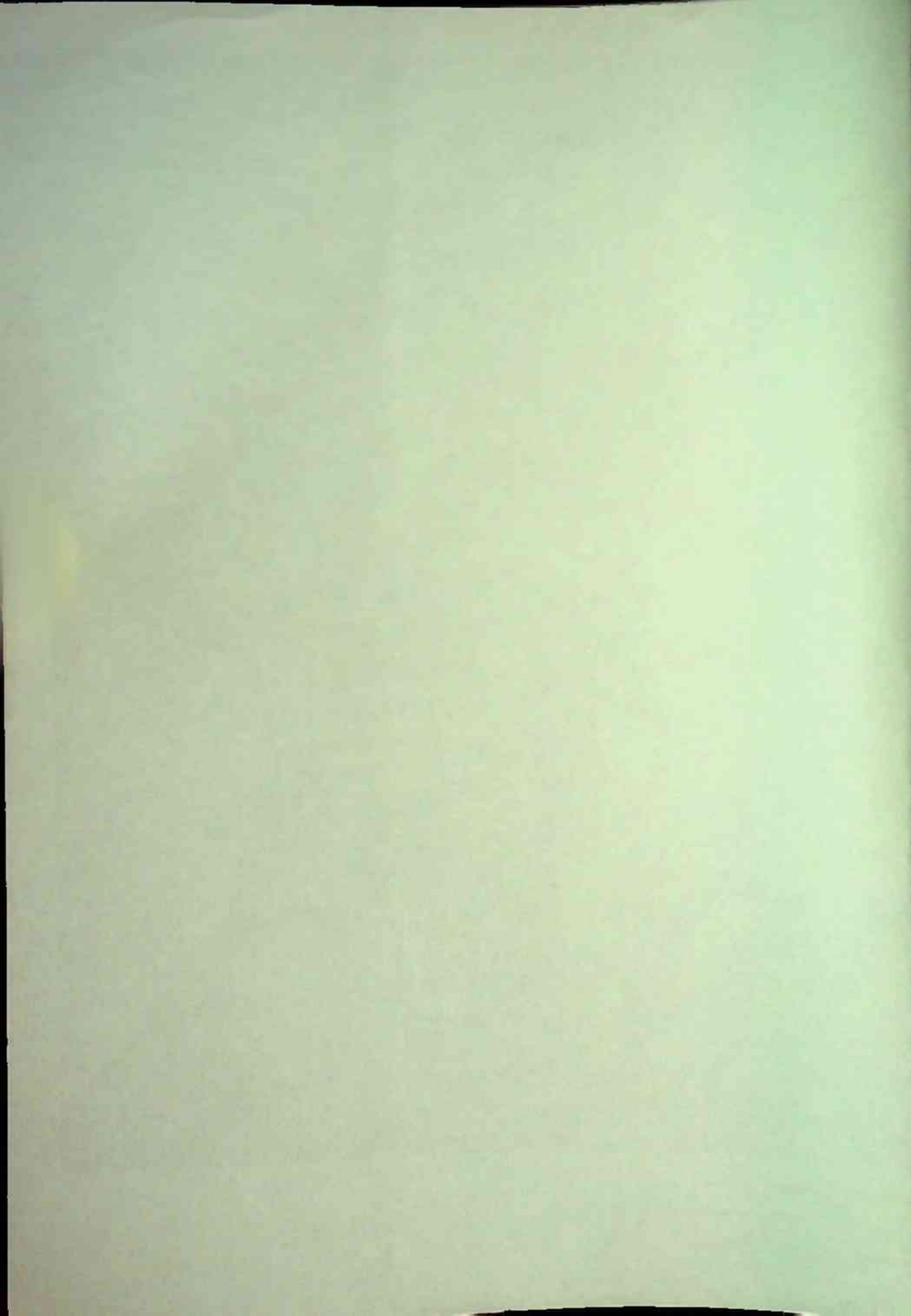


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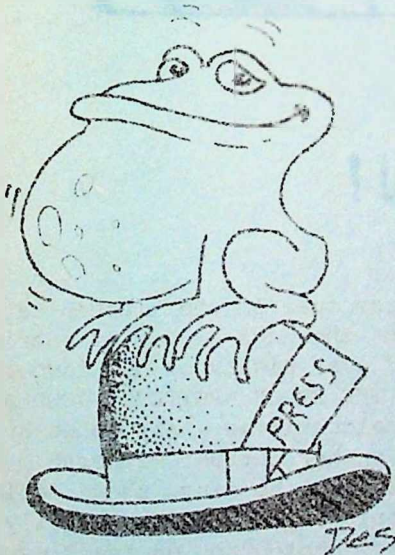
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Q36 is available for trade, artwork, contribution, letter of comment, at editorial whim, or for a naughty in the bushes.

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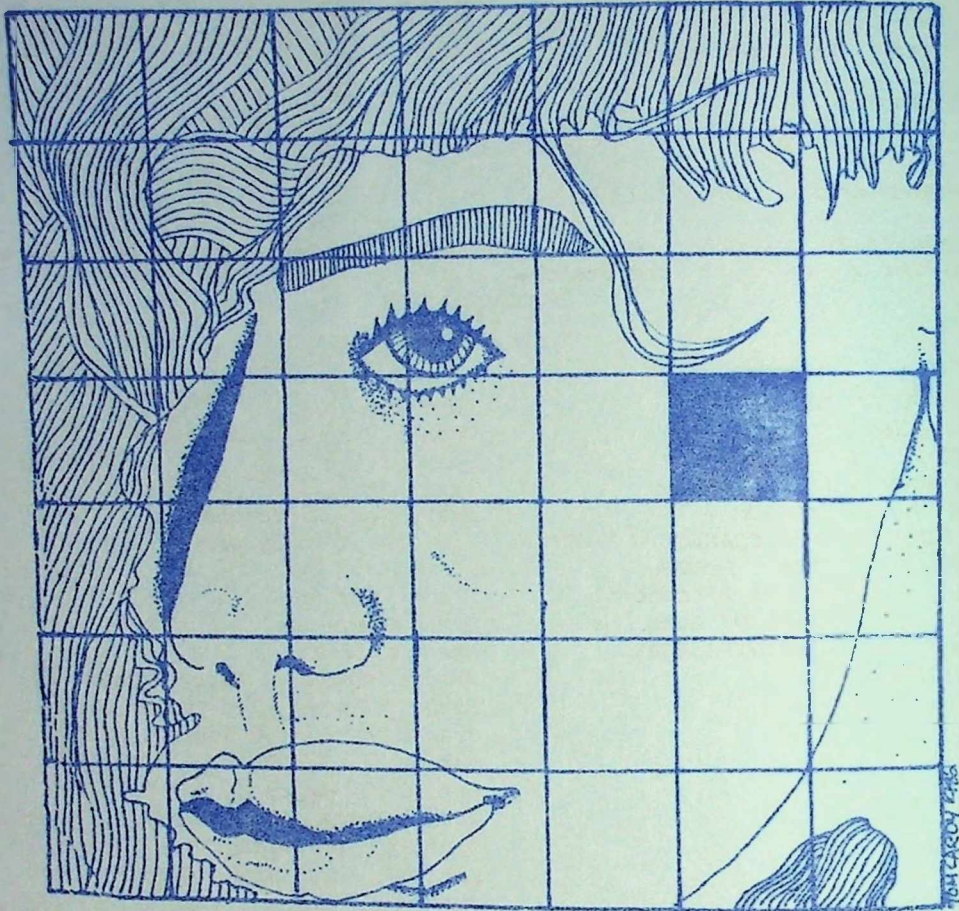
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PEPPERMINT FROG PRESS



LUD FOULS BAIN!

Medea looked morosely at the mailing journal that lay open on the kitchen table. It had been three weeks since the last "IN" entry, despite the huge number of entries in the "OUT" column. In those three weeks, she had LOcced over eighty of her favourite fanzines; had published four issues of her own fanzine - THE SPOCK SPOTTERS' JOURNAL - in three colour offset; and had even written to the N3F Welcomittee - all to no avail. Even her frantic request to the WorldCon for information on her current membership status had elicited no response, and, being unsure of her hotel booking, she'd decided to cancel her trip altogether. Her acne was playing up again anyway, and she really didn't want to go to the WorldCon looking like the "Before" photograph on the Clearasil advertisement, especially as she found that she looked no better "After".

She allowed her gaze to flit across to the medicine cabinet where stood a finely blown glass container, labled " IN CASE OF SEVERE DEPRESSION, LIGHT BLUE EAR PROTECTOR AND INHALE DEEPLY". She'd had that prepared after her trip to the magic land where acne

was unknown, and where, as far as she knew, the Enchanted Duplicator lay slowly rusting through disuse, while those who might have turned its handle bickered endlessly over the true meaning of fandom. She recalled, with tears welling in her eyes, the words of the kindly old St Fanthony who had assured her that there she had an important role to play. There she could aid in the restoration of trufandom. There she was needed - here she certainly wasn't.

The decision wasn't hard to make. Medea donned a regulation length Star Fleet uniform, buckled her plastic imitation light sabre to her waist, and slipped a flask of Beam's Choice into her shoulder bag. Then she reached up into the medicine cabinet, grabbed the glass jar, and, with one fluid motion, brought the neck down to crash against the bench. It was a foolishly dramatic gesture, but, thought Medea as she picked the shards of glass from her fingers, it certainly did help to relieve a few of her frustrations.

Having eased the ear protector from its shattered glass cocoon, she pinched a tuft of Angora wool from its finely pointed Vulcan tip, and inhaled deeply to catch the slight aroma of Nimoy's sweat. The protector had been dearly bought, she thought as she pondered her lost virginity, but it had been worth every second of it. Now the precious memento was to open the door into a world even more filled with wonder. With shaking hands, she tamped the wool into the bowl of a brand-new Rams-bottom device, lit it, and inhaled the wool and perspiration laden smoke through a cooling layer of iced Beam.

The room started to take on a vague appearance, as if the walls themselves had become one with the smoke. The building wavered, and was swept away by the hand of some enormously powerful wind. Medea found herself tossed around by the raging hurricane, and, as her body drifted down towards her incredible destination, she began to spin consecutively losing her lunch and then consciousness.

She awoke to the sound of female giggling. Barely daring to breathe, she opened her eyes, and quickly realised that this was nothing like the land she recalled from her previous visit. She was lying on a grassy knoll looking down on an enormous swimming pool where cavorted fifty or so shapely bikini clad women, and three or four muscular and strikingly handsome men. In the background was a house which seemed a strange blend of old Mexican and Gosh-Wow 26th Century. As she looked, a stick-like figure, dressed only in bermuda shorts of a singularly revolting hue, got out of a deck-chair by the poolside and made his way up the knoll towards her.

"Excuse me miss," he said, staring at her as though she were something that had just crawled out from under a stone, "but how did you get in here? We have an electronic fence specifically programmed to permit only women of singular and mindless beauty to pass. While you may well qualify on the grounds of mindlessness, I'm afraid that when it comes to beauty, you are an absolute and abject failure."

Medea was dumbfounded. This was certainly not the sort of welcome she'd been anticipating. The old man took her silence as confirmation of his opinion. He directed his gaze to an indeterminate point in mid-air and said "Minnever."

To Medea's surprise, the indeterminate spot replied, and in the sort of voice that adolescent boys dream of hearing in the backseats of their cars at drive-in movies, "Yes Dewball."

"Minnever, we appear to have an intruder - one of those dreadful hippie types who keep trying to steal our life-style by the look of her. Moreover, she's not even pretty. I think we're going to have to get rid of her. Tell Mick to report here pronto."

"Yes boss. He's on his way."

Medea finally plucked up the courage to speak. "Excuse me sir. I'm sorry for trespassing, and I'm sorry I'm not pretty, but I didn't mean to intrude. I was just on my way to search for the Enchanted Duplicator, and I found myself here instead of where I was supposed to be."

"There,there," said Dewball. " It's not your fault. You can't help being ugly, any more than a tiger can help being a killer, but we can't allow a man-eating tiger to live and continue eating people just because it can't help doing so, and, similarly, we can't keep you around. It's not your fault that you're not pretty, but the standard of the species must be preserved."

Medea shuddered and wondered what fate was in store for her. She considered running, but noticed that, at some unseen signal from the old codger, the bathing beauties had surrounded the knoll, and each was holding a lethal looking weapon. Considering the brevity of their costumes, Medea's mind boggled when she realised where the weapons must have been concealed. She noted with some relief that the men were unarmed. Her pondering time though was cut short as a Greek god, or the closest she'd seen to one, strode masterfully through the female ranks.

"Greetings Dewball," he said in a voice that seemed to blend childish innocence with unworldly wisdom. " Is this the chick who's got you all steamed up?"

" No Mick," replied Dewball. " If she'd gotten me all steamed up, I might have forgiven her. The trouble is that she's just plain ugly. Look at those craters on her face, and those poor excuses for what should be big, rounded, erect-nippled breasts. She's ugly, and she's got to go."

" I do not grak that Brother Dewball," said Mick. " She does, after all, have her own face, much like the camel that Brother Jullian took me to see at the zoo. I sense a wrongness here certainly, but I do not grak that I should remove it. Waiting is."

" Waiting may bloody well be," snarled Dewball," but how am I going to get this eyesore off my property?"

Medea was about to protest, but before she could say a word, the disembodied voice said " H y Cousin Dewball, why not just get Bob to write her out of this area?"

" A great idea Minnever, but how exactly do you suggest that I go about doing that?"

It was Mick who answered, in a ministerial tone, " It's easy Brother Dewball. As I've been trying to explain to you, Thou art Bob. I am Bob. Everything that graks is Bob." He turned to Medea. " It loses a little in the translation," he said, and winked.

Dewball looked thunderstruck. " Of course. It's so simple. Minnever, bring me my typewriter immediately. Front!"

There was a brief scuffle in the bikinied ranks, and a well proportioned brune emerged, slightly scratched, but otherwise stunningly beautiful. "Morium," exclaimed Dewball, "you aren't Front."

"No," explained the brunette. " Ayn is, but she's slightly inconvenienced at the moment."

Medea looked at the crumpled figure on the ground. Unconscious was more like it

" Never mind,"said Dewball. " Take this down...No! Not those! This! - THE UGLY DUCKLING by Dewball Hacksure. *Once upon a time there was an ugly girl who dared to trespass on the home of a benificent and immortal old man....*"

Medea found herself drawn into the hypnotic spell of his storytelling, and, before she realised it, she was spinning through dark corridors, and losing what little had been left of her lunch after the last such journey. Her last thought before black out was " I'm going to have to find a less sickening form of transportation."

This time, Medea awoke to a far more familiar sight. She was lying near the top of a stoney ridge and below her, in the far distance, were numerous walled cities, each different, but, in some way, strangely the same. She could not say for sure which was

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" Oh it is you!" he squealed as he drew her within the voluminous folds of his robes. " I just knew you'd come back. You can't imagine how pleased I am to see you."

Medea drew away, somewhat taken-aback by the enthusiasm of his welcome. She searched for some way to identify him, and her eye lit upon the silken patch covering his right eye. "Polyphemos?" she said tentatively.

" You remembered me, " he chortled. " And after such a long time too, but you haven't changed at all. You're still as beautiful and clear-skinned as ever. Oh but you must come and see what I have done here. It was such a marvelous day when you showed me the way... It is such a wonderful thing you did."

Medea allowed herself to be dragged on a further tour of the castle, noting the furnishings and the elaborately carved walls with approval, but looking on the libidinous activities of the residents with a lot less enthusiasm.

" Polyphemos," she said, pointing to a couple engaged in what could either have been a back-rub, all-in wrestling, or the latter stages of foreplay, " does everyone here behave like this?"

" Certainly," he said. " After all, we are the elite. We have made the transition from those sad walled-off cities below us to this magnificent over-view. There is a special bond between those of us who have defeated the mountain. What need have we for the petty moral limitations of lesser men. We are, after all, a meritocracy. It's not as if others aren't given the chance to join us. We've been bombarding the cities below with propaganda showing them exactly how they should be living, but few are those who survive the trek to join us here. Those who do are welcomed with open arms, much as you were, and they become a part of our family."

" Well, you certainly have made it a nice place," Medea agreed. " Tell me though what of the lands beyond here? Does anyone go there?"

" What reason would anyone have to leave this paradise?" exclaimed Polyphemos. " No. No one ever leaves here."

"But what of our old companions, Tantalus and Sisyphus? Where are they now?"

Polyphemos wrinkled his brow even more than nature had done for him. " Why I really don't know," he said. " The last time I saw them was sixty years ago, when you left us. They didn't see the point of staying here, the poor fools. They thought that there was more to life and fandom than good conversation and endless partying. They vowed to continue on their way. I have no doubt that they got caught up in the terrible skirmishes to the east of us."

"Tribal skirmishes?" asked Medea, interested, as this at least seemed to tie in with what St Fanthony had told her.

" Certainly. Would you like to see some? We get direct transmissions of them now-a-days. They're quite popular too, when the masseurs get tired, or when one wants a break from the smoothing room." He led Medea to a room fitted out with an assortment of comfy chairs and large screen television sets, and plunked her down on a particularly cosy futon. " Here," he said. " Let's see how the battle between the Serconites and the First Fandomites is going."

He punched a button by the edge of the futon, and the screen in front of them lit up. It showed an expanse of the greenest field that Medea had ever seen, which provided an ideal contrast for the fifteen white clad men standing there watching one of their number polishing an apple-sized red ball.

" But they aren't doing anything," said Medea, rather puzzled.

" Yes they are," replied Polyphemos. " Just wait a moment..... Ah there. You see?"

The person who had been polishing had obviously decided that the ball was now clean enough, because he had stopped doing that, and had instead broken into a lumberin

run. As he approached a set of three wooden stakes, he released the ball. It bounced once and then one of the others struck it with a flat-bladed wooden club. It dribbled back along the ground to come to rest at the feet of the man who had thrown it in the first place. The men on the field applauded politely, and an announcer's voice started to detail statistics in a very dry tone.

" That is a tribal skirmish?" said Medea.

" Well yes. It is perhaps rather tame in comparison to some, but there are those who claim that it is the gentlemanly way to sort out disagreements. The last time wasn't too successful though. They spent a year and a half at it, but didn't come to any real decision, other than that there should be a ten minute break every hour to allow the contestants to write up their experiences before they forgot them. Would you like to see something a little more exciting?"

Without waiting for her answer, he punched another button and the screen flashed up a melee of running figures in hot pursuit of a round checkered ball. The announcer was shouting breathlessly and at breakneck speed. " And Anachronism United have got the ball. Broadsword passes to Battleaxe, who has found himself in space. He lays in a nice cross to Arthur, who heads the ball to Med Lud. Lud is fiercely tackled by Vidicon, who gains possession for the Techs. He passes it back to the goal keeper. There's a long kick out to Pournelle on the right wing. Pournelle passes to Barbara Bain, the Tech's recent signing from Television City. She takes it neatly, and makes a calculated run through the centre, neatly avoiding a late tackle from Macher's defender Shield. Med Lud has come back into the six yard box to help the goal keeper. Bain is lining up to shoot, but Lud has come in for the tackle. She tries to turn around him, but Lud fouls Bain, and she goes down. The whistle goes, and referee Litcrit points to the spot. Penalty kick to Technology Wednesday. Apple comes in to take it. This is his fifth penalty kick for the match. The ball is struck. It beats the goalkeeper, but rattles off the woodwork, and Broadsword clears it for a corner."

" Wait a moment," said Medea, turning to Polyphemos. " Why are there two goalkeepers standing in the same goal?"

" It's simple," replied Polyphemos, turning down the volume. "They're both after the same thing, so naturally they have the same goal. For heaven's sake though never try to tell them that. They won't listen. After all, it's the fight that is important. The reason behind it is pretty much irrelevant."

" But that's wrong!" said Medea. "We shouldn't be fighting among ourselves. We should be building a strong and united fandom to stand up against the horrors of Mundania."

" Sure we should," replied Polyphemos soothingly. " But you try telling them that. The moment you get anywhere near them they'll have you signed up for one side or the other, and once that happens, you're gone. You'll never leave them."

Medea shook her head. " It can't be that way," she said. " Someone must convince them that they're going about things the wrong way, and it looks as though that someone is going to have to be me, if I'm to get through them to the land of the Enchanted Duplicator, where live the boo birds, whose eggs can cure acne for ever. Will you come with me Polyphemos?"

