

jf



Aw hell, folks, all this month I've been carrying around a clipping which told the story of how Sydney police are searching for the arch-criminal, Micheal ⁻⁻⁻aldwin, and how this fiend was somehow evading them.

But just at the critical moment this valuable document and its heart-rending story seemsto have vanished, leaving me with a large number of empty inches. I'll just have to award my

FINANCIAL FTGGHEAD OF THE YEAR PRIZE: 1964

This is awarded to Leland Sapiro, who sent me a few sample pages of his fanzine, RIVERSIDE QUARTERLY, first-class, at a cost of 18 (eighteen) cents for postage alone, offering to sell me the complete fanzine for a mere 25 cents, - Congratulations, Leland.

WHY ARE WE WAITING?

The management of this fanzine (me) would have had to put in an inordinate amount of time to get out a January issue, so this has been combined with the December issue. You should hear what the lads with contributions for January are saying.

THE GRYPHON 14 DECEMBER 1964/
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NEXT ISSUE: FEBRUARY.....

the gryphon

AUSTRALIAN FAN HISTORY: PART 7

SEA GREEN SUNDAY

transcription from a tape made during business meeting at Sydney convention, March 20, 1955. Originally printed in EXTANT 1, where all due credit is listed, as 'Part One of Three Parts'. Research indicates that the remaining parts were suppressed. All persons are/were Sydney fans, past and present.

.....

BURKE: I would like to move, in order to clarify the whole situation, and make any reconciliation between the two Sydney fan groups possible, that all fans' groups and organizations in Sydney be disbanded within three weeks or one month, that their resources be put in a common pool, and that the whole matter be thrashed out between the interested parties.

NICHOLSON: Seconded.

MOLESWORTH: That motion may be out of order. Mr. Chairman. We have in the Futurian Society a trust. It began with a donation of \$150 worth of books from America, which has grown into a library of about 2000 books and magazines. This library does not totally belong to the FSS. It is held in perpetual trust under legal articles drawn up by a solicitor, to be administered by the FSS. They cannot be altered. I'm quite in agreement with having one organization - I want to see one - but we cannot disband the FSS because its library is held in the perpetual trust. If you like you can ask the present executive of the FSS to resign and that a whole new executive be appointed.

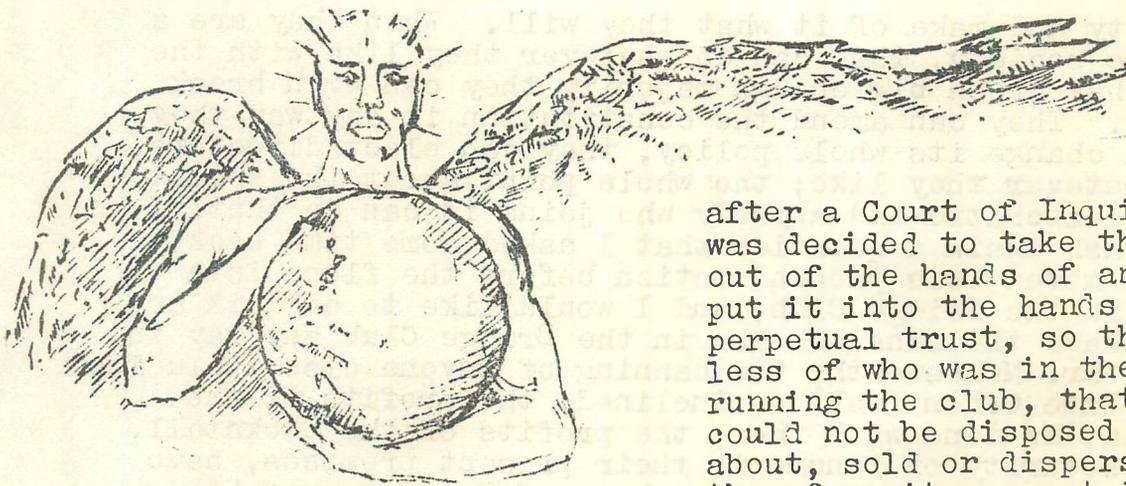
BURKE: I don't think that is possible, Mr. Molesworth. This motion can only go through as a recommendation of the convention.

MOLESWORTH: No. What I'm saying is have one organization, let's all move into the one and call it the FSS and maintain the library. The moment we disband the FSS we have to hand the library over to the Perpetual Trustee, who is the government.

LAWSON: The Perpetual Trustee is a governmental organization established for the purpose of handling for an indefinite time, trusts of various estates, of which this is one.

INTERJECTION: I would like some clarification as to how the FSS library got to be a perpetual trust.

MOLESWORTH: Well, it got into that state, sir, because there was an organization called the Australian Fantasy Foundation and without going into the history of the matter, the trustees failed to carry out their duties in this matter and,



after a Court of Inquiry, it was decided to take the library out of the hands of any fans and put it into the hands of a perpetual trust, so that regardless of who was in the FSS or running the club, that library could not be disposed of, knocked about, sold or dispersed and therefore it was put into the trust. We administered it for whoever happened to be members of the FSS. So for everybody's sake

we can't disband the club.

BURT: Can you change the name of the society and still retain control of the trust?

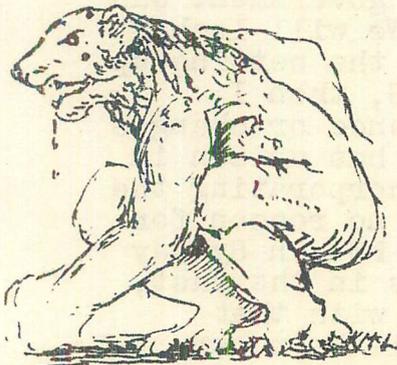
VOICE: You surely could, not disband, but temporarily cease activities until a new club was formed and then you could incorporate the existing clubs within it, with a subheading to get over legal difficulties.

GLICK: There is this about it, just how legally the trust was done. It is an old legal maxim that trusts are far easier to set up than to break. The reason for this is quite clear. The government for a long time has realised that someone might set up a trust for a certain purpose and then die, leave the country, and thus the trust might be unable to fulfil its purpose. Now if in his trust he set a certain number of conditions and those conditions cannot be abided by for some reason, the government can step in via the Perpetual Trustee Company and say "We will look after the trust". Now if we specifically stated in the setting-up of the trust that it must be administered by the FSS, then I sincerely hope that the FSS never goes out of existence or changes its name. We could however have the situation that has arisen in such circumstances that you get a combined club, incorporating the FSS and thus keep the name alive, but I for one see no reason for this. A lot of people say the thing wrong with the FSS in Sydney is an aggregate of individuals. If it made mistakes in the past, it is perhaps because some people who did not agree with that policy left, and the remnant carried on a policy all their own. These other people who did not agree now have a chance to get back

into the society and make of it what they will. When they are a majority in the society, they can do whatever they like with the society. If they are a big enough majority they can even break the society up. They can amend the constitution in any way they wish, they can change its whole policy, they can elect directors, they can do whatever they like; the whole point about the society is that it is democratic and anybody who joins it can do that! I would like to ask again a question that I asked some time back; the person who moved this present motion before the floor is a leading light in the Bridge Club, and I would like to ask him or Mr. Nicholson have the fans who are in the Bridge Club any say in the banning of Mr. Molesworth, the banning of anyone else including themselves if Dave Cohen feels so inclined, the profits of the meetings or what is done with them, the profits of the bookstall, have they any security of tenure in their present premises, have they anything except the assurance perhaps of Mr. Cohen of his goodwill? If they join the FSS they will decide, they will have the control of all the assets of the society, they will have control over its policy. They cannot join Mr. Cohen, unless they come apart at the seams and take over. If they join the FSS they can do what they like, and therefore there is no need to break up the FSS - join it and change its policy.

