



HARRIS BELL '75

only copy in existence. I'm going to have to re-read all 50+ pages when I LoC this so I'll say no more here. Good cover though. Yeah.

STULTICAE LAUS 2 - Darroll Pardoe: 24 Othello Close; Hartford; Huntingdon; PE18 7SU.

.....in which you say you don't want this reviewed Darroll, because it isn't generally available. OK, but this isn't a review, just a mention. In response to Harry Bell's 'Chung Fu' illo I must tell you about a couple of stickers I saw in the rear window of a car today. The first was an exhortation to 'GIVE BLOOD', the other was a sticker that suggested 'TAKE UP KARATE'.

IT COMES IN THE MAIL 17 - Ned Brooks: 713 Paul Street; Newport News; Virginia 23605; USA.

.....which raises the question of just where Brian copied this cover from. Brian's talent is to be able to copy anything, perfectly, and then make the slight changes necessary to make it fannish. I am convinced that the only reason Brian isn't incredibly rich is because the idea of forgery hasn't occurred to him.

MIKE GLICKSOHN 141 High Park Avenue; Toronto; Ontario; M6P 2S3.

I have to agree with your comment that May was a slack month for fanzines. Only twenty-three of the tricky little devils arrived here that month, allowing me to keep up with my reading and LoCing obligations quite easily. While I was away galavanting around the world attending conventions and setting new International Scotch Consumption records over July and August, another seventy of the nasty, squirmy little things wormed their way through into my letter box to lie festering, breeding and emitting vile odours of decay and rot. Especially rot. So I've spent a large part of the first two weeks I've been back trying to skim through them so I could file them away with a clean conscience and a very rare postcard to exceptional issues.

A part (very small, but still there) of your charm, is your completely justified desire to express yourself openly in your own fanzine, regardless of how disgusting your thoughts may be.

Still, if that's as gross as you ever get to thinking, I can't see any well-rounded individual getting upset. How about.....
'Your Turds Taste Terrific
When Your Shit's Dairrhoetic
But Don't Puke Through Your Nostrils
'Cause It Hides The Taste Of Your Snot'

I know it's disgusting: Harlan rejected it for THE LAST DANGEROUS VISIONS.

THE WINNER, IN THE BLUE CORNER.....

Yes Mike, you won hands down (and dinner coming back up). I should've known I couldn't compete for loathsomeness with a feelthy pro. I did get a few other suggestions but after the winner they all begin to sound like nursery rhyme titles, so I will stick with just publishing that.

PARKER'S PATCH 2 - Brian Parker: Warren Spring Laboratory;
Materials Handling Division; Gunnels Wood
Road; Stevenage; Herts.

.....which contains the single best article I've seen in a fanzine this year. 'Anagramancy'. INFERNO must have been the only zine you received that you did not let D. West review, Brian. Thank god! The tone of some of his reviews seemed almost vindictive. I see you also beat the postal increase Brian, but what happened to everyone else?

STARFIRE 6 - Bill Breiding: 151 Arkansas Street; San Francisco; California 94107; USA.

.....a dollar-threequarters, airmail! I bet there's a special door into Heaven for you Bill. Is it wise though Bill, to actually admit that you get your ideas for lay-out whilst cleaning out toilets? Isn't this kinda like leaving yourself wide open? It was a while before I got around to reading this issue in full. Oh, I flipped through it three or four times reading an item each go. Then I put it down. Cas picked it up, casually flipped through it just the once, and the back cover fell off. This is a strange para-normal ability usually evinced by women, which Doctor Rhine would have been well advised to concentrate on instead of all that telepathy

nonsense. Anyway, I decided to mend it. First I removed the old staples prior to putting in lots of new ones....,only I couldn't find my stapler, could I. Where is it? It's in bloody Derby, isn't it! Derby, fer chrissakes! Not even Jane Austen would place such distance between a man and one of the most important things in his life. Jane Eyre, you think you had problems? You may have been separated from Mr. Rochester, but at least you could pub your ish. A Fox on all Mearae! But, what am I going to do with this fistful of loose sheets which used to be STARFIRE?

PAT CHARNOCK 70 Ledbury Road; London; W.11.

Hamsters hunh? The Charnock family have an age old recipe that was devised in the days when wild hamsters roamed the Yorkshire dales. Now, I breed my own hamsters - that way you don't need sheepdogs to round them up.

At the age of six months, as they're approaching maturity, start them on a diet of whole onions and fresh sage. Keep overfeeding them madly 'til they die of a surfeit of onion. Then stuff the pouches with pate. Rub honey into the fur and bake in a slow oven so the fur doesn't fall out. Serve whole with diced mandrake, pumpernickel and South African tomatoes.

Pornography again? Starts the whole horny question of what is porn. Pam Boul appears to be describing pictures that gloat over deviancy. Paul appears to gloat over boobs and I imagine his taste in "porn" runs to "normal" mags offered for sale in the local newsagents. There's a world of difference. I have no idea how you would explain to a child that people can get pleasure out of being pissed upon (I mean literally) or tied up and beaten. But I feel kids should be brought up to understand their own body structure and that of the other sex. They should be encouraged to have a pride in their bodies. I remember when I was a teenage virgin I used to practise walking around nude in front of the mirror so that I wouldn't feel embarrassed about my body. And I later discovered that the men who were embarrassed about nudity were the ones who were worst in bed.

Would you put your sixteen year old daughter on the pill? Or would you let her find out about other methods? We've all

been brainwashed. Why the pill? I recently came to the realisation that the pill, which I'd been using for all of my sexual life, was fucking my body up. It wasn't easy to change. I'd believed in the pill for so long that I couldn't believe - although I'd read about the whole subject exhaustively - that anything else could possibly work. I had an IUD inserted and found that I was scared to make love. I'm through that now, but I wouldn't like to be in the position of a permanent pill-taker - most doctors still suggest a six-month lay-off now and then. Why doesn't society educate their sons to use birth control anymore? Or do we just accept that men are far more irresponsible than women?

Maybe love isn't a prerequisite of sex, but surely respect and trust should be.

12 OCTOBER 1975(SKEL)

To answer your question.....No, I wouldn't put Deborah on the pill. That's for her to decide. All I said was I'd make sure she had knowledge of and access to it.

I picked the pill for its convenience. I could just have easily have picked the coil except that my faith in IUDs is not what it was. Cas was on the coil when we met and for eighteen months my praise for the wonders of modern science was unstinting. Then we lucked out. Ask Bethany how safe she thinks the coil is.

The thing about the pill and coil is their convenience. Especially the coil. You don't even have to remember to take that, just to go along once a year to make sure it's still in position. What is needed is a male method of birth control that is equally convenient. There is no question that our sex life is no longer a patch on what it used to be now that we haven't an IUD to rely on (the pill has always fucked up Cas' body chemistry). These LoCs française are so inconvenient as to be almost off-putting and unfortunately the only 'safe period' in which I have absolute faith is also absolutely messy. However, as long as it is the woman who must take the consequences of inadequate birth control practises (which will be forever, won't it?) then I can't see a woman feeling abso-

lutely secure unless she is the one taking the precautionary measures.

MALFUNCTION 3 - Pete Bresford: 10 Walkwith Road; South Reddish; Stockport; SK5 7LJ.

...in which Terry leaves alleges that I executed the cover for number seven and in which Pete does not correct him by informing the world that the guilty party was certain Monsieur Robinsen, french anarchist of some note.

You then go on to say, Pete, that because of financial pressures you are going to cease putting out two zines and will now merge MANSAP and MALFUNCTION. One less zine? I can't allow the world to get this lucky.

Enter (I suppose of strumpets, i.e. they're nothing like trumpets, but much more fun) THE ZINE THAT HAS NO NAME.

Why? I will still try to respond in print to every zine I receive, but I shall no longer try to do it all within the limited pages of this magazine. Some, yes, but most will go into THE ZINE THAT HAS NO NAME. Qualitatively this should improve this magazine and the additional expense will be small because copies of EXAMIN will only go to people whose zine is responded to therein. I also get some letters which have absolutely no bearing on SPD and which I will probably use to improve the blend and balance. (THIS MEANS YOU GAB). Anyway Pete, thanks for springboarding me into this.

YOU AREN'T GOING TO BELIEVE THIS BUT.....