The old man smiled, but shook his head. " No Medea. Life here is much to enjoyable. Here I am King of the Castle, and I can bombard the cities below with my rock cakes. Besides, I am far too old for that sort of gallivanting. No, it is your task, and I wish you luck with it. Personally, I don't think you've a snow-flake's, but perhaps I can give you some sort of a start. Saint Fanthony said that you'd probably be back, and he left some things for you. He said that they'd be essential if your Quest was to succeed. Come with me, and we'll get you outfitted. Before you leave though, you must spend at least one night partying with us. After all, it was you who made all this possible."

The next morning Medea wished she hadn't accepted Polyphemos' offer with quite so much enthusiasm. Despite a healing breakfast of eggnog and poached egg-o'bo, her brain still seemed a size or so too large for her skull. Still, the items that Saint Fanthony had left for her had made the night's stay more than worthwhile. For a start, there was the famed Shield of Umor, which, if it was kept bright and untarnished was capable of turning any attack on her. Then there were tokens of introduction to Profan, whose aid could be invaluable. Finally there was the Hastan gavel, a potent symbol by which could be convened a meeting of the Elders. Exactly who the Elders were was something of which Medea was not quite sure, but she did notice a Government Health Warning engraved upon the handle. She was told that the gavel bore a potent curse. Anyone who attempted to wield it for more than a day was subject to meglomonia and irreversable swelling of the head. In a flippant moment Medea wondered if the swelling would do anything to alleviate the effects of her hangover, but sensibly decided not to try the experiment.

A few hardy individuals had turned out to see her off and to wish her good luck, but none looked particularly cheerful, and they winced every time Medea's boots struck the ground. It had been that sort of evening for all of them, and Medea was glad that she had had the sense to retire at three a.m. before the party had really started to pick up steam. As it was, she'd fended off eight advances, and had seen things that she'd thought only possible in the works of Samuel Delaney. She clearly remembered the last thing that Polyphemos had said to her before he collapsed into a drunken stupor. "Beware the Cult." She'd got no more sense out of him, and those few revellers still capable of talking sense had been able to say little more than that there was a group of strange folk who lived in the wilderness between Sothem and the battle ground which would attempt to waylay her. The glints that appeared in the revellers' eyes when they pronounced the word "waylay" had convinced Medea that it was long past her bedtime, and to ensure that she got her much needed beauty sleep, she'd wedged a chair under the door handle. That had worked, and she'd only been slightly awoken by the three attempts on the door.

With her shield gleaming brightly before her, she set off down the ridge towards some of the densest looking jungle she'd ever seen. The foliage hung thick and luxuriant. The air was sticky and hot, and seemed infused with an obscure and yet strangely meaningful dank miasma. Flowers of great vulgarity pushed sweet and sickly perfumes into the humid ambience. Medea pushed on through this excessive verbiage along a path that meandered along, never quite getting anywhere. There were all the jungle noises that Medea had come to expect from seeing innumerable Hollywood movies, but she could not detect the source of the noise.

The first creature that she saw was obviously taking the same path as she was, though seemed to be travelling far more slowly, because it didn't take long for Medea to catch up, though, adopting the better part of valor, she hung back a little in order to find out a little more about it. In contrast to the surroundings, the creature was clad in dull grey, and seemed the drabest thing that Medea had seen since leaving the castle walls. It muttered a bit to itself, and shuffled along the path, looking neither left nor right, finding instead some strange fascination in its own feet. Medea was about to speed up and catch up with the creature, when it stopped, and wearily took a swig from a bottle that Medea recognised as an eggnog container.

There was a sudden flash of light, and Medea looked away, momentarily dazzled. When she blinked away the fire from her eyes, she looked back to the path and there stood the most handsome fan she had ever seen. He bore a brightly polished Shield of Umor. His hands were slightly blackened as though by mimeo ink. By his side there hung a devastatingly sharp stylus.

"Hail!" he cried. "I'm Promy Sing, but you can call me Prom. Wow! This is a wonderfully gross forest. I think I'll write a fanzine article about it. Shit! I could write fifty articles. There's so much here. Look at that, for instance," he said, drawing Medea's attention to a small insect resting in the cup of a purple flower. "That's a pub bug. They pollinate the Purple Proze. Careful. They sting."

As if on cue, the bug lept from the flower and made a beeline for his hand. He cried out, and, to her horror, he started to glow brighter and brighter. She raised her hands to her face, to shield herself from the heat, and she heard the underbrush begin to crackle and burn. Then there was a deep and long-winded sigh, and the heat vanished. Medea carefully lowered her hands, and opened her eyes, barely in time to see an emaciated grey figure slink off into the blackened scrub.

"Sad isn't it," said a voice from just behind her. Medea whirled around, and instantly regretted it. The effects of the evening in Sothem hadn't quite worn off, and her body had far from pleasant memories of her two dizzying trips of the previous day.

"Who are you?" she asked, facing the wizened old man.

"So you have forgotten already eh?" the man replied. "Still, I suppose we old folk do have a better memory for things that happened a long time ago than do you younger folk. Not that you should be that young you know - not after sixty years."

Medea looked at him more closely. She could see that it was just going to be one of those Quests. "Sisyphus?" she asked, trying to equate his features with the young apaan she had known.

"Close, but no coconut," the man replied. "Actually, I'm Tantalus, but I'll excuse you. It has been a long time. Tell me, how do you retain your youthful skin?"

Medea found herself sitting by Tantalus and describing the events that had befallen her since last they'd met. It was rather a poor story, but Tantalus seemed happy enough to put up with it. Finally she reached their present location in space and time "... and then, when I opened my eyes, there was this grey thing crawling into the undergrowth, and you were right behind me. Say, what did happen to him?"

Tantalus made the sort of deep throat-clearing noise that one tends to make before describing a particularly sad, and yet totally inevitable phenomenon. "Well Medea, it's like this. This is the Proze Forest, through which many trufen travel on their way to find the Enchanted Duplicator." He pointed to a fork in the path some distance ahead. "Of course some never make it to their initial goal. Some choose to follow Profan's path. Either road is hard, but each has its own rewards. You yourself will have to make your choice, but I draw ahead of myself.

There are some who walk the path who never quite make it. The saddest of all are those like our recently departed friend. They have no difficulty in getting this far, as they are so colourless that no one ever notices them. Once they get here though something happens. They get over-stimulated; they can't take it; and they burn out, just the way that that youngster did. After that, their grey shades crawl back to the Glades of Gafia, never to be heard from again."



As Tantalus spoke, Medea noticed something that had been nagging at the edges of her mind ever since he had appeared. "Tantalus," she said, "why is it that the vegetation here shrinks from your hand? Nothing here seems to touch you at all."

"Ah yes," said Tantalus, and made a noise if anything even deeper in his throat. "It is yet another sad story, which, since it has to do with me, I tend to find even sadder than that which I just told. It is though one that contains a moral, and that you might find useful, since many of your sisters have taken the path which led me here. You may remember when last we parted I said that it was my destiny to serve children. Well, when I reached the fork in the road I realised that my aims would best be served by following Profan's road, and so I did, and it led me to a village, the village of the Jaylas. They are the fiercest of the female warriors, each devoted to a particular deity, though all hold Marzim as the most high.

They believe that the gift of creativity comes only from these deities, claiming that this whole forest was created by Marzim. They feel that by planting their own little gardens in imitation of the jungle that they too are a part of this great creativity. In order that their gardens might grow well, they find it necessary to provide them with nutritious fertilizer, and so they hunt down those strangers foolish enough to pass by their village, and ask them the Two Questions. Anyone who can answer the questions is permitted to join them or to continue in their journey as they see fit. Anyone who fails to answer correctly is killed and planted in the garden.

I will admit that I cheated. I hid in the forest and watched one of their successful interrogations. Thus I was able to answer correctly when my turn came, though I must admit that I had great difficulty in keeping a straight face when I gave my answer to the second question. I settled in, married one of the tribe's leading hunters, and she bore me three children. Her hunting provided our joint garden with adequate fertiliser, and so, for a while, everything was well.

However, it didn't stay that way. My wife decided that it was long past time for me to contribute to our garden, and that put me in a fix. The thought of killing my own kind was abominable to me, especially as it would add to the glory of Marzim. I had to do something though, or I would myself become fertiliser. I knew my wife well enough to realise that she would not allow a minor thing like sentiment to come between her and tribal law.

The only viable solution presented itself while my wife was out at tapestry weaving classes. Our little daughter was sitting in the yard plucking the legs off of puo bugs, and squashing them between stones. I remembered that I myself had once been bitten by a pub bug, and I remembered the pleasure that it had given me, so I took a much larger stone, and used it on my daughter. I buried her in the garden, and, when my wife returned, I told her that our child had been taken by a drongo - a common wolf-like creature that inhabits our neck of the woods.

That satisfied her for a while, but when she noticed that our garden was starting to flourish despite the fact that I had not been out hunting, she started to put two and two together and get twenty three. She went to the temple of Marzim, and asked what was going on. Of course, nothing can be hidden from Marzim. She told my wife what had happened, and she organised a posse, who captured me, and took me back to the temple bound in silken ropes. (That last bit had something to do with one of their minor deities - Norm - and while I didn't quite understand the significance of the ropes, the women certainly did seem to get excited by them, to the point that I myself was more than a little aroused.)

They asked Marzim to pronounce sentence. I thought that they'd just kill me and use my body for fertiliser, but Marzim felt that my corruption would spread a blight through the forest. Thus my sentence was that I be bound to this forest, and yet nothing of its substance was ever to touch my unclean person. I've been trapped here for forty two years now, with none who will talk to me bar wandering strangers

Tantalus completed his story, and, despite his treatment of the child, Medea was somehow deeply touched. She offered him a flask of concentrate of egg-o'-bo, which he swigged at hungrily. As she watched him, she realised that something had to be done. This seemed to her a part of that fragmentation of which Saint Fanthony had told her. Fans, she realised, should not worship filthypros, but should value each for his or her own works.

The more she thought about Tantalus and Polyphemos, and of all the battles she'd seen on the televisions of Sothem, the more she realised that she was going to have to do something rather drastic. She realised now the purpose behind the three gifts that Saint Fanthony had left her. The Shield of Umor she was going to need desperately if she was to survive at all. The tokens would be necessary because Profan would be a valuable ally in the fight. Finally, she would need to summon the council of the Elders, thus the Hastan gavel. She now knew the extent of her task, but she had no idea of where to start, and so it looked as though she was just going to have to improvise.

"Tantalus," she said. " Could you lead me to the temple of Marzim?"

" Certainly," replied Tantalus. " But I can't go in there. It was barred to me at the time of my judgement."

" Fine," said Medea. " But before I go there I'm going to have to make a few changes to myself. I fear that my present appearance is far too handsome for the role I will have to play. Tell me, is there any way to counter the curing effect of egg-o'-bo?"

"Yes. There is the hardy jonick bush. One brush with that, and egg-o'-bo is immediately negated."

" Good. Now take me to that bush before I have a chance to change my mind. I don't like it at all, but I'm going to have to become my original spotty self for a while. I will leave my tokens here with you. You must guard them until I return. They must not fall into the hands of the Jaylas."

Tantalus took her to a spindly bush that leaned drunkenly against a non-existent wind. Medea was taken by the brightly coloured leaves. They looked as though they had been decorated by a group of particularly foul-mouthed kindergarten students with a complete set of felt pens. Sure enough, one brush with the bush and her face sprouted a fresh crop of acne and four wonderfully gross pimples. She then had Tantalus lead her to the temple.

It was the strangest temple Medea had ever seen, but then, she would have been surprised had it not been. Somehow it combined elements of HOME BEAUTIFUL, a Gothic castle, and a pink fairy palace. There were two sentries stationed by a pair of plaster unicorn statues which, for some reason, made Medea think of garden gnomes.

She gave Tantalus a quick squeeze, and then headed out towards the door. Tantalus had briefed her on the Two Questions, and so she was more than ready for them. The guard clad in chainmail and a brass bra, whose facial expression clearly stated the discomfort that the garments were affording her, looked up at her and said, in a very testy voice "What is your name?"

"Medea."

" What is fandom?"

" A chance for us to act out our deepest fantasies, and to follow the holy patterns set for us by our betters."

Medea didn't really have much trouble with the second question, as it was very similar to the basic creed of most of her trekker friends. She could though understand how a male fan could well get into trouble delivering such a line with a straight face. Males tended to see fandom far more critically.

The uncomfortable looking guard looked her up and down. " Well, " she said. " That's got the formalities out of the way. Now, why are you here?"

" I wish to join your village," replied Medea. " I heard that here one could learn to create one's own world, and I want to do that even more than I want my very own pet fire lizard."

"Well, I'm sure you'll get along famously here. Come, you must make obeisance before our goddess, and then you will be permitted to pick a guardian deity."

Medea was led into the temple. The interior was, if anything, even more kitch than the exterior, with icons of guardian deities mixed with tapestries of unicorns, dragons, and beautifully clad maidens. It seemed though that there were no male clerics. Indeed, according to Tantalus, the only time males entered the temple was when chosen as the sacrificial mate to one or other of the guardian deities..

Finally they reached the inner sanctum where stood the golden trowel with which it was said, Marzim had planted the jungle. The sacred atmosphere of the place gripped even Medea. In the centre of the room, surrounded by adoring followers, sat an elderly woman. She gazed beneficently down from her ornately carved throne, but when her eye met Medea's a strange shudder seemed to pass through her aged frame.

" It's you," she squeaked. " What are you doing here?"

"Pardon Mam?" replied Medea, not at all sure that Mam was quite the right title by which to address a goddess.

" You're Medea. But you can't be. Medea was your age sixty years ago."

" I'm sorry Mam, but I don't know what you're talking about. I've never met a goddess before, so I can't possibly have met you. Yet you seem to know me."

The enthroned figure allowed a gentle smile to pass across her lips. " Yes, you are indeed Medea. Come. Come with me and I will explain all." With a majestic sweep of her arm she dismissed her worshippers, and then beckoned to Medea. She took Medea into a very comfortable apartment behind the sanctum.

" Here," she said, " is where I bring the young girls who wish to express their devotion in a manner not really conducive to the presence of an audience."

Medea started looking for alternative exits, but her fears were quickly calmed. " Don't worry child. You are quite safe. I don't go for girls with acne. But we must talk. You must know something of us before you leave."

Medea noted the cue, and sat down on an elaborately embroidered cushion featuring a picture of a rather unusual, but perfectly Freudian use of a unicorn horn. It seemed that everyone here had a story to tell her.

" Yes Medea, here we have the ideal fannish community. People have the opportunity to exercise their creativity using well known archetypes rather than the obscure nonsense favoured by fannishtypes. Here we have the ideal form of government. What could be more perfect than to have a goddess as leader. And it is within the reach of all. Who would think that, just sixty years ago, I was a mere kitchen hand in the city of Ceem. I was there when you first visited, and though you may not remember me, I remember you. Indeed, when Polyphemos started bombarding the cities with his rock containing the story of your wonderful achievements, I was one of the first to leave

I spent some months in the wickedness of his city, but soon realised that that was not my destiny. I was meant for something higher and I knew it. I continued on until I found the Jaylas. I found my niche here, and, once I had discovered my predecessor's weaknesses, I became Marzim incarnate. It's a simple system. All one has to do is destroy the previous goddess. I've been Queen Bee around here for quite some time now, though I must admit that I doubt that I'll last for long. Jaylik, one of the guardian deities, is almost ready to make her move, and I doubt very much that I'll be able to defeat her. Still, we must not look to my difficulties. Tell me, how have you managed to keep your youthful looks?"

So Medea found herself repeating her story yet again. By the time she had finished though Marzim was frowning. " Surely you're not really serious about re-uniting fandom. Fandom is quite happy as it is. We don't need to be re-united. Besides, it'd mean I'd lose my worshippers."

" Surely," said Medea " It is Mundania that is our enemy, and any sacrifice is worth while to defeat that insidious force."

" Don't be silly child. The Mundanes are our friends. Why, they send reporters to all our events, and run colour photographs of our costumes in their magazines, see."

She passed Medea a well thumbed glossy magazine. Medea worked her way through it until she found, on the second to last page, a photo of the Jaylas in costumes showing lots of boob and backside, with the caption SCI-FI FREAKS LET IT ALL HANG OUT. Medea shook her head. There was more to fandom than this. She turned to Marzim, sadly realising that there was no way to reason with her. She was about to say so, when Marzim spoke.

" So Medea. You don't like the way we're doing things here. That's sad, but I'm afraid that you aren't going to be able to do anything about it."

Medea started. " How do you know what I'm thinking?"

Marzim smiled." The first Marzim was not quite as mortal as we her successors. She passed on to us The Power, with which we can see the inner heart. You may, if you wish, call it female intuition, but we know better. Now, do you want this the hard way or the easy way?"

She drew Medea's gaze to the golden trowel, and when Medea saw her cratered face reflected therein, her will shattered. There was no way that one as ugly and unclean as she was could fight this sort of power. "Please," she cried. " Don't send me away. Here I have the cleansing strength of the bo bird. There I'm just a pimply freak."

"I'm sorry Medea, but we cannot allow you to stay. Saint Fanthony knows of your strength, even if you yourself do not, and he'll use it to re-unite fandom, whether you allow him to or not. You are but a pawn Medea, but such a pawn as could become a queen were you to reach the Enchanted Duplicator. I can't risk that." She gestured, and the trowel began to glow. As it did, Medea felt a thin tickling sensation at the base of her spine, as though someone were slowly running a feather up her back. The sensation built up, until she was incapable of moving, yet all of her muscles were starting to bunch up, as if ready to fling her body into wild convulsions

" Oh Ghu! Oh Ghu!! Oh Ghu!!! I think I'm going to.... I'm going to..... I'm going to.... AAAAAA.... CHOOOOOOOOO!!!!"

The sneeze brought her back to full consciousness, and she found herself lying on her bed at home. The still-smoldering Ramsbottom device had filled the room with smoke to the point that she could scarcely make out the scale model of the Millenium Falcon Gunney, complete with wind-up excreting wookiee, that sat atop the stereo.

She scarcely had time to blink when there was a crash, and an axe broke through the door. She inhaled, sneezed, and the axe crashed into the door once more, ripping it from its hinges. She jumped to her feet, and came face to face with a fireman in full breathing apparatus, who grabbed her, and rushed her out the door. In the street below a crowd had gathered, including that nice Mrs Davidson from next door.

" Is she all right?"

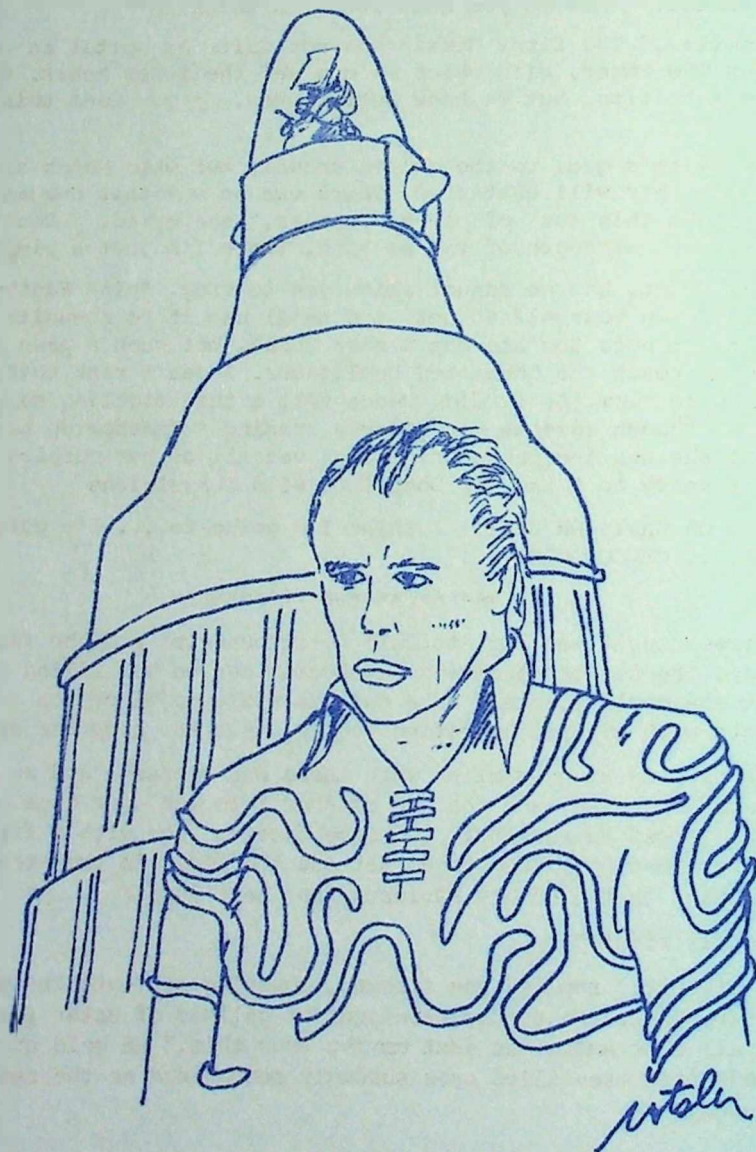
" Looks like it," replied the fireman, lowering her onto the pavement. " Mind you, the flat is a write-off. We pumped thousands of gallons of water into it before we realised that all that smoke was just coming from this." He held up a badly mangled object that Medea's smoke-filled eyes suddenly recognised as the remains of her Ramsbottom device.

