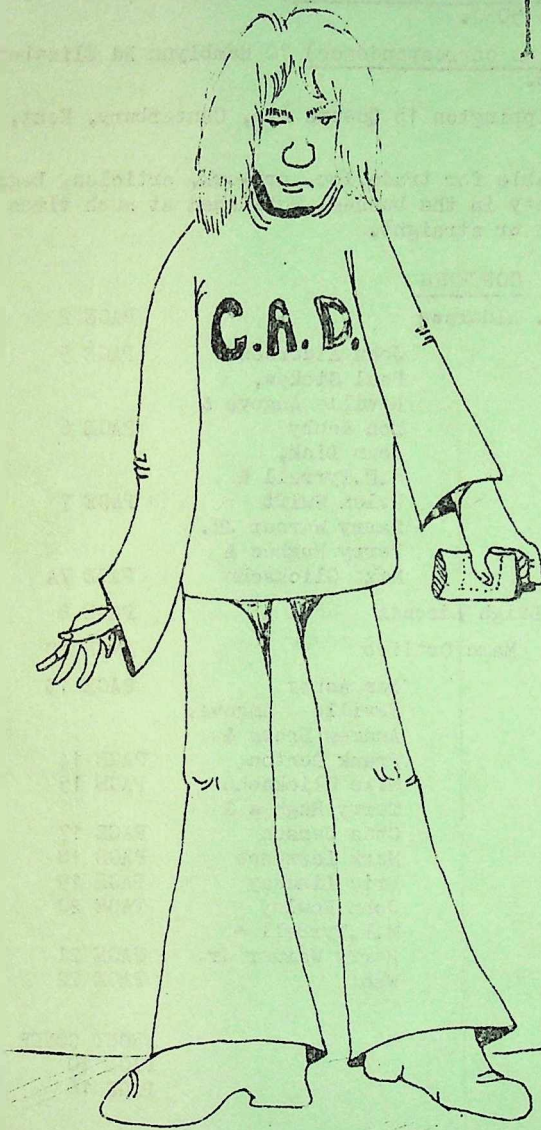


Minador



"...the Mystic word 'Minardor' was in fact the word "Mind the Doors""

THE SCARLET CAPSULE Spike Milligan

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PEPPERMINT FROG PRESS NUMBER ONE

WARNING:- This article is about religion and the reading thereof may bring about your conversion and lead you to a better way of life.

SING HO! FOR POPE JOAN

John J Alderson

Several days ago as I was pondering the receipt of the latest issue of MINARDOR and drinking my fourth cup of tea, the wireless being on, a news commentator began to speak. Due to the inadequacies of the audio-visual media, I did not get his name, but I think he was a reader in philosophy at a University in Croatia. His subject was the recent decision by a Synod of the Anglican Church in Sydney that there was no theological barrier to the ordination of women priests. He agreed and remarked in passing that the said body was fifty years behind the times etc. etc....

I disagree, on theological and historical grounds. Now, lest the Bishop of Westbourne Park, or the Cardinal of Rhode Island write querying my theological pretensions, let me state that I have contributed to THE AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN two theological articles, one on Paul's attitude to women and the other pointing out that the doctrine of Original Sin is based on a reading that takes no cognisance of the historical provance of the 51st Psalm. (2)

The point of having a priest is to offer sacrifice and to stand between the worshippers and their god as a mediator. Now, according to Christian doctrine, Christ offered himself, once and for all, as a sacrifice for sin (3), and since there is no further offering required, or indeed that can be made by the believer, no priesthood is necessary. Indeed, Christ himself is the high priest. (4) However, as every Christian offers his own body as a sacrifice to God (5), they are, each one, a priest. That is, every Christian is a priest before God (6). There is not, nor can there be, any priesthood or laity in the Church. The Anglican communion is not fifty years behind

the times, it is nineteen hundred years out of date. So much for the historical grounds of my disagreement.

Now the theological grounds for my disagreement. There is, in the New Testament, absolutely no teaching whatever on the ordination of priests, because, as I outlined above, the early Christian Church just didn't have any. Well, what did they have?

Christ appointed twelve apostles, but that number has never been added to. In the commune the first Christians had in Jerusalem, it was found that some of the Hellenist widows were missing out on the daily distributions, so seven men were chosen to be deacons. (7). A deacon was one who served at the tables, and men were chosen because, in the Hellenic world of the day, women did not do menial jobs, and the Christians did not use slaves. The deacons gradually began to take care of the temporal affairs of the Church. Most churches now have deaconesses (some of the modern ones having hang-ups about serving at tables) but their precise duties I don't know. When we were rewriting our local Church's constitution I wanted their duties defined as those of the elders and deacons were, but the deaconesses refused to divulge what their duties were, one saying very tartly, "We know what we do" and as a male I had to stand humble and abashed before such logic.

I suspect that the elders or bishops were successors to the apostles, but nowhere is it said. Their duties were pastoral, and they took, as their badge of office, a shepherd's crook to signify their spiritual oversight over the Church. They were not priests, but they were men, and have remained men and the writers of the Epistles were adamant that they should be men (8).

The early church did not have any other offices. They practiced a form of anarchy (in the political sense) called congregationalism and, as there is a lack of information about the local Churches being ruled by elders (9) and/or deacons, I suspect that they followed the Greek ideal and were democratic.

Well, what about the parson, or the minister as he is now known. The early Church did not have a paid ministry, indeed, they did not have a ministry, except for what has become known as a "mutual ministry". The idea grew up later so things would be done with some degree of decorum and certainty. A minister is one who serves a congregation. He is not a boss, manager or ruler. The Church is ruled by the elders (bishops) in the spiritual sphere and by the deacons (and deaconesses) in the temporal sphere. Now, here is a strange thing. Every female I have heard interviewed on the wireless or whose writing I have read, has emphasised the ruling and has never mentioned the real function of ministering.

I remember reading somewhere that the Church gained much of its power because it replaced the male at the head of the house in a woman dominated community.

It hardly needs comment that Greek men of any social standing are conspicuous by their absence in the New Testament. A few tradesmen, artisans, slaves and Roman officials constitute the males. Women of standing however are plentiful. Of the men it is said, "Now the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there spent their time in nothing except telling or hearing something new." (1C). Obviously the unemployment position was bad amongst the men. To see how this happened we have to go back a bit.

Xenophon (11) relates some advice given by Socrates to Aristarchus when the latter was like to be overwhelmed by poverty because some fourteen female relations (plus slaves) had taken refuge in his house

due to the political disasters that had overwhelmed Athens. Socrates advised him to get the relatives working for him, so Aristarchus borrowed money and bought wool and got the women to spin it and the latter began to work cheerfully together and the household began to flourish again until at length the women complained that only Aristarchus "ate the bread of idleness" and Socrates advised him to tell the women the "fable of the dog" and that "You accordingly tell your relations that you are, in the place of the dog, their guardian and protector, and that, by your means, they work and live in security and pleasure, without suffering injury from anyone."

In Greece, a situation arose, as described in the Book of Proverbs (12) and as remarked upon by Socrates (13), such that the women, knowing the family economy took it into their own hands. In Roman times Greece was virtually an occupied country and the man no longer was able to "protect the household". Consequently they became as Paul found them, doing nothing but speaking or hearing some new thing. They were consequently of no economic or social importance in the community. The Greeks being an enlightened people, the Greek man was allowed his room in the house where he could entertain his male friends (14) just as the male was allowed his den in Victorian times.

Christianity, springing from the male dominated Judea, came as a breath of fresh air to the Hellenistic society because the Church insisted firmly on placing the male again at the head of the household, just as Christ was the head of the Church. (15). It may not be amiss to point out that Paul would not have wasted ink telling the Greeks what was already their social practice.

Thus the elder or bishop had rule over the Church as much as they had any oversight in their almost certainly democratic practice. It is then understandable that Paul should object to a woman usurping authority (16) and draw attention to the verb used.

Well, what happened to change the Church with its local democratic congregations without formal organisation etc into the huge monolithic state churches such as the Church of Rome, the Anglican and the Lutheran with their complicated ruling class system to say nothing of their priesthoods and their celibates?