...rather than I've said recently I spent an enjoyable hour on the dox, yesterday, talking to a couple of Jehova's Witnesses. I didn't intend to, I opened the door, saw the

...organised... I thought if... an inter...

development. I should have expected it really. Organised religion was all religions except Jehova's Witnesses. I asked her how come her True Word was any different to anyone else's true word. She answered me without answering me, a thing which happened several times during our talk. She honestly couldn't understand what I meant when I said that the questions she was answering weren't quite the questions I was asking. She knew she was right, just as I knew I was right and just as we all, whilst intellectually admitting the possibility of being wrong, know deep down that we are right. But she was ever such a nice young woman and her belief did sort of light her up from inside and I was glad for her, that she had this belief and that it was good for her, that is, she found it good. I liked her and, liking her, did not want to offend her. And yet, she wanted to bring her joy to me, to come back for a couple of hours each week and give me a family Bible Appreciation class. In her certainty she was convinced that it would be a simple matter to find the rock on which my belief had foundered and to help me once more onto the better road. No way was I going to go through with a waste of time like that just to avoid offending someone. In the end I achieved a qualified success. I think I only offended her slightly. Her friend, obviously a learner watching how it was done, handed me a couple of their fanzines as they left. THE WATCHTOWER and AWAKE. One of them had a print run of 9,850,000. With a print run like that I could probably trade with Readers Digest even. But, she was a nice young woman and it was a good hour. When someone comes around to take away all the wasted hours of my life in exchange for new ones, I think I'll hang onto that one.

TRUE RAT 6 - Leroy Kettle: 74 Eleanor Road; London; E 8.

.....in which Kettle effectively nails down the 'Best Fanwriter' category for next year, providing Roberts runs the poll again. I made the mistake of reading this during my tea-break. Belly-larfs whilst drinking tea can be pretty painful and I can still hear large amounts of liquid slopping to and fro in my inner ear cavities. A truly hilarious take off of Ace Books 'List Of Characters' page. Superb, there aren't words enough to say thank you Leroy. I'd have written a LoC except that I saw all those zines you reviewed, and nary a

mention for a certain small canine whose friendliness is legendary. "Stuff him!" says I. Damn, but I did so want to LoC.

TITLE 44 - Donn Brazier: 1455 Fawnvalley Drive; St. Louis; MO 63131; USA.

.....maybe you can tell me Donn. What was it about Ernie's piles that makes 'em worth commemorating, uh? Like Doug Barbour I too have been reading some good SF recently. I must be getting cynical though. Rather than risk something new I'm turning once again to some of the books that have brought me much pleasure in the past. I've just re-read the whole of the Dorsai series, finding them much more than the space opera I'd pigeon-holed them as. Then I moved onto Biggle's 'The World Menders' (77) and 'Still, Small Voice Of Trumpets' (83) and Anderson's 'There Will Be Time' (84). I'm really blown at the moment. So what if it does ruin my status as a trufan?

I don't know who this Paul 'Skel' Skelton character is who you mention from time to time, but he sounds as pretentious as all get out. If it were me I'd insist on being called one or the other. I prefer 'Skel' because it seems to strike a friendlier note. Both used together is as bad as Arthur 'Two Sheds' Jackson. However, we must remember that if we took the bones out it wouldn't be crunchy, would it?

KARASS 16 - Linda Bushyager: 1614 Evans Avenue; Prospect Park; PA 19076; USA.

.....in which you publish the news of CHECKPOINT's demise. Last night Presford was telling me that Ian Maule has had a rush of blood to the wallet and intends taking it over. You must have heard of Ian 'All Time Loser' Maule?

NEWT'S FROM THE CHEM. DEPT. - Karel Quane: Box CC; East Texas Sta.; Commerce; Texas 75428; USA.

.....I almost flunked out completely with the quiz Denis, making only a, d and e. I should have got b, too, but didn't. I wasn't surprised at not getting c because I've never even heard of the book. To be honest, I'm just as baffled after seeing Donn 'I don't know which issue of TITLE I'm up to 'cos I blinked' Brazier's explanation of the Aricibo 'message'. If I got it as a LoC I wouldn't run it!

KEVIN HALL 83 Braemar Road; Fallowfield; Manchester 14.

I decided to give Cromwell an extra six years minimum and institute one radical change as my base. Note that I always say English as it's my world and there's no place in it for Scotland, Ireland or Wales. These are all countries within an English Empire (which is a misnomer in itself).

25 OCTOBER 1975 (SKEL)

That's what I like about Kevin. He's so anachronistic. The big issue with everyone else was whether or not to go into Europe. Kevin still hasn't come to terms with our being in the United Kingdom. Given half a chance, I thought, he'd write these Scottish bums and Welsh wops back into the foreign dirt where they belong. Offhand, I'm not sure who wrote 'Kavin's World' but I sure as hell know who wrote 'Kevin's World'.....

THE STATE OF THE NATION

(Excerpts from the Inaugural Address given to the National Historical Society by its new President, Major-General Sir Philip Blaire-Canterville, in the presence of the Protector. Wednesday, 12th February, 1975.)

"Ladies and Gentlemen. I have spent some considerable time in consideration of the topic on which I would speak tonight. In recent years it has become accepted that the new President of the Society should speak about the topic in which his greatest interest lies. However, I'm sure that over the years you've all heard me speak too often about the T'ang dynasty to want to hear it all again. So I thought that it would be a good idea, especially at a time when it is more and more fashionable to decry English achievement, to take a brief look at the more recent history of our country. All the more relevant now, with the signing of the treaty of accession to the European State only six weeks in the past. We are certainly the most stable country in the Federal European State and we must ask ourselves both why this is, and what benefits this can bring to this new power group.

It is always a difficult thing to have to choose a point in time at which to begin one's narrative. Fortunately in this

case the choice is restricted to three years. I doubt if anyone in this company would disagree with me when I say that I view the period of the Civil War as being the major turning point in our history. But whether to start in 1642, with the opening of that war, or 1649 with the execution of the King, or in 1663 with the passing through the representative Assembly of the revamped Instrument of Government. Actually, what I would like to do is to use that last date as my base, but actually start ten years earlier and look at the basis for the introduction of the Instrument.

Oliver Cromwell became our first Protector with the passing of the original Instrument of Government in 1653. Although in some ways that document is similar, also it deviates dramatically from the one which followed. What we must remember is that it was an experiment, as was the Humble Petition and Advice which replaced it in 1657. Now it is the second document which interests me more, for it gave Cromwell the virtual power and authority of a King even though it gave no title, and even that not for want of trying on the part of its authors. This is a fact that makes it all the more surprising that Cromwell should give up that power. The most plausible reason for this seems to be given by Martin Willis in his superb book, 'Elected King - A Study Of The Protectorate'. I would like to quote; "Cromwell had always been a deeply religious man, assured of his personal contact with God, and I feel that he saw his close brush with death in 1658 as being a sign. Cromwell did not fully regain his health until late in 1659 and it is a sign of his taste that he had at hand the man who kept the country together for over a year. John Thurloe was appointed as Chief Councillor late in 1658 and managed to hold the country together during Cromwells illness. This whole pattern of events must have convinced Cromwell that a strong man must lead the Commonwealth. He must have seen that a recurrence of his illness could come at any time and that his son Richard was not fit to rule." What happened then is well known, but it will not hurt to go over old ground again.

We can be fairly certain that Cromwell started work on the new Instrument of Government almost immediately on his full resumption of office in November 1659. The first glimmerings of what was to come did not, however, emerge until 1662. What

the new Instrument gave was the written Constitution of England that is still the basis of England today. It was full of revolutionary concepts that, in time, have become the basis of government in over half of the civilised world. At the top of the tree, so to speak, was the Protector, elected by the Assembly for a seven year non-repactable term of office. Elections for the new Protector to be held at the end of the fifth year of office in order that the new Protector might learn the trade by acting as deputy for two years before taking on the full responsibilities of the position. Under the Protector was the Assembly, elected for a four year term. That in itself was a novel concept in those days. Somewhere in between the two was the Council of State, appointed by the Protector from among the Assemblymen. In many ways it is astonishing that, having superintended the election of the first Assembly in 1654, Cromwell stepped down as Protector leaving the way open for Major General George Monk who had been almost unknown before his actions in Scotland in 1658. Undoubtably Monk was just the strong man needed to keep the Constitution going against all the threats he faced. One is always forced to wonder what would have happened if the invasion of French troops under Charles Stuart, the self-proclaimed King Charles II had actually succeeded. Fortunately it failed, but it must have been a causal factor in the events of 1789.