Medea managed to lift her head, and looked at the fireman, dreading his reply. " Are my ear protectors safe?" she asked.

He frowned at her. " If you mean these," he said, holding up two sopping wet objects, " then yes. They'll be fine once you've dried them out. But if you have any sense at all you'll use them only for keeping your ears warm. You know, if I had my way, these things would be illegal. I know if I caught one of my kids smoking them...." He let the sentence dangle ominously. " Anyway, it'll be a long time before you'll be able to afford silliness like that again. The clean-up and our bill are going to cost you a pretty penny lady."

Medea ignored him. She was staring at the ear-protectors. Sure, they'd dry out, but without that delicate hint of Nimoy's sweat, and without that, they were useless. They'd never get her back to the land. She was stranded here, in the real world. Oblivious to everyone around her, she broke down and cried.

---000---



THE ALBATROSS

by Joanne Wright

And

Ann Poore

Once upon a midnight boring, while I pondered quietly snoring
Over many a quaint and curious tome of long forgotten drivel;
While I nodded, quietly dribbling, suddenly there came a snivelling,
As of someone loudly sneezing, sneezing at my chamber door.
" 'Tis some traveller with a cold who's sneezing at my chamber door,
Only this and nothing more."

Ah so vaguely I remember, it was in that hot December
As each fly I did dismember, dropping wings upon the floor.
Eagerly I wished the morrow - vainly had I sought to borrow
From a needle and syringe surcease of sorrow -
Sorrow for the lost Minardor - for that rare and vital zine
That an Ortlieb named Minardor
Mindless here forever more.

And the silken sad uncertain rustling of each purple curtain
Thrilled me - filled me with fantastic trippings never felt before;
So that now, to still the throbbing of my brain, I stood there sobbing:
" 'Tis some vice-squad cop entreating entrance at my chamber door -
Some confounded cop entreating entrance at my chamber door,
This it is and nothing more."

Presently my mind grew sober; thinking then it was no ogre,
" Sir," said I "or Madam truly your forgiveness I implore;
But the fact is I was tripping, and so gently you came sniffing,
Oh so faintly you came sniffing, sniffing at my chamber door,
That I scarce was sure I heard you" - here I opened wide the door -
'Twas a seller of insurance, nothing more.

Open then I flung the shutter when, with many a fart and flutter,
In there stepped a stately albatross of Tucker's days of yore -
Not an introduction gave he; nor a moment stopped or stayed he
But, with mien of lord or lady, perched above my chamber door -
Perched upon a bust of John Cleese just above my chamber door -
Perched and shat and nothing more.

Then this silver bird beguiling my sad fancy into smiling
By the grave and stern decorum of the cumberbund it wore
" Since thy crest be quite unghaven thou art surely not a-craving
Grim and ancient mariners wandering from the night's plutonium shore."
Quoth the sea-bird "Nevermore."

Much I marvelled this ungainly fowl to hear discourse so plainly -
Though its answer little meaning - little relevancy bore;
And you cannot help agreeing that no living sentient being
Ever yet was blessed with seeing bird above his chamber door
With a name like "Nevermore."

Still the albatross beguiling all my sad soul into smiling
Straight I dragged a beanbag out in front of bird and bust and door
Then upon the velvet flopping, I betook myself to popping
Upper after downer thinking " My Ghod what a bloody bore!
What in Christ's name does this grim ungainly ghastrly bird of yore
Mean by croaking "Nevermore."?

Thus I sat engaged in guessing, but no syllable expressing
To this fowl whose fiery eyes now burned into my bosom - Cor!!!-
This and more I sat divining, with my head at ease reclining
On the bean-bag's velvet lining that the spot-light gloated o'er.
But that violent velvet lining with the spot-light gloating o'er
It shall press on nevermore.

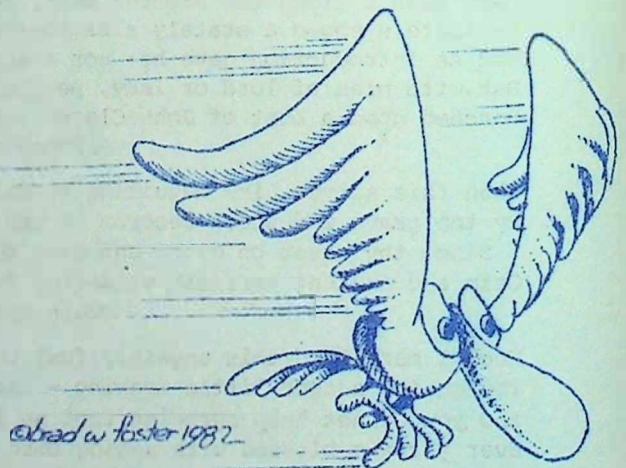
Then methought the air grew denser, perfumed by an unseen censer
Swung by Tinkerbelle whose footfalls tinkled on the tufted floor.
" Wretch!" I cried. " Thy Ghod has lent me - by these angels He has sent me
Respite - respite in morphine from memories of Minardor."
Quoth the sea-bird "Nevermore!"

"Prophet," said I. " Thing of evil -- prophet still if bird or devil,
Whether tempter sent or weather tempest tossed thee here ashore,
Desolate yet all undaunted, on this desert land enchanted,
On the Home by Horror haunted, tell me truly I implore
Is there fanac after gafiation - tell me I implore."
Quoth the sea-bird "Nevermore!"

"Be that word our sign of parting bird or fiend!" I shrieked upstarting.
" Get thee back into the tempest and the night's plutonium shore.
Leave no nom de plume as token of that lie thy soul has spoken;
Take thy beak from out my business and thy form from off my door!"
Quoth the sea-bird "Nevermore."

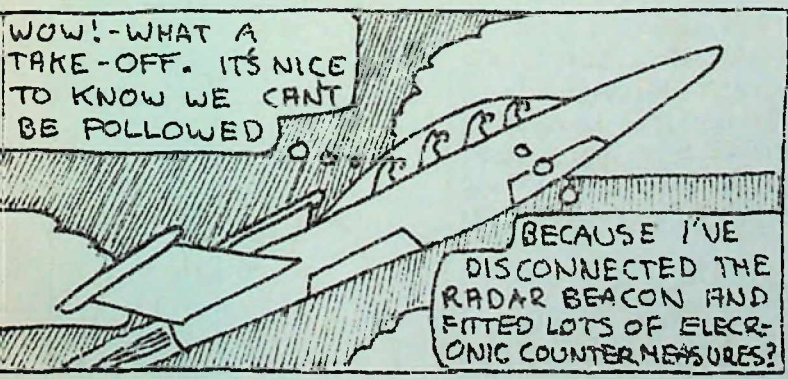
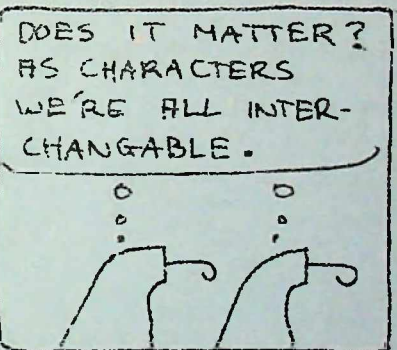
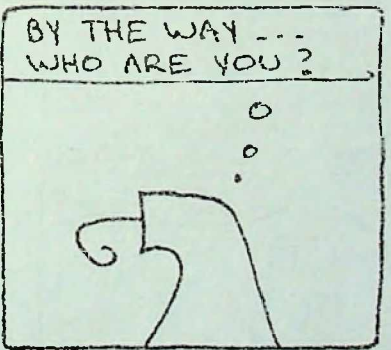
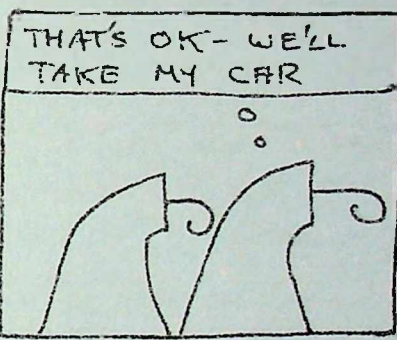
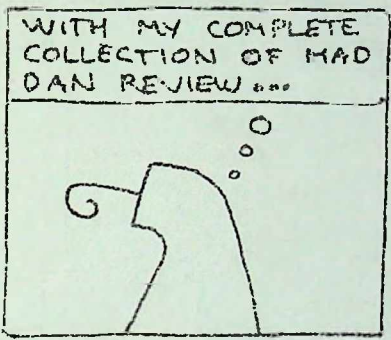
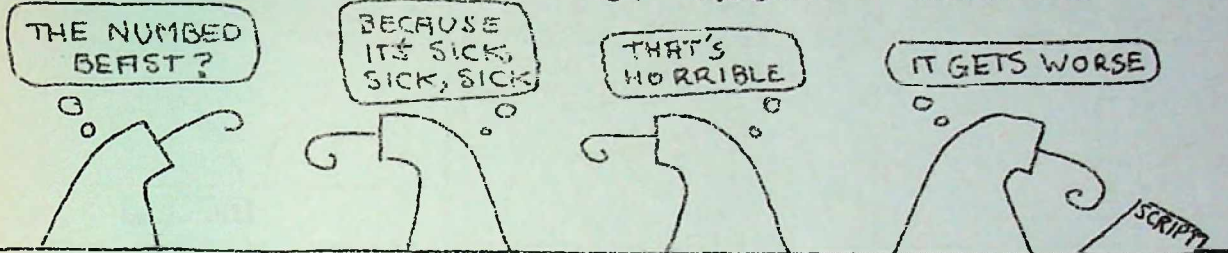
But the albatross not flitting still is sitting, sometimes shitting,
On the palid bust of John Cleese just above my chamber door
And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon's that is dreaming
And the spot-light o'er him streaming throws his shadow on the floor.
And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor
Shall be lifted nevermore.

---oOo---

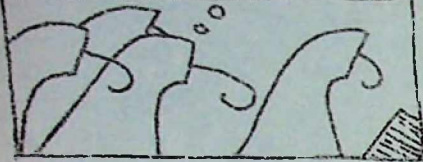


THE NUMBED BEAST

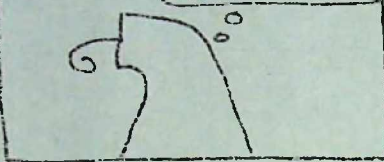
BY ROBERTA HARDLINE



WELL WEVE GOT MARRIED
FITTED A SPACE DRIVE
TO THE CAR AND KILLED
A PARK RANGER.
WHAT NEXT??



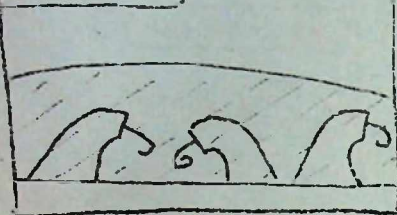
WELL WE BICKER
CHILDISHLY FOR 300
PAGES WHILE JUMPING
AT RANDOM BETWEEN
UNIVERSES



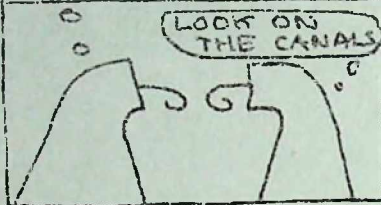
LET'S SKIP THE FIRST BIT.



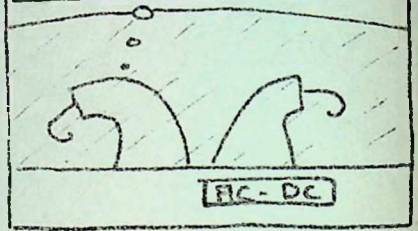
FIRST JUMP COMPLETE
- AND IT'S A MARS
VARIANT



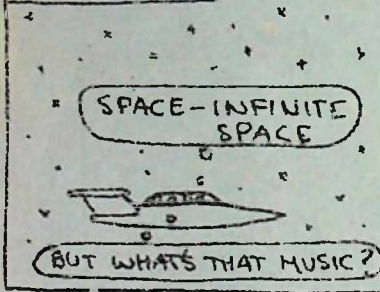
ITS MARS ALRIGHT,
THE RED DESERTS,
THE CANALS, BUT
WHAT'S THE VARIANT?



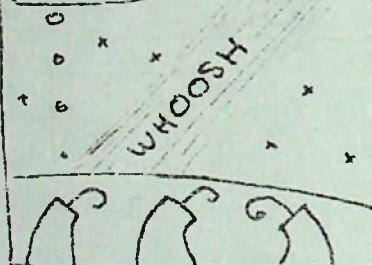
YOU'RE RIGHT, I DIDN'T
THINK TO LOOK FOR
GONDOLAS.



NEXT JUMP



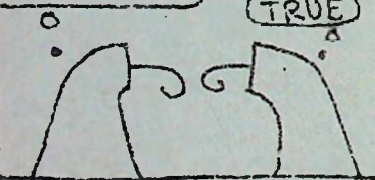
WHAT?



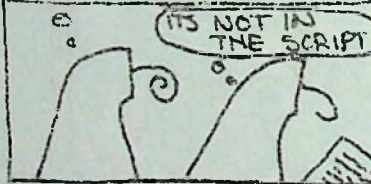
DID YOU
SEE THAT
SPOCK??



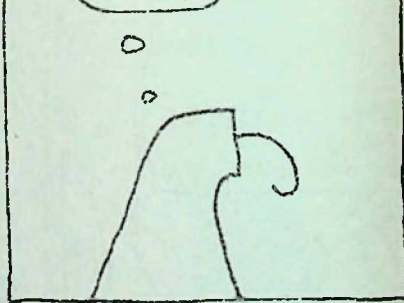
YOU KNOW, WE'RE ALL
INTELLIGENT AND EDU-
CATED. MATURE CONSID-
ERATION OF OUR
SITUATION IS LONG
OVER-DUE



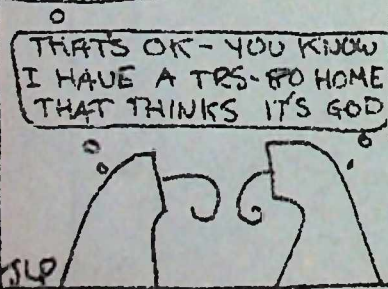
WE SHOULD DETERMINE
THE POTENTIALITIES OF
AVAILABLE HARDWARE
BEFORE DOING ANYMORE
OF THIS DANGEROUS
RANDOM JUMPING AROUND