BURKE: In regard to that point, Mr. Glick, I wish to state that owing to what happened at the Bridge Club at the time Mr. Molesworth was banned or supposed to be banned I have given up all association with that group.

NICHOLSON: The answer to all Mr. Glick's questions is a categorical "NO", and yet at least 30 of the science fiction fans of Sydney voluntarily preferred this condition to anything the democratic processes of the Futurian Society of Sydney could offer them. There must have been something drastically wrong with the Futurian Society for fans to take this stand. There has been no pretence that the Bridge Club was run by a democratic organization. It was not. We resolved from the start that our time and activities while we were under the roof of the Futurian Society were completely wasted. We then went to premises to meet under conditions which we realised, then and now, were faulty. We realised that they were not as faulty as the conditions under which we had been meeting. Possibly continuous ignorant insults from Mr. Graham Stone, a succession of power political manouvres in the administration of the Futurian Society and numerous other administrative defects not





actually connected with the reading of Science Fiction, its enjoyment, the pleasure that comes from meeting other science fiction fans, these had caused us to seek other clubrooms. The FSS is a democratic body? In theory, yes. In the sense that those present at any given meeting control it. Now those present at any given meeting are at all times considerably made up of those who have largely devoted a lifetime to playing the power politics of fandom. Possibly for some peculiar motive, they have built much of their lives around the personal satisfaction they get from making big fellows of themselves in the fan group. Now to a large extent possibly every

individual does this. But unfortunately the cases in the FSS became so aggravated that they made it impossible for the FSS, in our view, to carry out the duties of an active SF society, therefore we left the society. They had made what was supposedly a pleasant social evening, on Thursday evening, completely intolerable. There had been verbal brawling, consistent and deliberate insults directed at individuals, so eventually we left. Possibly rehashing this matter now will stir up feelings again that had somewhat died down in the intervening time. But I think nothing will be gained by not admitting that in this matter there is considerable feeling. Science fiction means quite a lot to a lot of us. We are prepared to admit that we can get emotionally stirred up about it. We think it's significant. We're prepared to do quite a lot of work for the furtherance of those things which are tied up with SF. I can tell you that quite a lot of work went in to organizing this convention. We shall not then attempt to avoid the fact that the question is one emotionally loaded. Possibly the preceding speakers have largely destroyed any hope we may have of getting Sydney SF fans back into one all-enveloping group. Now if this is so, we should accept it, go on from there and endeavour to formulate a process by which reasonably amicable relations can be maintained between the two groups.

If there is a formula by which a single group can encompass even within a very loose framework, all SF activities in Sydney let us get down to work finding it. I opposed this taping earlier. Because I wish everyone to feel free to say what's on their minds. Mr. Martin said to me privately did I think anyone would be restrained from saying anything that was on their minds by the presence of the tape. I definitely think they will. If we are going to get anywhere quite a few of us are going to have to go out on a limb, take up a position, and later have to take it back, they're going to have to be flagrantly inconsistent because none of us have the formula now. We can just say well those will do us all, we can all work within this. We have all taken up an extreme viewpoint at one time or another. If we are going to get anywhere we are going to have to go back on quite a few things we have said. I did not want this taped because if we do succeed this will be undoubted evidence in the future that people can point at anywhere here and say obvious evidence of serious inconsistency in this particular individual. ((Huh? foyster)) Can you ever trust anyone who is liable to change his mind so sharply?

LAWSON: Have you ever heard of compromise, Mr. Nicholson?

NICHOLSON: That is what we are hoping to achieve, sir, if the desire to be consistent and save face does not become the principle motivation of the speakers. However, let us see what we can do. I hope I have put our essential objections to the previous condition of Sydney Fandom, in answering Mr. Glick's questions.

BURT: Just one question to the speaker, Mr. Chairman. Is it possible to come to a satisfactory conclusion of this discussion by allowing our emotions to sway us in the question at all. If we allow emotions to overrun the meeting, then we are going to finish up in a complete brawl. The thing is to keep it as clear and logical as we can, and logic and emotions appear to me to be very much opposed. Therefore, it will be a good idea if we can tone down the emotions in the meeting.

NICHOLSON: We don't tone them down, sir, we hide them.

MOLESWORTH: Ladies and Gentleman. Some of you know me. Some of you don't. I suppose for the first time in my life I must take second place in fandom because most of the dirt is being thrown at Graham Stone I'm taking second place. I'm happy to accept the place however. Now, what I propose to do is try and state as factually as I can certain things that happened in the past, to try to state as I see it, the position at the moment and to offer a solution which you may or may not consider.

Now let us look back. In Sydney seventeen years ago a club was formed by Bill Veney and myself and three other people. It consisted of five schoolboys or office-workers, who were interested in science fiction. That club existed in various shapes and forms, some of the forms the original founders may disassociate themselves from but a club did continue. After the war the same group of people were adult and had more money. There would have been eleven or twelve; some had just come out of the services. Their character had changed; they weren't schoolboys; they were now able to think of rents of a pound. They started to meet in a coffee shop. We got more people in and eventually the numbers got so large the coffee-shop proprietors objected to our activities and it was decided we would have to move into a hall. But, came the objection, that would cost fifteen shillings a night. But if we could get fifteen people at a shilling each, that would cover it. Where would we find fifteen in Sydney, they asked? Well, on the opening night we got more than 20 and thereafter the rent was always paid, and thereafter we were able to move into the Sydney Bridge Club where the rent was about four pounds.

NICHOLSON: And we got fifty a night in those days.

MOLESWORTH: We were able to raise sixty pounds in sixpenny bites and stage conventions and everyone was together and it looked like a good thing. The people at the Thursday Night Group were not particularly interested in running the show. They did not want to do any work. They would do small jobs you asked them to do, but they did not want the worry of running an organization, keeping the books, and so on. I think someone said "did you give them a chance?" Well, I did. Well, you got the seventeen or eighteen who wanted to do the work meeting separately in a board room where problems were worried about, the books kept, decisions made; they ran the group for the social group. This is the way that a RSL club or any club must work, and it was a quite satisfactory arrangement. Anybody in the Thursday Night Group who wished to come along and take part in running the show could do so, they could join the Futurian Society which was the organizing body. They could get up on the floor and if they wanted something done, they could speak on their motion and if they could get enough support they could get it through. Any suggestion at all that that business session was dominated or run by one or two people is quite silly because it means that that other sixteen, and we ended up with 32 members just before the breakup, that meant that the other 30 must have been completelittle victims of Svengali. They must have been absolutely childish no-hopers.