We have heard many times how the early protectorate was not a democratic government. Well, of course it wasn't. Cromwell himself was a minor part of the nobility and it was always quite obvious that he thought there was a well defined place for those not born into the aristocracy, viz his treatment of the Levellers at Burford. What the Instrument of Government did give was a flexible framework within which social change could take place. To see this we have only to look back at the changes which have occurred, for instance the emergence of universal suffrage and the extension of the franchise. I maintain that no one could have forseen the Industrial Revolution that took place in this country in the middle of the 18th Century. That gave rise to a deeper awareness in the population, coupled with the election in 1804 of the 22nd Protector, Sir William Allerdycy, a notable social reformer, giving rise to the passing of ammendment 23 to the Instrument

of Government which gave the vote to all English citizens over the age of 26. Not only that, it was Allerdyce who, two years later, again ammended the Instrument to put the Congress of Craft and Trade Associations into a unique position where it became a fixed part of the English system of formal government. The age at which a person was allowed to vote was reduced to 21 by the 38th Protector in 1918, and there it has stayed. The number of such social changes which have occurred under our 46 Protectors to date have been legion. Would we have expected s such changes under a government wholly committed to the maintenance of a monarchy and a natural aristocracy?"

26 OCTOBER 1975 (SKEL)

I'm sure that Kevin would love to hear why his world won't work and just what is wrong with his scene-setting piece. Myself, I question the fact that the point where his history diverges from ours would seem so crucial as to stand out as a pivotal point some three centuries later. Conversely, the re-establishment of the monarchy seems no more crucial in our time-line than does any number of other events. Yeah, it's dead convenient Kevin, but is that all?

If you found the whole thing dead boring then it really is tough shits for you, because Kevin's second instalment (his left leg) is already to hand and will appear next issue. This is a transcript of a televideo lecture given by Patrick Moore on the British Televideo Corporation channel. The third instalment, a time-chart, is already commisiioned. However, Patrick Moore, or rather the impersonation of his brother by Ronnie Barker on 'The Two Ronnies' gives me a perfect lead in to a fanzine comment.....

THE SPANISH INQUISITION 6 - Jerry Kaufman and Suzanne Tompkins: 880 West 181st Street; 4D; New York; NY 10033; USA

.....which is Jerry's address. In his LoC within this issue Sam Long mentions ISIRTA. Dear old ISIRTA. This brings to mind just how much of a closed shop is the decent humour on british TV. But let us go back even further. Back indeed unto the Goons. Yeah Man De Goons. The Goons were really the orgasm of Spike Milligna (the well known

typing error). That he decorated this with the likes of Harry Secombe and Peter Sellers is even more tribute to his ability. Mike Bentine was also in there with him, but not for long, probably because Bentine was also cast in a similar mould to Milligan, although of lesser intensity. The Goons, a bizarre treatment of a single idea, gave way to Bentine's 'Square World' series which was a somewhat less bizarre treatment of several ideas. A mating of these two concepts could only result in 'Monty Python's Flying Circus'. But that is the destination - how about the route.....

In the beginning there was the Word, and the Word was 'satire'. 'Satire' made your washing whiter, your trousers tighter, and your Saturday evening brighter. It was the word of Kenneth Tynnan, and his prophet, David Frost. These two went through several transmogrifications, but the original show, 'That Was The Week That Was' was the word in essence. In this show Frost surrounded himself with an array of talent the like of which will probably never be seen again. Ronnie Barker and Ronnie Corbett, John Bird, William Rushton and of course John Cleese.

(John Bird re-appeared in later versions of the satire show and eventually into a situation-comedy series with Spike Milligan. William Rushton re-appeared just about everywhere, and Ronnie Barker and Ronnie Corbett both went into their own sit-com shows - 'No, That's Me Over There' for Corbett and 'The Six Faces Of Barker' and 'Porridge' for Barker. Both really scored however with several series of 'The Two Ronnies' which was a blend of traditional TV comedy and Monty Python type sketches.)

John Cleese re-appeared in 'Monty Python's Flying Circus'. This carried on for several series. He eventually left the show which managed one series after he left, but this was only a marginal success. He later emerged in the incredibly funny situation comedy series 'Fawlty Towers', with Prunella Scales. In the meantime he had been appearing in several series of 'I'M Sorry I'll Read That Again' on BBC radio. Other members of this show were Grahame Garden, Tim Brooke-Taylor and Bill Oddie, who also surfaced on television (and records) as 'The Goodies' a show which treated a single idea in a totally biz-

arre manner. Full circle.

Apart from this though the only outstanding humour on British television has been 'Steptoe and Son' (re-written as 'Sanford and Son' in the US) and 'Till Death Us Do Part' which was watered down into 'All In The Family' for US audiences. Just about everything else has been of the standard of US sitcom shows. I've always been smugly of the opinion that humour on TV over here was vastly superior to the imports we keep getting, but now I see that this is entirely due to such a small coterie of brilliantly original humourists it's almost unbelievable. All the rest of you UK readers are invited to kick me in my metaphorical things by reminding me of all the great series I've forgotten.

GOSHHOWSENSEOFARTWORK

.....says he, ripping open the envelopes and discovering several items of extremely artistic confetti at his feet. Oh, deary me! However, having come up with such a brilliant excuse for not using all this artwork, I must now admit that it's a load of lies. Stephen Morris's was shit, and was returned to him as such, via Pete Presford. Barry Kent MacKay's wasn't. Nor, for that matter, was a certain Miss Birkheads. However, I don't use fillos. Not usually. Not unless I can wring some INFERNAL connection out of them, at any rate. By dint of much devious mind twisting I have managed same with two illos from each of you, most of which will be appearing herein. The rest of yours, Barry, I passed on to the aforementioned Presdorf who accepted them with glee (Pete does everything with glee. If glee hadn't been invented Pete would sit at home alone every night muttering to himself, ".....shit, I wish someone would hurry up and invent some glee-type substances....."). The rest of yours will be passed on to les Mearæ, Sheryl, as you requested.

The other day Cas put on her 'Galloping ~~Horrid~~ Gourmet' hat and tried her hand at a 'Queen Of Puddings'. It abdicated.

There is a fortune awaiting the first fan who invents a stencil that doesn't have these last couple of lines when you want to start a brand new section and there just isn't room.

Something elastic which will enable one to put the stencil on and stretch it. What freaky lay-out effects I could get with something like that. It would almost be worth joining Goblin's camp and producing a traditional type genzine again (Goblin's camp.....is he, I didn't know that?). But, before I write myself out of room again.....hi Sheryl.

SHERYL BIRKHEAD 23629 Woodfield Road; Gaithersburg; Maryland 20760; USA.

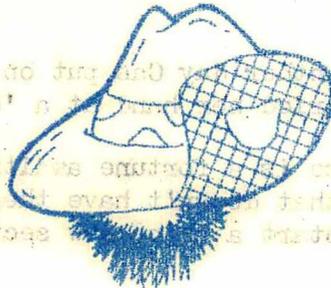
While 'down under' we met John and Sally Bangsund and I most sincerely hope all of fandom can someday have the experience. John (and all others in the company those days at Canberra) indeed made me feel inferior - with his easy wit, rapid warmth to us "strangers".....heck, they are just good people and I'm glad to have met them - very glad.

No Cas, don't know your ex-people. Gaithersburg is a lot bigger (Home-brew Sheryl - sorry) than most people think. But I'm quite willing to call 'em up and give 'em a long distance round-about 'hello' if you are interested. At least you'll keep 'em guessing.'

Donn's new zine, FARRAGO, is mainly fiction - wonder how extensive his trades will be? Finally, I don't intend to enter into the limerick contest - I know when I'm out (under?) classed.....but.....

A Mike, from Toronto, was sporting,
Quite willing.....in limericks cavorting,
To fence with a Meara,
(another Mike, yes, I fear-a),
.....'Intelligence' such behaviour purporting???

I don't (can't??)
see any limerick



8 NOVEMBER 1975 (SKEL)

I reckon Donn's trades will be pretty extensive. Like me they'll all be hoping it's a temporary aberration. After a while though, who knows? I for one have no interest in trading for something that is predominantly fanfic if such a bias is to continue. Are you there Donn? From the title I assume the mix to be strictly accidental and liable to change dramatically from issue to issue. That so?

CONTEXT - THE OLD NEWSPAPERS

'MOON TO BE COLONISED' Former American astronaut Gordon Cooper today predicted that the moon would have to be colonised soon to combat over-population on earth. Colonel Cooper said in Sydney, Australia, that countries were already suffering from a severe food shortage and predicted colonies would live in shelters on the moon and cultivate the rich moon soil.'

Manchester Evening News - Tuesday 4th November 1975.

