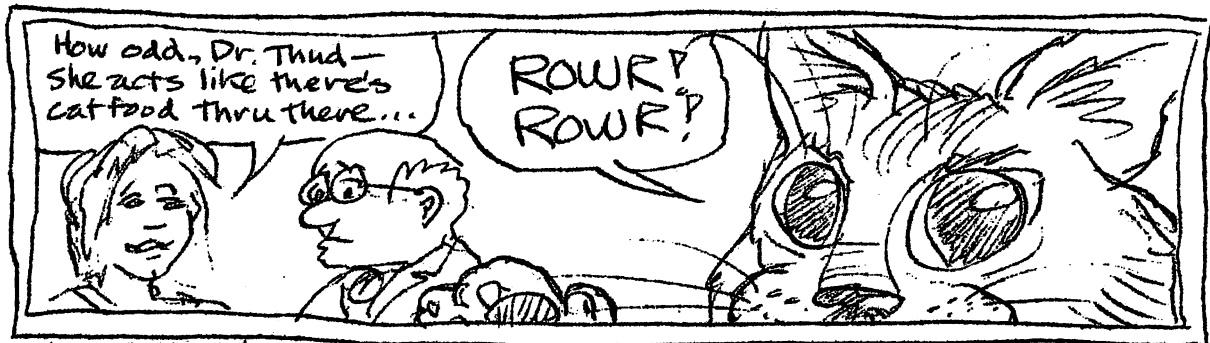
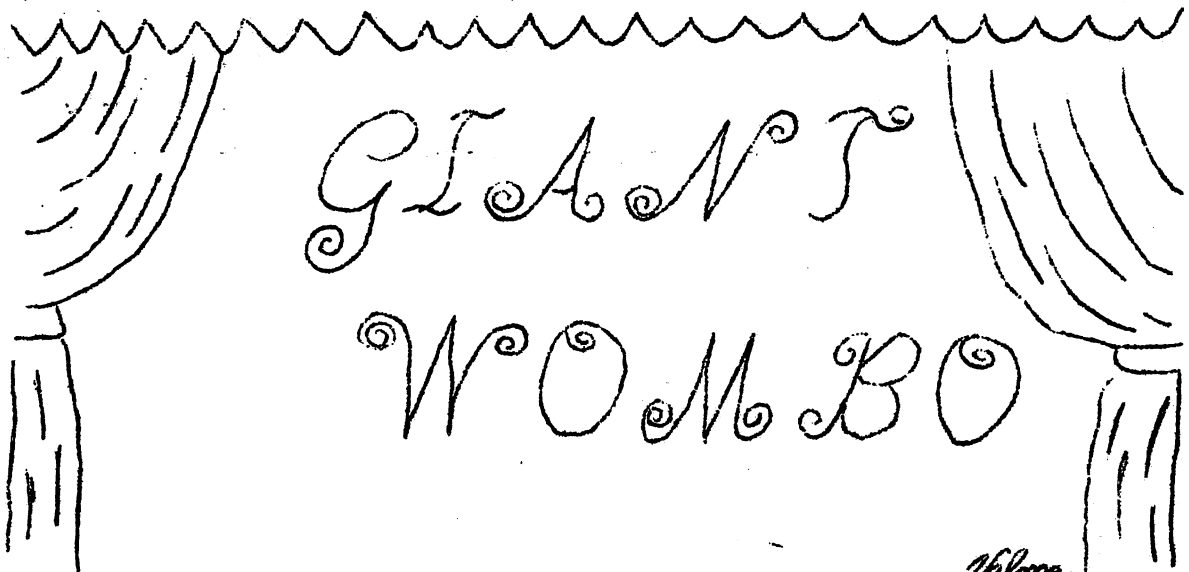