NICHOLSON: I assert just this.

MOLESWORTH: The membership at the time included quite a number of the people who are now opposed to the society including Mr. Burke and Mr. Nicholson and others. It meant then that these two people, or three if you like, must have dominated the rest of the meeting. Well, I don't know, if you get 28 votes in favour of a thing and 3 against I don't see how you can say the meeting is dominated. Now then, we move into another club-room, a decision made by a majority vote of the society, not a decision made by one or two people, but a majority of the members. That's the way we run the country, by a majority vote. We decided.....

NICHOLSON: By a majority at that particular meeting, I presume you mean.

MOLESWORTH: A majority of people at that meeting. I don't know the exact number. It was discussed at several meetings and a delegation of about 40 people went up and looked at the place and approved of it. The actual figures at the meeting I don't know but I know my lounge room was absolutely crowded. There wasn't even standing room so I would say that there must have been at least 23 people at the meeting and I think there were very few dissentients.

BURT: What was the contentious motion? I am a complete stranger to this.

MOLESWORTH: We moved into a new clubroom and a set of rules was put up on the wall, a set of rules that no one objected to. Rule No. 1, that no liquor was to be allowed on the premises. Rule No. 2 - these were not the rules of the FSS but rules of the proprietor of the building - just as Dave Cohen as you say - but the proprietor of the building rented the premises on certain specific conditions and these conditions had to be enforced by the society to maintain its tenure. 1. No drunkenness. 2. No noise or disorder that would interfere with other tenants. 3. One that the committee added itself, and which was ratified by a meeting, that there would not be any activity such that it would prevent any reasonable person enjoying these facilities. That is to say that if one bloke was sitting down playing chess and another bloke came up and kicked the chess board over, the executive would be expected to come and ask that person to stop kicking the chess boards over. Those were the sort of rules. Well, now let us come to the period of strife. The period of strife came about to begin with, in my opinion, in this way, that we had attending our clubrooms, representatives of another organization, the North Shore Futurian Society of Sydney, whom I understood intended to carry out activities on the North Shore, but they told us that it was more profitable to

operate within the FSS headquarters because they could do business with all the FSS members. If they went over to the North Shore they wouldn't be able to do as much business so they came along and they carried out their library activities in opposition to the FSS library activities on the same premises. I know that we had a raffle one night selling tickets in a book for sixpence and the NSFS sold tickets in the same books for threepence. I know that we had a library there discreetly in the corner and the NSFS had a table in the centre of the room with a large sign painted in big red letters "Use the NSFS Library". This was at a time when the FSS was paying the rent of the premises. However I asked the NSFS people to please move their library back into the corner of the room, just as ours was in the corner of the room, and to take down their large notice. People coming in could use their library, they could use our library, but not to sort of put up a great big sign, as you walk in the door, "North Shore Library" so that people would not use the FSS library. That was all I asked the North Shore library. Now I don't like to speak about anyone who is absent but I mean we are all going to say what is the truth - and I don't care if this goes on tape - Graham Stone didn't like the members of the NSFS and he told me he didn't want them there and in his opinion they ought to be kicked out and furthermore at the next meeting of the FSS they were going to be kicked out. Now if you take any other organization that you like to name and one member comes along and tells you that you are going to be kicked out, do you immediately resign, or do you go to the secretary or go to the organization and say what is the strength of this? I knew that Hubble and Bos would be upset about this so I called an Executive Society meeting - Mr. Burke was on it at the time - and I said well, what's going to be done about this? And what everyone at that executive society meeting said was to ask Mr. Hubble and Mr. Bos to attend the next meeting of the FSS, to get up and have the whole thing discussed, and no action will be taken. I invited Mr. Hubble and Mr. Bos to come along to the next meeting of the FSS to join the society if they wished, to speak in open debate on any subject or problems concerning themselves and the society.

HUBBLE: Mr. Molesworth, can I interrupt a moment? We approached you at one stage about selling the library to you and you offered us membership for a year each.

MOLESWORTH: I don't quite know what the import of that remark is. I do remember there being some discussion of merging the two libraries and I said that the only way it could be done would be for the people running the North Shore Futurian Society to join the FSS and then get themselves elected as librarian of the FSS and run both libraries as we had difficulties getting a librarian at that time. I'm quite sure I didn't say

they could only join for a year because it's not up to me to say how long a member is in. He's in till he resigns or is expelled.

BURKE: I believe, Mr. Molesworth, that you did offer a year's free membership.

MOLESWORTH: Free membership for a year?

GLICK: They mean that the value of the library was worth more than £4!

MOLESWORTH: Well, look I don't know, I'm only telling you what I remember. You can get up and call me all the liars you like - the pattern has been set earlier today. Right, now, that caused annoyance - Graham Stone told them to get out and that they would be thrown out. Well, let's say that they legitimately believed they were going to be thrown out.

DILLON: Of course!

MOLESWORTH: Because one member said so?

GLICK: Clubroom manager, if you please.

FINCH: He was not at that time.

MOLESWORTH: But the FSS didn't. And I'm sure that if a member of the Journalist's Association comes up to me and says Vol, at the next meeting you are going to be booted out...

BURKE: Are you a member of that.....?

MOLESWORTH: My oath I am.

VOICE: Well, that's a different thing.

MOLESWORTH: All right then, if Bruce Sawyer says to me I'm going to be thrown out of this convention I'm going to walk over to Arthur Haddon and say, "Am I?"

HADDON: Yes!

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The remainder of this never did appear in EXTANT. I've searched around a little and have uncovered nothing but the word that it was suppressed. I think some of you NSW blokes reading this must know a little more about the matter - come on, who has the rest of it?

Your opening comments in THE GRYPHON were acute, even though all you did was let Mr. Locke damn himself, and were received with great incredulity by the more responsible members of the department here. That such a mind as Locke's with its illogical, unreasoning, emotional attitude to the problem of what constitutes pornography and corrupting influences - "that evidence is rejected no reasonable person doubts that contrary to life ... intelligence of the court (sic)...." - could be allowed to continue in a position of peer was, to judge from the comments it elicited, incomprehensible and sickening in the extreme. Each fresh item relating to Australian censorship that I present to my academic brothers only seems to confirm in their minds the impression that our home is one wherein freedom of choice regarding one's reading matter is reduced to a minimum, is one wherein creativity is stifled, is one wherein attitudes of hypocritical emotion still reign over those of reason, and is one wherein the general public is so stupid, or apathetic, or cowed that it will allow such usurpation of basic rights to continue.

And here, perhaps you may be interested in some quotes from an article: AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND, SEX LIFE IN by V.H. Wallace, M.D., F.R.C.S., which appears in THE ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR ed by A. Ellis and A. Abarbanel.

".....the production of an orgasm by manual manipulation or by other friction applied to the genitals is regarded as very injurious.....

".....one woman in every five is pregnant when she marries..... large numbers of pregnancies are artificially terminated..... medical practitioners know that premarital sexual intercourse is the rule rather than the exception.....

".....police investigations revealed a shocking degree of immoral conduct which spread into sexual rgies.....