'SO THE OLD STAR-GAZER WAS RIGHT ABOUT VENUS AFTER ALL!' The grand old man of professional star-gazing, Dr. Immanuel Velikovsky, was sitting alone in his attic when I telephoned. "You are," he said, "the first person to take the trouble to ask me how I feel about being right about Venus. Well, I'll tell you. Tremendous. I never had a doubt that I was right." And the man who, a quarter of a century ago, was dubbed a "fraud and cheap self-publicist" chuckled as he added: "At last.....it is my turn to laugh."

And laugh he may. For the latest Soviet space probe on the planet Venus has confirmed that last of Velikovsky's three main predictions of what Man would find on the brightest star in the universe. That it is a young planet, nowhere near the age previously estimated by some of the world's most eminent scientists; and that it is alive and still in the process of formation.

"Ah," he exclaimed, "you have read the reports from Moscow, eh? They say Venus is a young planet and still alive. Oh! I said that so long ago." He said it, in fact, exactly 25 years ago in his book 'Worlds In Collision' which

the world of established science scorned. The late Professor J. B. S. Haldane, one of the most brilliant of British scientists, said: "I conclude that this book is fiction."

What were the other two predictions which were ridiculed by the world's leading scientists in 1950? Venus, he predicted, probably revolves in an opposite direction to the other planets. Nearly ten years later a radiometric monitor at the United States Naval Research Laboratory in Washington proved him right. His third prediction? That Venus is "exceedingly hot, probably somewhere near 600 degrees Fahrenheit." and again the experts laughed. They said the planet's temperature was not much above that of an average drawing room. In 1967 the Soviet space probe Venus 4 proved that the temperature was 536 degrees Fahrenheit.'

THE SUNDAY EXPRESS - Sunday 2nd November 1975.

MY OWN OPINION

.....is that Gordon Cooper is not supposed to be a complete and utter idiot, whereas Immanuel Velikovsky is. I suspect that Shalmaneser would say that this does not compute. Velikovsky may have been wrong about another 1,076 Venus predictions. Cooper may have been less than asinine in other comments about Man and Space. All the facts are not yet in, but what we need is a pair of articles in which Velikovsky's points are put and in which they are systematically knocked down: one by one on specific points. ANALOG tried to do this a year or so back but Asimov of all people, blew it. If he can't give a dispassionate view and do the job he was supposed to do, but instead descends to name-calling and nothing more, then maybe, just maybe, there might be something here worth looking into after all. What did Velikovsky predict which we know for a stone cold proven fact to be correct. Which of his predictions do we know for a stone cold proven fact to have been incorrect?

In my opinion the tragedy is that the whole thing was never afforded the benefit of proper scientific evaluation but was in fact 'pooch-pooched' by people who are supposed to know better. It may be a load of crap-and-lucky-guesses but you are supposed to investigate it, not refuse to consider it.

SPI 4 - Graham Poole; 23 Russet Road; Cheltenham; GL51 7LN.

.....let's see..... (66 + 63 /line length/) x (63 + 43 /lines per page/) x (39 + 48 /number of pages/) gives a figure of 1.2471., This is how much more you published in SPI4 than I did in INFERNO 9. This gives me the factor by which I must multiply my costs in order to get a true comparison with yours.

Electros (no increase)	0.92
Paper (£3.70 x 1.2471)	4.61
Stencils (£2.25 x 1.2471).	2.80
Postage (£3.63 x 1.2471)	4.53
	<hr/>
	12.86

for 105 copies = 12.25p each, or make that 13p each including ink and corflu. I'd like to know how many copies you got for your fifty quid, Graham. So, all you INFERNAL recipients, your copy sets me back about 10½p. Or, to put it another way, this fanzine costs me 84p a week to produce. I reckon that is a pretty good value hobby.

KEN BULMER 19 Orchard Way; Horsmonden; Tonbridge; Kent.

I don't recall you as being fat, Cas. Not fat. So dieting may be a way of expressing guilt and remorse for fanac..

What struck me as interesting were your comments on TAFF Skel. I, too, share your feelings that TAFF is a most important aspect of fandom, for obvious reasons. And here I mean real fandom, which is epitomised by fanac. There has been a considerable increase in recent years of academic and critical aspects of SF and these are fine if they are kept in their place. It is the hard - as one we wot of would say - nitty-gritty of actually turning out a fnz that counts in the big world of fandom. I'm not altogether sure that TAFF was used as a mere vehicle for a con committee member; but if that was a part of his platform and an aspect of his fannish career too much harm would not have been done, surely? Mind you, I do agree that if all a candidate has to offer is membership of a con committee this is not good enough; but we'll have to see, for I'd hazard a guess that anyone of note on a con committee would have done other things to have been eager, enthusiastic

and dumb enough to get on the committee in the first place.

Re page 16: All you have to do is wait until your span is two thirds over, and then grumble. Or when you see it dwindling away like a light in a tunnel - it's all good fun on the way to the old wooden box.

9 NOVEMBER 1975(SKEL)

All together now.....

"I will cling to the old wooden box and exchange it someday for a FREEZ-U-MATIC[®] Cryogenic Module with servo-assisted ice cubes, automatic defrost and go-faster stripes."

They don't write hymns like they used to, do they Ken?

I took a bit of stick about that TAFF piece. Dave Rowe wrote:-

"I admit to nodding learnedly with you over the Weston/Roberts - TAFF/'79 thing until I realised the '79 bid was announced only three hours before the close of TAFF voting. That is to say, those backing and proposing the two candidates could have known little and probably nothing of the 'Britain In '79' bid at the time."

Harry Bell (chiefly...but also one or two others and I can't remember exactly who said what) had a go at me during the kitchen sub-party of the skelorge. Basically two points emerged from this discussion (:discu'ssion(-shn) n. /L 'curro' run/: An event in which various people take it in turn to shit upon Skel:)(see also 'battle', 'fight', 'amicable exchange of views' and 'Ebitmifuckinearoff')and these two points were:-

"Who the hell else is there, Skel?".....and

"What gets me is that Roberts said he reckons he is an absolute certainty for next year."

What are we doing, forming an orderly queue or something? After you? No, after You! OK, but you come next time, right? Is fandom reduced to this? Have we run out of people worth

honouring to a degree that they pick themselves? I hope not. I presume the whole thing will turn out to be a misquote or something.

JEEZIBEENDUN

This paper that I'm currently using is supposed to be 'medium'. I presume that this is not meant to apply to the weight but instead to the fact that it seems to be in touch with the spirit world, offering up ghostly images of reverse sides. Ghod, the tissue paper that you use Mae has less show-through than this stuff. I can't junk it because ~~the cheating~~ ~~so~~ my friend the bent Roneo rep has now left and I need all the paper I can get. However, let's get on to some more name dropping.....

BRUCE PELZ 15931 Kalisher Street; Granada Hills; CA 91344.

Somehow, the title INFERNO seems inappropriate. Wouldn't it be better for you two to publish CLOSET, or WARDROBE, or somesuch? One just doesn't usually think of finding Skeltons in an INFERNO. Just out of curiosity, which blends of Scotch do you consider superior to Chivas Regal? I don't care at all for either of the 'burnt' whiskeys -- Scotch and Irish -- myself, but some of the locals who consider themselves Scotch connoisseurs praise Chivas up one side and down the other, and it would be interesting to ask them if they'd tried any of your preferred brands.

A small suggestion: set off letters somehow so we can tell who is talking, the letter-writer or you. It gets very confusing, especially when you get a letter from one Mike (Meara) addressing comments to another Mike (Glicksohn), and then add a new section with more comments to some Mike or other. Too many mikes induce a rather painful feedback into the system here.

YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE ETC.

Well, I wouldn't believe it. Whenever I run someone's letter I put their name, in upper case, their address, and underline the whole mess. When I re-start my comments I always

put either a new heading, in upper case and underlined, or I re-date and sign myself. Kevin's pieces don't work this way but I always give them an introduction so that you know who is coming next. And yet you aren't the only one to make this complaint Bruce (THIS IS SKEL HERE, BY THE WAY)(not Bruce, nor Cas, nor Idi Amin)(still Skel). Next time any of you write me I'd be obliged if you'd make a point of mentioning it if you also (still Skel talking) have difficulty figuring out who's who, or even who isn't who.