To my mind, these changes came about when Constantine the Great made Christianity the State Religion in 324 AD. Temples were closed and sacrifices forbidden, but it was not all so simple. Many temples became churches and probably many priests of the old religion became priests of the new.* Certainly many of the old practices survived very little changed, particularly official positions. Many of these remained with their old titles. Naturally, the Church had to become organised. It acquired a hierarchy and the idea of Jesus coming as the servant of all became lost.

This was not all the story. Very early in the piece, there arose a particular heresy, the Manichean sect, and although Mani was born in 215 AD, St. Paul appears to be condemning tenets similar to theirs in his Letter to Timothy (17). The Manichaeans believed that the powers of Good and Evil were co-eternal and that the material world was evil. Asceticism was superexalted and marriage was condemned (18). The struggle with this great heresy occupied the Church for the next thousand years, and its doctrines were contaminated by the blight of this heresy. This gave the Church the monastic ideal, the exalting of virginity and the sinfulness of sex, wine and many innocent forms

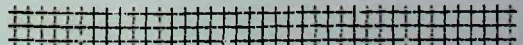
* I've been resisting the impulse to butt in up till now, but this statement I cannot allow to go unchallenged. The impression I have of the early Christian Church is that it was tight knit and paranoid. As such, I doubt that it would have welcomed ex-priests of its rivals. If you want us to believe that it did, I feel you are obliged to provide us with a bit more evidence than "probably".

MAO.

of merrymaking. It is inevitable that when men leave what Paul calls the natural use of women (19) for either an unnatural asceticism (considering sex evil), or lust (making sex despicable), then women suffer and cease to be our equals.

A very sketchy outline of what happened, but I think it a fair enough estimate of the essential history. Now today, with the Anglican Church dithering about admitting women priests, we see them not fifty years behind the times but about seventeen hundred, for in essential Christianity there is no place for the whole paraphernalia of these obsolete State Churches. The last thing Christianity can be is the religious arm of the State. All Christians are priests in that they have direct access to God. All are equal and none should seek to rule others (20) but should be practicing self-denial and love. The Methodists, when they broke from the Anglicans, saw the light and dropped all such worldly pretensions. It's time the rest did likewise.

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- (1) THE AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN, "Paul the Misogynist?" 1975 p 110
 - (2) Ibid 1977 "The Insincere Psalmist" p 340.
 - (3) I Cor. 5:7 ; Heb. 9:26.
 - (4) Heb. 6:20.
 - (5) Rom. 12:1.
 - (6) I Pet. 2:5.
 - (7) Acts 6:1-6.
 - (8) I Tim. 3:1-7 ; Titus 1:6.
 - (9) Titus 1:5.
 - (10) Act 17:21.
 - (11) Xenophon, MEMORABILIA 2:7.
 - (12) Prov. 31:10-31.
 - (13) Xenophon op cit 3:9.
 - (14) Vitruvius THE TEN BOOKS ON ARCHITECTURE VI:VII:4.
 - (15) Eph. 5:23.
 - (16) I Tim. 2:12.
 - (17) I Tim. 4:3.
 - (18) James, THE APOCRYPHAL NEW TESTAMENT Oxford 1955 p xx.
 - (19) Rom. 1:27.
 - (20) I Pet. 5:3.



THE ALDERSON LETTERS Part II

JOHN J ALDERSON Havelock Victoria 3465. 6/9/77

With the very odd exception, when writing a humorous article, one should be as accurate as possible. I find this so in particular because my humorous articles are very serious. So I take care that every fact I use is as correct as I can be sure of, and I write a humorous article with just as many reference books consulted as for a serious article and I could document them just the same. If I deal with myths it is because, as a fundamental part of history I study them. I hope I appreciate their meaning.

But when I make a simple statement, "Remember that proverb of ours, (reduced from its obscene original) to wit ; Once you've got them scared you've got them beat. (I may add that the proverb does not apply literally to girls. They start screaming.) Don't be afraid of them." I would have thought the meaning clear: If Marc was afraid of women he was beaten, and the proverb does not apply literally to girls. Well, the proverb is, as Paul Stokes apparently does not know, "Once you've got them scared you've got them fucked." and proverbs are usually figures of speech and this is no exception, but just so there could be no mistake I added that it does not apply literally to girls. I have never heard it applied literally, and do not expect to, and I suppose honesty should prompt me to add that I got the thought on girls' reaction to being scared from an article by Jack Wodhams. But Paul Stokes comes out with...

"Well John, as far as I, and a number of friends are concerned, you still know fuck all about women. All this crap about getting them scared and then you have them. For what may I ask? The great masculine passtime which centres the only possible relationship between man and woman as just below the navel. Isn't it about time that this attitude just disappeared?"

The disappearing of that attitude could begin with Paul Stokes. His complete misunderstanding of all I was saying in the article is monumental, and I am not surprised that his understanding of myths, legends and literature is just as wide of the mark. Whilst normally I am happy to discuss such matters, I am not going to wade through obscenities to do so.

I have read Dod D'Amassa's letter before in other fanzines concerning other articles of mine. Of course I write controversial articles. I like to think and make people think.

Re Andrew Brown's letter, tut my boy! You confuse a highly sophisticated literary production, Euripides BACCHAE with the Mytnological Bacchaeades. The latter induced orgasmic frenzy by chewing ivy leaves (probably also using other drugs.) ((Sorry to butt in again John but source? MAO)) Originally they apparently killed and ate any male they met. Later they had a chosen victim and finally an animal substitute. I doubt if Euripides would have got far by reminding the women of the cannibal origins of one of their major religious cults. ((I was under the impression that the cult of Dionysus belonged to both man and woman. Though the Bacchaeades were women, by the time the worship of Dionysus had become a major cult, anyone was free to worship. Indeed, Pentheus got his for not worshipping. MAO))

Well, there you are Marc, but where are the rest of the letters that were going to deluge you to put me right?

(See Don Ashby's letter and Helen Swift's letter. I think they cover that. MAO.)

PAUL STOKES 5 George St. Parkside S.A. 5063

Dear John,

excuse my indifference to what "you" choose to term "my obscenity". Should you choose to take offence there is little I can say on the matter. However, to use that as an excuse for your inability to reply is something else entirely. I misunderstood what you were saying? Really? Somehow I can't really swallow that. While I appreciate what you say about research and myths (and it is a technique I myself employ) I fail to see its relevance to what follows.

"Once you've got them scared you've got them beat. Don't be afraid of them." Now assuredly you may have thought the meaning clear. It isn't without sufficient explanation. Everything you yourself go on to say proves exactly what I said about it and your attitude. If it doesn't apply literally to girls then why do you use it and what point are you trying to make? Are you telling Marc that he should not be afraid of girls but should put his natural shy character aside and be more overt and forthright in his relations with women? If so I heartily agree. However, I personally would be reluctant to encourage someone to put on a bold front that isn't them. You can't lay down one hard and fast rule for relating to people that can apply to everyone.

Why should this "attitude" disappear starting with me? What attitude are you talking about John? The passage you quote was my denouncement of your quote and attitude. I have made no "monumental misunderstanding" of what you were saying in your article which I reiterate was distasteful, not only to me, but to those female friends who read it. As to your comments regarding my comprehension of myths legends and literature: such a crass and immature statement from a man of your standing who researches his writings is not worthy of comment.

NEVILLE J. ANGOVE 13/5 Maxim St West Ryde, N.S.W. 2114 5/9/77.

I can't understand the furore raised by Alderson's article/letter on women. I thought it was funny (then, I happen to be a MCP of the highest degree) but there was nothing in it that should have generated the response that it did.

DON ASHBY 224 Nicholson St Abbotsford Vict 3067. 10/10/77

Apparently John is incapable of writing without being sexist and while I wouldn't be so rash as to suggest he give up (writing that is) I would suggest that he will keep more friends and make fewer enemies if he ceases. While the predominant emotion his sexist remarks evoke in me is pity, the emotion they arouse in most people is repugnance, disgust and anger. I have shown the article to a few female fringe fans of my acquaintance and the ensuing pyrotechnics were a wonder to behold. Marian's grandmother lives near John's place and I have suggested at odd times that we make a side trip to see John. "You can go by yourself, I'm having nothing to do with that sexist shit" was the response. I know that John is a capital fellow from odd talks at cons and parties. The newer generation of fans who are somewhat more worldly and less eccentric than the old guard have likely not met him. By writing such thoughtless rubbish, he is not doing himself, or fandom, or the reputation of your fanzine any good.