".....there is a widespread opinion among the Australian people that marriage..is not the ideal type of relationship between the sexes.....Church and State have combined to bring about a situation in Australia which is not a happy one.....divorce laws are different in every state.....some papers delight (with a view to increasing sales) in publishing intimate details concerning the private lives of citizens.....

".....single men, when they desire sexual intercourse, usually have it with their girl friends.....

".....prostitutes do a flourishing business in our big cities. Many frequent hotel lounges, have 'beats' in public places, are in houses so well known that the women do not have to go in search of business. Taxi drivers know the various houses..... prostitutes earn large incomes.....those in the highest income groups earn more per week than the Prime Minister of Australia (but for physiological reasons this rate of earning does not continue for a whole month).....

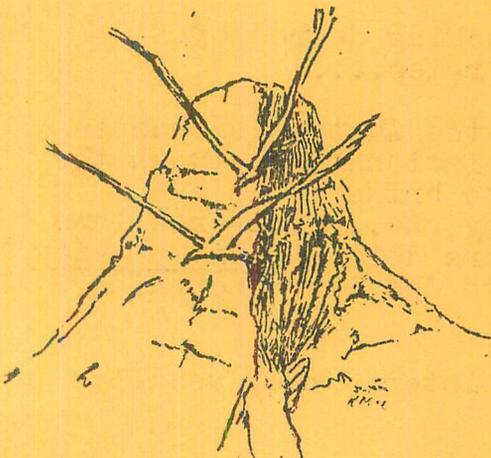
".....the existing laws are not concerned with homosexuality as a biological fact or a neurosis.....in three of the Australian states the penalty is imprisonment for fourteen years.....up to 1949 the penalty in Victoria was death.....according to psychiatrists and police there is much homosexuality in Australia (and.....)there is probably much undetected.....

".....exhibitionism is the most common offence in Australia..... it is a frequent occurrence on our beaches and also commonly takes place when a man finds himself alone in a compartment with one or more women passengers in a suburban train.....the penalty is imprisonment from six months to three years.....

".....voyeurism seems to be as common in Australia as in other parts of the world.....imprisonment for a period that ranges from six months to two years.....

".....Censorship in Australia is by no means liberal. The censors consider they are the guardians of public morality and they tend to take a narrow view of the subject.....According to the Police Offences Act, books, newspapers, magazines, pictures, photographs, statues, or records may be classified as obscene when they tend to deprave or corrupt any person, notwithstanding that persons in other classes or age groups may not be similarly affected. The act makes provision for entering premises to search for articles and for their destruction in the event of a court holding them to be obscene.....what is pornographic and what is obscene is a matter of opinion, as there is no agreement on a clear legal definition, and is usually determined by the particular magistrate before whom the case comes.....

".....The general opinion among the specialists here is that there is probably more hypocrisy, deceit, and dishonesty in relation to sex

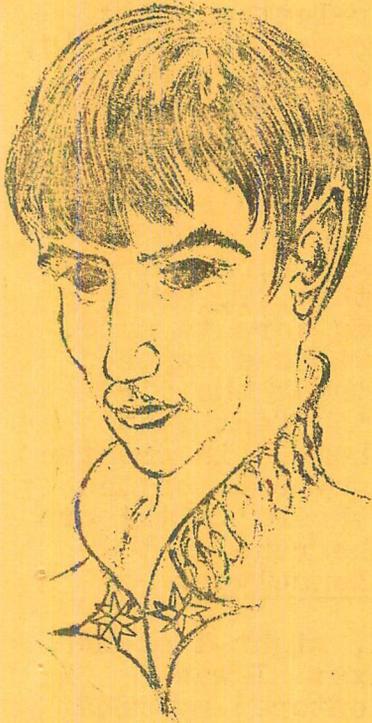


than there is about anything else in our lives."

It is obvious, isn't it, that the use of four-letter words will tend to deprave and corrupt a land of adulterers, homosexuals, voyeurs, transvestites, exhibitionists, a land where prostitution flourishes, where premarital intercourse is the rule, and where a trip to any football game, on any Saturday, will bring to your ears four-letter words in profusion, a land where the public school system encourages masturbation and 'the unspeakable vice'obvious? It is people like our Stipendiary Magistrates who keep Australia clean, and free of the vices of England, America, France, Germany, Sweden, India, Japan, Holland, Italy.....and any other country (with the exception of Eire) that you care to name. I shudder to think of the depravity to which I have been exposed here ... how corrupt has become my soul?.....how thick the dirt which surrounds my persona? But I am puzzled by the fact that nothing I have seen here could not be found back home, (in greater profusion, and more readily acquired). I wonder why none of the dirty books I have found here have approached in sheer 'filth' or erotic appeal some of the literature which went the rounds at school, literature which the other pupils wrote themselves.

And I recall the first, or was it the second, night I spent as a boarder in the 'Big School' of Xxxxxxx Xxxxxxxx: I was twelve, and naive, and impure thoughts had never entered my mind. But lo! a voice from the bed near mine pipes up with the query: "I wonder where the hole is? In front, behind or in the middle?" Quoth I: what hole? I cannot recommend this as the ideal way in which to learn the facts of life. I remember also the rhythmic creaking of the beds at night, and how I learned what the sound meant. I remember the boys (in groups, usually) who were expelled for not taking a cold shower and who therefore let their baser instincts overcome them. I remember the master who was discovered in the chemistry laboratory in the process of obtaining samples of spermatozoa from a pupil. I remember.....

There was the institution known as The East, composed of students who would not make the grade of prefect (or probationer) and who therefore could not vent their sadism legally on younger boys...a prefect had the right to cane them, you see...and who circled 'round this restriction by subjecting the very tender 12-year-olds to a highly cruel form of intellectual sadism: an inquisition: - these pimpled bastards, secure in the wisdom of their 17 or 18 years, would surround the luckless innocent and overwhelm him with a barrage of questions: who's captain of school...NO you fool, school house, not the school, who's the captain of the football team...when did you last brush your shoes...toe the line (pointing to a dozen chalk lines on the floor) ...not that one you idiot, that one...no, that one...Jesus, you



think you're bloody Christ on wheels don't you (and I quote exactly)...sing the school song...louder!...LOUDER!!...don't look at me ...look at the wall...learn it all by tomorrow...write out the school rules ten times (10 pages of closely packed type). If you annoyed them even slightly you were handed over to the head prefect for a caning. This could go on every night. And, in some cases, did, especially if the child was completely cowed by them, for they evidently enjoyed the spectacle of a wide-eyed youth trembling with fear and shaking with apprehension, growing sicker and sicker as the torture went on.

And then there were the initiation ceremonies...eating soap, forced under hot and cold showers, being kicked, with damaging force, out the door, compelled to hold heavy weights at arms length under penalty of a beating...but why go on? Read TOM BROWN'S SCHOOLDAYS, leaving out the fire in the great hall, and you know what life was like.

No one was ever killed physically. But I still haven't recovered. Many never do, and become the perfect public school old boy - they are the ones whom the system 'made men of'. I am a failure...a proof that the system is not infallible.