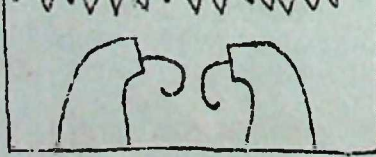
PITY



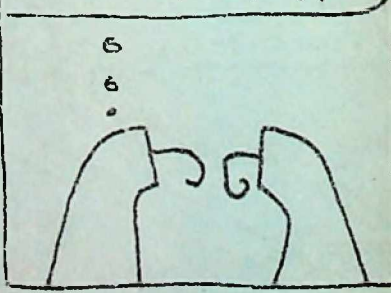
YOU'RE A GREAT PROGRAMMER
TEACHING THE AUTO-PILOT
TO TALK



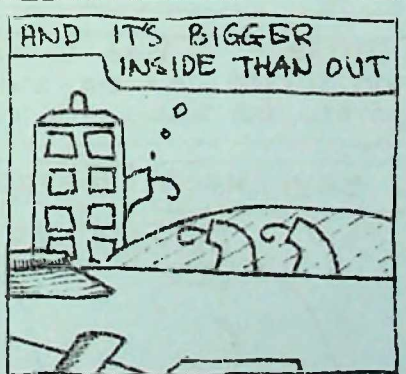
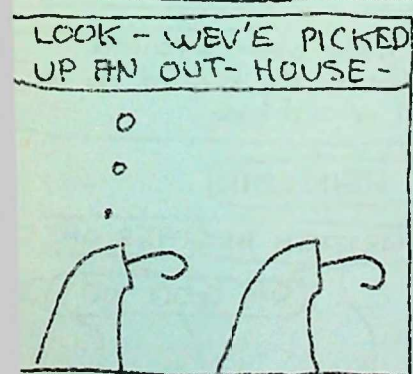
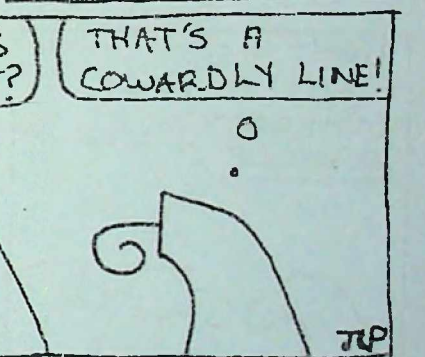
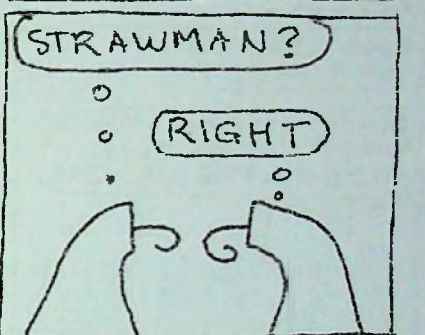
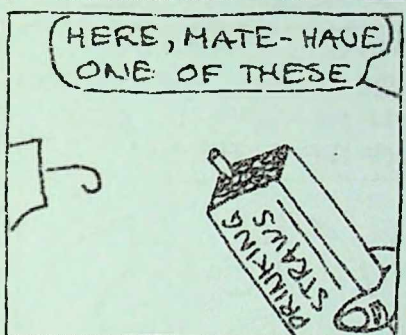
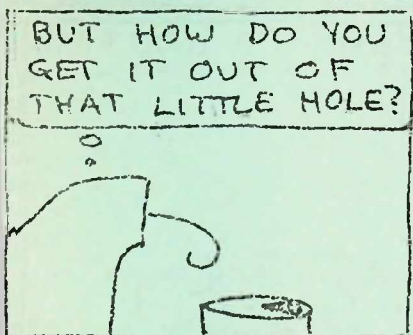
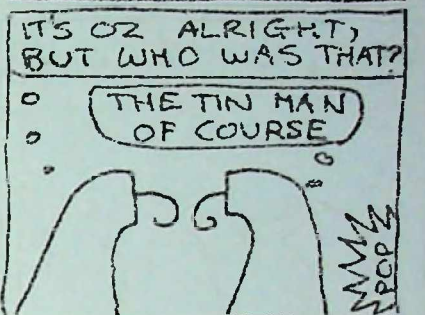
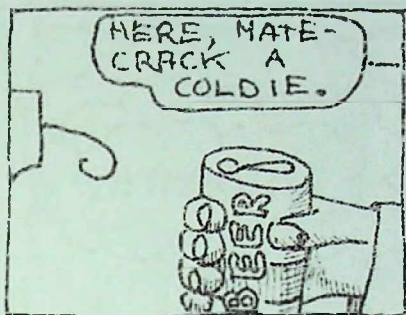
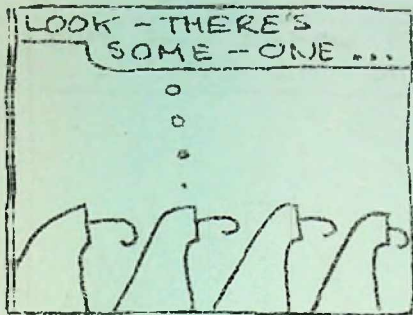
HI, I'M GAY, YOUR
SHIP-BOARD COMPUTER
HI, SWEETUMS, HULLO
HONEY BUNCH, LOVE YOU
TO PIECES CUDDLE-POP
AND A BIG 10-4 TO--
~~~~~



NOW CAN YOU  
SHUT IT UP??



JLP



SO WE'RE JUMPING BETWEEN ALTERNATE FICTIONAL UNIVERSES?

YEP

THEN I'VE GOT AN IDEA ---

WAIT A MOMENT - THERE'S A GOOD BIT COMING UP.

HERE'S WHERE WE GET THE DROP ON LAZARUS LONG!

OK, LONG ---

WHOOOMP

IT WASN'T LIKE THIS IN THE SCRIPT.

AND THE SCRIPT IS IN ASHES

DONT WORRY I'VE WRITTEN MY OWN ALTERNATE UNIVERSE

THAT'S BRILLIANT -- BUT WHY DIDN'T YOU THINK OF IT 400 PAGES AGO?

SHUT UP AND READ

RIGHT - GOT IT ? FIRST A MORE COMFORTABLE VEHICLE

THEN VISIT MINNEAPOLLS IN '73 --

AUSTRALIA IN '83

AND THEN FILL IN ANYTHING ELSE WE WANT TO DO IN THE BLANK BITS PROVIDED

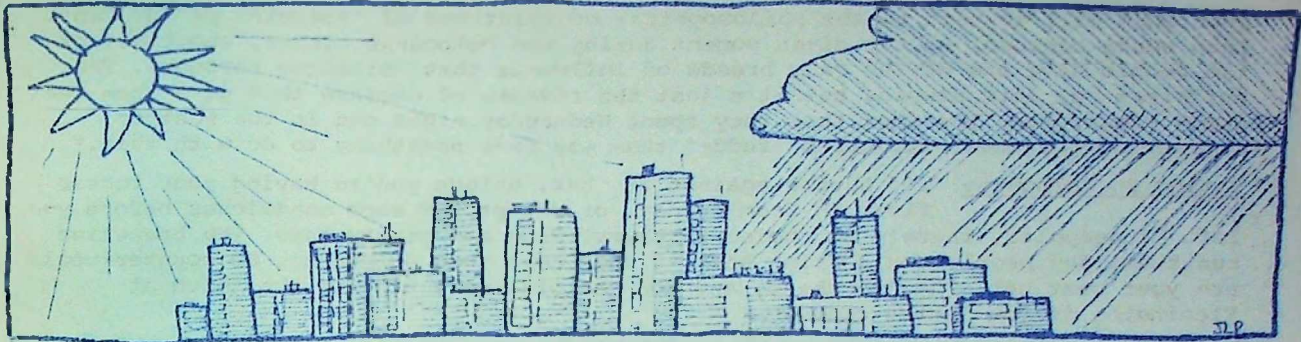
WHAT WAS THAT LAST BIT OF THE OLD SCRIPT?

PERHAPS SATIRE - "it has long since been proved that no satire can be sufficiently broad to be recognised as such by all readers"

WHO SAID THAT? ROBERT HEIN LEIN

I HEAR HE'S WRITTEN ANOTHER ONE

OH GOD NO!



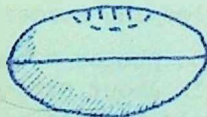

MELBOURNE IN WINTER by Jerry Frost

There are three topics of conversation in Melbourne during the winter months (all ten of them). These are 'The Weather', 'The Snow' and 'The Footy'. If you're visiting Melbourne for a Symposium on 'Satyriasis Among Irish-Catholic Clergy' or for a World SF Convention, you'd better learn to talk about these or you'll spend your time talking to the Sikh tram conductors and Lebanese bakery employees - not that they're dull people ... if you talk Punjabi or Arabic.)

The Weather: Conversational ploys such as 'Reckon it's gunna rain?', 'Priddy warm for this time of year, eh?' or 'Pissin' down, ain't it?' will hold you in good stead. Predicting weather in Victoria is a mug's game, so don't venture an opinion. They'll peg you for an outsider right away. Let the native do the talking and throw in the odd observation like 'Yair. Froze the friggin' dog's water dish on Wensdy' where it seems apt. With any luck, the drongo will think he knows you from somewhere and you'll get to go to his sister's twenty-first the following Saturday.

The Snow: The second conversation type starts with 'Gun to the snow?' and the reply is a casual 'Just bin upta Mount Buller/Falls Creek/Mt Hotham'. Don't dare say that you went north of the border to Perisher or Smiggins, or that you reckon that snow is cold and wet, and that the last time you went you didn't score so much as a pasho behind the first-aid hut. It helps if you've got a phony looking suntan, a blond moustache, and wear mirrored aviator-styled sunglasses, but thick wrists or a leg in plaster will do as a substitute. For variety, say that you stayed with friends at Bright or Mt Beauty rather than at a resort, which you feel is too tacky and commercial.

### AUSTRALIAN GUIDE TO FOOTBALL SHAPED OBJECTS

|                                                                                    |                                                                                            |                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                           |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | <p>POSSESSION OF THIS MAY MEAN YOU ARE ABOUT TO BE ATTACKED BY 36 MEN IN SHORT SHORTS.</p> |  | <p>POSSESSION OF THIS MAY MEAN YOU ARE ABOUT TO BE ATTACKED BY A SIX FOOT FLIGHTLESS BIRD WITH A KICK LIKE A POPULAR AUSTRALIAN WINE.</p> |
| FOOTBALL                                                                           |                                                                                            | EMU EGG                                                                             |                                                                                                                                           |

The Footy: Occasionally when riding a tram (Choo-choo mutandis melbournii) you'll get asked something that sounds like 'Juh go tuh thuh fuddy?' by someperson who looks as though they might have a tiny bit of brain damage. A quick retort of "Too bloody crook. Cort th'friggin'flu" will end it with a sympathetic nod, after which the

poor soul will go back to the philosophical convolutions of "Peanuts" or "Mr Men". This works because, at any given moment during the Melbourne winter, about 80% of the people have one of the many breeds of influenza that Melbourne harbours. The sufferers may look stupid, but it's just the ravages of disease that give them the dopey appearance. The fact that they spent Wednesday night out in the weather barracking for their favourite 'fuddy' team may have something to do with this.\*

Eating In Melbourne: I'd advise against it, but, unless you're having your tucker flown in from Sydney, or you packed some sandwiches before you left Minneapolis, there's no choice is there? Pubs are pretty safe. The breweries run them, and people can't drink beer if they have food poisoning. So counter-meals are your best bet. They're cheap, and you can pick up a tip for the third at Flemington if you listen close.

Scoring (For American types.): Forget what your Dad told you about picking up women in Sydney in 1944. Things have changed. For one thing they can get stockings and chewing gum themselves now - even in Melbourne! - and, since the Equal Orgasm Bill was passed in Gough Whitlam's day, they're sexually satisfied too. So, unless you're Ryan O'Neal, Jack Nicholson, Jim Henson, or 'Gopher' from The Love Boat, you don't have a mullet's chance in a fish'n'chip shop of getting anywhere.

Drinking In Melbourne: Australian wines are the best in the world, so it makes sense that we have a correspondingly high number of winos. A hearty greeting of 'wharsmuggleshoraff' and the traditional offering of a bottle of Seppelt Solero sherry will make you a friend for life with these colourful and malodorous

**BRIEF GUIDE TO AUSTRALIAN WINES**

| REDS                                                                                                                                                            | WHITES                                                                                                                                                                    |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  <p>A VERY POPULAR "ROUGH" RED</p> <p>CABERNET SAND PAPER '79</p>             |  <p>A KICK LIKE AN EMU WITH THE FAMOUS SHEEP-DIP FINISH</p> <p>CHATEAU SHEEPSTATION</p> |
|  <p>A DRY WHITE REMINISCENT OF BATTERY ACID.</p> <p>WATALOTTABUL RIESLING</p> |  <p>WITH A DELIGHTFUL "PRINT THINNERS" BOUQUET</p> <p>MORADATCRAP MOSELLE</p>         |

urban denizens. They're especially fond of middle-aged women with pillbox hats and people under the age of five. However, etiquette demands that you don't disturb their al-fresco slumber, even if you can't get the door open with them sleeping across it.

Next time, with Mr Ortlieb's kind permission, (Remember those photos of you and that Canadian all-girl hockey team? Word to the wise.) I'll talk about Strine Kulcha, a subject with which I'm intimately familiar, having fandom's biggest collection of mulgawood ashtrays and plaster busts of topless aboriginal women. See ya in court.

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\* Perhaps this is the best place to note that, in anticipation of this article seeing print, Terry has moved to Dubbo, in the wilds of New South Wales, to which no God fearing Melbournite would fare, even in the cause of righteous anger. While I don't intend to translate the article, I would point out that the term 'barrack' used here means 'to support one's team'. The American equivalent should not be used, as here 'root' refers to a biological activity performed in the privacy of one's bedr





THE FINAL MISSION  
by Harry J.N.  
Andruschak

"Harry Andruschak does advanced technical work for the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, most of which is entirely too complicated to be comprehensible to the layman. He works out spacecraft trajectories and planetary orbits on such a scale that no room in the building is big enough and he has to work in halls, using intricately designed models and other instruments which only look like mops, brooms, buckets, etc. to the most ignorant and untrained observer."

Darrell Schweitzer in Marty Cantor's *NOLIEB THEN THOU* #14.

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The truth can be stranger than Darrell's fiction. Come with me friends, as I go into building 179, officially designated as the

Spacecraft Assembly Facility. The date is Tuesday 2 November. The rest of the U.S.A. is having an election. We have more important things to do at JPL.

The party consists of five technicians. No, I don't work out spacecraft trajectories, but I do help maintain the computers that work out the trajectories. I also assist in building spacecraft where the job involves my specialties.

Building 179 is a huge three storey edifice, half of which is just one room, a room that is kept as dust-free, smoke-free, and static-free as is possible on a limited budget. Here we have built a long line of spacecraft - Explorer, Mariner, Ranger, Surveyor, more Mariners, Viking, and finally Voyager. So many deep space probes. Here were built SEASAT, Solar Mesospheric Explorer, and the International Infra-red Satellite - the Near Earth Spacecraft. For final checkouts came Pioneers from Ames and Helios from Germany.

We enter an anteroom. One after another we walk up to a machine on the floor, insert a shoe, and move it back and forth as brushes clean off the dust. Then the other shoe. After that, it's on to an airlock. With doors closed, air is blown up through the floor, clearing more dust from you. You exit through the opposite door into the robing room.

First off we put on face masks. These are particularly important for people with facial hair. The ability of beards and moustaches to pick up tobacco smoke and release it into the S.A.F. is a constant source of worry. So on go the surgeon's masks. Next we have the caps. Put it on and adjust the straps so that it is snug. No hair is to creep down from the front, and the hood covers the chest and back.

Next come the bunny suits - that's what we call them, though I suppose that the closest thing you'd find to them are special purpose overalls. You step into them, zipper and button up, and fasten securely around the neck. The cuffs are tightened just above the wrists.

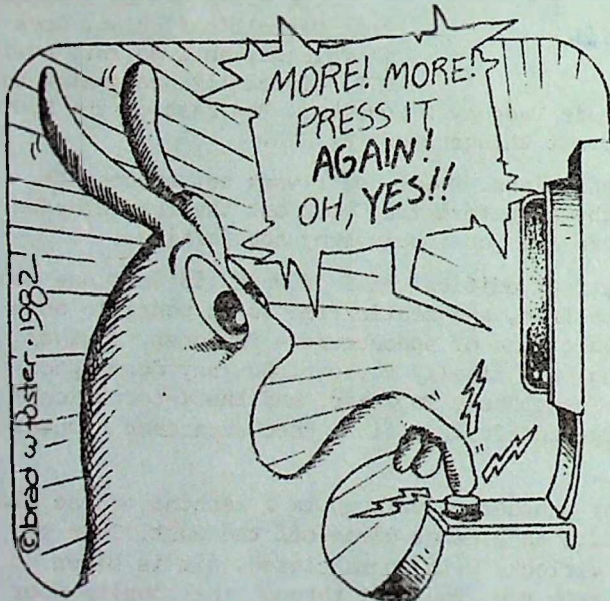
With the suits, we have to wear rubber soled booties which prevent static electricity problems. They are laced around the bunny suit legs. Additional cuffs have to be added, covering the wrist tightly, and extending to the elbow. I have to make sure that my MEDIC ALERT bracelet - warning all that I have diabetes and that, if I start acting funny, I am not drunk, and need to be fed sugar fast - is tucked in.

We pass into another antechamber, touch a pole to ground ourselves, and walk across what is, for all intents and purposes, a flypaper mat to get as much dust off the soles of our booties as possible. Finally we open the last door and enter the Nigh Chamber. This is what the S.A.F. is all about.

This is also where the cosmic joke comes in. None of us ever wields a mop, a broom, or a bucket, but those suits that we wear are dual purpose. Not only do they serve to keep dust inside us, but they also have a special surface that picks up dust from the air around us, and holds on to it. Despite all our precautions you see dust does get in. Remember, we do inhabit the L.A. smog basin.

So, as we go about our work, stray dust is picked up by the plastic, to be carried out after we have finished our work. Cute eh? Now go and write a science fiction story about that if you can while the work party goes about its business.

Cable Laying. As the Galileo spacecraft is built, it will be checked out piece by piece. Cables will lead from the spacecraft to the control booth outside the chamber, through a special cable door. We will, in the next few weeks, put down power cables, grounding cables, data cables, command and control cables, video cables, and cables with names that haven't been invented yet.



We have done it before, and now we do it one last time. The U.S. Government has decided that GALILEO will be the last deep space project for the U.S.A. and that no more funds are available. But on 2 November we began to build that final one.

---oOo---

Interesting to note the eventual destination of some of that work too. A bloke who salvaged some fairly large pieces of Spacelab from the Western Australian desert is selling tiny bits of cabin insulation, encased in plastic for some incredible amount like \$9-00 a shot. I saw some in the Black Hole Bookshop the other day.



FRANKLY MIZ CHARLOTTE,  
I DON'T GIVE A DUFF

*It was suggested that DUFF nominee, Charlotte Proctor, be introduced to potential friends in Australia by way of a silly little interview. Thus two silly little people, Jim Cobb and Nancy Brown, asked Charlotte the following questions:*

*Q: Charlotte, how long have you been in fandom?*

*A: Uh, wait a minute. I have to go to the bathroom.*

*(Brief pause.)*

*Q: I understand you've held several offices in Birmingham fandom. Could you tell us what those were?*

*A: I have to get something to drink now...*

*(Longer pause as Charlotte gears up for happy hour.)*

*Q: Didn't you hold the office of vice-President of the Birmingham Science Fiction Club twice, serve as President once (by default) and become the editor of the clubzine ANVIL?*

*A: I can't find my cigarettes.*

*Q: and aren't you also the secretary of the Atlanta in '86 bid committee, and chairperson of BoShCon 1?*

*A: Who stole my matches?*

*Q: We'll find them in a minute Charlotte, but first tell us about Birmingham's feelie fandom, and how you think it compares to Australian backrub fandom.*

*A: O.K., where've you hidden all the ashtrays?*

*Q: Tell us ~~the~~ truth about the sauer kraut and jelly sandwiches. How many of your room mates have lived to tell about them?*

*A: Let's turn off the television and put on some music...*

Q: Charlotte, it's extremely difficult to interview you while you're dancing. Can you tell us why Post-Merald reporter Jeff Hardy described you as a real trouper?

A: Starship?

Q: As a veteran of several of Birmingham fandom's wilder parties, to what do you attribute your amazing survival rate? We've heard you've been taking lessons from Bob Tucker.

A: Turn up the stereo!

Q: Getting back to your involvement with ANVIL, isn't it true that you were dubbed "Head Typoist" several years before finally assuming the editorship?

A: Anyone else here know how to do "The Camel"?

Q: Isn't it a fact that your continuing friendships with fans in England, Australia and Canada are lending an international flavour to the material in ANVIL?

A: All right! Let's boogie!

Q: Well, thank you Charlotte, for the informative and in-depth look at one of the founders of Birmingham Fandom...

A: Well, when do the questions start? We still have a full bottle of Henry McKenna bourbon, five bags of ice, a whole stack of boogie albums, and there's some of that baby oil that Peter left from his visit. You know, I got my stereo fixed especially for this occasion... boy I sure am glad that thing is still under warranty. By the way, did anyone find my matches?

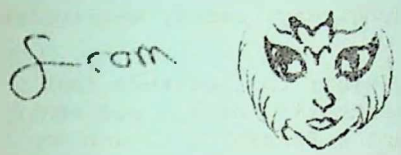
---oO---



DUFF CANDIDATE  
Jerry Kaufman,  
trying to ignore  
the noisy party  
upstairs.....

# STRIKING A HAPPY MEDIUM

There are probably as many different views on what a fanzine "should" be as there are fan editors and fanzine readers and writers and, of course, artists. After reading a few of my comments in the last Q36, Julie Vaux wrote a letter, and I replied to her, and we had quite a heated discussion in the post over what a fanzine's purpose is. I'm going to print Julie's first letter here, plus a few points from later letters. However, being a coward of the first water, rather than reply myself, I've chosen David Grigg as my champion, and will reprint a piece of his, first published in his ANZAPazine WITH A STRANGE DEVICE #7. It's not exactly a reply to Julie, but it expresses rather nicely many of my feelings about the role of fanzines. After that, it's a free for all.



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A LETTER OF DISCONTENT  
Julie Vaux

This is going to be a serious letter, out of place as that may seem in a self-declared tru-fen satirical pseudo-scientific fanzine. That is the source of my discontent, the "one mustn't be very serious" tru-fan attitude. I like my reading matter to be yin-yang, sweet and sour, fun and fury, silly and straight - balanced.

Q36 lacks a centre of gravity - a heart - a..... - well, I know it's not supposed to be too serious, but that's what disturbs me. Q36 is supposed to be one of Australia's leading fanzines? Right? Yet it's printed on primitive stencils, on low-grade paper. This distresses me as an artist and as a craftswoman who cares about material quality. What distresses me is that I know that we can do better.

Consider the following:- Out of all the fan publishers in Australia, and I am taking Trek and comic fandom into account, how many are semi-pro? How many are printed offset? How many care enough to get their own offset press? - Only Ron and Sue Clarke, to my knowledge, and they financed it on a co-op basis. How many Australian fanzines are sold, through shops, or through subscriptions? How many prozines do we have? You can count them on the fingers of one hand. Doesn't that worry anybody? At all???

Now I know that we can't all be creative, but this isn't a matter of creativity, it is a matter of caring craftsmanship, of which there isn't much around. Instead we have the cult of the Sacred Mimeo, and a few sensible individuals trying hard to loosen the restrictions of amateurism.

This brings me to your response to Ron Clarke's letter. Ron, along with Jean Weber, is one of the best fan editors I have dealings with. He has used his experience and other people's, and has made that extra effort to stand out from the rest. In my opinion, Ron and Sue Clarke should receive an award for overall achievement in fan publishing - even if they do print Trek and media zines.

The sad fact is that there is a bias against fans of other forms and expressions of science fiction and fantasy that is downright silly, especially since it seems to be based on a subconscious resentment of that extra effort that media fans make with zines, costumes and stories. I think that some fannish persons will find that these media fans try harder to be creative - to make something. If you want more creation to go on, more good books and comics to read, better zines etc, take a good look at those not so tru-fen, support semi-pro and pro publications, and make that extra financial outlay that helps artists. I would like to create beautiful things for you all to enjoy, but I still have to work shifts, when I could be painting or writing.

Now Marc, and readers, - assuming that Marc spoils his fanzine by publishing this "serious" letter - I wish to ask one last embarrassing question. Now many of you saw WRATH OF KHAN, RAIDERS OF THE LOST ARK, or E.T.? How many of you, even if you wouldn't confess it, read the following comics - ELFQUEST, CEBERUS THE AARDVARK, X-MEN etc.? We are all media fans to varying extents.

Let's avoid the silly biases of mundanes, and let us not make sacred cows of our own special sillinesses please.

*In response to my reply to this letter, of which I did not keep a copy, Julie added the following:-*

My ideal fanzine, or semi-prozine, is not necessarily glossy, merely well-printed, with an interesting combination of artwork and articles.

It is the negative aspects of amateurism that I criticise; the attitude that allows interesting articles and letters, in one Western Australian zine I was sent, to be printed on a photo-copying machine!!! If I ever print a fanzine I'll use Ron and Sue's offset, because I want to make something worth keeping.

I am an artist who wishes to be a mistress of colour and technique, to be a craftswoman as well. There is more work, maybe, in putting out a mimeozine but... well honestly, you have editing skills Marc, but craftsmanship? No. You're no artist. What is in a zine is equal in importance to its appearance. Balance. Yin and yang Marc. Well presented material and good illos enhance the content.

I am obviously never going to be a trufan. I can not, and will not, play the game of trufannishness as a pseudo-Gnosis cult. It is taking silliness too far when, at every con when there is a panel discussing religion and philosophy in sf, there seems to be some twit who starts comparing fandom to a religion.

---oOo---

*I said I'd leave the rebuttal to David's piece, but since his is a general article not specifically in reply to Julie's piece, I will make a few quick comments.*

*I do not see fandom in the same light that Julie does. She seems to see it as a large group, capable of ensuring the success or failure of commercially published science fiction. Not so. Fandom is a small group within the larger community of sf readers and viewers, who have a manic desire to interact with the science fiction "community". The success of semi-prozines depends on sf readers, most of whom have little or no contact with fandom. Sure, I am an sf reader, as well as a fan, but I realise that my fannish activities have little to do with science fiction as such.*