((It seems that this might just be an ideal time to give my full views on the subject, since the reputation of my fanzine has been raised. To be

honest, this is the least of my worries. I published John's article because I enjoy his writing style. I disagree with most of what he says, and find his misuse of logic abysmal, but at the same time, John's articles always come out readable, unless one's point of view runs so contrary to his that one is rendered incapable of enjoying the writing. I must admit that I hadn't really thought deeply enough about his article on women, because it seems that every female who has read the article has been totally turned off. I'm just hoping that the article in this issue won't effect people in a similar manner, because there is enough in it for a couple of good arguments. One thing I do object to however is people telling me what I should and should not print in MINARDOR. I get the impression Don that you are trying in a diplomatic manner to hint that I should not print certain things. A certain other Don was a bit more forceful in his suggestion. As matter stand, I'll continue to print John's material if I think it's worth it. MAO))

Of the letters you printed in PUTTING JOHN RIGHT ABOUT WOMEN. the one that comes closest to my own feelings is Don D'Amassa's. The other letters were merely haggling about trivial points of history and mythological detail that on my reading of said history are much closer to the facts than John Alderson's. None of the letters actually approached the inherent problems of sexism or the causes for the underlying sentiments. Your remarks concerning Paul Stokes and APES in general were well made. It is interesting to note that none of the letters you printed were by women. If Maz was an example, she tried on a number of occasions to write a letter, but descended into inchoate anger every time she tried to finish the article under discussion.

((Thank Don for a well set out analysis of the whole thing. I must admit that I also noticed the hedging around the main issue, however I do not feel qualified to write anything really meaningful about sexism. If anyone else out there would care to do so, I'll gratefully receive it. Otherwise, may I recommend JANUS a beautiful fanzine which has featured some of the best material on sexism I've seen since KHATRU 3/4. 75¢ or the usual from SF3 Box 1624 Madison Wi 53701. MAO))

JCAN DICK 379 Wantigong St Albury N.S.W. 2640 8/12/77

John Alderson certainly stirred up a hornet's nest when he "aired" his views on women. With three such gallant gentlemen ready to do battle for women, all I can say is "God made women without a sense of humour so they could love men instead of laughing at them."

((Somehw Joan, I don't think that having men fight for women is enough. Still in there I detect the view that woman was created to serve man, and that grates on my nerves. MAO))

M.E.TYRRELL 414 Winterhaven Drive Newport News Virginia 23606 U.S.A. 4/9/77

I am assuming that John Alderson's PUTTING MARC RIGHT ABOUT WOMEN was written just to irritate everyone so I am largely ignoring it. If he really means all he said I hate to think what sort of life he's had.

HELEN SWIFT 1/52 St.Anne's Place Parkside S.A. 5063 5/12/77

Reconsidering my reply to John Alderson's comments, I just feel really sick of the whole thing, and feel that to add anything else to it would be to drag out an argument best left alone. So I ripped up what I wrote and feel better for having done so.

PAGE 7A

or

THE BEST LAID ~~PLANS~~ PLANS

or

THE BEST TIME TO TYPE STENCILS IS THE DAY AFTER YOU'VE
TYPED THEM.

Synopsis:- Having finished typing the letters concerning John Alderson's article, Ortlieb discovers another and receives two more.

HARRY WARNER JR. 423 Summit Ave, Hagerstown, Maryland, 21740 U.S.A. 28/10/77.

As I've said in a couple of locs recently, there should be a special committee formed to draft John Alderson for DUFF, or to set up a special fund to import him to the United States. While here, his itinerary would be arranged so he could participate in every panel discussion about feminism at all the cons being held during his visit. I'm sure he would enliven the discussions magnificently. Other than that, I don't intend to comment on his letter/article. There used to be two things I didn't write about for fanzines, religion and politics. Now there are three, the woman question plus the two original ones which seem sort of shrunken in comparison by now.

((Hmnn. lemme see now, there's the religious article in this issue, the letter/article in MIN 2. John, how would you like to do a political article for MIN5?MAO))

TERRY EUGHES 4739 Washington Blvd Arlington VA 22205 U.S.A. 14/12/77

John Alderson's column is a definite asset for your fanzine as it would be for any fmz.

MIKE GLICKSOHN 141 High Park Ave Toronto Ont M6P 2S3 Canada 6/12/77

Well, I doubt that anyone will be able to accuse John Alderson of anything more serious than writing boringly as a youth after this particular article. I suppose the contrast between the somewhat more idealistic young Alderson and his loveable cynical mature self is interesting but this is in most respects a simple piece of filler. Like some of your readers who vent their spleens against John's earlier article on women, I used to let him provoke me into angry responses with his goading and deliberately provocative articles, but I wisened up, refused to rise to the bait and a fairly bitter enmity that had been growing between us vanished and was replaced by a friendship that was realized at AUSSIECON. So nowadays I find it hard to take John seriously or to sympathise with those who are still moved to attack him with such fervour. I'm sure it's all good for controversy and lots of mail, but to me, that's a pretty rotten reason to publish something. If you can't generate response with the quality or tone of your publication (tone in the sense of the special feeling that pervades fanzines like MOTA, MAYA etc) then doing so with what amounts to yellow journalism is pretty low. (Note, I'm not questioning John's article -- which I don't remember at this time -- but merely your reasons for using it.)

((Point taken, however, I find my reasons for doing anything fuzzy at the best of times. I think I have basically two criteria for what I publish. The first is appeal to me and the second is whether or not an article will elicit locs. John's articles normally fit both categories, though I must admit, the women article fitted criteria two better than it did one. MAO))

The following was passed on to me by Paul Stevens DUFF candidate and perpetrator of lousy jokes. He had rejected it for his own zine, and had sent it to me because "He (Leigh) said you weren't very selective." Mumble. Not selective indeed. Why, only a year ago I rejected an article. However, in the interests of paying Leigh back for his totally uncalled for and absolutely accurate comments, here is

LEIGH EDMONDS' Q CON REPORT

1977 was not, for Valma and I, a very good year for conventions. I realised this as soon as I walked into the convention room at Q-Con the first time, and that was still in 1976 (New Year's Eve I will admit.) As a room in which to hold a convention it was pretty good, lacking only air-conditioning. (In Melbourne one might not notice, but in Brisbane in the middle of summer you certainly will.) However, from the ceiling were slung three large slowly rotating fans that stirred the air languidly. The ceiling was fairly low and the shafts on the fans were fairly long and I thought it was a pity that Andrew Brown wasn't there so that he could be cut down to size every time he walked under one.

But as I was saying, I knew it was going to be a bad year for conventions as soon as I walked into the Q-Con convention room. I was scheduled to play a piece of music on one of the evenings and while an L-shaped room may not bother a panel or a guest speaker, it plays hell with the acoustics and stereo effects on pre-recorded tape. I had a quick dose of gloomy foreboding and then went down to the lobby where we met Paul Stevens and he and I decided to go for an exploratory walk of the city while, on the other hand, Valma took her ease and comfort on the bed in our room with the air conditioner turned up full.

It was a day of blast furnace intensity heat, but, as explorers, we paid little attention to such things. With the aid of a street map ripped from a tourist guide, large doses of native intelligence and orange juice, we successfully negotiated the streets of Brisbane city for the afternoon. It eventuated that our interests were slightly dissimilar because I was interested in looking around toy and hobby shops at plastic models and Paul was interested in looking in bookshops - "professional interest" he claimed. Paul was under instructions from Valma to remind me that I had already spent enough on plastic for the holiday and, though I did not have any similar instructions from Mervyn, I think Paul was worried that I would tell tales anyhow. In the hobby shops I would lecture Paul on the kits there, giving him a run down on quality, availability and price. In the book shops Paul lectured me on quality, availability, quantity, price and the natural superiority of SPACE AGE BOOKS. Naturally I paid no heed to this chatter.

Late in the afternoon we discovered that the convention motel was perched up at the top of a high hill overlooking the city, a fact we had failed to notice when we had earlier walked down into the city. It was still very hot and we were both hot exhausted and parched when we got back to our rooms.

I had been looking forward to a glass of ice water from the room fridge, but instead I discovered another omen overshadowing the 1977 convention - calcander - the water at the motel was heavily chlorinated. I am no fan of chlorine, haven't been since the time I drank a not small portion of the contents of the Horsham Olympic Swimming Pool. The only solution to the problem was to dash over the road to the bottle shop of the pub on the corner to stock up on vital bodily fluids, naturally bourbon.