Well, this week I decided not to devote all my so-called spare time to work, but to pamper myself and have my own private dirty-book-week. The first to be polished off was Jean Genet's THE THIEF'S JOURNAL. There's no doubt that Genet can create a world of hypnotic reality where murder and depravity and crime and filth are the norm, a world in which he finds great beauty and satisfaction, but this, I feel, is merely the world, the fantasy dream, of a retarded adolescent. Genet, like Rimbaud, wants to find 'reality', saintliness, truth, through 'a systematic derangement of the senses'. Both have the ability of presenting the other side of the coin with horrifying fascination, of being able to drag one to the depths which soon become indistinguishable from the heights; but we are prepared to forgive Rimbaud for this, or at least to understand him for it, because of his youth. After all, the sentiments expressed by Rimbaud are those which every precocious young man, especially in this age, must feel when he realises the transience of life, the hypocrisy of his elders, the death of the gods, the relativity of beauty and deceit. At that

age, moreover, depravity does exert a powerful influence, a basic appeal to the senses, and what better way to reach Heaven than through Hell? I carried around with me a copy of A SEASON IN HELL for almost a year when I was nineteen or so; I wallowed in in, and the view it offered; I even convinced myself that I could live such a life and enjoy it; I cultivated cynicism, yearned for evil, thirsted to be cruel. But I never made it. I grew up - as did Rimbaud - and learned that while a plunge into the waters of the black side of one's soul was, for some, a necessary experience, one had to return to life, and use the experience to live beyond good and evil. (That state appears to be one of good, but only because it is one in which harm to others or things plays no part. Well.....I think that would be the state). Genet though, still revels in filth, in excrement, in the knowledge that his homosexuality sets him apart from others.....and it matters not whether this filth etc., is one of the mind (soul) or of reality.....it still represents a level of fixation in the man's development.

Marvelous murderers, exquisite queens, beautiful thieves, glorious criminals are all very well for a few pages, but the point is quickly made; we soon realise as we share Genet's loves and lusts, thoughts and feelings, that these phrases are as true as marvelous philanthropists, exquisite souls, beautiful saints, glorious priests. But when a whole book is filled with these interminable characters, of foul acts, of perpetrated and perpetuated crimes, all chronicled with turd-licking delight, then one wonders whether Genet is a charlatan or not. He appears serious when he makes such statements as: "In order to spare him any pain of which I am the cause, I would rather kill him". It is a tribute to his powers of writing that we do not query such a remark for some time. But when we do....how sick the mind that believes it. Or again: "As I write these notes, I am thirty-five years old. I want to spend my remaining years in glory's opposite."

Genet robs churches, and makes a ritual of it; takes communion, and thinks of blasphemy; loves someone and wishes their betrayal...in seriousness? As a justified means to an end?... But whatever the reason is, it remains an adolescent urge...a mind trapped by its senses systematic derangement.

His style is highly reminiscent of Salvador Dali's (in THE SECRET LIFE OF S.D.). Witness: "The murder by a charming child, of a grown man



whose tan could turn pale, take on the hue of death, the whole ironically observed by a tall blond youngster to whom I had just become engaged". (Though that is probably closer to HIDDEN FACES, with the youngster's sex changed). Or again: "Pepe had disappeared, but when, turning my eyes away from the corpse, I looked up, there, gazing at it with a faint smile, was Stilitano. The sun was about to set. The dead man and the handsomest of humans seemed to me merged in the same golden dust amid a throng of sailors, soldiers, hoodlums and thieves from all parts of the world. The Earth did not revolve: carrying Stilitano, it trembled about the sun. At the same moment I came to know death and love." How many passages of Dali does that bring to mind?

Dali and Genet have more in common than mere style - I assume that, though both works are in translation, the original French must also be quite similar - they both have the habit of reporting their past in terms of the reality and the fantasy inseparably intertwined. They both report the past not as how it affected them, but as how, in the light of the future (now present) they envisage its repercussions on the fabric of their lives. They both elevate commonplace happenings to the status of a myth - a personal myth; "The Legend of My Life", - and endow people and places with an aura of high significance. They both speak of the ugly, and of the filthy (I refer to feces, bodily decay (worms), in short, that which constitutes necrophilia and coprophilia), and of the insane and incomprehensible, in terms of beauty, of the sublime, of sanity. Both can make us forget that the world around us is not one of crime, lust, cruelty, unreason, depravity, madness alone, and can plunge us into a universe where these attributes are the only accepted commonplaces, and where no other values exist.

But why is Genet taken seriously and Dali not? Well, Genet's writing is of a far higher literary quality - no, I take that back ... of a higher quality - but this cannot account for the difference in acceptance. I believe it to be that Dali does not take himself seriously. He is laughin at himself, for having these thoughts (and, perhaps, feeling drawn to them in spite of their speciousness), and at us for taking him seriously, however momentarily (perhaps at us also for being drawn into his fantasies), and at us again for thinking he is taking himself seriously. Genet, though, is still too ego-bound to stand aside and look at himself, objectively and with compassion and through the eyes of a man his exact opposite, to be aware of the fact that by claiming that beauty and good and evil and crime and righteousness are merely relative concepts, he himself is adopting a relative attitude. He is like the man who shouts with vehemence and anger: "I CANNOT STAND INTOLERANCE!!"

For all his faults, I think Dali - and his SECRET LIFE- are far more worthy of preservation than Genet's THE THIEF'S JOURNAL or OUR LADY OF FLOWERS. For Dali reduces so many 'real' ideas and images and cherished concepts to the level of the irrational and the absurd (whether they be so or not), his field of iconoclasm is so large, that he forces one to think of life (physical, material life) in its totality. Forces one to say: what is this? what is being, and what becoming? are these meaningful questions? how real is the world? He forces us to the first step of recognizing the absurdity and ephemeral nature of life, without once asking us to lose our sense of wonder. In fact, he enhances this faculty - BOY LIFTING THE EDGE OF THE SEA UNDER WHICH THERE IS A SLEEPING DOG, THE AVERAGE ATMOSPHEROCEPHALIC BUREAUCRAT IN THE ACT OF MILKING A CRANIAL HARP, BUST OF VOLTAIRE, THE MYTH OF NARCISSUS are some of the paintings in which this influence is at work, destroying conventional reality, but replacing it with the vision of a recreated, more beautiful, but just as logical, universe. Dali is the other side of the coin of existential pessimism.

(MORTON KRUSS has spoken at last!)

|||||

AN
AUSTRALIAN
FAIRYTALE.

Once upon a time, in a garden city, lived a happy all-Australian family.

Daddy was a public servant and had a beautiful Government flat and a secondhand Holden.

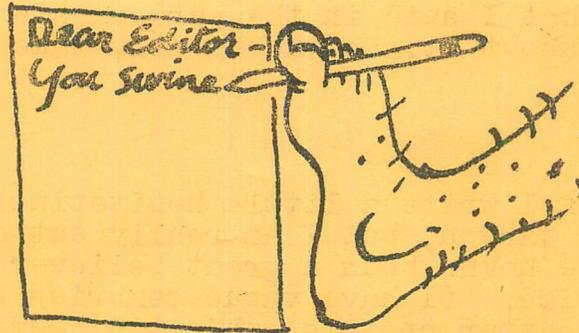
Mummy was a private secretary for an estate agent, and she had a secondhand Volkswagen.