As to the whisky Bruce, I must agree with Mike (Meara) that it is all a matter of personal preference. (Personal? Oh well, chalk it up to Pollard's best bitter. Skel's best bitter won't be ready for another four days.....and it's driving me mad, I tell you). To be specific, any of the better blends down from Johnnie Walker's Black Label, Crawford's Five Star, Addison's Rare Old Liqueur, Yates's Extra Special, Usher's Old Vatted Glenlivet, Braemar and even Dimple, which runs the gamut from expensive to inexpensive. Those aren't in any order of preference, by the way. Or price. I haven't tried Dewar's Ancestor, Laird Of Logan or King's Ransom so I can't pass an opinion on those, although one of them will be the christmas bottle I take round to my parents' when the skeltribe descends on them for christmas dinner. My Christmas booze list reads:-

- 1 bottle Dewar's Ancestor (as above)
- 1 bottle 15 year old Glenfarclas (for the skelhouse at christmas.
- 1 bottle Fuckknowswhichmalt (to take to Mike's for the week after christmas)

I could be in a rut, but whatarut! Ghod, but I almost come just thinking about it. Let's drop another name.....

ROY TACKETT 915 Green Valley Road NW; Albuquerque; NM 87107.

You can't believe nobody named Bruce D. Arthurs. Especially when he said he wasn't going to be able to make it to the latest Bubonicon because he was there and I sat next to him on a panel and we bemused ~~that~~ a small group of people by talking about fanzines. We sat on a panel because there was a shortage of chairs.

I've been watching your attempts to smoke me out and decided that, since you've been sending me one fmz or another for nigh onto 40 yrs now I really ought to send along some sort of EloHSee. Let me say that, in view of his penchant for changing the graphics in OW a certain nameless fan.....no, the Nameless fans are in Seattle.....would undoubtably end up rearranging the whole British landscape.....move the Highlands to Cornwall, that sort of thing.

May I say to Sam Long that the reason, obviously, that filksinging is rare at British cons is because British fen have more sense than American fen in that regard. Yes. Now about this poetry soiree,.....what is a poetry soiree? It sounds obscene. It must be French. Would you recommend one for the next Bubonicon and if so send over some French femmefans?

BUT WE HAVE ENOUGH CHANGES OF POLICY OVER HERE AS IT IS

Although I wouldn't object if the Glenmorangie distillery suddenly appeared at the bottom of my garden, With my luck though I'd probably get the stockroom belonging to the Principal Keeper of The Rancid Rat-puke at the British Museum. Look Bill, you gotta promise. Leave well alone. Britain in three-column micro-elite with Rotsler illos and a Steve Fabian Isle of Ely.....well, I don't think we're ready for it yet Bill. Honest.

NOW THERE'S A FILM YOU CAN ONLY SEE ONCE

The local ABC cinema is showing the follow up to 'Enter The Dragon' yclept 'Enter The Seven Virgins'. This puts a wholetogether new and somewhat seamy complexion on the title of the original flic. Coupled with this is 'Women Come First' which is one of those generalisations which I tend to mistrust. Anyway, on with Contrived Letter Introduction number 278:-

Speaking of seamy complexions.....What lives in Toronto, can't get your fanzines because there's a mail-strike on at the moment, and even if he could LoC a zine he hadn't received he couldn't send the LoC because of the self-same postal strike? Beats me. Maybe it's the Mayor of Toronto. I know who it certainly isn't though. He may not be as fast as a speeding

of Time Dilution. Actually, while the concept of a civilization that has not perfected the tape-recorder is well within the grasp of even the sparsest of imaginations, the actual situation is beyond human ken. The real catalyst of the time-dceleration phenomenon is the simple act of opening a fanzine. Any reader of the genre will readily agree that opening the smallest of the beasts will cause time to slow down to such an extent that it takes upward of an hour of "slow-time" (cf "slow glass", a way of stretching one's Guinness invented by an eccentric Irish genius) per page to wade through the thing. The real anomaly arises when one tries to conceive of civilizations that haven't yet invented the crudzine and hence are out of temporal step with the rest of us. Surely any civilization capable of avoiding this evolutionary backwater would long ago have conquered the universe and taken us under their wing for our own good?

Knowing not the Pam Boal, I've no idea what she considers pornographic sex. Is oral-genital contact pornographic in her mind? Anal intercourse? Homosexual intercourse? None are pornographic to me (although whether I'm interested in engaging in them is a different matter). These are aspects of human sensuality and sexuality I'd rather explain calmly and clearly to a young person so that they can understand them as merely alternate methods of sexual expression to be neither feared nor exalted, instead of letting him/her pick up distorted views and information through the grapevine. As Pam (knowingly or otherwise) admits, it is not the acts of sex that are wrong, but the attitudes some people have towards them. And that's a hangover from the unfortunate reluctance of most parents to discuss sex with their children, or to discuss it beyond the procreation/man-on-top antediluvian viewpoint.

25 NOVEMBER 1975(SKEL)

"Antediluvian"? How Freudian.

This, by the way, is a special 'embarass John Bangsund half to death issue' of INFERNO.

Why have we never been contacted by these advanced civilizations? Obvious! Everytime they take a step in our direction

we go and publish another damn fanzine and take two temporal steps in the opposite direction. Things like TITLE and ITSOTM are robbing us of our rightful heritage.....the stars. You bastards! Call yourself SF fen? Gafiate, for the good of humanity.

I'd hate to see the mood I'd get in after a four-week mail strike. Ye ghods, marriages have foudered on less. True, although they've also foudered on less, as well, especially when less drunk. "He committed murder whilst the balance of his mind was disturbed," or even "He committed suicide whilst the balance of his mind was disturbed." I wonder if there is any correlation between such verdicts and mail-strikes? Mind you, it serves them right for having no imagination. Can you just see the headline....."He committed sodomy whilst the balance of his mind was disturbed". Beats me why you can't have fun whilst being disturbed. Not that I'd like to be disturbed whilst having fun.

YET ANOTHER MILESTONE

.....in the life of a new daddy. Last night my daughter Bethany wet her bed for the first time. Whow, makes you feel good doesn't it. Strange how these milestones seem to come together. Last night was also the first time she'd gone to bed without a nappy on. I wonder if these two facts are somehow interconnected? Stranger things have happened.

Back on the subject of TAFF, I note with a strange sense of perversity that, always assuming that Britain is just a little bit worse than mint in '79, that is the year when we'll be sending someone over to the States. This is likely to be the biggest non-event-honour of the century.

Still on the subject of TAFF.....I would like to take up the remark of Harry's, "Who the hell else is there?". I don't know Harry, especially as I don't know exactly who has won it in the past. If anyone can supply me with a year-by-year list of TAFF-winners I would be most grateful. This would enable me to see who has already been honoured and therefore who is still available and deserving of same. The only people I know to have been from here to there are, Eric Bentcliffe, Ethel Lind-

say, Pete Weston (wot no TAFF report?) and of course Walt Willis and Ron Bennett....and also presumably Eddie Jones. In the other direction I only know the names of the Moffatts. Can anyone help?

NOTICE IN THE WINE SHOP WINDOW

We are not as experienced with our 'Wanted' posters over here as you are in the States (or they are in the States, depending on whether you are etc.). Things like 'Dead or Alive-20,000 Dollars' are too sophisticated for our initial fumbling attempt. The poster from the Greater Manchester Police in the window of a local shop read.....

ATTEMPTED RAPE

CAN YOU ASSIST?

.....boggleboggleboggleboggle.

27 NOVEMBER 1975(SKEL)

STULTICAE LAUS 3 - Darroll Pardoe: Address as page 5.

.....which is still not a review, more in the way of comments that pass in the night. Back about Ro's review of 'The Baby Trap'. I am disappointed to note you say that ".....the majority of people seemed to agree....Only a handful of people over-reacted..." (ie, disagreed). What I thought I said was that you were over-reacting.

Here I was presumably guilty of confusing the opinions of Ro and the authoress. My impression was that Ro was endorsing the views expressed in the book and the tone of the book. In essence these are not arguable, but I felt that the tone the book took was too extreme. It was like saying that 'A' is wrong, so sling out the whole alphabet except 'Z'. To me the desire not to have children needs no defence. It just is. This frenzied grabbing at each and every justification implies a need to feel justified which in turn implies that she does not already feel so.

If society can't understand why you aren't having kids

then the lack is in societly and is societys tough shits. What is the problem? (OK Skel, if an axe-murderer comes up and wri writes you off the lack is in him - what's the problem? Yeah, but you can't ignore a man with an axe). If you aren't able to ignore such people doesn't this indicate a fault in you? A need for approval from sources who's opinion didn't ought to matter to you? If your friends get at you over this I pity you for your friends. Although I will admit we keep asking Mike and Pat why they don't have kids.....our's.