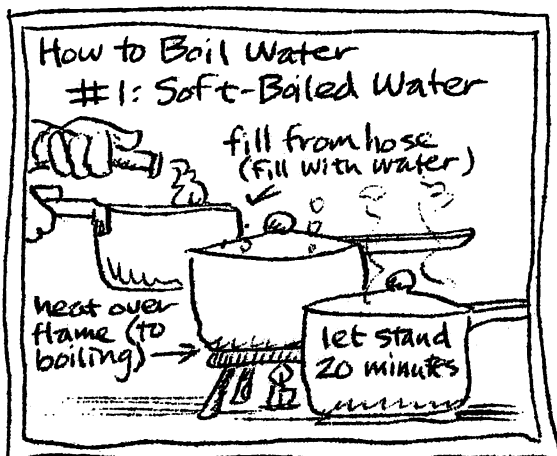
Ken Fletcher 1979



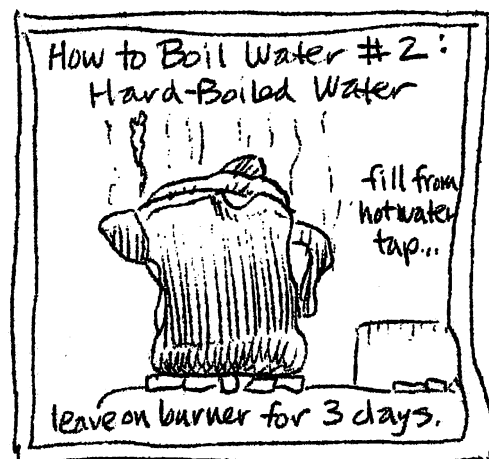
Ken Fletcher '79



Volma



Ken Fletcher '79



Ken Fletcher '79



## INTRODUCTIONS

by Leigh Edmonds

### WHAT'S NEW WITH WOMBOS

Latest research suggests that the most recent sighting of a real live Wombo occurred in about the year 5 500 AD (After Dreamtime) so, even though we are expecting that another one will happen by any day now, we aren't holding our breaths.

### PROBLEMS WITH THE POST OFFICE

Jim the Spider is not too happy about what we're making him do at the moment, but as we say to him, "He who buys the flies calls the tune". Don't get me wrong, Jim really is interested in solving our problem with the post office, it's just that he seems to have set his mind to exterminating Praying Mantis People (see the letter column) and he reckons that that should take priority. Valma and I reckon that trying to save on postage is more important but we're only humans.

You can perhaps imagine my horror when I sauntered into the post office with a few copies of the first issue of this fanzine and some GUFF ballots and discovered that the fanzine and the ballots would cost 35¢ to post. "Okay," says I, "just take out the ballot". But it was still going to cost 35¢. I ripped off the back cover but it was still 35¢. So it looks as though these days twenty pages is all we can get in the mail for our 25¢ and twenty pages is all you get in an issue of GIANT WOMBO from now on. I'm not going to complain though, it means that's a few less stencils I have to type.

We explained the problem to Jim and I said that the previous time I'd posted a genzine for the minimum rate with the maximum number of pages I could get, I'd been able to slip through 26 pages on a good day or 24 pages on an ordinary day. He got straight to the point, "When was that?" I did a quick reckoning and seemed to recall that RATAPLAN 16 had gone out in early 1974. And in 1974 I was still using quarto paper and lighter weight paper too. So much for the mystery! Now, how to save money on postage.

Some smart bugger is going to suggest that we get a Category "B" on GIANT WOMBO but if you've had a quick look at the rules and regulations that the Post Office has for the category, it is obvious that even on those slack rules something as irregular as this fanzine is excluded. And besides, Category "B" isn't much help when the vast majority of the copies are destined to go overseas.

Valma and I left the problem with Jim and went for a holiday to Perth (which was very enjoyable thank you) expecting that when we'd get back our problem would be solved and we'd get rich selling the idea to other needy fans. No such luck. The idea which Jim proposed was just what we should have expected from a master of lateral thinking but not much good for people like us. Jim proposed that we both take second jobs to help pay our postage bills - and we put him on stale fleas and water for a week.

### VALMA SAYS

Valma says; "Hello".

We are now in the middle of the first term holidays at college. Holidays is the last thing that Valma would call them for even

(Continued on Page 15)

## FEMINIST SCIENCE FICTION: A CONTRADICTION IN TERMS?

by Jean Weber

As a feminist, and as an avid reader of science fiction since childhood, I have long been concerned about the lack of female sf characters with whom I could relate. With few exceptions, female characters in English-language sf have shown the stereotyped, sexist characteristics attributed to women in American (and British and Australian) society. Women were either absent from sf altogether, or they were (again, with exceptions) anything but intelligent, brave, assertive people. In the last ten years or so, this has begun to change, as new authors (mostly women) are creating strong female characters, and/or publishing short stories and novels examining the assumptions of sexist societies. So, while "feminist science fiction" may have been a contradiction in terms ten or fifteen years ago, it is much less so now.