*By this criterion, I am a media viewer, as opposed to a media fan. Sure, I read comics sometimes, and I have been known to watch sf movies, but that puts me in a similar position to that of the person who reads fifty or so sf books per year without any real desire to publish a fanzine or meet sf authors. As fans, we have no obligation to science fiction. That will continue to be published for the huge number of sf readers and film viewers. What I say about FUTURISTIC WORLDS in Q36 numerical will have no effect on its circulation figures. As fans, we do whatever we want. That is the true value of amateurism. Thus fanzines can and do publish material that is not aimed at a commercial market, and that is, for me, where the fanzine fascination lies. But I wasn't going to say much here. On to David.*

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THE FUTURE OF FANZINES  
David Grigg

Those of us who are fond of nostalgic reminiscences are never likely to forget publishing their first fanzine. In my case, I fondly remember standing in the back room of the Clifton Hilton while John Bangsund swore and sweated as he tried to run off the stencils of the first issue of GHOP? - stencils which had been typed without the typewriter being set to the stencil position, and which were therefore barely bruised instead of cut. Ah, the smell of the ink, the sound of the duplicator!

That first fanzine of mine, co-perpetrated with Carey Handfield, was - perhaps fortunately - quite illegible. But that was besides the point. It enabled me to join ANZAPA, and that was quite literally a fundamental turning point in my life.

I went kind of crazy when I first joined ANZAPA. It was as though a whole new world had opened up before me, because suddenly I found that it was possible to write anything I liked and have people read it! And, what is more, write back about what they thought of it. It was a sudden release for a rather repressed creative urge. I published pages and pages of stuff, all of it now quite forgettable.

What I want to talk about here is the nature of that urge, and the uniqueness of fanzines.

The average non-fannish person has very few outlets for verbal self-expression. Letters, once a major and important means of putting one's thoughts on paper, are declining with increasing postage costs and with the increasing availability of that most ephemeral of communication methods - the telephone. Besides, letters are usually addressed only to one other person. We might say though that two people who correspond regularly form a kind of two person apa.

The joy of fanzines is that they enable the publisher, without any great cost, and certainly without formal journalistic training, to carry on what is, in effect, a many-person correspondence. This is particularly so with apazines, which are usually entirely self-written. An apa is like a circle of people who all regularly write letters to each other.

Why is it such fun? Because we all like to express ourselves, to think on paper, to flatter ourselves that our ideas are worth showing around. Many fans who are too shy to say very much in person write long and fascinating fanzines, revealing aspects of themselves or their lives that would be impossible to get across in conversation without embarrassment or boredom.

Certainly not everyone in society would want to publish fanzines, even if they had the opportunity. Many fans, knowing all

THE FANZINE CONSUMER DILEMMA



about fanzines, never publish one or join an apa. But that the urge to say and be heard is very common at all levels of society may be evidenced by the extraordinary popularity of CB radio, which enables anyone with the equipment to get on the air, usually under the cover of anonymity, and say what they please. The result, all too often, is a great deal of profanity - some people, when given the chance to express themselves, have nothing at all to say. But the urge and the pleasure of being free to communicate, often with total strangers, is there for all to see.

When I first joined ANZAPA, for at least the first three mailings, I would say that I was, in effect, a fanzine addict. I was hooked on the apa, and would wait in the agony of withdrawal symptoms, for the next mailing to arrive. No doubt being a ratner lonely, emotionally repressed, teenager had a lot to do with that, but I have a feeling that that first rush of pleasure in just knowing that fanzines and apas existed is common to many fans.

About a year ago, however, I came across a book which, to my amazement, showed me that the same symptoms were common in another form of communication, a form of communication which I believe represents the fanzines of the future. The book was "The Network Nation" edited by S.R. Wiltz and Murray Turoff, and it was about computer conferencing.

Computer conferencing is a new and still rather experimental method of communication. Basically users type on a terminal, just like an ordinary typewriter keyboard, with the words displayed either on a roll of paper or on a tv type video screen, connected over the telephone lines to a central computer or computers. But the users need know nothing at all about computers. All they need to be able to do is use a typewriter. Using the terminal, the users can type out short or long messages and direct them through the computer either to all the other users taking part in the conference, or to particular users only. These messages are stored until the person or persons they are meant for reconnect themselves to the computer and call them up from a kind of "mailbox".

The similarity between this and an apa should be obvious. The messages which go to all other members of the conference are like apazines in a mailing. The messages to particular users are like ordinary letters. The big difference is that the conference is continuous, extending over days or months. Users can reconnect whenever they feel like it, and get the messages that have accumulated since they were last connected. No users need to be connected at the same time. Alternately, many may be connected at the same time. In our terms, there is no mailing deadline and the "apa" is "mailed" every minute.

"The Network Nation" gives many examples of correspondence through this computer conferencing. The examples are fascinating for their similarity to fanzines, to mailing comments in particular. Users adopt pen-names, or sign themselves "Anonymous"; there are petty fights over trivial issues; some use four-letter words, and there is great argument about this; and some declare that they have become "addicted" to the system, unable to wait until they can get back to their terminal and receive their latest messages. Subjects range from personal emotions to Chinese restaurants.

The fascinating thing about all of this is that it showed me that the fanzine urge is, in a sense, latent in all people. The people using the computer conferencing facility came from a variety of professions, and they all fell in love with the idea of such freedom to express themselves.

And this is where I think the future of fanzines lies. The biggest deficiency of apas, to my mind, is the delay between mailings. It's hard to carry on an exciting correspondence when your thoughts are only published every two months. Those apas which I've seen which were weekly (APA-L, MINNEAPA) were absolutely fascinating and vital, but the work involved in collating and distributing a weekly apa were horrendous. With computer conferencing, the work vanishes.



Already, organisations like THE SOURCE and THE AUSTRALIAN BEGINING allow users with terminals or microcomputers to send messages and put them in an "electronic mailbox" for other users. The PRESTEL system in Britain allows very similar things to be done.

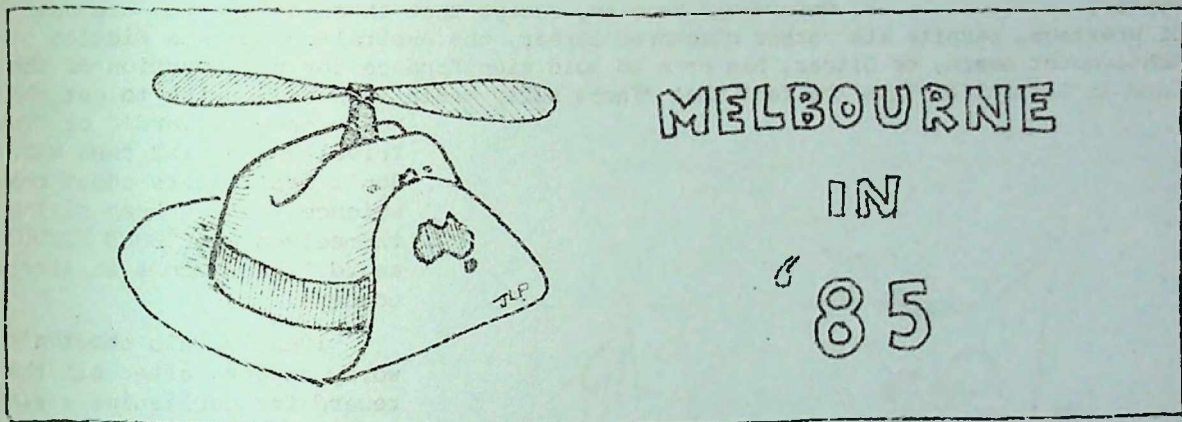
But when will we see the first true fannish electronic apa? Perhaps, despite my ignorance, such a thing already exists, probably in the States. Even without using telephone lines it would seem fairly easy to set up a system among users of the same kind of computer whereby each month a cassette tape did the rounds of the members, the tape containing text submitted by each member and dubbed together by the Official Editor.

But it won't be the same as smelling that ink and cranking the stencils through the duper will it?

---oOo---

*In responce to David's question about the electronic apa, as far as I know, a number of Minneapolis/St Paul fen were using a PLATO network for something like that at one point. Denny Lien might be able to enlighten one more on that. (Indeed, he does in the latest ANZAPA.)*

MISCELLANEOUS PLUGS



Just a none-too-subtle reminder that, in order to vote for Melbourne as the site of the 1985 WorldCon, you must be a member of CONSTELLATION. To be on the safe side, send \$15-00 to Carey Handfield P.O. Box 91 Carlton Vict 3053. You will also have to pay to vote, but that second payment gives you part of your membership in the convention.

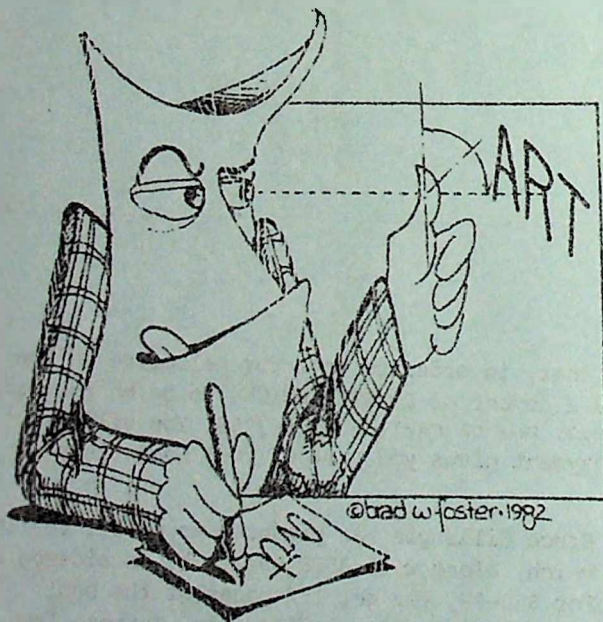
And, while I'm plugging things, Bruce Gillespie has produced an offset reprint of the first year of S.F. COMMENTARY, which, along with ASFR has to be considered one of Australia's greatest fanzines. For \$40-00, you get 152 pages of the best reading you could wish for, featuring writers like Aldiss, Gillespie, Turner, Lem, Bangsund, Foyster, Brunner, Blish... but why go on? Get this numbered limited edition from Bruce Gillespie G.P.O. Box 5195AA Melbourne Vict 3001 AUSTRALIA.

# BACK TO THE DRAWING BOARD

As some of you may have noticed, I'm developing an ~~obsession~~ interest in the different ways people have of viewing fandom. It seems to me that many of the current "feuds" or differences of opinion have much to do with the fact that the people involved in said differences of opinion see fandom in very different ways.

The articles by Julie and David in this issue show one facet of the Balkanisation of fandom. One doesn't have to go far to find others. Fandom as such does not exist. Instead we have several small communities, with different aims and objectives, each seeing itself as the true fandom. There is some interaction between the groups, but, in general, they can be seen as thoroughly autonomous. There are larger loose connections between certain groups, thus Trekkers, Blakes 7 fen, Dr Who fen, and Star Wars fen can be broadly grouped together as media fen, while fanzine fen, convention fen and sercon fen see themselves as continuing a tradition stretching back to Gernsback. However, when it comes to the crunch, the one definition of fandom that holds for any of these groups is that "Fandom is me and me mates."

Personally, I see nothing at all wrong with this. It can though lead to a degree of misunderstanding. Take, for instance, the recent discussions in the pages of Shayne's FORERUNNER, this zine, Ron Clark's THE MENTOR, and a few other Australian zines. The general tone of these seem to be "You aren't really fans, because you don't.....". This would be okay, except that there enters the element of prestige. Despite its rather checkered career, the Australian Science Fiction Achievement Award, or Ditmar, has come to hold significance for a proportion of the fans in Australia. Thus the fact that "Those silly media fans are trying to get their hands on OUR award!" or "Those frivolous fannish fans who don't really care about real science fiction keep giving themselves a SCIENCE FICTION award." has become an item of concern.



Ideally this shouldn't worry anyone, after all the reward for publishing a zine is the warm feeling that one gets from caressing its warm body as it comes off the press right?

It appears not. For some reason, people see the award as important. (Mind you, I might be accused of being biased because I already have a couple of the things.) Thus it provides further ammunition for the argument. So what are the major differences between the factions?

I don't think that it is merely the fact that some fen prefer written sf to audio-visual sf. As Julie points out, most fen watch movies and read comics. Ron Clarke has, on several occasions, made the point that media fen are more interested in writing sf than are the majority of 'mainstream' fen. Indeed, 'mainstream' fen have developed a reputation for not reading sf at all, being too busy putting out fanzines and going to conventions, neither of which have much to do with sf at all. ( Mind you, when accused of not reading sf anymore, Mike Glicksohn - archetypical fannish fan - pointed out that it's fanzines he doesn't read. He still reads sf, but only that stuff written by his mates. With mates like Joe Haldeman, this can't be too hard.)

So, perhaps, the difference comes down to attitude. Jack Herman has suggested that the basic difference between media fen and 'mainstream' fen is that media fen are far less critical of the material that they read and view than are 'mainstream' fen. This is a very attractive theory, especially when one looks at the cults that have grown up around what are, after all, fairly average films and television series. When one considers that there are BATTLESTAR GALACTICA fans, then the theory becomes even more convincing.

I think it is, more than anything else, this fascination with invented personalities that puts fannish fans off of media fandom. I will admit to being a regular viewer of DR WHO. I've even caught a few episodes of BLAKES 7. However, the deep fascination with the characters is something very foreign to me. Thus there is no way that I'm going to consider a zine singing the praises of STAR TREK or Luke Skywalker to be the equal of WAHF-FULL, or SIKANDER, regardless of the fact that the reproduction on the mediazine may be immaculate. WAHF-FULL may look at sf film, but it does so in a balanced fashion. It seems to me that, in spite of everything else, the basic principle behind and media zine must be that its particular concern is worthwhile. That, to me is a very limited viewpoint.

So we come to what is for me the nub of the matter. My fandom is based on the concept that nothing is sacred. Julie's article suggests that I am an advocate of the holy mimeo. Sorry, but it doesn't work that way. I use a mimeo because it is the cheapest and easiest way to do what I want. Q36 is not my only fanzine. I also produce material for assorted apas. Thus I need to have the equipment on hand. If it's there, I figure that I might as well use it for all of my fannish enterprises. It's not that I think that any other form of repro is less fannish, merely that the mimeo is the ideal form of duplicator for the sort of zine that I want to do.

This attitude also means that I find something alien in the earnest nature of most media fen. They seem to think that science fiction fandom means something. Here is where we part company. For me, fandom is just a ghod damned hobby. For them, it is a Way Of Life, or a stepping stone to professional success.

I have this feeling that one or two of you might have done a double-take when I espoused the FIJAGDH cause. After all, I'm the sort of person who spends half of his spare time behind a typewriter. I plan my holidays around conventions. I spent a hell of a lot to get to the WorldCon in '81. I support a small post office. My friends are almost all fannish. However, what I see as they key point is that I recognise that this is just my hobby. It's like anyone, be they chess players, model builders, or cricket players. People spend money on their hobbies. True, in any area you will find those who get carried away with their hobby to the point that their lives revolve around it. You will note that such people take their field so seriously that they get into heavy arguments over it. They have to. If you make one thing the centrepiece of your life then you have to believe that it is important, otherwise you can't justify the fact that it is the centrepiece of your life.

Me, I've made the fact that fandom is a hobby the central premise in my fannish existence. Thus I am aggressively amateur. I can give up fandom anytime. Why, last week I gafiated three times. I also make a point of not limiting myself to fannish company. That is not as successful as I might like I will admit. I became involved in fandom because I liked the people - not because I saw it as a way of

becoming a for-real u-beaut sci-fi writer. ( I will admit that every now and then I still suffer delusions of gender, and wonder if I could make it as a professional author, but that's not the reason I remain in fandom. Indeed, it seems to me that, to become a real writer I need to get away from fandom.)

I certainly don't see the point of drawing a division between fandom and mundania. I will only do so as a joke. Some of my best friends are, after all, mundanes. If I may pinch Julie's analogy, how many of you have read SHOGUN? Right, you're all mundanes.

As a matter of fact, I really don't like drawing lines between people at all, being of the opinion that we are all individuals, and that gross generalisations are not really of much use. However, considering the number of people there are, sometimes generalisations have to be used. Thus the media/fannish split, in which we are arguing on the basis of stereotypes rather than on the basis of real people. It would be nice if we could just talk in specifics, but considering the fact that I don't have the time to read all the 'mainstream' fanzines there are, much less the media zines means that I have to pull out certain general characteristics and base my arguments on that.

The fact that such general characteristics exist is, of course, evidence that media fandom and mainstream fandom are two separate entities, despite certain superficial similarities, such as an interest in things labled sf. Which, of course, brings me right back to where I started. Fandom is Balkanised. Ideally, it should be Balkanised to the point that one could say "That's a Marc Ortlieb" rather than "That's a fanzine fan" but we are concept inventing creatures, who love to categorise things, so there's no real way around it.

What there is a need for though is some way of removing the sources of argument. One is that, since science fiction is a common thread, all groups lay claim to being the sole prophets of the genre, and to events such as WorldCons and National Science Fiction Awards and the like. Ideally, each group should have its own equivalent of the Hugo and the National Convention - something which seems to be happening here in Australia. I gather that media fandom has now a national convention. Comics fandom has developed something similar, as has the SCA, to the point that there will be three major 'conventions' over the Easter long weekend - a comics' con in Melbourne, a fannish con in Melbourne, and an SCA gather in Sydney. So there's part of it. One must accept the Balkanisation, and even encourage it. That's not to say that media fen should be excluded from sf cons, or vice versa. There is still enough overlap of interests that each can learn from the other, and get something from the interacti

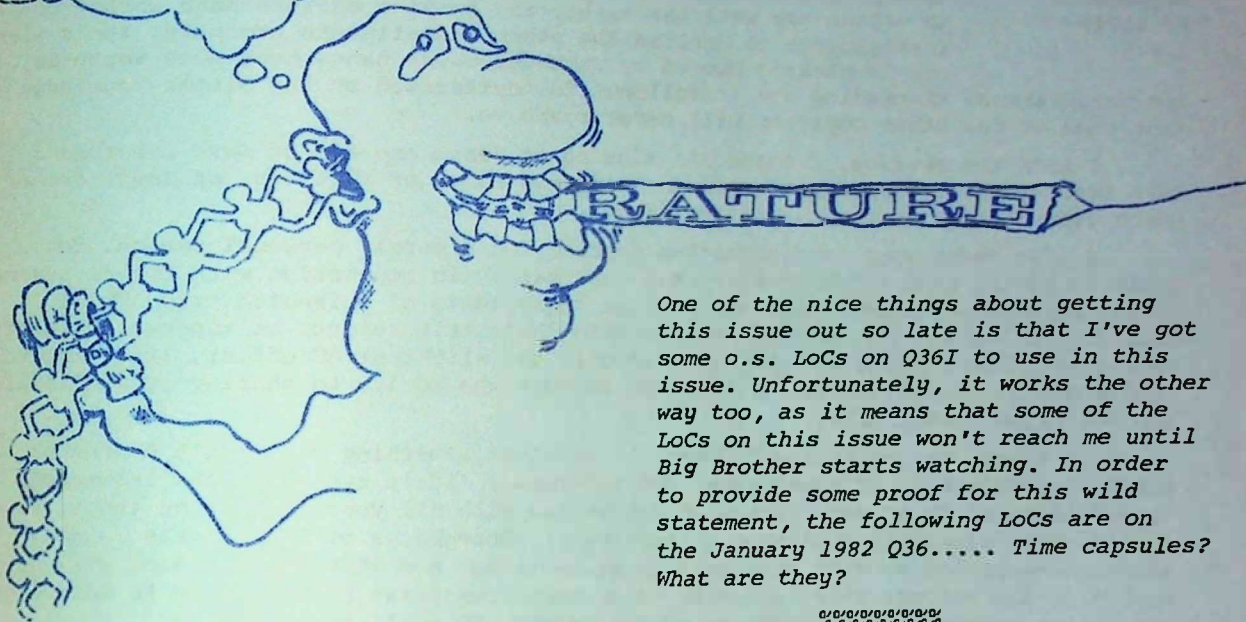
Difficulties only come when one group sees another's values being forced upon it. Thus fannish fans feel threatened when it sees all these fuckwits with ray-guns and Darth Vader masks running around con hotels and making newspaper reporters think that sf is kids stuff. Media fen feel threatened by what they see as pompous cliques excluding them from something they see as part of their heritage as science fiction fans. This is where Balkanisation works. (Note that I don't use the word apartheid. I might want to play rugby in New Zealand one of these days.) However, it must be the sort of Balkanisation that works on choice, i.e. there must be no exclusion causes or anything like that - i.e. "You had a LoC published in SF COMMENTARY. Sorry, you can't attend this year's SPOCKON"

I guess it comes down to my basic philosophy in life, which is let people do whatever they like, so long as they don't harm others. I'm going to continue to prefer zines like SFD, with little artwork, and done in mimeo, over the offset fiction filled zines that media fen seem to prefer, and I'm going to say it. I expect them to make rude comments about Q36 too. If I feel like talking about such things, I might even print pieces with that point of view too. However, as I've said to many a Mormon, Jehovah's Witness and Evangelist, " Talk all you like. You're not going to change my mind, but we might get a good natter out of it."

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AND THE GIRLS. AH!  
THE GIRLS LOVE IT!



One of the nice things about getting this issue out so late is that I've got some o.s. LoCs on Q36I to use in this issue. Unfortunately, it works the other way too, as it means that some of the LoCs on this issue won't reach me until Big Brother starts watching. In order to provide some proof for this wild statement, the following LoCs are on the January 1982 Q36..... Time capsules? What are they?

Q36 G

JACQUE MARSHALL  
c/o Fellinger  
1590 Quince  
Boulder  
CO 80302  
U.S.A.

On reading your zine, the fact that you wouldn't let me scratch your beard the night we were sitting around trying to figure out what Susan Crites was going to do for the Masquerade makes more sense. I have run into exactly two male fans who weren't hopeless suckers for getting scratched under the chin, and, being as how you were the first one, I now infer that it was not in fact some horrible social gaff that I committed, but merely the fact that you aren't in to that sort of thing. Correct?

Well, not so much that, as the fact that I was upholding my complex set of moral standards.... However, I thought I'd better publish this part of your letter in order to counter-act the now current feeling that all Australians are pleasuremad hedonists.. We're not all like Peter Toluzzi - more's the pity. Sigh....

I read with interest that you and Linda Lounsbury aborted your drive through Rocky Mountains National Park because of fog (Actually those were probably real live clouds -- the kind that float through the sky over Denver and Boulder. You were high enough that you were going through them instead of under them. Spooky no?) because I heard a report on the radio just the day before yesterday that somebody finally managed to drive off Trail Ridge Road and finally landed again fifteen hundred feet later. It's a very well-designed road as twisty-twindy mountain roads go, but tourists up there are measured by their white-knuckle index -- i.e. how hard they're gripping the steering wheel or the seats of their cars.

Yes, well, I really hadn't planned to include that road as a part of my next trip to the States anyway.....

35