After that the convention went fairly well, the only major low point being the performance of the piece of music. For years I have been preserving my youth and handsome looks through wholesome exercise, wholesome environment,

wholesome food and clean wholesome thoughts. By my reckoning my physical age was still about seventeen until after my first piece of music was performed when I quickly became about twenty seven. This was fair enough since that was about my true age, but the performance at Q-Con made me the oldest sixty-eight year old twenty-eight year old in fandom and perhaps the real world. Personally, the performance went that badly I refuse to think about it. My nerves simply can't stand it when I have to perform my own music.

When the bourbon ran out we were reduced to putting red cordial into our water to hide the taste of the chlorine. Unfortunately the chemical has a rather distinctive taste which kept on peaking around the edges of the red flavouring. By the closing stages of the convention I was beginning to feel more like a chlorine gas container than a trufan. I was also looking forward to my Fan Guest of Honour speech. Although remnants of gloomy afterbedding from the previous evening still overshadowed my normally sunny countenance, I had fortunately spent hours and hours researching information and preparing notes so I couldn't see what could go wrong. I wasn't exactly overconfident of the success of the venture, but I did have high hopes of a roaring success.

Like any other convention, this one had been exhausting, most people staying up much too late and drinking much too much. Just before lunch and then my talk on that final day, we were standing in the convention room talking with some fans when a bout of tiredness came over me. I yawned and stretched. Suddenly there was a loud BONG and my right hand which had been raised directly over my head was flung away at an unexpected angle while still attached to my arm, an odd sensation let me tell you. I looked up and then commented, "I've just been bitten by the fan." Since my fingers had not been severed from their hand and had not even taken severe damage, nobody was too concerned, except me. There was only one small cut, hardly any blood at all. However there was a yellowish gas which had a slightly familiar chemical smell seeping from the wound, making the blood bubble. This kept up during lunch, but had almost stopped by the time the expectant crowds had gathered to hear me speak.

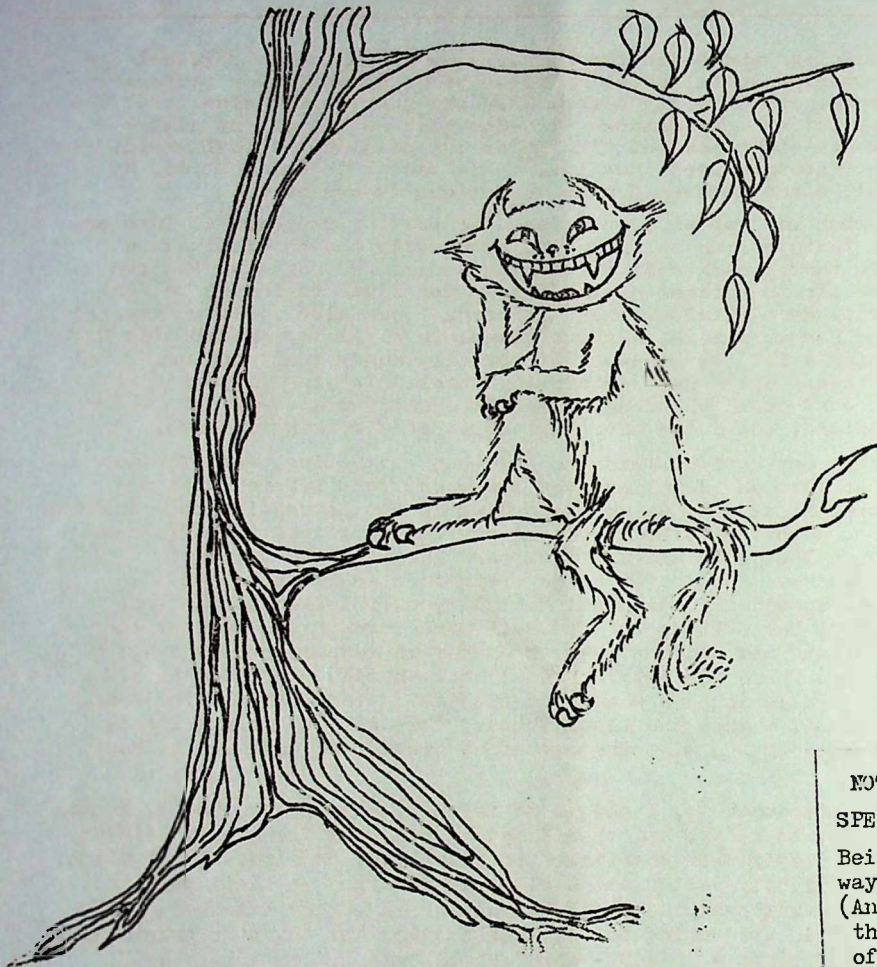
Dennis Stocks introduced me, I nodded to friends, cleared my throat, looked at my notes, prepared to speak. And then I made a stunning discovery. Either; "Chlorine dissolves inspiration when taken internally."; or else; "Inspiration and confidence are slightly yellow and smell like chlorine in their gaseous states." I'm not sure which is the case, but either way, when I looked at the notes they meant little or nothing to me. That morning and any time previously, the four words "Bill Wright - COMORG - ASIO" could have led to a lengthy discussion of one of the epic chapters in the history of Australian fandom, but as I sat there I was overwhelmed by the thought of the immensity of my discovery, the value to science, the prospect of a Nobel Prize, the money, the women etc... I couldn't think of one interesting thing to say.

Well fans, I've learned my lesson once and for all - I go to pieces in front of an audience. No more will you catch me turning up to conventions with prepared tape, prepared talks with lots of background information or any of that sort of thing. Any conventions from now on, I'll be attending with a bottle or two of bourbon, a pack of cards and the time to be spent being amused, educated and entertained. I shall also be taking a box of band-aids and a chlorine filter for emergencies, just in case I have to do something on a programme.

It's not that I don't like prepared tapes and prepared talks, it's just that after last New Year such things make me slightly nervous.

As for the other conventions held in 1977, I'd rather not talk about them.

+++++



NOTES FROM THE
SPECTACLE CASE.

Being something in the
way of an editorial
(And the more things
that get in the way
of this editorial
the better.)

Somehow it always helps a fanzine if someone else can be blamed for it. The burden of guilt is lightened, and the editor can face his loved ones secure in the knowledge that it "was not all my fault." In this case, the winner of the "Who Can I Pass The Buck To" award is Allan Beatty. (Perhaps better known to some as Steve Beatty. He produced the mammoth FANZINE DIRECTORY.) I was sinking into a pleasant sort of gafia when Allan's APRIKOS 8 arrived. Believe me, I had a list of excuses for the non-appearance of MINARDOR which would have easily sunk a battleship. You see, I was working

on an article on ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW, and Steve's article on Colin Wilson wasn't finished, and I hadn't gotten theillos into Roneo to be electrostencilled, and I didn't have the time. Anyway, APRKOS 8 arrived, with Allan bubbling over about cems and meeting people and things, and I looked into myself and located the real reason I hadn't got to work on MIN 4; I was too bloody lazy.

Having made a blunt statement of fact, I will now smother it in rationalizations. Fanzine work for me is a solitary passtime. I started whilst in the depths of the country and continued whilst living on my own in various cut of the way parts of the city. However, when one adopts the commitments involved in living with other people, one's life style tends to undergo a marked change. Take for instance the ritual involved in a simple cup of coffee. The solitary cup of coffee is no sweat. One merely puts the whistling kettle on the stove and goes back to typing. When the whistle screams, one whips out to the kitchen, dumps the water in the cup, curses the lack of fresh milk and opens a tube of condensed because one cannot be bothered interrupting one's typing to go down to the shops for a bottle of the genuine article. Nett time removed from typing time, two minutes.

Now compare the same ritual in a group habitation. Dive into the kitchen to put on the kettle. Blast! No milk! Could use condensed, but no, X don't like it. Oh well, nothing for it but to trundle down to the shops for a pint. Might pick up a packet of biscuits. Later:- Put on the kettle. No, not the whistler. The screech is too off putting. Just have to sit here until it boils. Okay, coffee's boiled. Yeah, that's really fascinating, matter fact I saw something about it in the latest ROLLING STONE. Wait a sec I'll grab it. See, he agrees. Personally I thought the last album was far better. Wait on, I'll just put it on so you can have another listen. Yeah. You're right. Another cup?