No, that's a bit strong. Friends who can't understand your wish to remain childless are no different in kind to those who can't understand your desire to play your LPs on auto-change. "You should never put LPs on auto-change". Look Kevin, whose bleeding LPs are they then? If I wish to accept a certain loss in playback quality for the privilege of not having to break off typing every 15 minutes who the hell else's business is it? But then now who's over-reacting?

A POEM REJECTED BY ZIMRI

It is cold now
..... here,
inside.
The lizard-bats of night
stretch
their scrapy wings
across my brain.
It is getting hard
now
to pierce through them.
My eyes
are not so sharp
now,
no, not sharp.
They were sharp,
my eyes,
once.

"There!"

I cried,

"The eagle,

see it?"

The eagle ghosted nearer,

there,

in the sky

and she,

sighting down the barrel

of my arm,

gasped,

hugging tighter

as she saw.

That was the time

of sharp eyes

but now

the eagle has scaled wings

and he is not an eagle

and his wings

scrape

harder.

Skel 6/1/73.

MUST BE BECAUSE THEY'RE NOT THE BIGGEST

.....he thinks to himself (Avis rent-a-wing?) but then it has been nearly three years and I have re-read it about six million times. You, on the other hand, must not be flippant.

FEATURED LP OF THE WEEK DEPT.

I note that the very first track on the latest Judy Collins LP, 'Judith' is a Jim Webb composition entitled 'The Moon Is A Harsh Mistress'.

.....boggleboggleboggleboggle.

I'VE JUST REALISED

.....that that poem might not have been rejected after all.

I sent three and one was given the thumbs down. Now that I've run it off I suspect it was one of the others. If I've ballsed things up Lisa I'm sorry.

I WONDER IF.....

.....that song sounds anything like his 'Luna-opolis Lineman' or his 'By The Time I Get To Mara Ibrium'?

DID YOU KNOW.....

.....that a 'nappy' and a 'daiper' are not synonymous? Did you fuck. Just think, if you'd been on 'Mastermind' and been asked that question you'd have blown it in front of x+3 zillion viewers. A nappy is about 23 inches square, made of cotton towelling. A daiper, at least the 'Curity' make, is about sixty inches long by 20 inches wide, made of something akin to sheet material. Now all you need is someone to come along and offer ten million pounds and a night in bed with Brian Burgess to the first person who can reveal this information.....and you're made.

For our US readers, 'Mastermind' is a quiz show in which you get to answer questions in a category of your choice and in a 'general knowledge' category. To give you some idea of the difficulty of these questions, the ones in the 'general knowledge' section are on a par with....."Give the nickname of the seventy-fourth gene (from the left) on the 'Y' chromosome of a dyspeptic flatworm.....give the answer in second century greek."

LESLEIGH LUTTRELL 525 W. Main St.; Madison; WI 53703; USA.

One thing I have to take issue with, your fondness for Heinlein's 'Podkayne'. Well, I certainly can't argue with your taste, but I can point out that some people, myself very much included, don't like the book because it is so horribly sexist. The female character is really handled very badly, and I just cringed when I read the book. Perhaps I was a bit too old for it, reading it for the first time long after I'd read all the other Heinlein juveniles (for some reason it wasn't in our local library, although most of the others were). I don't

think I'm the only one to feel that way about the book. In fact I tend to find Panshin's 'Rite Of Passage' as sort of an answer to Podkayne, an attempt to show what a good writer, using some of Heinlein's tricks, can do when he knows how to handle female characters.

29 NOVEMBER 1975(SKEL)

'Rite Of Passage' is a good novel. Much better than 'Podkayne Of Mars'. I do not however accept that this makes Panshin a 'good writer' and Heinlein a shyster who uses 'tricks'. I will take your word that Heinlein can't handle female characters. The only sort of character I have first hand knowledge of is male, and Podkayne is OK on that score. Heinlein is merely guilty of seeing his characters as 'people' rather than 'male' and 'female'. To use this as evidence that Panshin is a 'good' writer and by inference, that Heinlein is not, is strutting on weak ground. As a writer Panshin isn't fit to write the word 'zip' above Heinlein's fly.

I'm not sure either whether putting a female character (Poddy) into a male role is an example of sexism, or the opposite. Is it because he couldn't distinguish between 'female' and 'female-role' or because he could? To my mind Poddy is a tomboy and behaves like one, as I see it, from a strictly male point of view.

I agree that Heinlein has his faults, but in my opinion fandom is now over-reacting. Heinlein was once a god who could do no wrong. From that stupid extreme we have swung over until he can do no right. A reactionary view. The fact is that Heinlein is still the greatest SF author of all time. There are now however people who may surpass him. May. They merely have the potential. They haven't done it yet. They have to come up with the goods, for twenty years, like Heinlein came up with the goods for twenty years. I don't think that they'll manage it, but I wish they would. Just think of the future SF that would mean.

SOMEONE CAME A KNOCKING AT MY WEE, SMALL DOOR

Actually it was my not so wee, not so small window, but

even Walt de la M can't be expected to get it right all the time, now can he? Sit'ee back Jim laad whilst Skel regales 'ee with the tale of how Terror came to stalk the barren wastes of the Offerton Neighbourhood Housing Estate, of how White Fang took part in the Colgate Toothpaste Trial and of how Vanessa Letits discovered that the Jolly Green Ghiant wasn't all that green after all. All this in a few moments after a brief word from our sponsor.....

SCIENTIFRICTION 3 - Mike Glycer: 14974 Osceola Street; Sylmar; California 91342; USA.

.....which proves that there are more differences between US and UK than I had suspected by reading all these US zines. Not only are Mike and I on different orbits, but one of us has retrograde spin. One passage in your Midwestcon report is totally meaningless to me Mike. The bit about Bill Mallardi and his drive to Cincinnati from Akron.

'Mallardi drove.....working his citizen's band radio along the way to beat the heat, which is Smokey. Said Mallardi he'd been on the circuit with one driver up ahead, the front door, and one behind, "Pink Dragon", the back door, with Mallardi in the rockin' chair on a stretch reconnoitered clear of cops."

'The heat' is obviously the cops. This is one Americanism we are all aware of. Thanks to the adverts in ANALOG I also know that Smokey is a large bear which lives in the forest, wears a Mountie hat and stomps on fires. Clear so far. Obviously somewhere between Akron and Cincinnati the cops all change into bears, put on silly hats and rush into the forest to make ANALOG adverts and harass innocent campers who only want to keep warm and get back at society and their parents. Apart from a previously unsuspected incidence of werebears in the US police forces, this is all pretty straight forward. Where I get lost is in the fact that he seems to be driving a house, complete with front door, back door and rocking chair. All whilst drinking a cocktail called a 'Pink Dragon' with his behind. This is kinky.

I showed this excerpt to Lord Stokes who agrees with me that if the damn Yankees are driving their houses around the

country then it is only a matter of time before this latest technological advance spreads over here and makes our cars obsolete too. Lord Stokes quickly sold all his stock in British Leyland. This caused a panic, resulting in British Leyland stock hitting rock bottom, bankrupting all the other shareholders. Unfortunately the largest single stockholder was the British Government, which doesn't take kindly to being bankrupted. It mobilised the British Army. The Army came round to see me and I told him it was all your fault. He insists that he is going to invade Sylmar just as soon as he can save up the air fare. Serves you damn right Mike Glycer!

HORRORSHOW PART TWO

(Wherein Skel reveals the full details of the time someone or something knocked on his window - Can you take this. Is your heart in sound condition?)

I was just about to slip my headphones on and commence a missive to a certain Captain Meara (and His Amazing Flying Polecats) Inc. There came a knock on the window. "Aha" I thought, "a knock on the window!" Incisive thinking this. I am always at my best at that time of evening. I also figured it was some kids so I decided to ignore it in the hope that it (ie they) would go away (ie fuck off). They didn't. Four knocks later I decided to station myself behind the front door so that I might burst forth and wreak mayhem upon the child-like substances of Greater Manchester. Seven knocks later I figured out why I was having trouble silently unlatching the skeldoor prior to the aforementioned bursting forth. Cas had gone to bed. Before going to bed Cas invariably locks, bolts and bars the doors, feeds the drawbridge and puts the sharks out in the moat for the night. Then she switches on the minefield and electrifies the curtains. Cas has this thing about burglars, you see. Anyway, I couldn't unfasten the door because Cas had brought the deadlock into operation, thus ensuring that only dead people can burgle us.