Please say hello to Andrew Brown for me -- he won't know who the hell you're talking about, but I ran into him at IguanaCon in '78. ( I had had a dream about him two weeks beforehand. Shocked the spit out of me when I then actually met him.)

HARRY WARNER JR 423 Summit Ave Hagerstown MD 21740 U.S.A. It's nice to encounter a trip report that comes complete between one set of staples, avoiding the premonition of doom that always accompanies the arrival of an installment of a serialised trip report no matter how well the author and fanzine editors have worked out arrangements to publish the other installments promptly, their plans are hopelessly doomed by whatever curse hangs over such ventures, and the pleasure of reading one installment is adulterated by the bitter knowledge that some of the other portions will never reach me.

*I know the feeling. I think I'm missing at least one bit of Dave Langford's TAFF report, as it's been published in a diverse range of fanzines, at least one of which doesn't have me on its mailing list.*

I also found your long narrative special for a purely personal reason. You admit to having this and that worry and uncertainty in connection with travel arrangements, personal relationships, and similar ingredients of a fannish trip. While I feel admiration for the fans who emerge from their trip reports as super-capable of coping with every potential problem with only the slightest of effort, it's nice to find a change of pace in the writings of someone who admits to sharing my fallibilities and frettings during trips.

If I have one criticism to make, it involves something you didn't do rather than a transgression of commission. You apparently didn't recognise the tremendous opportunity you faced and ignored in connection with all your laundromat trips. Some day, someone else will publish a collection of photographs of laundromats in many lands, accompanied by wise observations as captions, and this picture book will be hailed by the photographic community as an ingenious fresh contribution to sociology and communications, and to the use of the camera. It could have been you.

At least you can be consoled by having contributed in this long article a large quantity of information about fans, fandom, and cons for future students of what fandom was like in the late 20th Century. Fewer and fewer little facts about personal characteristics of individual fans; how certain things are done at cons; the way fans live in a particular city and so on get into print nowadays because more and more fanac is done on the conversational level in face to face encounters, and less and less appears in fanzines. Since I haven't been going to cons in recent years, practically everything in this article was informative to me. As it happened you didn't spend time in the parts of the nation where most of the fans I know personally are to be found.

*Harry also includes some hints on under-tipping waitresses to express disapproval at sub-standard service, and makes some pessimistic predictions about the Melbourne in '85 bid, which, I hope, will not eventuate. (The predictions that is, not the convention.)*

KENNEDY POYSER 42 - 77 Crommelin St Flushing NY 11355 U.S.A. Maybe there's something inherently interesting in seeing one's country through a visitor's eyes, or maybe I was reading to pick up gossip with an international slant, but really I don't often make one-shot excursions through sixty six page zines. Maybe it was an interesting tale well written.

*Thank you sire. I'll accept it as that. Seriously though thanks for all the nice comments, both yours and those of others. Now all I have to do is work out what I can do to follow that trip report. It ain't going to be easy.*

*But enough of this. It's back to your stock standard letters on ordinary issues of Q36.*

Q36 H

Ted White  
1014 N Tuckahoe St  
Falls Church  
VA 22046  
U.S.A.

In appearance Q36H is something of a paradox. You obviously put more than average thought and care into its design and duplication -- but the vast majority of the "art" (nearly all by John Packer) is awful, and strikes me as a complete waste of electro-stenciling. The occasional good pieces, of which Linda Cox Clan's is the best, and quite good, appear to be in Q36 almost by

accident when they appear in proximity with something as completely awful as M.E. Tyrrell's contents-page doodle. You may state that you have "a very definite policy on what (you) want in the way of covers," but how is such a statement reconciled with that piece of kindergarten scrawling on your actual cover. My twelve-year-old daughter (who has no demonstrable talent as an artist) has drawn better.

Naturally I offered John Packer right of reply on this. His reply was "Ted White? Didn't he write SECRET OF THE KILLER SATELLITE?" On further consideration, he suggested that I ask Ted for a piece of his daughter's work for the next issue.

I'd like to take it a little further than that. I don't feel that John's work requires defence. It might though require a little explanation to someone like Ted, whose views on fanzine "art" aren't quite the same as mine. John's work is not technically brilliant. He'd be the last person to deny that. It is, though, bizarre, twisted and funny. Thus it is the sort of stuff that I want in Q36.

A cover should reflect the contents of the zine, and I feel that John's drawings are ideal for me. As a matter of fact, he and I spend quite a bit of time working out what should be on the covers. Sure, John doesn't produce artistic covers. They are overgrown cartoons, but then so is Q36. The fact that John can translate my cover ideas into a useable form is quite enough for me. Ted's comments are fine, but miss the point of the zine.

You will note that I have a different cover artist for this issue. I like the piece that Taral has done. However, it does not suit the zine as well as John's stuff does. The mood of the zine is better captured in the back cover that Schirm kindly provided.

I'm pleased to say that I will continue to use Packer artwork in my zines, and for that matter will use anything that appeals to me. It is my zine, and that is the real advantage of being aggressively amateur. I would though suggest to Ted and to anyone else who has passed over John's material that they go back for a second look. Ignore the technique if you don't like simple art. Look at the humour. John produces some of the most consistently funny material going. (Mind you, he did reject my suggestion for trifidising some of Ted's stuff.....) But back to Ted, who seems to be bucking for the same place in my heart of hearts that Colonel Sanders holds in Gonzo's.



Andruschak seems to think that private apas exist to provide amusement by blackballing other fans. Well, I've been in private apas since the very first one, Apa X (also known as Apex), was formed in 1962 or thereabouts, and none of those I was in spent any real time on the subject of whom to keep out. At best we debated

whom to invite in, but usually we accepted the need for a small group (one to two dozen) and didn't try to include all our friends. Private apas are like private room parties at big conventions. You get together a convivial group of a manageable size and you enjoy yourselves in good meaty conversations. Private apas are private so that people can discuss things more openly and freely -- often their personal lives. Friends keep in touch and up to date.

Joseph Nicholas says he's "no longer prepared to put up with those who respond to the image rather than to me," and disowns the opinions he expressed two and three years ago, but it's my impression that everywhere but in Britain (and now that he's been there, Australia) people are responding to the image Joseph presents to them, which is to say his written words, which are often prolix, hastily thought of, and overtly or covertly abusive of his audience. As of his letter here he is still doing it. And while I doubt he cares too much what a BOF like Ben Indick thinks of him, Indick's refusal to read an article (which, to judge from the comments here, presented a more human, less hostile side of Joseph) by him shows how effective he has been in alienating some of his audience.

"A fan's paper personality is always, in certain crucial respects, somewhat different from his real one; and, in my case, the differences are so extreme as to make it seem as though I were actually two entirely separate individuals." I wonder why. Most of us present only a few of our many facets on paper, but to meet us is not to discover us to be entirely different -- only, you might say, augmented. We exist in three dimensions while on paper we appear one-dimensional. Why has Joseph apparently created a fictitious paper personality for himself? Did he do it at the same time as he gave himself the name "Joseph Nicholas", which, I am told, is not his real name? (Giving oneself a new name in fandom isn't new, of course, and I'm not criticising it.) I'm glad to hear that he is tired of his old image and is seeking to change it, and I wish him success.

*Ted goes on to point out that people might see him as "crabby and super-critical" on the basis of this letter. Funny he should mention that. Peter Toluzzi assures me that, in person, Ted is a nice bloke. I guess he'll just have to come out here and show us one of these days.*

SKEL

25 Bowland Close

Offerton, Stockport,

Cneshire,

SK2 5NW

U.K.

It really is time someone talked some sense to Joseph Nicholas.

If you don't mind, I will say my say through you Marc, as if I talk directly to Joseph, even via the pages of your fanzine, acrimony might result, and I have too much respect for Joseph to risk that. I may not agree with much that Joseph says, or with the underlying philosophy behind his statements, but it is obvious that he cares, and one must respect him for this.

The problem is that his LoCs are published long after he has written them and in the interim his views have changed. Fair enough, although I suspect it's less a change of view than a change in relative importance. The problem is that the people who read Joseph's LoCs have no idea when they were written. They only know that they read last week that Joseph said such-and-such. They don't know that Joseph wrote that letter eighteen months before it was printed (which was three months before they got it surface mail). All they know is what they read. If you've said it in print you are assumed to still feel the same way until you say otherwise, in print, because "in print" is, unfortunately, the only way most of us have access to each other. OK, those who have access to Joseph in person may be aware that he no longer feels exactly the same way about things. Bloody Hell Joseph, we're not fucking mind readers! Until this last spate of letters we'd no way of knowing of your change of attitude/emphasis. If I wrote that Margaret Thatcher thought we ought to vote Labour on the basis that it was some time since she'd actually told us to vote Conservative, I think I could get sued. Ok. Now Joseph's telling us that he no longer feels quite that way, but it's not fair to criticise us at the same time for not having divined this information in advance.



Thanks, that does allow me to mention a few aspects of this fanediting bit that worry me. I received a letter from Joseph explaining that the bit that I published in Q36 H wasn't really for publication. That's fine, and my apologies to Joseph for publishing it, but I do wish people would make it clearer in writing letters which bits they feel are suitable for appearing in the pages of the zine. For instance, I'm not sure that I should have published all of Skel's first paragraph in the letter here, but, in the absence of any other indication, I've had to use my own judgement, faulty as that may be. Letter writers are warned that if they trust themselves to my editorial judgement, they deserve all that they get. (If the letter is personal, then please don't mix it in with bits of LoC. I sometimes have difficulty in telling the difference.)

I published Joseph's original letter though, and Skel's reply, because I feel that they do give an interesting perspective to the difficulties of fanzine writing.

Skel also makes similar comments to Ted's concerning the cover of Q36 H, and then goes on to say

I am completely amazed that you've managed to carry the fannish spirit of complete disorganisation into the way you keep track of your in/out mail. Can you really keep track of everything in the manner you describe with a monstrous print run of 310? Or do you combine the exercise book with some other system? Apparently not if you send duplicates out. I had assumed that every fan used the same system, simply because the only other system I've seen, Mike Meara's, was identical to mine although arrived at completely independantly.

I have a separate file card for everyone on my mailing list. The back of the card is devoted to the person's address, which is necessary in the case of young college-going U.S. fans, who go through addresses like an apprentice lion-tamer goes through underpants. The front of the card is ruled into four columns, two in and two out, on which I record what they send in and what I send out. Thus I can see at a glance how I stand with everyone, and how many issues I've sent them since last they responded/sent me anything. In fact I have two separate files, one active and one dormant, and cards get shuffled from one to the other as the situation demands. Thus the only cards in the active file are those who got the last SFD or who sent me something since. I also glean addresses from other fanzines and add these cards to the front of my active file, satisfying as many each issue as copies are available. Thus I never (well, hardly ever. Some copies get returned by the post office) have any spare copies to respond to requests. When it comes time to mail out the current SFD I go through the active file and remove any cards to the dormant file that are not responsive enough and then add in as many of the new cards as I've got spare zines. Why am I telling you this? Well, it seems to me that trufans live by egoboo(=response) and apart from the quality of the material, the best way to control response is to keep a tight rein on one's mailing list. I'm keen to hear how others try to stay afloat in the negoboo ocean, as any tips can't possibly hurt, and might even help. Maybe with 310 copies it's less vital than it is with 155 (exactly half. Whaddya know?)

I must admit that I have attempted to inject a little more order into my chaos of late. I now have a card system of sorts, though the only thing I record on each card is name and address. I've started to use an active/dormant system too, with people moving from one to the other on whim, usually connected to receipt of some sort of response. (No "naughties in the busn:s" yet though.) I'm still using the exercise book to keep track of mail in/out though. It's a pain too. I lost the original book, which probably reflects on the state of the study kipple deposits.

I guess, ideally, I'd like to get myself a computer which could store all that sort of informatiōn with minimal fuss, but such things are expensive, and, so far, are still a little too complicated for me. I have tried a mailing list programme on the school APPLE, but it's difficult to have to modify a non-fannish programme to fit my own very specific needs without having enough programming knowledge (enough in this case being defined as more than the zero knowledge that I have.)

JOHN D CWEN  
4 Highfield Close  
Newport Pagnell  
Bucks  
MK16 9AZ  
U.K.

Q36 H didn't have quite the intense interest of your trip special, but is nonetheless amusing and good fun to boot. Obviously, seeing the mammoth trip thingie has slightly raised my expectations. I keep

wondering where you'll be reporting from this time. Short of a trip report up the Zambesi, where a primitive tribe of pigmy amazons are said to worship Joe Nicholas as the One True Ghod, I guess I'll have to throttle back my over-inflatable expectations and make do with your 'normal' issues.

Packer's THE WRONG TRACK was as nice a piece of fannish bitchiness disguised as a cartoon strip as I've ever seen. More than a touch of Nitchhikers' Guide about it - could almost be one of Doug Adams' famous sidetracks. Liked especially the pluralistic intimation that the 'Boltimorii' had already blown themselves up a thousand years before, which got things a bit Heinleinish or Moorcockish, depending on which multiverse you'd prefer to be in.

I've always kept records of my music collection. It helps when compiling tape selections for the car (Helps you keep track of them does it?)

The letter that did have me rolling in the aisles was Joe Nicholas', which almost moved me to pity the old sod, trapped in his self-made strait-jacket of an image, and aggrieved that no one will help him take it off. He doesn't realise that too many fans have suffered at his hands in the past to let him off the hook that easily, and since it's common knowledge that Joe is sensitive about his image and his writing then they'll keep right on slapping custard pies in his persona (or worse) until the game becomes boring or until everybody feels sorry for the guy.

BRAD FOSTER  
4109 Pleasant Run Irving  
TX 75062  
U.S.A.

The zine gave a favourable impression from just leafing rapidly through it when it first arrived. Prejudice on my own part, but I like to see a lot of art in a zine, and to actually see a multi-page comic strip was a treat.

Lots of discussion about artists and art in this letter column. I wish I'd seen whatever started it all up. For my own part, I would probably continue to draw even if no one else ever saw any of it, but first and foremost I want other people to see it. I've figured out this is why I'm so attracted to the commercial field of art rather than the gallery side. The idea of doing a piece of work I'm very proud of, and then having it hung in someone's house, where only a dozen or so people might see it, does me no good, no matter what they pay for it. I prefer to see several hundred copies of it floating around so that several hundred or more people can see it.

Nilarious images conjured up by Lien's letter! You oughta see if you can get Packer to do that as a strip in a future Q36.

Brad mentions the fact that he'd love to do fillos and the like for other Australian fanzines, with the aim of receiving at least a zine every day. Go to it folks.



Never thought that we'd last this long  
Always thought that they'd drop the bomb.

(SCIENCE FICTION)

Christina Amphlett

HARRY WARNER JR  
423 Summit Ave  
Hagerstown  
MD 21740  
U.S.A.

Even if Harry Andruschak didn't seriously suggest a blackball apa, he may have given some Australian fans a false impression of FAPA. There is no blackball provision in the FAPA constitution. FAPA provides for barring from membership any waiting lister if more than half of the FAPA members vote against that person's admission. A blackball provision would mean that a waiting lister could be kept out of FAPA if just one member objected to his admission. So there is a considerable difference. In practice, the FAPA mechanism for voting down waiting listers has never been utilised; it's there just in case it should someday be needed to cope with some impossibly unsuitable waiting lister, but no such person has tried to join FAPA in the many years since that provision went into the constitution.

*FAPA is, of course, the Fantasy Amateur Press Association, the oldest of the fannish apas. It has a tradition of long waiting lists.*

Terry Frost's contribution was one which I wished would have gone on longer than it did. Melbourne sounds as though someone from Hagerstown had been hired to found, lay out, and develop a new city in Australia. Just a block and a half from my home is one of those railroad crossings with which both Melbourne and Hagerstown are so lavishly bestowed.

*Oops! Slight misunderstanding there. The 'trains' to which Terry's article referred are, of course, trams, or, as you Americans would say, streetcars. I was a little put out by the caption on the postcard that Linda Lounsbury sent me from Seattle. It featured a Melbourne tram that has been installed on the Seattle waterfront, and it was labled "The Seattle Waterfront Streetcar". You will note the second episode in this issue. Since Terry has now moved to the wilds of Dubbo I have no idea what he will present us with next though.*

KIM HUETT  
G.P.O. Box 429  
Sydney  
N.S.W. 2001  
AUSTRALIA

I was quite pleased to see a very good short piece from Terry Frost this time around, but it does raise one question. How on earth did you get Terry to write such a structured piece? After reading his Applesauce contributions, I was caught off my guard when it didn't go jumping around all over the place as is his usual style.

*Well, for a start, I can't claim any credit for Terry's piece. It was sent to me as I published it. I think there is a tendency to underestimate Terry's writing ability because he tends to experiment. Personally I find him one of the most enjoyable of the more recent fanwriters, and am always pleased to be able to use his material.*

No comments on the lettercol came to mind until I reached Skel's letter. Now that's the sort of letter I want to write! It's a well-written, chatty letter that still manages to make good points about the zine in question. It also sums up my feelings on this art question, particularly in its mention of pride. Though it may not always look like it, a lot of thought goes into my letter writing. At times I have sat in front of my typewriter for an hour trying to think of the best way to say something. If it was merely a case of writing to ensure a supply of fanzines then I doubt I would do more than scrawl a hurried note to let the fanned know I was enjoying the product. However, I have pride in my letterwriting, even though a letterhack gets even less acclaim from fans (not including most faneds) than the artist does. It makes me feel good to see someone publish a LoC of mine and encourages me to work harder at improving the quality of my writing so that the next time they need not edit me so heavily.