Daddy and Mummy both smoked Peter Stuyvesant (they called them Peties) and had an abstract painting in the lounge. They were terribly avant garde. They'd tell you if you asked them.

They had two children, Brett and Kim. Brett was a boy. Kim was a girl. Kim learned ballet.

Mummy went to yoga class twice a week and painting class once a week.

They belonged to the book of the month club and the record of the month club and had a wonderful collection of unread books



Artw

073 SHRILLS ON IN UNSPEAKABLE FURY

I know that my style leaves much to be desired - and that's putting it mildly - that my phraseology is well nigh incomprehensible, and that the thoughts expressed are dull, secondhand and trivial, but I had never realised just how awkward I must sound to the outsider until Harry Warner drew attention to one of my sentences and commented on it in GRYPHON 12. Thanks Harry.

Frankly, I thought when I wrote the lines that they had a certain ring, a flow, about them, that in context they had a definite meaning (saying something about 'good' and 'bad' as functions of the brain), that they were grammatically correct, and that the sentence did not have too involuted a character. Ah, but Harry disproves my naivety. By removing the sentence from its context, by robbing it of all its referential points, by isolating it from what went before and what came after, by refusing to think about it, and according it only the minutest attention, he has, so to speak, brought it up from the sea wherein it was at home and cast it on dry, barren ground, leaving it gasping for air. He then has the insight to exclaim: "See! this sentence is like a fish gasping for air. Absurdity, that it is."

This is criticism of the highest calibre. Universal in its application, and available to all.

If he had but said: "This sentence is meaningless", I may have let it pass...probably would have...ormuttered something brief: if he had said: "It is contorted and obscure, and not worth bothering about", I would have agreed vociferously. I do not mind criticism - constructive or destructive - and I make no pretences to writing immediately lucid prose. But I abhor dishonest criticism. I am disturbed when I see tricks taking the place of thought.

"What can any one say about a sentence like..." he asks. What he has said, perhaps, to save oneself the trouble of thinking;

better would be what I said in the paragraph above. But best would be: "think about it, and above all, take it with quite a few grains of salt."

PAT BURKE

Forgive me if I write a little hesitatingly and in what may be to you an archaic jargon, but I am really out of touch. Also, I am afraid that I have never been a great believer in jargon as such, fannish or otherwise. (I have vague memories of having crossed swords with John Baxter on this subject at some time or another).

Talking of John, I quite enjoyed his critique of the "Peter, Paul & Mary" concert at the Stadium, but was a little surprised that he seemed to expect more than he actually got. Surely he did not expect real folk songs or folk singing in such an obviously (and blatantly) commercial venture. But then again, maybe he did.

Returning to 'The Gryphon' for the moment, I might comment that it lacks the zestful lunacy of Baldwin's EXTANT, but it eminently more readable - as a note of explanation, I must add that I have long had an inordinately soft spot for said EXTANT, the only fanzine, to my knowledge, ever produced by foot power, being trodden out by Mike and (in the beginning) Bill Hubble on an old flat-bed duplicator.

*****And I have news for you. John Baxter and I once published a fanzine on that very same flat-bed duplicator.

HARRY WARNER Jr.

Those Henry Miller quotes in SATURA make me feel like arguing. The old chestnut about Shakespeare requiring few words to do so much is one that people seem to take on faith alone. But any Shakespeare play contains words that will not be found in any other Shakespeare play. I'm sure that Shakespeare would have used three or four times as many words if he'd written as much as Wilson wrote and had written non-fiction; in fact, I strongly suspect that Wilson got along with fewer words than Shakespeare puts into the mouths of his characters in conversation, if the count is restricted only to Wilson's oral statements. And I don't like this concept of a 'splendour of the Old World'. The only people who are supposed to have been splendid in that world look awfully dull and seedy in the paintings of the kings and popes and scientists and poets of the bygone ages: the only art and sculpting that shows real individuality uses anonymous models, obviously friends or poor models. I believe that it was the same centuries ago as today: the people who become famous and who govern are almost always stupid and incapable of doing anything well, but have gotten where they are by

some temporary exertion or an accident, and the world wouldn't differ much if all these leaders of politics and society were obliterated and replaced by other leaders.

The perfect example of how one sees what one thinks he sees in a photograph occurs in the tenth issue of SATURA. The beautifully reproduced photograph page leaves me in doubt, because you identify the two men only by big and little and they look the same size here. Obviously you've seen them in person, so you can see the size difference in these pictures. Tentatively I'll assume that Harding is the one on the right with glasses, because small people don't usually have near-crewcuts and big fellows somehow tend to avoid such heavily-rimmed glasses. Anyway, someone turned out beautiful prints for you on this page, far superior to anything most amateurs or commercial firms would turn out in this country.

The Judy Garland religion leaves me unbelieving. I've always assumed that Judy is so extremely popular because she can't do anything well - live happily, sing beautifully, get along with people, act her increasing age - and that she's so popular because these are faults that the American public possesses in generous quantity. Most of the popular entertainers in this country are so inferior in talent that the public must like them because they are not superior to the guy in the street.

*****Your allocation of names to figures for that photograph was correct. When I saw the proofs, Chandler was bigger, as he is in real life. Harding handled the photoprinting.

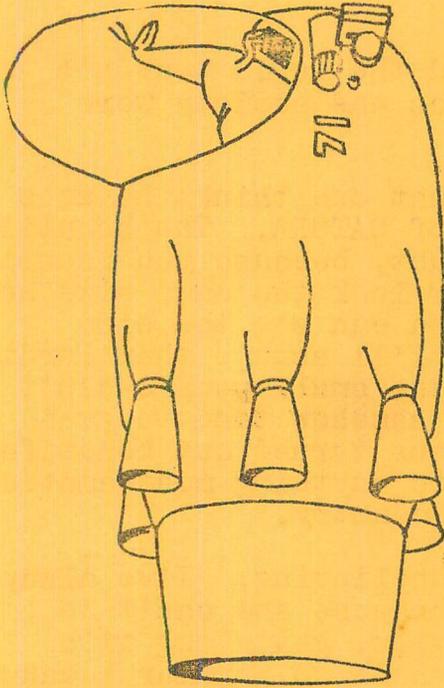
de la FAYE GETS INTO THE ACT

Well, Kruss has always been forced to sign the worst of the artwork, while I (dlf) always have had to be responsible for the fantasy muck which dj turned out like slops from his (hah) mind. I've decided to SPEAK on Fanhistory.

I enjoyed LJH's memoirs very much - I could never resist a bit of fantasy, and when it is also true, then I'm turned right on, right on...the nostalgia it brought with it was the sauce for the emotional repast.