I unlocked the door. This is more incisive thinking and supports my contention that I am at my best during the mid-evening. BANG.....and I was out of the door and running. You should've seen it. Kids errupted in all directions, like brats

serum and put up with incredibly bad Aussie actors, all while saving the Australian bush from a fate worse than Rolf Harris. Pretty hot stuff these Kangaroos. The idea could have possibilities.

Can you just see yourself bopping down the motorway at a good 71 mph and seeing this huge hairy beast hopping up after you, lights flashing on its helmet and a radar-trap in its pouch?

No wonder the Kangaroo population in Australia is increasing by leaps and bounds. They are obviously more fit to rule the world. But, when they take over, will we roo the day?

BILL BREIDING 151 Arkansas Street; Sanfrancisco; CA 94107.

Monty Python says that they're surprised that us Rednecks get our rocks off on them?

It's not so surprising; their point of humor most often (than not) is saturation rather than englishisms, which any dumbkopf is going to respond to. Last night our local non-profit channel showed both Monty Python and 'No-Honestly', one after the other. I found the humours more extreme in both. I think MONTY tends to appeal to a more cosmic type of thing, the cosmic funny bone, whereas 'No-Honestly' is limited in appeal to the reversal of commenalities, like placing the wine on the heater to get it at "room temperature". Most of it was rather absurd like that, if not embarrassing. Another thing I disliked was the ploy of putting down another person, which I found somewhat disgusting, because it was used in the personal. MONTY at least makes it bizarre, if not impersonal.

14 DECEMBER 1975(SKEL)

I disagree that 'Monty Python' humour would appeal to any "Dumbkopf". Surely this is proven by the fact that it was not thought to be 'commercial' in the US and had to be screened on Public Service TV.

If you knew the reputation American TV humour has over here you wouldn't be surprised that the Monty Python crew were

shocked at the degree of success they achieved over there. US TV humour is very staid. Just look how something as old hat as 'Laugh-In' was acclaimed as 'revolutionary'. Monty Python, conversely, boldly sought humour where no TV show had sought humour before. A significant (yet staggeringly low) proportion of the sketches failed or 'missed' because, if you are in completely unexplored territory, how the hell are you supposed to know if you're on the right track or not?

I watched 'No-Honestly' only because of my admiration for John Alderton. If you ever get a chance to see him in 'My Wife Next Door', take it. In this series he starred with Hannah Gordon (who is definitely worth a prod). Hannah is now playing the new mistress of the house in 'Upstairs Downstairs'.

Getting back to my remarks earlier I have just learned that a probably watered-down version of 'Porridge' (called 'Quacker Oats'?) is to be made in the States under the name 'On The Rocks'.

IN DEFENCE OF 'SPACE 1999'

I respect Mike Meara's judgement so when he told me that, after watching the first three episodes, this series was a dog I allowed Cas her head and did not struggle when she insisted on watching 'The Invisible Man' on the other channel. Then I decided to at least give it a try.....so I could say I'd seen it and talk intelligently whenever anyone mentioned it. I was very impressed with the first episode I saw.

Don't get me wrong, as SF it was abominable, but as television it was pretty good. Far superior to Star Trek which it apes more than somewhat. The first episode I caught was the one involving a graveyard of spaceships inhabited by one of the best monsters I've ever seen. It existed in a non-material form until its lunch turned up. Then it materialised in a convenient doorway, drew its prey towards it, ingested it and spewed forth some manky, half-ingested remains. All this was handled exceptionally well. Visually the series is superb. The sets are terrific. One recent episode involved a spacecraft approaching a plateau that loomed up out of the mists in a very Mt Lookithat fashion. The plateau itself was covered

with alien forms. The whole set screamed 'real' and 'alien'. Shots of The Hero among this landscape, looking suddenly in a certain direction, followed by a shot in that direction from his apparent position, of the model landscape not only looked realistic, but gave immense sense of distance.

The acting is not so much abysmal as tedious.

The better plots are adequate. The worse ones pukeworthy.

The basic idea.....the less said the better.

But, let's take it on its own terms. As SF for non-sf readers (the bulk of the TV audience) it is excellent. The amount of really good SF on TV to date has been negligible. Only the minority interest channel, BBC2 with its 'Out Of The Unknown' series (before the later series where this was used for supernatural playlets) gave us serious SF like Brunner, Phillips, Simak; Asimov et al. But, if they are going to spend a lot of money then it is going to have to have mass appeal. You aren't going to find something that satisfies the sophisticated appetites of the SF reader and which is also bland enough for mass consumption.

Basically, if you want good SF, read a book. If you want SF on TV then take it for what it is: Space 1999, Star Trek, Dr. Who, Quatermass, UFO, Outer Limits and such. Take it for the good aspects (Star Trek's professionalism, Space 1999's models and special effects, Dr. Who's ideas) and put up with the bad. You can't change it. Would you rather have the good aspects of these shows or no aspects of these shows? Me, I'll take what I can get.

Just a plug here for the BBC's 'A State Of Emergency'. A three part serial based on an earlier play 'The Donatti Conspiracy!'. The events here are set in a Britain of the near future.....a fascist Britain, run by the army. The whole thing is somewhat cerebral, but extremely gripping. It also makes you think. As usual my sympathies were entirely with the freedom seeking insurrectionists until I found out that the reason the army took over in the first place was one I find myself in sympathy with. So where to now, eh Skel? OK, how about hutris?

"Paul is a buddy and a very nice person and last issue I praised INFERNO, but.....I was bored out of my fucking mind!I found myself soured by it all. It was just page after similar page."

IAN WILLIAMS in SPI 4.

"Rather like KNOCKERS FROM NEPTUNE."

KEITH A. WALKER in FANZINE FANATIQUE 14.

.....which is all the bad reviews I could find, and I had to cheat a little on some of them. Still, it keeps me in my place.

WHO'S OUT THERE?

This issue the print run is up to a staggering 102. Bit-
ing into this number are:-

A. Abramowitz; Jan Applebaum; Bruce Arthurs; M. Bailey;
F. Balazs; John Bangsund; Doug Barbour; Rich Bartucci; Steve
Beatty; Harry & Irene Bell; Eric Bentcliffe; Sheryl Birkhead;
Gray Boak; Pam Boal; Bill Bowers; Donn Brazier; Bill Breiding;
Ned Brooks; Ken Bulmer; Linda Bushyager; Ed Cagle; Larry
Carmody; Charnox; Eli Cohen; Ed Connor; Copyright Receipt Of-
fice; Don D'Amassa; Bill Danner; Frank Denton; S. Dorneman;
Dunlops; Martin Easterbrook; Kevin Easthope; Gary Farber; Bryn
Fortey; Jackie Franke; Gil Gaier; Superglick; Mike Glycer; Jim
Goddard; Dave Gorman; Kevin Hall; Fred Haskell; Terry Hughes;
Ben Indick; Rob Jackson; Terry Jeeves; Jenrettes; Jerry
Kaufman; Leroy Kettle; Eric Larsen; D. Lien; Ethel Lindsay;
Dave Locke; Sam Long; Frank Lunney; Luttrells; T.W. MacDonald;
Loren MacGregor; B.K. MacKay; Jim Meadows III; Mearæ; Will
Norris; Jodie Offutt; Pauline Palmer; Pardoos; Brian Parker;
Dick Patten; Bruce Pelz; Dave Piper; Graham Poole; Pete
Presford; Denis Quane; Mary Reed; Peter Roberts; Tom Roberts;
Brian Robinson; Dave Rowe; Jessica Amanda Salmonsens; Sharpes;
Rick Sneary; Andrew Stephenson; Phil Stephensen-Payne; Alan &
Elke Stewart; Mae Strelkov; Roy Tackett; Don Thompson;
Victoria Wayne; Roger Waddington; Keith Walker; Elst Weinstein;
Janet Wild; Janice Wiles; Ian Williams; and Susan Wood.

Along with three skellish copies that takes care of a good 98 copies. Anyone underlined is due for the big heave-ho if I don't hear from them before the next issue comes up for mailing.

W A H F

Letters:- Janice Wiles; Sam Long; Janet Wild; Joan Sharpe; Dave Rowe; Roy Sharpe; Graham Poole; Phil Stephensen-Payne; Roger Waddington; Mary Reed; Kevin Hall; Dave Piper; Pam Boal; and Elst Weinstein.

Zines:- Gil Gaier; Rob Jackson; Mae Strelkov; Linda Bushyager (Mike had already received K18 five days before I even got K17.....how 'bout dat?); Bruce Arthurs; Mike Glicksohn; Ian Williams; Donn Brazier; Bruce Townley; Rich Bartucci; Martin Easterbrook; Terry Jeeves; Darroll Pardoe; Susan Wood; Don Thompson; Pauline Palmer; and several others who are mentioned in TZTHNN1.