Nett time elapsed thirty minutes. Not that I begrudge a moment of it. But it does partially account for the time I haven't been putting into MINARDOR lately. Add to that the following factors; work on the school production; running a Dungeon; running a postal game of Diplomacy; work on three apas; lesson preparation; reading; marking; extra travel time; sleep and the Liberal Government and you can see the fact that this zine reached you at all is a miracle (and a pity did I hear someone say). Now, all this is a rather roundabout way of saying that I'd like to change the trade agreement I have with some of you. For instance, next year MINARDOR will probably come out three times. At the moment, I seem to have an "all for all" trade arrangement with Brian Thurogood for instance. Now, no one is going to tell me that three issues of MINARDOR are worth twelve issues of NOUMENON. Thus, I would like to trade MINARDOR on a one for one basis in future. That way I can live with my conscience and you are getting something closer to value for value. Be assured that I will do my best to loc the frequent fanzines I most wish to receive. (I might even resort to ("Gasp!") subscriptions.) Note, this does not necessarily work the other way around. If you only produce one issue a year, I'll be happy to send you MINARDOR for a year in exchange.

Well, the DUFF race is in full swing, and for those of you who are still unaware, the contestants this year are Shayne McCormack, Paul Stevens and Keith Taylor. We Australians have the chance to rid ourselver of one of these worthies when IGUANACON time comes about. (And gathering from the news reports we receive from the States, the chances of the lucky winner not returning are worth placing a few dollars on.)

Now, speaking as a rational person, I should be unbiased in my evaluation of each of the candidates, however, into the life of the most rational of us can creep that emotional spectre self preservation. In the interests of that

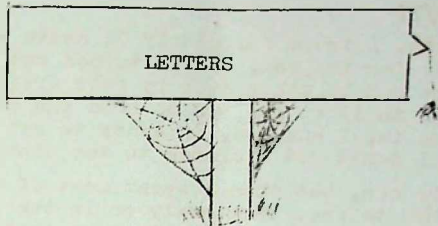
particular emotion. I would like to support Keith Taylor's cause. Keith and I are members of ANZAPA, indeed, Keith is the President of that august body. Now, in one particular mailing, I chose to make light of Keith's superiority to me in terms of number of years on this planet. Keith replied that he considered my remarks to be deleterious to his honour and I, jestingly, suggested a duel might save any loss of face. I forgot that Keith was one of those people who turn up at cons in replica armour with replica but exceedingly dangerous swords and battle axes. As a result of my oversight, I have been religiously avoiding Keith, however, if you good people could see your way clear to paying his way to America, he would be much easier to avoid. Indeed, his habit of toting medieval weapons might just earn him a short rest in one of those fine American prisons. (I'm not sure what President Carter's policy on axe murderers is at the moment, but I'm sure a strategically timed telegram to the airport could work wonders.)

Let it not be thought that the other candidates are without their merits. Paul Stevens sent me the Leigh Edmonds' article printed here with a cunningly worded note, including the line "Stevens For DUFF" which I'm sure has some deep philosophical meaning. Shayne McCormack is also a beautiful person and it might be worth sending her to the States so she can add to her collection of photos of her being hugged by different pros. However, for my money, and skin, it's TAYLOR FOR DUFF. A ballot form should be included with this issue, provided I don't run out of paper. (It's Christmas Eve at time of typing, and all the shops are closed for a week or so.)

I guess this is also a good time to look back over 1977. (My, doesn't time fly. It seems like only yesterday that I was reading BRUCE GILLESPIE'S IDEAL 1977.) To be quite honest, I'd like to know what happened to the year. Fannishly, it was no big thing. In G'Nel 8, my ANZAPAZine, I published a list of plans for 1977. They ran as follows.

- (1) Visit Sydney
- (2) Publish at least three issues of Alician Fields.
- (3) Buy a better duplicator.
- (4) Put out at least five large fanzines.
- (6) Maintain my position in ANZAPA.
- (5) Finish my Drama course from 1976.
- (7) Save a little money.
- (8) Get to as many cons as possible.
- (9) Enjoy myself whilst attempting all of the above.

Well, four out of nine isn't too bad. I did manage to visit Sydney, though, as Carey Handfield warned me, it isn't a particularly pleasant city. (The fans there make up for that though.) ALICIAN FIELDS has been relegated to the "I'll put out another issue if and when I have the material" pile. The better duplicator has been relegated to the "When I feel I can really afford it" pile. Putting out at least five large fanzines fell prey to the RSN phenomenon. My position in ANZAPA is safe for the next six months, and due to some miracle, the waiting list for FAPA shrunk so quickly that I was invited to join in the new year. (That gives me three apas to worry about.) I didn't get around to enrolling in the Drama course. I did however enrol in courses in Religious Studies and Science Fiction, both of which I failed. (Couldn't be bothered handing in the major assignments.) Saving money also went by the board. (Mind you, my record collection increased very nicely.) Getting to as many cons as possible was quite easy too, as both major cons this year were in Adelaide. I did get to two Melbourne cons as well. As for enjoying 1977, I guess I did. It wasn't a good year, but then again, I didn't suffer any major disasters either, so overall, the Crtlieb listing for 1977 is M (for mediocre.)



DON ASHBY 10/10/77. (address as previous unless he's moved again since.)

MINARDOR three arrived about two hours ago and it already has coffee stains and vegemite stains on it, a sign of a good fanzine. It hasn't got claret stains on it yet. That is reserved for Bangsund and Thurgood zines.

The cover was good (did anyone recognise John Alderson's arm?) ((Yes, as a matter of fact Mark Lawrence did, or did you tell him? MAO)) I thought the back cover was better though and I would have used it in preference to mine. It has a stfnal look to it - a massive launching of colony ships leaving the dying earth or something. ("And I dreamed I saw the silver spaceships flying/ In the yellow haze of the Sun." Neil Young AFTER THE GOLDRUSH. MAO))

Manuel Velocipede has to be either you or John Alderson. ((Wrong, MAO)) The absense of sexist remarks makes you the liklier author, though I could be wrong. Who ever wrote it seems to have missed the point that if you are traveling in the same direction as the Earth's rotational spin, your relative velocity is much greater than if traveling opposite to the spin, i.e. if you are traveling on a freeway running east/west at the equator at 120mph one way, you are traveling at 880mph, and the other way you are traveling at 1120mph relative, the difference being 240 mph. If you did the trip both ways, you would expect to suffer from the effects of lag.

((I had hoped to get Dr Velocipede to answer questions arising from his article, but he is not available at the moment. I may persuade him to deal with these questions next issue. MAO))

While you are handing out free plugs - Strine Con, Australia's first relaxacon to be held over the Australia Day Weekend '78, presided over by myself and Mr Carey Handfield at a venue to be announced.

By the way a pie floater is NOT restricted to Adelaide. It is an English dish (probably British would be a better word as it is restricted to Cornwall and Devon whose inhabitants are the remnants of the British nation before its integrity and culture were destroyed by the Saxon and Norman barbarians.) The difference between a S.A. floater and a British one is that the British pies are usually made with pork and have an egg in the middle.

As far as wine goes - give me a good Tabilk red to a dozen from anywhere else in Australia. I thought Carey showed remarkable taste wearing a Hunter Valley T shirt. Everyone knows that Victoria produces the best wine, the best beer, the best conventions and the best bullshit in all Australia.

((Well, one out of four ain't too bad. Thanx for the comments. You will, unfortunately note a decrease in the quality of the cover this issue. The old printer left the school leaving me without access to the offset. I had an old offset offered to me, but decided to leave it until I was in a better financial position. As for Strine Con, I gather there is more info available, but I've lost the copy of FNS in which it appears.

MAO))

NEVILLE J. ANGOVE 5/9/77

FROGCON gave me the shits. I drove for nearly 24 hours without a break in order to get to Adelaide for the con, and it turned out to be pretty much a disaster. Than an sf con can be taken over by fake frogs is proof of a lousy con: there wasn't enough in it on its own to hold the attendees attention. The only reason I go to cons is, I suppose, in order to get away from the grind and to meet the people I don't get a chance to see otherwise.