Because the term "feminist" is defined in a variety of ways by different people, here is the definition which I use and upon which the comments in this paper are based:

*"Feminism is a belief that all persons must have equal opportunity to develop their individual abilities without restrictions based on assumptions about the characteristics of one sex or the other. Feminism is the opposite of sexism, a belief that certain characteristics and a definite role in society are or should be determined by a person's sex."*

I think it is evident that human society practices sexism to a greater or lesser degree. (Some may consider sex-role differentiation desirable, appropriate, or even irrelevant, but that's another essay.) Given that sexism exists in our society, it is hardly surprising that fiction, including science fiction, reflects this sexism in characterisation and story lines.

Feminists, and many other people of both sexes who don't consider themselves "feminists" but who agree with the basic philosophy stated in the definition given above, feel that the lack of alternatives to "traditional" female roles, depicted in sf, is an unsatisfactory situation, particularly in that portion of sf which seriously examines future developments in politics, economics, and other human relationships, including meetings/interactions with aliens, and alien societies in general. Unfortunately, although some authors postulate incredible changes in human society (usually technological), or develop entirely alien societies, with few exceptions the relationships among the characters, especially between males and females, whether human or alien, are virtually identical to the stereotyped situation in whatever era the author was writing (eg. 1950's, 1960's). Feminists feel that this shows a great lack of imagination, if not a deliberate choice to perpetuate the status quo.

Some authors and fans excuse the sexist stereotyping in much sf by saying that the stories involved are written "purely for entertainment" and thus the author has no obligation or responsibility to portray women differently. I doubt that anyone would argue that all sf should change its view of women, just that a bit more variety would be good. However, I would suggest that writers of juvenile sf do have a responsibility not to portray women in a sexist manner. (I could write another whole essay on that subject, if someone else doesn't.)

With adult sf, I maintain that even "purely entertainment" sf always contains value judgements. Morality or ethics are often implicit, in the

sense that there is an underlying theme of "good triumphs over evil" or some such cliché (definitions of good and evil of course depend on one's ideological views and that is where the author's bias comes in). At the same time, in depicting the relations between characters (however cardboard those characters may be), certain things about relationships are implicit, if not explicit: e.g. "heroes" (of either sex) are usually from hierarchial societies (often pseudo-feudal or militaristic), rarely from collectivist groups; "freedom" or "democracy" are often portrayed as synonymous with "capitalism", which is not the same thing; the rugged individualist (however greedy) often wins out against the dictator/society/multinational company/other group. Political intrigue makes good entertainment, and the winner tells us a lot about the author's biases.

It may be less obvious to some people that the relations between men and women are always implicitly, if not explicitly, treated with value-judgements: women in sf are generally non-existent, subservient, or otherwise less-than-equal. So writers are also implicitly re-inforcing societal stereotypes about women and about male-female relationships. Fiction writers usually deal with what is and what ought to be; sf writers often deal with what might be. If we're speculating about the future, or devising alternative worlds, a lot of possibilities are being overlooked.

What makes a feminist science fiction story? Firstly, a female main character is not sufficient. There are plenty of examples of negatively-stereotyped female leads. Secondly, in my opinion a female main character is not necessary for a book to be feminist (Ursula LeGuin's works are good examples). Thirdly, a feminist book may be written by either a female or male author. The big question, obviously, is what sort of behaviour or relationships are feminist? This is a really good philosophical (or ideological) question, and I hope to get some thoughtful feedback from readers. I don't intend to try to answer that question fully here (maybe I'll expand upon the theme in another essay), but I'll throw out a few ideas.

A story may be feminist without any of the characters being feminists: that is, if the author is telling you, however subtly, that sexism is bad or silly, then the story is feminist. Some of the best feminist books I have read have contained many stereotyped men and women, but the story pointed out the inherent ridiculousness of many assumptions in a sexist society.