Trust Eric Lindsay to know about 'Snatches and Lays'. Not long ago I purchased a copy of this delightful volume. I had always been curious about 'The Ballad Of Eskimo Nell' which I couldn't believe was as vulgar as people told me. It was worse. If you really want to drop your nice and straight image, there could be no better way than to be seen carrying copies of this volume around conventions.

*Actually, I can think of any number of better ways. I will though, point out that I am fully cognisant with Eskimo Nell, having been able to recite most of it off by heart since about 1974. I have also, on one occasion, been a member for the Society*

for the Preservation of the *Dirty Song*, and having sung with the Bogus Quartet. The book you mention is okay, but not really a match for the Purity Songbook, put out by the Society for the Confining of Immoral Impulses Among Engineering Students - a group run by the University of Adelaide medical students. I guess one of these days I should really reveal the true colours of Q36, and run a piece on filthy songs.

But, while on that topic, does anyone know of any really filthy filk songs?

DIANE FOX            Re Denny Lien's comments about naughties in the bushes and the difficulty  
P.O. Box 129        thereof, I would have thought it more logical to drive the person to be  
Lakemba            naughty to a convenient bush-grown area, as humans, by their nature  
N.S.W. 2195        are more mobile than plants - excepting, of course, triffids, among  
AUSTRALIA         whom only a masochist would wish to naughty anyway.

MARC GERIN-LAJOIE        Re Denny's comments, cops are always wary of anything  
314-2951 Riverside Drive    unusual. Having to explain the bushes, propellor-beany  
Ottawa, Ont            cap and such odities would be little worse than having  
K1V 8W6                to explain why you're (as in 'I') driving around, for no  
CANADA                 good reason other than the fact that you like doing so, at  
                         2-15 am in a city where they roll up the sidewalks at

18-00 hours on most nights.

Fortunately the cops in Ottawa aren't that bad. 'Sa good thing too. I'd have hated to have had to have tried to explain what the lady and I were doing in medieval garb (Society for Creative Anachronism--try and explain that sometime) with real steel at belts, in an illegally imported (borrowed) American car with Illinois licence plates, which belonged to an exotic dancer whose visa had expired but who was still in Canada for all that, and which had piles of traffic tickets in the glove compartment but no registration, and me driving this thing with piles of expensive stereo gear in the back seat - I'd brought part of mine to provide music at the SCA event - and a driver's licence with an address that was two years out of date on it.

I suspect that the stereotyped small southern town US cop would have shot us on sight. (Note use of the word 'stereotyped') Fortunately our 'finest' aren't quite that over-zealous. He was going to ask us for an explanation, but realised how long and convoluted his report(s) would have to be, and decided to let us off with a verbal warning instead.

NEIL E KADEN            I know I'm coming in late to the fan-artist/fan-writer bit, but  
1104 Longhorn Drive    I'll put my two pence in. Fan-artists and fan-writers are operating  
Plano                 in very different goal tracks. Any fan-writer who aspires to  
Texas 75023            create a career in writing is also aiming at moving OUT of the  
U.S.A.                 fannish marketplace once the \$\$ start coming in (in general). Fan-  
                         artists, on the other hand, can aspire to become fully supported  
by their art, and yet remain in the same market they are now in. I know of several who are doing that quite successfully.

For the fan-writer, awards would lead to recognition, and so to the fan-writer leaving fandom. As a self-defence mechanism, fandom is extremely lax in giving fan awards out. See, it's not because of the existance of CFR that 'true' fanzines never get Hugos and there are so few nominations. Fan-artists are just unfortunate in sharing fandom with such a selfish crowd.

An interesting idea Watson, but a little more thought provides an elementary solution - just take that hypodermic out of my arm will you? Now where was I? Oh yes, the way to improve the fannish award system so that real fan-writers not only win the awards, but stay writing for us is to attach a cash payment to the award, conditional on the receipient producing umpty-nine pieces of fanwriting a year for the next three years. Mind you, definitions would again become argued ad infinitum, but it would add a bit of spice to the arguments....

---000---

Q36 I

JUDITH HANNA  
22 Denbigh St  
Pimlico  
London  
SW1V 2ER  
U.K.

On to I, the egoistic issue, in which you ramble on about how your shy Pommie younger self met up with Aussie fauna, and, of course, the response evoked is to set me rambling on about my youthful encounters with animals, sleepy lizards in particular, which were also known round our way as blue-tongues, or bob-tails. If I remember rightly, I first met one as anything other than a lump sunning itself on the road soon after our family moved to the farm. We were visiting some neighbours.

The parents - or, as local parlance soon had us calling them, the "olds" - were politely sipping cold lager being given all sorts of helpful advice on the care and feeding of our newly acquired sheep, and the kids, them and us, went off prowling around the fences, through what seemed to us city types jungles of bleached dry wild-oats, when we just about stepped on this hissing reptilian thing poking out a swollen blue-black pointy tongue at us from its bright pink gaping mouth. We jumped back. The local boy bent down, grasped the little monster firmly behind its triangular head, and thrust the still hissing beastly towards us. "It's perfectly harmless," he smirked. We didn't believe him.

As that summer wore on, we found blue-tongues a noticeable portion of the wildlife that surrounded us. We could hardly step out the back door without almost treading on one. They tended to accumulate around there, where the grapevines cast cool shade and they could raid the dog's and cat's plates for milk and porridge. We were told that the bob-tails helped keep snakes away. Certainly we saw more sleepies than snakes - about three snakes sprung sneaking around the buildings was the average for a year, always tiger snakes or dugites, both poisonous, and enthusiastically attacked with rifle and/or axe by my brothers. I felt sorry for the poor snakes. We never saw a carpet snake, a variety of python, which we would have willingly adopted as rodent control for the sacks of grain we kept in the shearing shed.

We were warned that we'd have to grow strawberries up off the ground or the bob-tails would gobble them all up. The problem in growing strawberries though was more in getting enough water to them, and protecting them from the heat. Our carefully tended strawberries in their specially raised beds never paid off with more than a couple of stunted dried-out berries a year.

Although not in the least pretty, because they were always under-foot, we came to regard the sleepies as almost pets, in the same way as we did the blue wrens that nested in the fuschia and the mulberry tree which occasionally flew through an open door into the house. We ended up running a sort of lizard vet service, getting the ticks out of their ears. Inland, in the west, we don't have the spectacularly poisonous ticks of the east coast. What infested our lizards were technically 'stickfast fleas', a parasite of poultry, which were picked up when wandering across old fowlyard sites. Being dumb animals, they showed no gratitude for our ministrations.

We'd get the ticks out of their earholes by first picking the 'izard up, an easy enough matter once we got over being scared of their hissing, then sitting on the back doorstep, we'd drop kerosene in the earholes. This would drown the ticks which, their hold loosened, could then be picked off with sharp tweezers. The same treatment was meted out to afflicted chooks.

Joys of country life eh? Nostalgia for Australia? You bet! Not that I'm not enjoying it over here. Beaut mob the Pommie fans. Really triff as the local lingo has it.

Thanks Judith. As a matter of fact, I wouldn't mind being over in Pommiland at the moment. It's far too hot here. It's also the second innings for the Poms in the Fourth Test. England three for 116, giving them a lead of 113. Lamb and Fowler doing very nicely indeed.

43

MANDY HERRIOT

Marc, your fiendish plot to start WW III in my loungeroom won't work.

Phil knows better than to try to

read an Ortlieb fanzine concurrently with me, but that John Packer, (Grrr jus 'cos he's listed as art consultant, seems to think that he has some right to MY Q36 I.

Every time I stopped reading to blow my nose; the fanzine had gone, and there was Packer across the room snickering at the cute rats heading the letter column.

Well, I won. It's Friday, and I lured him out of the flat, using a Museo meal as bait, while pleading a terrible coldy wog, and retired to my nice warm bed to read Q36 I in peace.

Now John can fight with Phil

for possession - and I can sit back and be amused. So There!!!

Actually Mandy, my aim was more subtle than that. I deliberately started that fight to elicit that most rare of objects, a Herriot letter. It worked too!

VALERIA BEASLEY  
3900 Hawthorne Ave  
Dallas  
Texas 75219  
U.S.A.

Despite a dislike for creatures like lizards, I enjoyed your piece on Australia's wildlife. Your writing skills weren't too tested, that is you've written better, but you made the piece enjoyable. I sympathise with the desire for native life in the backyard. My freshman room-mate had me fill in a survey for one of her classes on the subject of sightings and was surprised at the number of creatures I had seen outside of a zoo. Those days, alas, were long ago. My parents no longer find startled deer staring at them in the driveway. The wooded route to the house is no longer continuous and secure. My Aunts and Uncles still see moose and otters and such, but it's cold up in Maine and it isn't really farming quality land there. The rabbits are as plentiful as the Texas Armadillo with both being prone to commit suicide late at night. The rabbits, I swear, always wait for car lights to cross the road with. The armadillo gets startled when a car passes overhead, and jumps straight up for a fatal concussion.

Police harassment... I doubt that this story made it to Australia: Seems a small town in New Mexico had a sheriff, his deputy, and a brother with a tow truck. They would stop and arrest on suspicion of drug possession any kid with long hair and a car sporting a bumpersticker for a radio station. The kids were then released for fines totaling the amount in their wallets less the amount for towing. Mind you they never saw a judge. The story was finally broken when the crew decided they could clear more profit if they accepted plastic money.....

Interesting. I doubt that such things would be so easy here in Australia, as the police are hired by the individual states. We don't have town sherrifs as such, though rumour has it that Queensland police behave in much the same manner as small town sherrifs in the U.S.. Indeed, Queensland is often called Australia's Deep North. Just out of interest, to whom are the small town sherrifs in the accountable?

(England six for a hundred and sixty. Miller lbw to Lawson.)



TED WHITE  
1014 N. Tuckahoe St  
Falls Church  
VA 22046  
U.S.A.

15/11/82

Q36 I, postmarked July 23th, finally arrived here Saturday (the 13th) in an envelope stamped (by the USPO, I think) "Found in supposedly empty equipment." At a mere four months I doubt this challenges the Australia-US Slow Crawl Records, but I thought you'd find the explanation as amusing as I did....

I found the interview with Jean Weber fascinating; I always enjoy people's observations on cultural differences between the English-speaking countries, and Jean's former-US point of view brings out aspects of Australian culture which I doubt a native would notice, or regard in quite the same way. I've long been curious about Australia and New Zealand since branches of my family - primarily the Clay branch, originally from Co. Clay in Ireland - live there, and it's been in the back of my mind to follow my father's footsteps some day and visit them. (His stories about the lack of central heating were less than encouraging however....)

*Don't worry about that Ted. Just time your visit correctly. Today is a nice cool day. The overnight minimum was 17'C, and today's estimated maximum is 28 or so.*

On the other hand, I thought her comments on the US were remarkably glib and unperceptive, and treated the entire country as some sort of monolith, which I think anyone who has actually spent much time travelling in this country could refute. "Australian men tend to be less devious." Than whom? (And I can't help wondering about those "devious" American men "who say all the right things, and then stab you in the back." Was this in a professional relationship, a personal relationship, or just walking down the street?) "Unmarried couples, even with children, are more readily accepted here than they are in the U.S., and are treated the same in most aspects of the law." Funny, but the year and a half I lived with a woman and her three young daughters, no one gave us the slightest hassle about it. These days there are probably almost as many unmarried couples as there are married ones here -- one runs into articles about it and about how commonplace it is in fact. And, due to high rents, two to four unrelated people sharing a house is also so common now that builders no longer build one "master" bedroom into their houses but two or three equal-sized bedrooms, each with its private bath.

In general, I think this reflects a trend which is nearly universal in Western society - the same trend the reactionaries point to with alarm: The Breakdown Of The Traditional Family Unit.

Of course the Australian Government doesn't "have any illusions that they're the world's policemen, or that they have the muscle to push anybody around." Nor

*stick to me only  
with thine eyes...*



do most governments, having pushed the major load of their defence off onto the U.S. via NATO, SEATO, and whatnot. In fact, dollars have poured out of this country in Lend-Lease, WWII rebuilding operations like the Marshall Plan, and just plain ol' Foreign Aid, for forty years now, to the point where we're running out of them. But what would happen if we folded up our tents and said "That's it. We're finished as world cops. Isolationism here we come!" I doubt many non-Warsaw Pact countries would be cheering.

*The objection, as I see it, isn't to the aid that the U.S. has given to the rest of the world, but more to the way that the rest of the world is expected to Americanise itself in sheer gratitude. I think that Catherine Circosta's comment sums it up the best. She was visiting Phillip Island, a part of Victoria famous for its fairy penguins, where she heard an American tourist say*

*"We have much bigger penguins in Texas."*

Despite its more-than-50 pages, I found little else in this issue of Q36 comment-worthy. There's a dull earnestness to much of the issue, and, of course, the usual terrible artwork.

*Thanks Ted. I do need someone to restore my perspective at times...*

MIKE ROGERS  
2429-D Old Stone Mountain Rd  
Chamblee  
GA 30341  
U.S.A.

The interview with Jean Weber worked well. I'm probably too much of a homebody to ever live outside Dixie, much less the U.S., but Jean seems to enjoy her new home. I would like to point out that, while Ms Weber may find the Aussie tax burden a little easier to bear, someone from the Southern U.S. would find the Australian tax

levels to be higher, mainly because the state and local taxes here tend to be lower than they are elsewhere in the States. Of course there's a trade-off. The overall level of services here is usually lower than in other places, but this can vary according to the desires of the local area. The part of the South I live in probably has one of the highest local tax levels to be found anywhere in this part of the country because it's a fairly well-to-do suburban area whose residents want good schools and good roads and are willing to pay to get them.

Do Americans really take themselves all that seriously? I'd be interested to hear reactions from others on this. I never thought of it that way, but if you've got hundreds of Russian missiles pointing at you, it makes you think.

I will pass on Mr Alderson's challenge. Friction burns on my private parts doesn't sound like my idea of a good time, and after that many naughties not even K-Y Jelly would do any good.

John Berry may not have any contact with "Southern Fandom", but that doesn't necessarily mean that the contacts don't exist. For example, I'm sending my fanzine - irregular though it may be - to a couple of fans in Seattle, and I'm getting their zines in return. Maybe the impression of an isolationist Southern group lingers because Southern fans don't go to many conventions outside the region, mainly due to the distances involved. But I don't think we're an "alternate fandom". This is one of the main reasons I am involved in the Atlanta in '86 Worldcon bid. I don't want to see Southern fandom lose its special flavor, but I don't want us to be thought of as a foreign country by the rest of fandom.

*I dunno. What's wrong with Australian fans thinking of Southern fandom as a "foreign country"? From our point of view, you are. I suspect that what you meant was that you didn't want Southern Fandom to be seen that way by the rest of U.S. fandom. This tendency to think of the U.S. as the whole of fandom is the sort of thing that those of us at the farther flung corners of the globe find tends to grate. I know that you didn't mean it that way in this letter, but there it is.*

**CRICKET UPDATE:-** The Poms won the Fourth Test by three runs. It's now the first innings of the Fifth Test. Australia are 4 for 173. England have to win this one to retain the Ashes.



MRS P.J. BOAL  
4 Westfield Way  
Charlton Heights  
Wantage, Oxon  
OX12 7EW  
U.K.

THE OTHER SIDE OF THE RAINBOW was an excellent interview, affording insights to both American and Australian culture, not to mention to a person I think I would like to be acquainted with. Mind you, I do not see the issues of women's equality in such black and white terms as does Jean, though I think she pin-points the reason for the movement being more advanced in America most accurately. I wish others were as aware of the intellectual and educational advantages that they enjoy, and would think a little more about the effect of their clarion call upon the majority of women who are less fortunate. I contend that the preference for some sort of lasting relationship - if not love - to accompany sex is a needful survival instinct for those women who do not enjoy the average liber's intellectual/educational advantages. The vociferous denigration of that instinct has, in my opinion, contributed greatly to the growing army of young women landed with the task of raising children on their own when they are neither emotionally, intellectually or financially equipped to do so. They tend to be a burden on inadequate Social services, and tend to raise people who are emotionally ill-equipped to deal with life.

I must express sympathy with Eric Mayer. I have the same problem. At least he can utilise the bushes though - perhaps his own inflatable ones - for the needful stops on long journeys. Being obliged to use a wheelchair for distances of more than a few feet, that's a bit difficult for me.

By the by, if his tablets are Navidrex rather than Navidrex K I would advise him to eat bananas, or some other food that will replace the phosphate. Those tablets, plus my walking stick, were responsible for a hospital ward being deserted by staff for several hours one night. A very junior nurse had been left in charge, and she hadn't been told about the patient who had to make frequent trips to the bathroom, and who used a walking stick. The tap tapping echoing around the darkened ward completely un-nerved her. She simply fled, and was so ashamed at having done so that it was some time before she could bring herself to find someone to come back to the ward with her to investigate the weird goings on.

DAVID PALTER  
1811 Tamarind Ave, Apt 22  
Hollywood  
CA 90028  
U.S.A.

It's interesting that Jean Weber left the USA because of her dislike for Richard Nixon. No doubt he was an outstandingly loathsome President, but relatively few people fled the country for that reason - not counting draft dodgers, which category undoubtedly does not include Jean.

I am reminded of John Alderson's comment some pages later, in the letter section, that "I doubt that it is anyone's right to hate his own country." So what do you do if you hate your country? Find a better one. It's a pretty good idea, although Jean's observation is certainly a good one. You can't escape your problems by moving to another country. It's not too difficult to get away from America if it doesn't suit you; it is harder to get away from the foibles of humanity i.e. selfishness, hypocrisy, cruelty, stupidity, ignorance, insanity, depravity etc.. I have often felt that I really do not want to live anywhere on this planet.

*You think maybe that it might be better anywhere else in the universe? Mind you, if you're looking for reasons to leave the U.S., I figure that Mike Rogers' comments about Russian missiles would rate pretty high in my book. I feel awkward about living this close to the American tracking bases at places like Pine Gap.*

It is an amusing anomaly that, whereas you state, at the bottom of pg. 47, "I like to be able to say FUCK in my fanzines," that this is the only place in Q36 I where you do so. Philosophically, of course, it does not follow that because you like to be able to do something that you will also like actually doing it. This philosophy would endear you to the American Civil Liberties Union.

*Yep. I guess, philosophically, you have to put me down with the laissez fairies. I like to keep my options open. I find any group that attempts to restrict personal liberties, other than, of course, those personal liberties which involve hurting other people, to be a pain in the arse. This specifically applies to the Moral Majority and the Festival of Light.*