((Hmnn. I enjoyed the con, but then I spent most of my time nattering to people whom I wished to see. Very early on in the piece I stole from Eric Lindsay and Leigh Edmonds the philosophy that a trufan does not attend panel items. Perhaps I have persued that philosophy a little too far, but it also has resulted in my being able to enjoy disorganised cons. I'm sorry I didn't get to meet you at A-Con. Perhaps at the next Sydney Con.MAO)) ((Neville by the way, produces the only Australian fanzine which can compete in looks with ENIGMA and the new SF COMMENTARY. It's called the EPSILON ERIDANI EXPRESS. Well worth asking about.MAO))

ANDREW BROWN 23 Miller Cres Mount Waverley Vic 3149 1/9/77

((What with Andrew's forthcoming holiday in the Americas, I don't know how current that address is.MAO))

Mame'l Velocipede's article has so many holes that I could drive a truck through, but I suppose that's intentional. I will restrain myself to saying that the east coast of the New World was settled sooner because it was a lot easier to get to.

As to Don Ashby, I could argue that if he gave up smoking people wouldn't be rude to him. (Come to think of it, last time I saw him, he was threatening to give it up anyway.) Anyway, does valium cause cancer? Come to think of it, does finger nail chewing cause cancer? You can probably get tetanus from knuckle chewing, but it would be like trying to slash your wrists with an electric razor.

((No! You've got it all wrong! You're supposed to turn the razor on and take it into the bath with you. Oh, and make sure it's mains operated. batteries don't quite have the power necessary. As for valium, I gather it does have one or two nasty side-effects not shared by tobacco.MAO))

((Andrew continues to make rude comments about my spelling and plugs his fanzine BLACK WHOLE. He also mentions the possibility of a fan fund to send an Australian to Britain in '79. I gather there are moves a foot which Leigh Edmonds is coordinating here. Keep an eye on FANW SLETTER \$4-40 for twenty from Leigh P.O. Box 103 Brunswick Victoria 3056.MAC))

FRANK DENTON 14654 8th Ave S.W. Seattle WA 98166 U.S.A. 11/11/77

I'm a bit jealous of your running around and visiting various fan groups over there, but I'm sure the feeling is reciprocal when you read some of our zines. ((And how!MAO)) There is not quite so much activity up here in the Pacific Northwest, but we do have our share of visitors. Peter Roberts, this years TAFF winner was just here for a few days, and it was nice to be able to visit with him. Strangely enough, I seem to have been able to meet quite a few Australian fans over the last several years. Leigh Edmonds and Valma Brown were here for a visit a couple of years ago. I've met Carey Handfield, Eric Lindsay and Christine McGowan (now Ashby) and I've met Robin Johnson at conventions, although he probably wouldn't remember.

I enjoyed Shayne McCormack's article very much. It doesn't hurt at all to rationalize why one likes and reads sf. Sometimes we do get a bit defensive about it. When I first entered the world of sf, it was a true rejection of what was being written in the mainstream at the time. Gradually I have found that there are mainstream writers whom I enjoy immensely and I occasionally give myself some time to read them. I'm just a lot more careful in choosing mainstream books than I used to be. Perhaps I should be just as careful in choosing the sf and fantasy which I read, but I seem less inclined to set standards there. I do have a list of "must reads" that would stand up pretty well for the moment; a new Aldiss; a couple of new children's fantasy things by Patricia McKillip and Susan Cooper; the new Algis Budrys book; but then I find myself plucking some real junk from the shelf and find myself thoroughly immersed in some not very good writing. This is what I should be questioning critically, but I suspect that many fans find themselves doing the same, even though they know better.

((Yea verily. Still, you've got to read the crap so as to better appreciate the good stuff, right? Frank, by the way, puts out ASHWING, an excellent mine which I owe several locs. Available for the usual. MAO))

MIKE GLICKSOHN (address as previous) 6/12/77

.... I can also wish you a Merry Christmas although how one can feel Christmas-like in hot sticky weather without snow, ice, sleet, frozen rain, runny noses, cold feet, sore throats and chills which strike through to the marrow of the bone I don't really understand. What good's Christmas unless you have to suffer to enjoy it?

I appreciated the article about the effects of speed on the human body. It explained away something that had been getting me a pretty widespread reputation in North American fan circles. I refer to my occasional tendency while at conventions in that great country south of here to stumble, appear giddy, slur some words and occasionally even pass out. Lack of scientific knowledge among the unimaginative members of current fandom has placed the blame for these symptoms on my occasional imbibing of small quantities of alcohol which is, of course, a slanderous blot upon my otherwise stainless escutcheon. Thanks to this article I shall now be able to explain to my detractors that any such behaviour they might observe is simply the inescapable result of my body's valiant efforts to adjust to the greater speed of the earth in these more southerly latitudes. I thank you for this obvious resolution to a difficult and sensitive problem.

I can sympathise with Don Ashby even though I'm totally against smoking myself. I think many smokers are rude, inconsiderate and downright dirty. Unfortunately, too many of the anti-smoking brigade assume that all those unfortunates addicted to nicotine are like that and treat all smokers on that premise which leads to the sort of regrettable confrontations with responsible smokers that Don objects to. Consideration ought to be shown by both sides of course.

Coincidentally, the next fanzine I'll be dashing off a response to is Bill Rotsler's personalzine so it's good to be able to read a moderately detailed report on the con he was a guest at and get an Aussie's-eye view of one of North America's most liked and respected fans. I'm delighted that all mentions I've seen of Bill in Down Under fanzines so far have been universally favourable. As one of his nominators and a prime mover in getting him down there, I was sure he'd be popular but it's always nice to have one's faith in other fans' tastes vindicated! It was also good to see an explanation of the frog mystique of the con since the only other reference I'd encountered to that

aspect of the gathering didn't explain it at all. Since I was once a guest of honour at a con where there were thousands and thousands of teeny tiny frogs in the grounds all around the buildings we were meeting in (and on the streets and on the steps and all over the sidewalks and just about everywhere you might go!) I wasn't sure whether or not the A-Con frogs were real, alcohol-induced or stuffed. Now I know. Isn't reading fanzines an educational experience?



Good to see your plug for DUFF which can benefit from the publicity and an even broader base of support than it now has. I've been an ardent supporter of DUFF since it started and have recently added a small footnote to its history at a couple of cons. For example, I paid a hundred and seventeen dollars for a six pack of six ounce cans of beer at one con and just last weekend I upped my own bid six straight times while bidding for some time with Bob Tucker. Most of the audience thought I was crazy both times but at least it makes them aware of DUFF! (I'm not at all sure that being nominated by me is a very good thing: Potsler's the only fan fund runner I've ever successfully nominated and I think he'd have won with , , and as his supporters.

((Honestly, I tried not to cut the letter Mike, but I have enough trouble printing insults about people I do know, without adding insults aimed at people I've

never even heard of. MAO))

Not much to say about the lettercolumn except to register a massive psychic shock at the blasphemy of Mark Lawrence! "Pontoon" (or "Blackjack" here) is a pretty neat game when the stakes are reasonable, and poker, .. poker is the game of the ghods! I take pride in having a great deal to do with the recent massive increase in interest in all-night poker games at Midwestern US conventions. In the last year or so every con I've been to has featured a game and many that I couldn't make have had one in my name. I enjoy poker enormously, for the thrill of playing, the social interchange that results while the game is in progress and, of course, the money I've won that has paid my way to several cons this year! Mark better not spout such heresy if he ever makes the rounds of American conventions. Poker has long been a very fannish game and now that it's reaching even new heights of popularity he might find himself stoned into oblivion by a torrent of nickels, dimes and quarters.

TERRY HUGHES (as previous) 14/12/77

I'm sorry, but I must refute your claim that "the only American Humour worthy of a snigger is THE BUGS BUNNY SHOW and THE FABULOUS FURRY FREAK BROTHERS." Sir! Do you mean to tell me that you think any country that had Gerald Ford for a President lacks a sense of humour? Of course our sense of humour is not so great that we would actually elect him to office...

But then, your nation just re-elected Fraser.

((I wish you wouldn't mention such distasteful matters as Uncle Mal. I've been trying to forget him. Besides which, if you think he's bad, you have obviously never encountered mention of the Premier of Queensland, JCL Bjelke-Peterson. My favourite political joke at the moment runs as follows: Q Why did Uganda get Idi and Queensland get Joh? A Uganda got first choice.