Women don't have to "win" over men for a story to be feminist; in fact, most of the books I've read of that nature are reverse-sexist, that is, they uphold rigid sex roles, but the roles are reversed or otherwise different from the roles in our society. If we go back to my definition at the beginning of this essay, we see that feminism is concerned with equal opportunities, not sex-determined restrictions. Role-reversal can be quite feminist, as long as it's in the context of choice, or for the purpose of examining the stupidity of roles or stereotypes.

As for individual characteristics, a female lead should show the same general characteristics as a male lead; intelligence, courage, assertiveness, talent, inventiveness, and so on. At the same time, I prefer my female leads to be less ruthless and singleminded than many male leads, but that is my bias as to "appropriate" behaviour in both males and females. Another essay I'd like to write when I have time would concern male and female solutions to typical problems; whether women would or could find new solutions to old problems (particularly socio-economic problems). I think somebody must find some new solutions, and I like to think women will be the ones. Let's

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speculate on how society would solve problems of welfare, unemployment, pollution, and so on, if women had a greater (or total) say in business and government.

What I'd like to do in the rest of this article is to look at some of the new books and say why I think the characters or the story line have (or have not) broken through the old stereotypes and have given us some new ideas to think about. The list is necessarily limited to books I've read, so I will also include a list of related books, and some references to feminist fanzines and more detailed articles on the subject of "feminism in sf".

### Feminist Science Fiction and Fantasy

Cecelia Holland, "Floating Worlds", 1975.

Future history, full of political intrigue. Earth-born anarchist Paula Mendoza has her own methods of dealing with the mutant Styth pirates of the Outer Planets. Paula doesn't let anybody dominate her - or not for very long, and only as part of her overall plans. Inherent flaws in racism, sexism and a variety of political systems are brought out.

Tanith Lee, "The Birthgrave", 1975.

A quest fantasy set on a far-future Earth, featuring a female main character trying to find her identity and origins. Along the way she is treated by various groups of men as a goddess, warrior, witch, whore and slave, and exhibits herself as a strong, assertive character who does not crumple into a rescuing male's arms when things get rough.

Joanna Russ, "The Female Man", 1975.

Women from several alternative Earths meet: present-day America, an alternative twentieth-century America where World War II never occurred and the depression continued, a future all-female world (men have died of a plague thirty generations ago), and a far-future world where the battle between the sexes is quite literally a war... a "heavy" feminist novel with long philosophical passages interwoven into fascinating descriptions of the various societies.

Marion Zimmer Bradley, "The Shattered Chain", 1976.

Insight into the lives of the Free Amazons, bound up in an adventure story. Three main characters are women, each struggling to reconcile conflicting emotions within herself ("freedom" vs the "chains" of traditional women's roles); each lifestyle has good and bad points which must be considered and reconciled. This book was flawed for me by the sudden collapse of one of the main characters about two-thirds of the way through the book; for no apparent reason she "fell madly in love with" a man and spent the rest of the book rationalizing this.

Anne McCaffrey, "Restoree", 1967.

A woman awakes from a long "nightmare" to find herself on another world, with a face and body that are not hers. She rescues a man from an insane asylum and assists him to regain his political position. Her intelligence and skills are indispensable to his success.

Kate Wilhelm, "Where Late the Sweet Birds Sang", 1976 (Hugo winner).

An extended family survives plagues, rioting and later sterility through

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advance planning, scientific research, and cloning. The women are shown as equals to the men in status and capabilities, except for the "breeders" (non-sterile women) who are kept drugged and docile. Good discussion of the "group dynamics" of clones, and the potential for evolution of a two-caste system; upper-caste, carefully-bred clones, and lower-caste oppressed breeders (used mainly as surrogate-mothers).

James Tiptree, Jr., "Up the Walls of the World", 1978.

Three story lines interact and finally converge, bringing together humans, very convincing aliens and a vast sentience floating amongst the stars. Male and female characters are portrayed as equally having strengths and weaknesses. Among the aliens "fathering" (child-rearing) is high-status and is done by males. Feminist philosophy is interwoven with fascinating descriptions of aliens and an engrossing story. *Tiptree is a pseudonym for Alice Sheldon.*

Suzy McKee Charnas, "Walk to the End of the World", 1974.