JOHN D OWEN  
4 Highfield Close  
Newport Pagnell  
Bucks  
MK16 9AZ  
U.K.

The interview with Jean Weber was intriguing. Given the two excellent reasons she had for leaving the US of A, i.e. Nixon and Raygun, I can't see that the lady had much choice in the matter. Sitting here in ol' Merrie England, with Raygun rattling his sabres fretfully on one side, an aging and possibly senile Russian leadership on the other, and with the Iron Lady ruling the roost here, I begin to wonder why I'm not heading Oz-ward!

John Packer is really ace. He's got that Schultz-like ability to make vague blobs turn into real characters. I mean, most of the strip this time consists of three three-tentacled blobs with no distinguishing features, yet the strip is funny just the same. Incredible.

JOHN NEWMAN I was reading along, thinking how nice it was that our ex-yank friend P.O. Box 4 Jean was saying all those nice things about Oz, when, suddenly, I stopped. Thornbury "...take themselves and their country far less seriously than do Americans Vict 3071 Minn. Yes, and not entirely a good thing either. It's all very well not AUSTRALIA to be self-importantly self-involved, and to maintain a sense of balance with respect to the importance of the country one calls home, but the same lack of serious regard is behind the infamous Australian apathy. The trend seems to me to be that Aussies don't take themselves or Australia very seriously because they don't take anything very seriously. In fact, the general case in Australia seems to be that what serious regard is given is given to the entertainments provided for the masses. This, of course, means football, television and politics.

Certainly the spectre of the worst kind of American jingoistic excess is nice to avoid, but I wish that some of the locals would care as much about themselves and their lives as tne appear to care about the footy grand finals.

I think it's significant to think of myself as an Australian. Being born and brought up here has shaped me into much of what I am, much as being in America shaped Jean - into someone who wanted to leave! I'd like to see Australia doing better as a country. The relationship between a country and the people who live there is a symbiotic one, and attachment either way helps it work.

*I'm not sure that many would agree with you in placing politics as one of the major Australian entertainments. Complaining about politicians certainly is, but that's got more to do with the Australian tendency to knock.*

JACK R HERMAN Mike O'Brien's pastiche is good, and almost inspired, although Box 272 it might go over the head of all you rabid anti-media types. Wentworth Building You see it's based on an sf movie called STAR WARS. My one University of Sydney complaint though is that Mike's fannish references are a little N.S.W. 2006 esoteric, pertaining as they do to the ANZAPA "old fans" AUSTRALIA network, and featuring three of Australia's leading fan-hermits. At least he has re-introduced the concept of the running gag - BEEP! - into Australian fanfic. Packer's illos are excellent accompaniment.

Your lettercol is becoming a quite interesting discussion on Australian history. Alderson's slight knowledge enables him to dive into very muddy waters. His assertion that the Australian character was established before the mining era (1850s on) or the "pastoral industry" (1830s on) rests on the assumption that the "fundamental Australian identity" was established in the first forty to fifty years of the colony's establishment. As I have pointed out in Q36 I, a much better case can be made for the development of our prevailing ethos in the mid to late 19th Century, especially in the "pastoral industry". It is essentially male-dominated because of the sex imbalance in that "industry".

*Jack continues to cost offset vs mimeo, pointing out that the major difference in the costs is the initial outlay. His comments about having to take electricity use into account strike me as a little tongue-in-cheek. After all, I don't count the cost of the Deep Heat rub that I need to get my arm into shape after a long run when working out the economics of Q36.*

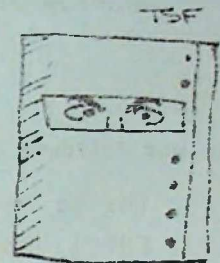
LEIGH EDWARDS I fear that not only did John Alderson misunderstand my comments on P.O. Box 433 people associated with The Bulletin ( You did too. What I was referring to was, in fact, that sf imitation Futuristic Tales), he has misunderstood my comments on the sources of Australian population and character. A.C.T. 2608 I'm not really sure what John is writing about when he lists four main AUSTRALIA sorts of immigration and then says that the fundamental Australian identity was formed. So far as I'm aware, the pastoral industry in Australia was formed somewhere in the 1810s and it would be very difficult to find anything which predates that so far as influence goes. At the sake of being tedious, my point was that the pastoral industry was made possible by the extensive use of assigned convicts, virtually a form of slave labour. The growing immigration of free settlers from the 1830s was partly as a result of the growing conflict between the pastoral and the merchantile classes - which is not something that John raised, nor something which I'm really knowledgeable with. I wish, however, that John had actually backed up his suggestions that the Australian identity is convict based with a few decent arguments instead of the list of immigration waves.

Since Jack Herman is a professional historian, and I'm only 2/5ths of one so far, I'll have to bow to his suggestion that Russell Ward is Australia's most insightful historian. I haven't read The Australian Legend so I am doubly ignorant. Of course, being at ANU and seeing Manning Clark wandering around the place, and having seen him lecture a few times and having read some of his writing, I would be just a little bit tempted to say that he might be more insightful, but knowing only one side of the story...

*Speaking in my capacity as 'umble editor, I must admit that virtually everything above went straight over my head. I don't understand these heavy historical type arguments. Hopefully though it will make some sense to some of you. The Management reserves the right to deny any understanding of material appearing in this fanzine.*

I have to disagree with Ron Clarke that comics fans were the outcasts of fandom. My memory of the late sixties is that the few of them who were actively involved in sf fandom were not in the slightest outcast and both Gary Mason and John Ryan were among the most popular (given that Gary was a little idiosyncratic at times) fans in Australia. There was also Noel Kerr in Melbourne who produced the MSFClub fanzine for a year or so, and made it one of the best produced fanzines ever to come out of Australia. In fact those few comics fans who did play a part in the early stages of current Australian fandom did a lot to shape it. Through their hard work and their enthusiasm they contributed a lot more than most normal fans - four were involved in the early days of ANZAPA and John Ryan in particular gave that organisation a much more mature tone than it might otherwise have had. Gary published the first regular newszine in Australia (To my mind it is still to be equalled because he would worry at things and actually do a bit of investigation to give depth to the news - though this may have been partly because there was so little of it. Publishing a sixteen page newszine in the sixties would be like publishing a fifty page zine now.) Gary also did a lot to keep the SFFF going after its initial burst of enthusiasm under John Danza.

Like some Star Trek fans (but not many) Gary, John and Noel moved in two fannish circles. I'm not aware of what they did in comics fandom but I am sure that they were not regarded as outsiders by any sf fans. They were intelligent and interesting people, no matter what their main interest was and anyhow sf fans don't always talk about sf, so why should comics fans talk only about comics?



Who're you calling a bloody droid, smart arse?

Mike O'Brien should be locked in a room and made to look at STAR WARS over and over again as a reward for having written that ... er ... interesting little piece of fan fiction. Leigh Skytracker and Princess Valma indeed. I mean it's flattering, but not exactly the sort of reward that one expects in one's fannish old age.

As always, John Packer's cartoon strip was delightful.

Thanks Leigh. As a matter of fact, there were one or two other responses to Mike's story....

TO: Mr Michael O'Brien  
FROM: Editorial Desk of the Aged Newspaper - Ronald DeDonald Editor  
SUBJECT: Biographical Details.

Dear Mr O'Brien,

Could you please oblige us with full biographical details for our obituary column next Saturday. Your address was given to us by a Mr P.J.Stevens who had just read Q36I and had a sudden premonition that you were going to shuffle off this mortal coil very abruptly.

Yours in expectation

J. Farley Whatasteamer  
(Obituaries)

*This was followed by another letter, in a strangely similar envelope.*

TO: Mr Mark Ortlieb (copy to Mr M.O'Brien)  
FROM: George Lucas and Star Wars Co.Inc.  
SUBJECT: Defamation of character and infringement of copyright.

Dear Sirs,

It has come to our attention that Q36I has within its pages a story that infringes on the copyright held by ourselves and our corporation, to wit STAR WARS.

Furthermore we would like to point out that although the character of Darth Vader is totally evil and vile, he is a pussycat when compared to the low degeneracy of Anti-fan. Your actions have therefore forced us to write him out of the next movie at a cost of several millions of dollars.

Therefore we have decided it is only fair if we sue you to your back teeth and ask you to forward us the sum of forty five million dollars before next Friday or we will be forced to take drastic action... A large Wookiee will call on you and rip your bloody arms off for a start....

The Force is with us

Geo Lucas and Corp.

P.S. We contacted Mr Stevens and asked him if he would like to play Anti-fan in Revenge, but he suggested that such a role would make too many people like him. He also suggested a novel use for the sample light sabre which we sent him.

*Well, what more can I say. I guess it serves me right for lowering the standard of my fanzine by including material catering to media fandom.*

*Fifth Test. England are in their first innings, and are eight for two hundred and twenty, chasing an Australian first innings of three hundred and fourteen.*

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10/00/10/00

R. COULSON      Talking to pros depends on the pro. Hell, Bob Tucker is a pro, and  
Route 3      I can't quite imagine anyone not wanting to talk to him - or not  
Hartford City      enjoying it. The U.S. has this rather sharp distinction between pros  
IN 47348      who go off by themselves and don't want to be bothered, and pros who  
U.S.A.      join the fan parties. At Roc-Kon, Suzette Hayden Elgin listened to  
                 the filksinging awhile and then borrowed someone's guitar and joined  
in. I wouldn't particularly want to talk to Ellison, but then I didn't when he was  
a fan either. Leigh Brackett was possibly the most fascinating person - pro or fan -  
that one could ever talk to. Gordy Dickson is usually with fans a good share of his  
time at cons as is Kelly Freas, and others. I can't name all of them in an aerogramme,  
and I won't name the pro snobs.

Awwww!

For that matter, Juanita has had fifteen novels published and I've had seven.  
You wouldn't snub us would you?

*Actually, I try not to snub anyone, though I do have some difficulty talking to  
people I don't know, being, if not the stereotyped fannish introvert, at least a  
touch shy. I certainly would have liked to have talked to Bob Tucker, but never quite  
managed to find him at Denvention II.*

ANN POORE      Regarding John Alderson's mathematics... Well Marc, you do lead a  
Unit 5      busy life! No wonder you haven't got any time for anything.  
15 Cardiff St      *Ann is yet another of those pikers who insists on writing letters  
North Adelaide      in order to keep on the Q36 mailing list rather than bring her own  
S.A. 5006      bushes.*  
AUSTRALIA

I don't see why you have to be jealous of the Americans for having  
terribly cute squirrels in every tree. After all, there's nothing like having terribly  
cute possums in the ceiling to give you a love of nature. I know I've got at least one  
possum living in my bedroom ceiling. Used to keep me awake quite a bit when I first  
moved in here, before I realised what it was. Of course you never get to actually see  
the blasted things. You just hear them scrabbling about in the ceilings at night. I  
dare say American squirrels are a little more visible.

*Yes, and they don't play late-night scrabble games either...*

DIANE FOX      A note to Eric Mayer - I'd not regard Linda Bushyager as an ultimate  
P.O. Box 129      authority on whether or not you could write well. The one or two of  
Lakemba      her books I have read came across as run-of-the-mill sword and sorcery  
N.S.W. 2195      - the Big Macs of fantasy writing. The better authors tend to be  
AUSTRALIA      fairly friendly towards beginning writers or mere mortals. ( "Bird's  
                 brain" - hmmm. You put it very subtly - but nastily.)

Ouch. Your comments about fan fiction, pro fiction, serious fan fiction and  
faanish fan fiction sounded rather depressing. In other words, if it's serious but  
it's not worth publishing professionally, it's not worth reading right? Judging by  
some of the crap that does get published and sells well, and by some of the really  
brilliant stuff that took years to find someone game to publish it....

What is worse, the publishing industry seems to be getting more and more run  
by purely business conscious types instead of literary businessmen, or literary  
people with business sense. This means that books get treated as an interchangeable  
commodity, rather like packets of cornflakes. It is not quality that is looked for  
but adherence to a certain set standard. Anything that can't be slotted into a  
pigeon hole will not get published.

*The point that I'm trying to make is that I don't like the sort of fiction  
that I tend to see in fanzines. It would be all well and good if the fiction in  
fanzines were of the sort that didn't get published generally because it didn't fit  
the established markets, but most of the fan fiction I've seen has been mass-market  
type sf that isn't good enough to get into mass-market publications.*

As you point out, if a piece of fiction is good enough, it does eventually get published, most of the time. I can't see that seeing print in a fanzine is really that much of an advantage. If anything, I see fanzine publication as a disincentive to a serious up and coming pro, as it means that those writers can become hooked on fanzine writing, and never go on to professional success. As far as I'm concerned, the ideal role for the fanzine is to provide a medium of communication for me and me mates - i.e. the ideal clique house organ....

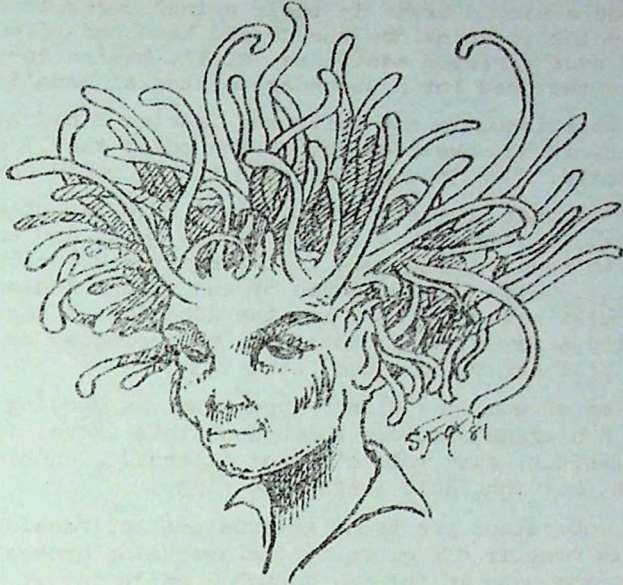
VALERIA BEASLEY      Something naughty in the bushes? What is the Australian slang for sex? One American fan always euphemises it to "Bump & Tickle" which seems about as useless as "fuck" in most situations - that is I wouldn't bring myself to say it under regular circumstances. Generally men don't seem to have dignified expressions for sex which always bugs me when I get someone on the topic. That's really a turn-off - that and groping when I'm in the mood for cuddling.

Well, the most common Australian euphemism isn't exactly what you'd call refined. It is "root". This, of course, has led to some wonderful confusion, such as the, no doubt apocryphal, story of the American male who asks an Australian female "Which team do you root for?" It also explains the smile which may pass across the Australian face at the mention of "root beer" or the television series "Roots". It's the rationale behind the comment that the wombat is the only creature other than man that "Eats, roots shoots and leaves."

Other than that, the standard terms seem applicable. Among those I've heard are "shag", "frig", "screw", "stuff", "sleep with" and "make love to". Mind you, one of the more ocker terms of approval which demonstrates the worst side of the breed is "I'd be up that like a rat up a drainpipe."

THE TERRIBLY UNJUST W.A.M.F.  
COLUMN

Robert Teague 1900 Clay Ave Panama City FL 32405 U.S.A. who feels that Andy's blackball apa article was putrid enough for *Holier Than Thou*, and who liked John Packer's aliens; Jon Noble 97 Burns Rd Springwood N.S.W. 2777 AUSTRALIA, who thinks that Mike O'Brien should be persuaded to do a sequel to FAN WARS, and who points out the N.S.W. beer measures, a schooner being 15oz, a middy being 10oz, and a seven being a 7oz glass; Jim Meadows P.O. Box 1227, Pekin IL 61554 U.S.A., who feels that my mockery of Star Trek fen in the first Medea story was a bit of pot/kettle nastiness; Kim Huett G.P.O. Box 429 Sydney N.S.W. 2001 AUSTRALIA, who didn't find the cover of Q36 I very funny, who did like John's comic strip, and who, among other things, informs me that, in N.S.W., a schooner is 12oz, and a middy is 8oz. Since we're supposed to be metric, I guess it doesn't really matter that much; Brad Foster 4109 Pleasant Run, Irving TX 75062 U.S.A., who, as well as sending some more lovely artwork, comments on the A4 paper size, which I will agree isn't as pleasing as the standard American size, but which is the most easily available here. He also wants to see a sequel to Mike's story, and comments that he's going to have difficulty seeing Chewie in STAR WARS as anything other than a giant koala; Merridy Johnstone c/o 10 Webber St Mt Gambier S.A. 5290 AUSTRALIA, who isn't sure whether my comments against media sf are meant to be taken seriously or not. I guess it comes down to my automatic reaction against mindless adulation of anything *other than me*. She also asks why Q36 doesn't seem to have much to do with sf. Well, let's put it this way - Why is a raven like a writing desk... Harry Andruschak P.O. Box 606, La Canada-Flintridge, CA 91011 U.S.A., who points out that his weight is down to 140 pounds, and whose trousers keep slipping down around his ankles; Richard Nryckiewicz A319702, Base Radio, RAAF Base, Richmond N.S.W. 2755 AUSTRALIA, who congratulates me on getting his name and address correct and who offers me feelthy peectures in exchange for Q36; and Brian Forte 15 Buchanan Grove Reynella S.A. 5161 AUSTRALIA, who claims that every time Q36 arrives, his mailbox gets soaked. The cats up his way must be literary critics.



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Wunsa pona time scientists believed that there were dinosaurs so primitive and big that they needed a second brain in their spinal cords to control their backsides. The mind boggles to think how they would have had to communicate had these posterior brains ever achieved sentience. Still, having just finished typing this monster, I can see the need for a secondary editorial ganglion, so here it is.

I'm afraid that this issue is not quite the fanzine I had hoped it would be. For a number of reasons, it has been delayed to the point that I can't remember when I typed the first stencils. Thus it's a lot later than I would have liked.

One thing though is that the artwork, windowed into the stencils, seems to have deteriorated a lot. I guess if I am going to use quick and easy windowing with magic tape, I'm going to have to make sure that I run the stencils off as soon as possible after windowing. Under the influence of the recent Adelaide heatwaves, a lot of the electrostencils have wrinkled, and the adhesive on the tape has started to squeeze out, sticking a few stencils together. My apologies to the artists whose work has so suffered. I'll try to do better next time.

To add to my tales of woe, the bloody typewriter is playing up again. You may well have noticed the n/h transpositions throughout this issue. If you're considering buying a golfball typewriter, stay well clear of Adlers.... Mumble. It has been serviced several times, but the fault keeps recurring.

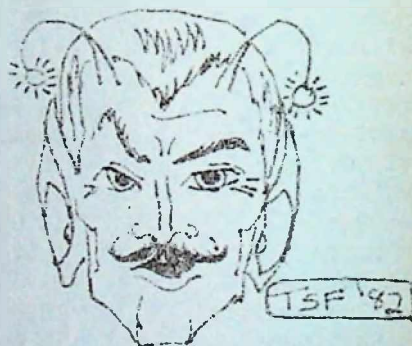
I can certainly understand the trend towards smaller fanzines of late. The thought of running this monster off gives me the screaming heebiejeebies. I intend to keep a tighter rein on the zine in future. Though I can't see it becoming anything like IZZARD, WING WINDOW, CRAB DROPPINGS or WIZ, it will, I hope, shrivel a little until it becomes more like Q36 B in size.

The other thing is that 1983's Q36s are likely to be even more irregular than 1982's. As many of you will realise, I intend to move to Melbourne sometime between now and this time next year. This has unsettled all of my schedules. Indeed, one of the things behind the tardiness of this issue was a job application. I'll try to get the issues out, but I can't promise anything, as my school holiday zine production is also my best time for getting out and looking for Melbourne jobs.

I note though that I'm not the only member of Australian fandom in that sort of predicament. As lots of you will already know, Peter Toluzzi is departing for the U.S.A., leaving Australia without a DUFF administrator. For the duration of the current U.S. to Australia race, the fund will be looked after by Jack Nerman. After the results of that race have been announced, I will take over the job for the 1984 race which will send an Australian fan to the WorldCon in Los Angeles.

What am I getting at? Well, we will need people willing to stand for that race. This could be your chance to have your airfare to Los Angeles paid for you. You will need nominators both here in Australia and in North America, so now's the time to start thinking about it.

But enough of the subtle hints. I'm going to need stuff for the next Q36, so keep those cards and letters coming in, and you won't be hit by my dreaded mailing list freeze.



They aren't antennae,  
they're my primary  
sex organs!







FOR RUBE GOLDBURG, GUS MAGER, BILLY DEBECK, & GEO. HERRIMAN.

SCHIRM 82.