First off, let me say that I think that Lee is being a trifle modest about his role in the PERHAPS etiology...I know that this is hard to believe, and I had to fight my own incredulity, but modest he is. If it hadn't been for Leo - for so he was known then - not only PERHAPS but ETHERLINE would never have been





born. I'm one of those who always have grandiose dreams (100 pages, stories by Kuttner Van Vogt, Miller etc., artwork by Paul, Bergey, Rogers, Orban - in seven colour prints - glossy paper, SatEPost size, selling for 1/6...I'll have an office, of course, in a 70 storey building...) but who never do anything about them until they're pushed. And then they discover the dreams are just that - useless fictions. Well, Leo not only provided the push, but he did most of the work. He wrote letters, contacted people, suggested story ideas, cover illustrations, solved layout problems, told Merv when to turn the duplicator handle, and in short was the driving force (spiritual) behind PERHAPS. Mervyn Binns was the driving force (material) ... he found us a duplicator, fixed it when it went wrong, forced it into action, and was, in short, thoroughly indefatigable on the production side. I ... I obeyed orders, and produced all the little fillers designed to round out those big blank

spaces between the high-powered stories and articles. Anyway, most of my stuff was rejected.

But perhaps I had better say something about my initiation into fandom, and thereby, hopefully, cast some light on others' Personalities.

It was the ubiquitous Race Thorson Mathews who first seduced me into the delights of the nevernever world of science fiction, just as earlier, much earlier, he had corrupted my mind with the garish, and much-sought-after publications known as (hush) American Comics. Race, I recall, had a rather large collection of English penny dreadfuls - you know, the Nelson Lee Library - and I had a father in Shanghai, and then Hong Kong, who supplied me with American Comics. We arranged a swap, and matters progressed satisfactorily, until the Customs began to clamp down on the dreadful influx of corrupting literature threatening to engulf our youth in a decadent tide of Nyokas and Captain ^Marvels, and Batmen, and Sheenas, and Heaps, and Airboys, and Stu Taylors, and Dr. Sivanas, and Mr. Mxyztplks, and etc. Nelson Lees dwindled as did the heady wonders of Buck Rogers in Fulcolor.

Trust Race, though. Before you could say Shazam! twice he had

discovered a tiny place, quite near school and the St. Kilda junction, which had a supply, small it is true, but a supply nonetheless of the forbidden fruits. Life was again livable.

Well, Race was in the class below me at school, and I soon had to leave Xxxxxx to enter 'The Big School'. St. Kilda junction was out of bounds for a boarder, and I no longer had the pocket money I had been accustomed to, so I stopped frequenting the shop. But not Race.

About 18 months later I was taken away from school on a whim of my Father's and whirled 'round the East and then to England for a year, to absorb God knows what, and when I returned Race and I were in some classes together. He reintroduced me to the little shop, this time not for comics, but a far more insidious poison, one which still courses through my veins - science fiction. Astounding, Plant, Super Science... ah! even the British titles were hued with wonder, drenched in the promise of interplanetary orgies. Life was again worth living. I remember distinctly the first true SF mag I ever read - a present from Race - 'Galaxy for May (I think) 1951, with THE WIND BETWEEN THE WORLDS by Lester Del Rey, TYRANN by Asimov, GOODNIGHT MR. JAMES by Simak....plus others. I have never been the same since.

It would probably have been Race who introduced me to Franklin's library also - I doubt if I would have found it myself - and I know he put me onto Slater, Chapman and the other BIG sellers of the stuff. But more than this, Race, I'm sure, was the guiding light in the foundation of the Melbourne Science Fiction Club, for it was he who brought together those who would constitute its nucleus. (If it seems remarkable that a 16-year-old could accomplish this - that is, the formation of the club, not the seduction to SF of a youth of but 15 tender years (me), it must be remembered that Race was a boy of remarkable precocity. He always seemed old to me ... an Olympian of wisdom. Baby-faced he was, Lee, but rather in the manner I've always imagined Odd John would be. I remember my Mother saying, sighing really, once to me after Race had just left: "He's very handsome, dear. He'll break many many girls' hearts." I couldn't see it, but then ... Anyway Race was married quite young - he was nineteen, I believe - and any hearts broken would have been through sheer frustration at his unattainable status).

The fens of Melbourne began to meet in each others' houses sometime in 1951, I believe, (I haven't the photographic memory of Lee), and the first I attended was at Race's. That bus trip from the station - Middle Brighton - was a focal point of space-time, for on my journey I met Bob McCubbin. We were, as I recall, the only two on the vehicle and, somehow as these things happen,

began to talk and discuss our common passion. I soon discovered, however, that Bob had many an other passion, and by the time we had reached Race's I had learned that Japanese women had beautiful (the word conveys most inadequately Bob's look of remembered joy) purple nipples, firm and delightful to touch, hold and squeeze. My mind had been opened up to whole new worlds, for Bob had been most loquacious on subjects whose delicacy forbids my mentioning them here for fear of upsetting our flowered friends across the border.

Well, Lee has taken the story from there, and developed with far more accuracy, tension and literary skill than I could: but there remain a few points to be made. Yes, I am two years older than LJH, but I don't think I look any younger than he ... for we have both led clean, upright lives. I think.

The Melbourne Science Fiction Group, if I can trust my failing memory, was formed about 1952/3 after a 'round table discussion in Val's Coffee Lounge - late '52 or early '53. (Why we picked Val's, I don't know - perhaps because one could sit there all night after buying a cup of what was laughingly referred to as coffee, which would be filled and refilled and refilled as long as one was there. Our landlady heard that I was going to Val's for the meetings, drew me aside one day, and whispered conspiratorially, "Be careful Dick ... they're a bunch of queens". I didn't know what a queen was, but if she had said 'poofsters' I should have caught her meaning instantly. Luckily, I didn't, and guilt feelings about going to science fiction meetings in a house of inverts never troubled me). At this discussion there was Marshall McLennan, Ian Crozier, Bob McCubbin, Don Tuck (? but he was no founding member), myself, and some other, whom I cannot remember. At any rate, we five formed the Club ... perhaps Race was the fifth ... in fact, now that I think ... think ... think ... it becomes more and more likely that he did, in fact, round off the group.

And that fills in the picture



RECEPTION COMMITTEE

from my side, I think. I hope in future installments of the PERHAPS story Lee will devote some space to a discussion of the front and back cover of number 2. Two superb illustrations by a young, and very talented boy, David Rose. They are, from memory, the best illustrations I have ever seen on any amateur magazine of the sf world. David at present is in Spain, where he and his wife are soaking up the geist of Picasso's homeland (also Dali's) and imbibing culture.

*****I know why the meetings were held at Val's. Absolutely no prize to the first person sending in the correct answer.

PS BY DICK JENSSEN

As for the memoirs: the cover story of PERHAPS 1 was to be a serial, as I recall, because it was intended to be about 10,000 words, or thereabouts, in length. I remember writing the first 2000 or so and then for some reason fading out. Here I think Lee's memory is somewhat at fault in respect to (a) the cover and (b) the date at which Ian Crozier made the fan scene. For it was I.C. who was responsible to the lettering on the scraperboard cover - neatness being one of my many non-realised virtues. This would mean that Ian would have been associated with AFPA some 2 or 3 months earlier than Lee remembers. In every other respect, though, he has what Oscar Levant terms 'total recoil'.

PETER SINGLETON

To be crushingly blunt as is my wont, I'm hereby heartily and sincerely tendering the glad tidings that Mr. 307 can gallop off and do something unprintable with himself. I don't savvy pseudonyms at all, I'm afraid. They cause me endless irritation and confusion. "Leon Collins" over here in Merry England is very much a case in point regarding my pseudonym phobia, only in Leon's case I hate his bloody guts too.