After the cataclysm, women are blamed for all the horrors of the past. Male and female societies are totally separate, except for forced breeding and the use of women as servants by men. One woman uses some renegade men (who think they are using her) to attempt to find the mythical free women of the wild places. Women are shown as strong and decisive, but the men are not sympathetically portrayed. I don't care for the book, as I thought the characters (both female and male) were poorly developed and stereotyped.

Vonda N. McIntyre, "The Exile Waiting", 1976.

Centre is the sole surviving city on Earth, with a very hierarchical, "free-enterprise" system ruled by wealthy degenerates. The heroine, a telepath and cat-burglar, managed to sort them all out and escape. She comes across more as a neuter than a female, because of her youth.

Ursula LeGuin, "The Dispossessed", 1974 (Hugo winner).

Although the main character is a man, the difference in the treatment of women in two societies (communal subsistence, and capitalistic over-consumer) are well contrasted, and the inherent weaknesses of sexism pointed out. Excellent characterisation and descriptions of social systems, including weaknesses in both systems.

Ursula LeGuin, "Left Hand of Darkness", 1969 (Nebula & Hugo winner).

The inhabitants of Winter are all capable of being both male and female during their lives, apparently at random. The consequences of everyone in a society being potentially a mother, are examined within the context of a story of political intrigue. The story is told from the point of view of a human male.

Joan D. Vinge, "The Outcasts of Heaven Belt", 1978.

Women in one of the societies are equal with men; in others, the great concern about sterility and mutations keep the women planet-bound. Group marriage is also examined, as well as several solutions to a common problem of dwindling resources and mistrust in the aftermath of war.

Doris Lessing, "Memoirs of a Survivor", 1975.

A strange story set in a dying London, as the social services of a city



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collapse. The female lead moves back and forth between "reality" and "fantasy" until you're not sure which is which. Fascinating descriptions of coping with food, fuel and relationships as the city dies.

Samuel R. Delany, "Triton", 1976.

Sex changes, homo/hetrosexuality, communal living, total individuality in dress/nudity — all are on Tethys, a city on one of Saturn's moons. Men and women have equal opportunity, but some (like the male lead) have trouble coping. Along the way we are treated to descriptions of theatrical arts, lots of gadgetry, various living arrangements, and a future Earth: lots to think about!

John Varley, "Ophiuchi Hotline", 1977.

The aliens have taken over the earth, and humans live on various planets and satellites. Sex-changes, memory-recording for "transplanting" into cloned bodies, computer terminals in the brain, and medical modification of the body are just some of the biological wonders; the main character, a woman, turns up in several (illegally) cloned bodies as she battles to survive. Attitudes towards women, sex, and parenthood are slipped into the story, too.

More titles (I haven't read all of these; not all are feminist)

Pamela Sargent (editor), "Women of Wonder", 1974; "More Women of Wonder", 1976; "The New Women of Wonder", 1977. Short f & sf stories by women.

Excellent introductions discussing women writers of science fiction. Many of the stories, particularly the older ones, are good examples of non-feminist story lines or characteristics, but all are a good read.

Ursula LeGuin, "The Wind's Twelve Quarters", ; other books.

Kate Wilhelm, "The Infinity Box", 1975 (short stories); "The Clewiston Test", 1976; others.

James Tiptree Jr., "Star Songs of an Old Primate", 1978. (Contains the Hugo-winner "Houston, Houston, Do You Read?"): "Warm Worlds and Otherwise"; "10,000 Light-Years from Home".

Zenna Henderson, "Pilgrimage", 1961; "The People: No Different Flesh", 1967; "Holding Wonder", 1971. These stories about gentle telepathic aliens, stranded for several generations on Earth, are flawed by the strong sex-role stereotyping.

Joe Haldeman, "The Forever War".

Vic Ghidalia & Roger Elwood (Editors), "The Venus Factor", 1972. Fantasy and Science Fiction stories by women.

Edmond Hamilton (Editor), "The Best of Leigh Brackett", 1977.

Vonda N. McIntyre & Susan Janice Anderson (Editors), "Aurora: Beyond Equality", 1976. SF stories by women; I'm told this is excellent.