If I seem to be wrapping this issue up in unseemly haste it is because today is the twenty-first of December and in just one week's time the skeltribe will be on its way Meara-wards for a week's drunken sloth and the production of yet another one-shot. Also for mailing out the next joint mailing, which means this issue has to be finished before we go. Also this coming week I have to run off the second issue of ARDEES for Ruth and Andrew Dunlop.....and consume vast quantities of Scotchy substances.....and bottle five gallons of festering grot.....and pick both nostrils.

DAILY EXPRESS - Tuesday 16 December 1975.

'Space-age Sir Lew Calls Up The Stars...' Television boss Sir Lew Grade earmarked £3 million yesterday for another series of his science fiction epic 'Space 1999'. This money-spinning series has been so successful abroad that another 24 of the hour-long programmes are to be made at Elstree Studios even before the British ITV network has opted to buy it.

American producer Fred Freiberger, who worked on the 'Star Trek' series, has been recruited to join the team led by Gerry

Anderson. Martin Landau and his wife Barbara Bain will remain as the stars. Said the head of ATV: "The decision was also influenced by the fact that it would give considerable employment to British studio technicians."

THE MORE DISCERNING AMONG YOU.....

.....may have noticed a shortage of Cas, a total absence of Cas in fact. She says to pass on her apologies. Just at the moment she is up to her clit in preparations for Chrimble, so she can't make even her token last-minute appearance.

GREAT FILMS OF THE EIGHTIES DEPT.

Last night we sat and watched 'Anne Of The Thousand Days'. I decided there and then that the title of the film to be made of my wife's life-story, would be 'Cas Of The Thousand Diets'.

W A A H F

Lesleigh who sent some recent back-issues of STARLING after I pointed out that our mail seems to have been going astray. Ta. Patrick Hayden sent 'THANGORODRIM with a note to the effect that we appear to trade 'question marks'. Sam, Mary.....Mike informs me that congratulations are in order. I see it wasn't only the 'Fortey' episode that Mary explained to you, Sam.

THIS SPACE WAS RESERVED

.....for Sheryl's 'Bowers For TAFF' illo until Cas pointed out, as I was about to patch in the electro, that the voting'd be closed before this issue came out. Now who's a fool? Oh to hell with it, let's go a couple more pages.

JIM MEADOWS III 31 Apple Court; Park Forest; Il 60466; USA.

Are you really serious about this UK National Serials Data Centre?and their urge to process you? In a recent issue of TITLE there appeared a piece speculating on government regulation of fanzines, and what would happen if all faneds had to report to a Federal Fanzine Register. The thing is we consider all this to be a faraway joke. After all, why would any-

one want to know about fanzines? Even though the university I go to (Southern Illinois U.) has published a book about them and a few people think about them, they aren't important. They don't influence public thought. They don't make lots of money. They don't even affect the economy by increased paper and mimeo sales. So why bother? Why does the UK bother?

JIM, YOU RECKON WITHOUT THE BUREAUCRATIC MIND.

The whole thing is a follow up to the successful International Standard Book Number (ISBN). Now they want to do the same for magazines. What they are really after are the mags like Reader's Digest, Analog; Cheshire Life, Hot Car etc. But they are thorough. INFERNO may only be an amateur magazine, with a circulation of around 100, but it is still a magazine. The Mills Of The UK National Serials Data Centre.....and all that.

In a stroke of sublime common sense (only to be used when form 365-B /section 6243c - category PGtips42A17A12bCC/.....has been correctly filed) they have tied this in with the Copyright Receipt Office. That way they pick up on everything published and copyrighted in this country. Notice it is an ISSN. International. You gonna get yours too baby. The only option I can see is not to copyright. Not that I give a toss about this anyway. I just consider it a courtesy to send a copy to the Principal Keeper Of The Printed Books at the British Museum (now replaced by the Copyright Receipt Office at the British Library) because I like to think that there is a reasonably complete fanzine collection somewhere in this country other than the one laying around in Dave Britton's house waiting for the heat to die down.

27 DECEMBER 1975(SKEL)

Well, it was an odd Chrimble. Cas threatened me with a fate worse than her sausage-rolls if I got drunk on Christmas Day. Needless to say I stayed sober (anyone who thinks that is cowardice hasn't tried Cas's sausage-rolls). My system was so thrown out of kilter that I spent Boxing Day trying to come to terms with the fact that I could remember some of the previous day. Today I have come down with the flu. (I told you my sys-

tem was out of whack) So did Cas. Tomorrow we go to Derby. It begins to look like this zine will accompany us in an unfinished state. Oh well, at least United won.

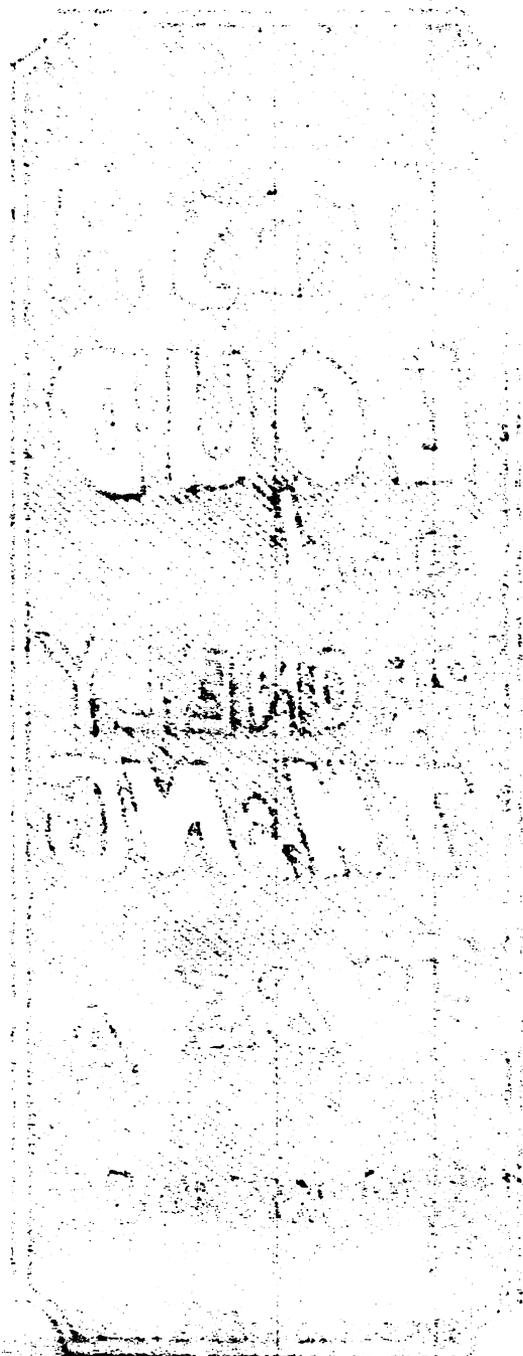
Next year Dave Rowe will be buying all our christmas presents. The very first things all three of them played with were Dave's presents. This indicates an uncanny ability on Dave's part to think like a two-nine year old. The second thing that Bethany played with was a large cardboard box. I sometimes wonder why we bother.

In ITSOTM 50 Ken Huff mentions divorce in a manner which implies it is 'A Bad Thing'. Without actually saying so he manages to tie the increased divorce rate to the increased acceptance of premarital sex. This was one hell of a sleight-of-penis. I consider it more likely that the increased divorce rate is partly attributable to divorce losing its stigma and becoming more accesible, and also partly to the current trend of not making the effort, of something for nothing. It is the same in work as it is in marriage. Put as little effort into it as possible. Take what you can get out of it. Take, take, all the time take. A marriage has to be worked for, surely? Kids these days don't seem to want to work for anything. They want everything as a right.

Divorce is a second chance. A lesson for those prepared to learn it. My emotional life is incredibly enriched by Cas's divorce. Without it we would both have lost out. I like to think though that should we ever lose what we have together we both have the chance to go for it again with someone else. I can't really bear to think of losing the relationship we have but to lose it and never have the chance to replace it would be even more unbearable. Divorces don't just mean broken homes and broken families Ken. The home and family is already broken. They are merely an acceptance of fact and a chance to start a-again.

THIS HAS BEEN.....

.....ISSN 0306-932X. Look upon my works ye mighty and despair. Cas says "Happy New Year" and "Ooo-oh, I'm dying."



IT IS A

LOUD

and

PRONELY

THING

TO BE A

SPOONERIST