I've never seen a Judy Garland show, I do not possess any of her recordings and I harbour no intentions of finding the time or inclination to alter this situation because her type of music doesn't appeal to me in the slightest.

I must comment on your strong criticism of SF Review and I agree with you to a point - the 'reviews' are not very enlightening. Even so, I get this fnz on a regular basis. I find



it useful because it provides me with up-to-the-minute information on the latest releases and I add certain books mentioned to a reference list with a view to obtaining them. This is usually based on authors who I have a particular liking for and is confined to pbs and hcs because I already read all the prozines. The occasional brief articles by well-known authors are of considerable merit and I am also interested in the fairly frequent 'British Scene' resume by Ted Arnell. So far as I'm concerned it does provide information, for which purpose the magazine is obviously intended. So I go with your criticism only halfway. After all, what do you expect from a 'zine costing 10¢ per issue and paying out money to contributors - P.S. Miller?

*****Anyone reading all the prozines is probably beyond the veil anyway. Two questions: why pay for such crud, when much better is available free, and just how much does Miller get paid for his column?

PS CONTINUES:

I share Dick Jensen's views re modern art: I can't abide the stuff and I always have the feeling that it is merely thrown together haphazardly with the prime intent of getting rich quick. Calling it 'crap' reminds me of the modern art item I espied in a Chelsea coffee bar about three years ago. It was three dimensional with red clay around the extreme edges and a pronounced dollop of brown clay sticking out of the centre.

Dick's graphic description of the activities of a male prostitute startled my impressionable and fragile senses. Dick seemed to enjoy giving us a blow-by-blow description of this. Sometimes I wonder about Australian fandom..... The terms 'gay bar' and 'camp bar' are interchangeable over here. I find the giggles and other affected feminine antics of these 'regulars' more than a little pathetic and irritating; I don't like artificiality and the bods who are genuine swishes are few and far between, so far as I could determine from my extensive but tactful observations. I've nothing against queens, but crude exhibitionism is something else entirely.

Maybe you've hit the sweet old nail right on the nut, Lee, when you say you can discover all the info contained in SF Review by nipping out to the nearest newstand. I can't go browsing around because I'm stuck in this here hospital and I'm no teleport by any stretch of the

imagination so this might well account for my interest in the mag. But after making notations and memos, I pass my issues along to Alan Dodd who finds them 'very useful for reference' and he is free to hunt the newstands. So it must all boil down to a matter of personal tastes regarding one's reaction to SF Review.

RON CLARKE

Mike ^daldwin's column was interesting - I've got that copy of THARUNKA and I had been wondering is he was the same bloke.

The Barrett Chronicles are interesting too, with the added feature of being well-written. More AFH - well, it does give us new-comers an idea of what the ancients did back in the good old days.

"That which is past is gone and irrevocable, and wise men have enough to do with things present and to come; therefore they do but trifle with themselves that labour in past matters." Francis Bacon.

*****Thus is Mervyn Barrett's name once more mentioned in this fanzine.

CHARLES WELLS

That judicial decision of Mr Locke's (whoever he is), was positively horrifying to read. It sounds like something out of the USA of the twenties. Are you sure, if I visited Australia, I wouldn't find speakeasies and silent movies?

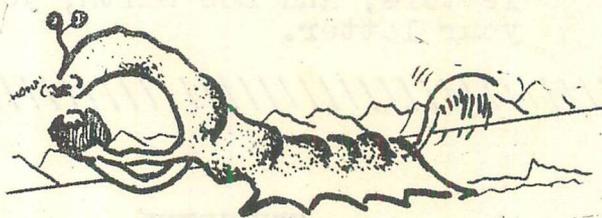
*****Not unless you visited the Melbourne SF Club.

COW CONTINUES

I have read governmental statements with that exact tone of voice from that era. One of my favourites is the American attorney-general who said, in banning a book that included the word "breasts", "As far as any gentleman is concerned, a female has one breast."

TOM SEIDMAN

The NY diary of Dick Jenssen's was fascinating. As a New Yorker (rather, an ex-NYer) it is most interesting to compare viewpoints. NY never impressed me as quite so filthy/violent/impersonal - but then, I was used to it. Maybe sometime I too will have the courage to go to the Forum of the 12 Caesars but the \$110 bill rather frightens me.



It seems strange to pass on a comment to Ed Meskys via Australia (Hell - I saw him in person at the Pacificon 11 in September) but I'm interested in his reaction to MAGISTER LUDI. I was personally more impressed with Hesse's STEPPENWOLF and especially SIDDHARTHA, but read MAGISTER LUDI first. (Q: could Hesse have gotten the idea for DAS GLASPERLENSPIEL from the Japanese board game go?) Hesse points out some intriguing aspects of a successful ideal 'contemplative' (?) community interacting with the 'normal' world. For a definitive look at MAGISTER LUDI one would have to consider it, I think, within the context of Hesse's interest in Eastern thought (cf, SIDDHARTHA, JOURNEY TO THE EAST) and the anomic alienation of contemporary Western Culture.

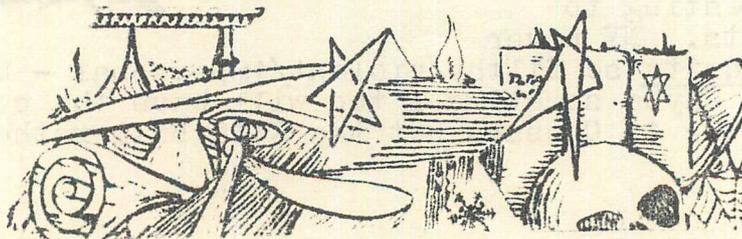
RON SMITH

I enjoyed Jensen's Letter in Exile 7 very much. Sharp, evocative style, and it brought back memories of the old city... intrigued by his description of, and reactions to, his birthday supper. Such an experience would have driven me to the wall. If I spend \$5 in a restaurant it's a traumatic experience. Look, I mean really, I would have done the dishes first. My admiration for Jensen is nonetheless boundless. His comments on Art are of great interest too, but I must admit that the psychology of the participants in that birthday bacchanalia really draws me, like a moth to a flame...

Liked Barrett's diary this time, too. Has he read THE WORLD OF SUZY WONG? I'd like to know more about Hong Kong - and China. Can he tell us how many people leave Hong Kong yearly to return to China?

There were more letters than that, but space is running out. As it is, I have cut out all the interesting sections of these letters and left only the dregs. Thank you, then, Betty Kujawa and Mike Moorcock, for your letters, and Bob Smith, you'll die laughing, but I lost your letter.

////////////////////////////////////



QUOTE FOR DECEMBER/JANUARY

QUOTATION CONFESSES INFERIORITY

- emerson.

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John Maxwell Foyster
4 Edward St/
Chadstone SE 10
Victoria
Australia.

QUOTE FOR ENGINEER JANUARY

D. Schultz

1915q Helen

Detroit 34

Michigan

USA.

QUOTATION CONFESSES THE BIRTHDAY

REPLY