Anne McCaffrey, "The Ship Who Sang", 1976; "Dragonflight", "Dragonquest", many other books.

Judith Merrill, "The Best of Judith Merrill", 1969.

Catherine L. Moore, "Jirel of Joiry", 1969.

Kit Reed, "The Killer Mice", 1976.

Robert Silverberg (Editor), "The Crystal Ship", 1976. Short novels by women.



Joan D. Vinge, "Fireship", 1978.

Leigh Brackett, "The Book of Skaith", "Reavers of Skaith", others.

Marion Zimmer Bradley, various Darkover books.

Suzy McKee Charnas, "Motherlines", 1978.

C.J. Cherryh, "Brothers of Earth", "Faded Sun? Kesrith", others.

Tanith Lee, "Don't Bite the Sun", others.

Doris Lessing, "Briefing for a Descent into Hell", 1971; she has written numerous feminist books, but few are sf.

Vonda N. McIntyre, "Dreamsnake", 1978.

Patricia McKillip, "Riddle Master of Hed", 1976; "The Forgotten Beasts of Eld", 1974.

Naomi Mitchison, "Solution 3", 1975; "Memories of a Spacewoman", 1962.

Andre Norton, "Perilous Dreams", 1976; "Outside", 1975; various Witchworld books.

Marge Piercy, "Woman on the Edge of Time", 1976. This is supposed to be excellent; I haven't been able to find a copy.

Joanna Russ, "Picnic on Paradise", 1968; "We Who Are About To...", 1977; "The Two of Them", others.

Cherry Wilder, "The Luck of Brin's Five".

Samuel R. Delany, "Nova", "Dhalgren".

#### Symposia, Discussions, Commentary

Mary Kelly Badami, "A Feminist Critique of Science Fiction", Extrapolation, Vol. 18, no. 1, Dec. 1976, pp. 6-19.

Beverley Friend, "Virgin Territory", Extrapolation, Dec. 1972, pp. 49-58.

Joanna Russ, "The Image of Women in Science Fiction", Vertex, Feb. 1974, pp. 57.

Pamela Sargent, introductions to Women of Wonder, More WOW, New WOW.

Jeffrey D. Smith, Editor. "Women in Science Fiction: a Symposium", Katru 3/4, pp. 4-125.

Karen Trenfield, "Feminist SF: Reality or Fantasy? A review of recent sf by women", Hecate, Vol. 4, no. 1, February 1978, pp. 99-108.

Susan Wood, "Women and Science Fiction", Algol, Vol. 16, no. 1, Winter 1978-79, pp. 9-18.

#### Feminist Fanzines (just a few of those available)

Amanda Bankier, "The Witch and The Chameleon", 191 Sherbourne St., Apt. 112, Toronto, Ontario M5A 3X1, Canada.

Jennifer Bankier, "Orca", 485 Huron St., Apt. 406, Totonto, Ontario M5R 2R5, Canada.

Janice Bogstad & Jeanne Gomoll, "Janus", c/- SF<sup>3</sup>, Box 1624, Madison, Wisconsin 53701, USA.

## A HYPOCHONDRIAC A DAY KEEPS THE DOCTOR IN PAY

by David Grigg

My trouble, of course, is that I have too much imagination. And I read too much.

The result is that everytime I have a sore throat, it's cancer of the larynx. Every bout of indigestion is a heart attack, every touch of colic is acute appendicitis, every cough a clear sign of tuberculosis.

The fact that Sue is a nurse doesn't help, of course, since she comes home with gory stories and terrifying tales about people who drop dead at the age of twenty-five with no more sign than just a slight headache. Now, of course, everytime I get a headache I just lie there waiting for everything to go suddenly black.

Not that I'm the kind of hypochondriac who tells everyone about his imagined illnesses, and goes running to the doctor every week. But when I count off my symptoms, deep down I know I'm doomed, and stoically keep silent. Stiff upper lip, and all that.

But not only does there seem to be a proliferating number of exotic things to die from, there is an incredible upsurge at the moment in advice on how to keep healthy, what to do and what not to do in order to live until the age of 103. And worse, since each piece of this advice invariably contradicts every other piece, I am kept in a continual state of confusion.