Terry produces MOTA, one of my favourite fanzines. John Bangsund is local agent. Available for a dollar or the usual I think. MAO))

CHAS JENSEN Flat 2/113 Osmond Tee, Norwood S.A. 5067 21/11/77

Not having met Shayne Mac at any stage of the game, I find it hard to understand why the article on THE QUESTION seems to have come from someone who's been a fan for some time. I agree that the question only ever seems to be asked by those people who don't read a large amount of sf, and I think it's that very fact that causes peoples' defensive reactions when called on to answer what is basically a shitty question. Do readers of Aunt Agatha ever get asked why they read her simplistic shit? You bet they don't! Do readers of westerns get plagued with a series of asshole questions that seem to imply that their reading taste is a little odd? Not to mention the crazy, violent worlds of macho gunfighters, doll-like women, dumb savages and horses that they insist on "escaping" into. Nope. Nobody cares less. But.. You even hint that you like sf and your whole intelligence, lifestyle and even your sexual interests are likely to be advertised in the next morning's paper as "something that is lowering the moral standard of our youth." Horseshit.

I have been led to wonder over the last ten or so years whether the reaction the sf reader gets isn't because people are horrified that they find in their midst some individuals on whom the social conditioning hasn't taken.

"The very idea! Reading stories about worlds other than ours! Isn't this one good enough for you young man/lady?"

If that isn't a defensive reaction against an implied criticism, I might just as well tear up my psych. degree. Ursula LeGuin said at AussieCon that the old attitude that you couldn't read sf and be intelligent is dying, but I guess she was only talking about the USA. (They actually teach that Buck Rogers stuff in universities don't you know?) The horrified reaction has toned down here as sf becomes more available (and more commercially exploited - the cheers for capitalism!), but the reaction the individual reader gets from members of the mundane public has altered only slightly. That there look of stunned surprise is all too obvious and familiar to many of us. (No wonder we hid in a ghetto for so long.)

It's the individual reader who has to confront this sort of downer shit from day to day, and that is the key word back there - individual. Know any sf readers who aren't fierce individualists? I sure don't. Which is what upsets those trendies who come into contact with fandom. They can't stick a label on the people in it, and it confuses them totally. Like the guy from NATION REVIEW who went to AussieCon expecting an academic discussion and was

furious when he found most people had come for the party.

Shayne can forget about being defensive and when they ask her why she reads sf she can ask them why they don't. Try it some time: you'll get a shock. Most people will come back with reasons that might have applied in the Thirties but sure haven't got any place in the Seventies. Mind you, all this serious (?) thought doesn't ruin my pleasure in reading the stuff, nor is it likely to, until sword and sorcery swallows the field whole anyway. So one goes blithly on, reading all about what Xmas on Mars would be like, whether fen have wings and walking cabbages and kings of infinite space.

((I dunno Ghas. It seems to me, that what you are describing is not the Australian attitude to readers of sf, but the Australian attitude to nearly any form of culture. I cannot help but recall a line from the Mavis Bramston Show.

"Twenty years ago, the average Australian held this view on ballet dancers."

"They're all a mob of poofs!"

"But today's Australian is far more culturally aware. He has learned a greater appreciation of the arts and is more willing to judge each case on its individual merits."

"They're nearly all a mob of poofs!"

The thing to remember, is even in a country which is 95% literate, the number of people who regularly read anything other than the local paper is not high. Avid readers of anything are a minority group. It may be true that sf readers are looked down on slightly more than readers in other genres, but the difference is slight.

As for sf readers being individualists, again I think you're over stating the case. As I believe Mike O'Brien said in a letter to MDR, sf readers are only individualists because they can't find anyone to talk to about sf. The moment most readers discover fandom, they bury their fanatical individualisms and start joining cliques, forming committees, holding parties, developing jargon, discovering friendships, giving awards, and in short, doing everything that every group of human beings do. Calling sf readers individualists is, I think, making a virtue of a necessity. MAO))

MARK LAWRENCE 46 Combermere St Essendon Vic 3040 September sometime.

After an excellent start, a page of absolute crud from Don Ashby. Tut, tut, How anyone can claim it is trendy not to smoke is beyond me. I can still remember the incredible pressure that was put on me in high school to smoke. The pressure is still there of course, not just through the large numbers of people who do smoke, but through the million dollar advertising campaigns. For so long it has been the accepted, done thing to light up a fag and be-a-man or be-kool or be-suave, that I'm delighted to see non-smokers asserting themselves and their rights to fresh air. Don says he finds it rude to be lectured on the evils of smoking, well, maybe. I find it rude to have smoke blown in my face, to have to breath the stuff, and to have my eyes irritated and sore. A visitor to your home can fill a room with smoke in an hour, the entire house in an evening, and it takes days to get rid of the stink. To get back to Don's letter, perhaps the aggressiveness Don is experiencing is a backlash to the aggressiveness of the smoking population who have been treating us to their used smoke for three hundred years.

((I think you miss Don's point. Due to the general bloody-mindedness of the human beast, the best way to get it to do something is to tell it not to. MAO))

A lot of things happened at A-Con, as they do at every convention, but there is only one thing I wish to comment on. Even now, a month after the con, I still get very angry when I think of this. There was not one single panel I attended that was not bombarded from every side by loud-mouthed smart-arses trying to be funny. It was practically impossible for a speaker to utter more than a single sentence without being interrupted at least once. I have never attended a convention before where that sort of behaviour was so heavily in evidence. It's just plain rude, especially when you consider that those people who take the time and trouble to speak on panels are not doing it for their own benefit, but for yours. At every con there is the occasional interjection, sometimes hysterically funny, sometimes making an interesting point, but at A-Con it went too far. The audience seemed to do more talking than the panel. A couple of people sitting next to me at one session mentioned their annoyance. I wonder what those on the panel thought.

((I find that sort of problem to be more a feedback mechanism than anything else. If the panel is interesting, then you don't get much heckling, and in the panel is dull, the heckling makes up for the panel. MAO.))

ERIC LINDSAY 6 Hillcrest Ave Faulconbridge N.S.W. 2776 9/9/77

Manuel Velocipede hasn't a leg to stand on in his assertions regarding the effects of speed, for the putative effects of speed he cites are, in fact, caused by changes in altitude. You will be aware that, despite the interesting but unfounded suggestions of the Flat Earth Society, the earth is not, in fact, a perfect or even an imperfect sphere, but is rather an oblate spheroid, and not even a very good oblate spheroid, being somewhat pear shaped. This means that when moving from area to area, one is subjected, all unknowingly, to serious changes in altitude (as related to a perfect sphere with the average diameter of the earth - the oceans, being liquid, are distressingly subject to the effects of gravitation and thus follow a level that is anything but level, and thus measuring heights from sea (un)level produces considerable error which has previously hidden this great discovery.) This change in altitude is of course also pronounced when flying in a jet aircraft, which travels at higher altitudes than the old style planes, thus, what Velocipede mistakes for a speed related malady is in fact an altitude related one.

I take it that Don Ashby is a smoker, from his defence of the evil weed. (They always used to call it that back at primary school, when everyone sneaked behind the toilet block to have a fag - by which I mean smoke a cigarette and nothing more. Except the teachers of course; they used to smoke out in the open while telling the kids not to.) Being a non-smoker myself and being somewhat disturbed by the headaches I got after Faulcons full of smokers, I filled my house with little signs asking people not to smoke. This didn't have much effect, so I got big signs (free, all of them, because of a union campaign.) A fair percentage of people ignored them, so I stopped holding Faulcons at all. However, I do agree with Don that there is no need to be aggressively offensive about it. After all, if you are in someone else's place and they smoke, you always have the option of leaving if your dislike of the smoke exceeds the pleasure of the company, and if you are at your own place, a warning at the entry should be enough to let others know that you don't care for smoke in your house. My own experience is that smokers usually ignore this at first, and some continue to ignore it after you mention it to them, so there the solution is to avoid asking them to your place again, as I've done, or else decide if their company is worth putting up with their smoking habit.

((Me, I don't mind people smoking at our place, but I do wish they'd empty their own bloody ashtrays. I can only think of one occasion when my

smoking has embarrassed anyone, and that was at MelCon. Sorry Bruce.MAO))

I read John Alderson on how to go beating, and you may rest assured that if I ever get on a boat, I will avoid anything John recommends.