Exercise is very important, so they say. That worries me a lot, since I have a very sedentary job, don't play sport, and sit around reading during most of my leisure time. So I've taken up doing a few push-ups and so in the morning, and climbing the seven flights of stairs at work two or three times a day. As I sit there panting at my desk, with my heart trying hysterically to batter its way out of my chest, I keep telling myself how much good it is doing me. Except, of course, that it seems a large percentage of heart attacks happen to unfit people like me trying to exercise.

Worst of all is what you read about diet. Everyone at least seems agreed that what you eat has a large bearing on your health and longevity. But as to just what you should eat... that's the problem. It seems that everything edible is sure to give you cancer, a heart attack, diabetes or galloping gastritis.

I stopped eating butter a long while ago. All that cholesterol and those poly-saturated fats. Very bad for the heart. I started using margarine instead, and feeling virtuous, spread it thick. Now the latest reports say that margarine is no better for you than butter: it seems that polyunsaturated fats in your diet being good for you is a myth.

Then there's bread. Wholemeal, of course. You need all of that rough fibre to keep your plumbing in trim so that you won't end up with cancer of the bowel. That's all right. But you can eat too much bread. It makes you fat, and obesity is dreadful for the heart.

Sugar, as I'm sure you know, is A Dreadful Thing. Too much predisposes you to diabetes. And besides, like bread, it helps make you fat.

Like butter, milk is out of the question. I used to drink a lot of milk, usually flavoured, being encouraged by those obscene 'Big M' advertisements on television where all those fit and virile young people run around in swimsuits pouring milk over each other. But then I read the statistical reports. Drinking milk can reduce your lifespan by ten years. It seems milk is all right for cows, but not for adult carnivores like us.

So imagine my problem, getting up in the morning, ready for breakfast. What to eat? Bread and jam? All that starch and sugar? No. Well then, eggs and bacon? Even worse: cholesterol in the eggs, fat in the bacon, not to mention the carcinogens in the forms of nitrates used in curing the bacon. No. Cornflakes? With milk and sugar? No.

Well then, at least I can have something to drink when I get up. A nice glass of flavoured milk? No, no, I'd forgotten that I'd stopped drinking milk. Well, then, fresh orange juice, terrific. Until I counted up the amount of sugar in every bottle.

Coffee, then. I had to cut out sugar in my tea and coffee, once I realised how bad sugar was. It has been a hard struggle, since I used to take two and a half teaspoons, but I eventually did it. Having a sweet tooth, I would have been tempted to substitute one of those pills containing artificial sweeteners. But we all know what they do to Canadian rats, don't we? Zap! Cancer of the bladder after a dose of only ten grams a day.

But I've had to give up drinking coffee and tea all together. I came across a recent article in New Scientist which said, among other things, that if caffeine were being introduced today as a new drug, the US Federal Drug Administration would restrict its use and only allow it to be sold on prescription by a pharmacist.

So I eventually settled for drinking mineral water. I don't need to tell you that I couldn't start drinking beer. Apart from all the calories, the alcohol attacks your liver. But I thought I was on to a safe thing with mineral water. I mean, all it is is clean water with lots of bubbles, right?

"My God!" said Sue after watching me down my second glass. "I'd hate to see the sodium levels in your blood right now. All those bicarbonates! Dreadful!"

I suppose after that there's nothing left to drink but plain water. But someone at work collared me last week and lectured me for an hour about the evils of fluoridation in drinking water. It pollutes your precious bodily fluids you know.

At this rate, I could die of thirst.

*(Members of ANZAPA will have already read this as part of David's "WAITING... for someone to invent an invisible nerve gas which induces instant gafia in those above you on the waiting list" in ANZAPA mailing 66.)*

## WAYCON '79 REPORT

by Caroline Strong

(The impressions, or the disinspiration of a neo)

For me WAYCON '79 started in October 1978, upon my attachment to our great and wonderful leader, the El Presidente of the Western Australian SF Association. Poor me little did I know that I was letting myself in for - I'm referring to the workload (nothing else) which I so eagerly took on to merge my time with that of Bob's and also to relieve him of some of the load. This involved typing, artwork, morale, interpretation of great languages (see later reference), and numerous other things. I guess I got to know the ins and outs of convention organising, especially publicity, really well - too well for a poor little neo, but I enjoyed doing it.