I was glad to see the Adelaide con report, since I don't look like getting to any conventions at all this year. Actually Frogcon reminds me of the curious parallel with Hippotopher fandom in the US, in which cloth hippotophers filled with mexican bean rind are substituted for frogs. In fact, if you look at the con listings over there, you will see that a Hippotocon has been devised.

((Eric also gives a few facts and figures to prove that anyone who is employed should have no trouble getting overseas once every three years, so finding fans who can't afford to do so for DUFF is unreasonable.MAO))

((Blast! Premature closing of the brackets. Eric edits a fine zine called Gengschein. Well worth getting.MAO))

JOHN ROWLEY 14 Lowalde Drive, Epping Vic 3076 10/9/77

About the EFFECTS OF SPEED. I wonder how Dr Velocipede can expect us to take him seriously. Does he (she?) really expect us to accept his (her?) proposal when there is obviously a fault in his reasoning. It's in his reference to the average velocity of air molecules. I think he has based at least a part of his argument on a spurious relationship, viz the fact that the effects are only noticable at speeds which are a large fraction of the speed of molecular motion. For one thing, he makes no mention of what the speed is relative to, (e.g. why wasn't the revolutionary speed of the Earth around the sun mentioned?) but since the article later considers latitude and rotational speed, it must have something to do with the Earth's centre of gravity. At least, that's the only thing I could think of. Apart from that, I have only one minor quibble: I think M. Velocipede should note the fact that the adverse effects of jet travel (commonly called jet lag) is an effect of traveling across longitudes, while M. Velocipede's theory would only explain the adverse effects, if there are any, of traveling across latitudes.

About my opinion of the relative merits of sf and mainstream, I think I can express my view best by quoting a well known fan... "There is no way I'd make a rash statement to the effect that sf is better than mainstream." For one thing, I have no idea how I would go about defining better, construction, plot, style, lyricism of prose or what? What I would say is that in my opinion sf is more stimulating, thought provoking and relevant than any other form of fiction.

Of course, I would not say that all sf is better than all mainstream, or even most. (By the way, what does mainstream mean? Would you include Goethe, Twain or Plato in mainstream, and if not, what would you include?) I simply think that if relevance, stimulation and credibility count for anything, sf is best.

If you are reading a book by, for example P.G.Wodehouse, then there is a definite background which is set up both explicitly, and, from what is implied by the background, tacitly, to be the "real" world. If in a Wodehouse book you read of an unusual item (A clairvoyant premonition would qualify) then it immediately jars. When a writer is writing about the "real" world, he must restrict himself to, not what is the "real" world, but to what people are willing to accept as the "real" world. In spite of the fact that such things exist, a radio transmitter the size of a pin would not be acceptable (credible) in most works set in the "real" world, while in something not set in the "real" world such as a James Bond book, such a thing would be accepted as one of the fictions.

((You still haven't explained what you mean by relevant. MAO))

In science fiction there is no tacit background; what is accepted as the background is precisely what is said explicitly, and in the better sf, what follows logically from it, therefore there is no objection to anything. A writer must however set up his own restrictions. In Disch's CAMP CONCENTRATION for example, there is evidence that the world in which the story is set is the "real" world and there are things which, while not unbelievable would be out of place in the story as it is.

So in a mainstream novel, set in the "real" world, a writer has to be very careful not to do or say anything which is unacceptable to a reader because it violates the world image. As I said, in sf, a writer is stuck only with that with which he has stuck himself, so in sf there is no reason to worry about credibility, because there is no way to violate the world view because there is no world view as such, except what the writer has set up, and that cannot be violated without logical problems.

((I think you've missed something. One major job of the sf writer who abandons the "real" world is that of creating a new world of equal credibility. That isn't easy. More times than not, you'll find writers returning to past societies and using them as models for their future societies in order to maintain credibility. I think you will find also, that a twentieth century western philosophy is implicit in most sf. Returning to the problem of creating an alien, most beings have a psychological base which is strictly twentieth century American. As a result of this, good sf is a rarity, and even the best rarely has the credibility of good "mainstream". What is important for the sf writer, is to maintain a consistent world. But this matter needs far more space and time than I have to hand. Next issue perhaps.MAO))

M.E. TYRRELL Address as previous. 4/9/77

There is one thing which takes smoking out of the category of "merely" annoying habits (like gum-snapping or nail-chewing). No, not that it's bad for the smoker's health-- that's his choice to make-- but some people truly cannot tolerate the smoke itself. I am smoke sensitive. I cough; my eyes water; I get a headache. My brother-in-law is out and out allergic to smoke. He gets into an even worse state than I do. And it seems to be a law of the universe that smoke drifts directly from the cigarette to the nearest non-smoker (rather like cats and dogs pouncing on the one person in a crowd who can't abide them.) I don't mind if people smoke ; I just mind if they smoke around me.

HARRY WARNER JR Address as previous 28/10/77

I don't see the big red A on the envelope beside my address. It's just as well because if it had been there, my mailman might have been forced to revise his opinion of the capabilities of such an ancient mailbox owner as me. In case Nathaniel Hawthorne isn't a familiar name in Australia, he's a 19th century American writer of fiction who is much esteemed in school textbooks and certain areas of the higher criticism. One of his most famous novels is entitled THE SCARLET LETTER, and guess what? The letter is a big A, but it doesn't go to the heroine for her failure to write a letter on a fanzine.

((Yes, the SCARLET LETTER was compulsory reading in my first year Teacher's College English course. I hadn't really thought of it in connection with the red A though. I actually stole the red A habit from Leigh Edmonds who has used it on me once. I wonder if he chose it with Hawthorne in mind. Anyway, set your mind at rest, because, to paraphrase MAD magazine, "You know you're a bnf when no one hounds you about subscriptions. MAO))

Shayne McCormack disappointed me just a trifle, but only because she didn't tell me what I was hoping she would reveal, why I read sf. Sometimes I think I still read it out of sheer force of habit; sometimes because I need at least slight acquaintance with recent sf to understand much fanzine material; sometimes for the escapist element which Shayne stresses; sometimes because sf is so closely tied up with the happy years of growing up, and reading it today brings back a bit of the atmosphere of that long ago time. But I'm sure I don't know how many of those reasons for reading sf have any validity and how strong the correct ones may be. There are subsidiary mysteries, such as the compulsive way in which I finish reading every sf book I start, even though I may know one-third of the way through that it is a hopeless bore or too raw wavish for my limited intellectual powers. Could this be a useless survival of the way during my first years as a reader of sf, there were only three prozines and virtually no books available to me and I read every word in every magazine for lack of better alternatives?

If there wasn't any worldcon in 1974, why do I still have fits of remorse because I forgot to leave a tip in my hotel room for the chambermaid? Something must have been happening in that hotel to confuse me sufficiently to disturb my customary habit from functioning.

I also received letters from the following people, and though I haven't the space to use them here, thanx anyway, (Except for the letter from the National Library. You'd think that if they wanted a copy of my zine they'd at least pay for postage.) Again apologies for the lateness of this issue.

Roger Weddall, Peter Toluzzi, Shayne McCormack who mentions the possibility of a big games convention next year i.e. 1978, Irwin Hirsh, Dave Cockfield, who complains about my habit of putting in in the letter column. Honest Dave, it's one of the few ways I've got of reminding myself that it's my zine. Jon Noble, James Styles. National Library Of Australia, Brian Earl Brown, Rowena Cary.

With any luck, and a decent amount of planning, THE WEST OF MINSTER'S LIBRARY should re-appear in Min 5. Thanx for the trades which have come my way. I owe several people locs, real soon now. And while I'm wildly nattering, does anyone out there know a decent way of stopping a Royal 203 with elite face from cutting out the centres of letters. Please don't suggest that plastic film, because I make so many typos that I have to have instant corflu access at all times.

This stencil is the last to be typed barring the contents page and is being typed on the twenty seventh of December 1977. MINARDOR FOUR is the first Peppermint Frog Press production, and is produced by Marc Ortlieb of 5 Ringarooma Ave Myrtle Bank S.A. 5064 but whose address for overseas readers is 70 Hamblynn Rd Elizabeth Downs S.A. 5113. Thanx to Chris and Linda for all the nice letters. One of these days I'll put together an issue in which I can use a few of them.