One of the greatest uplifters was deciphering the great words of the El Presidente, and the programme editor Bevan Casey - Scandal!! Illiteracy in the higher core of WASFA!! No, just phonetics forever - sorry great leader that should be "Fenetix Fureva". My pet projects for the Con were a Star Trek Animated display, a great help was Bob's copy of the Star Trek Concordance and for colours a Star Log magazine and my imagination. The other was a Dr Who display, which was mainly pictorial - photos plus two large drawings. These displays (plus my costume) in the end were the main impetus for my frustration at not being able to complete them to my idealization... Ah what? There's always next year? Look out for PERTH IN 80!

The next part of the convention was meeting our GoH at the rail terminal on a brisk and sunny morning (huh - change that, Perth's weather does some weird things as poor East States fen found out - heat wave during the con) - on a very chilly Monday morning at 7am. I was anxious to meet Leigh and Valma, at the time I felt a bit shy but overcame this to be overawed by Leigh's personality (and height, gee!!). I also talked with Valma while Leigh zipped off to get the luggage. Getting up at early hours of the morning does weird things to the brains of night owl fen, three of them proceeded to do an Ornithopter greeting on the platform (names will not be released for publication to stomp rumors of insanity in the hierarchy of WASFA).

We took them to the hotel and due to circumstances myself and Bevan arrived at the room with the luggage before anybody else. While standing in the corridor while waiting I began feeling like I was on a movie set - (maybe it was the narrowness of the corridor that caused these symptoms, no - ah, it was the plushness of the place, that was it). I wondered what Leigh said he does for a living - but I was informed that this was the quality of east states con hotels. I wonder what east states fen do for a living??. When the others arrived we went in and talked for a while and then left Leigh and Valma to have some breakfast. Me, well I had to attend a lecture that morning at the Uni after Bob and Bevan had talked about going back to Bevan's to make hamburgers and to return to their respective homes to go to bed. Aaarrrrggghhh!!

Thursday night and Friday morning of that week I spent fixing my costume for the the banquet - Princess Leia - well I like the costume and the character! Double frustration was present as Bob was at the hotel fixing things up and was unable to pick my things up, and I was supposed to attend a geology lab that afternoon (in the end I didn't attend). My kind brother drove me into the Ozone Hotel. When I arrived chaos reigned only in small doses as it was only lunchtime. I spent most of the afternoon and early evening fixing up my Star

Trek Animated display - bluetacked all the pictures and words to a large sheet which eventually went onto the wall.

When I came downstairs for the opening session every thing seemed to be in a calm, cool and collected mood. Things went off very well, introducing the fen to the committee and Leigh and Valma. During the refreshment break my stomach was making striking demands due to no breakfast, late lunch (about 3.00pm) and at that moment it was about 8.30. Bob was in no mood to eat food so I went with Ray Raspa (Great Presidente of FOC) and his lady, Heike Immenel. So we walked and walked and walked... and I was the one who had made out the list and map of eating establishments. One restaurant was closed for renovations, another was full up to the brim, the next one seemed to be non-existent or so we thought, it had been transformed into "Coco's Polynesian Restaurant". We all looked dubiously at the place - it looked very expensive, it was possibly reservations only. My feet were saying, "No more walking," while my purse said, "No, you don't dare step inside!" We all considered the takeaway we had passed earlier, then Ray dashed in to ask about reservations, the gentleman at the door said there was no need for reservations. Ray then promptly said, "Ladies, follow me" - there's me going into a flash restaurant with bare feet, honest. Thank goodness for my long skirt, it did a good job of covering them and I wasn't asked to leave but that rather sheepish expression on my face remained there all evening expecting just that to occur. So we dined - hhhmmmm - a beef dish with a tangy, spicy sauce, plus wine, and for desert a coconut and banana concoction. (not so good later, as alcohol and I are not friends, even with a mere three quarters of a glass.)

At about 10.30 we left to return to the hotel to an anxious Bob. We had missed the great event of the evening, the debate - "That Science Fiction Prepares People for the Future" - which apparently had gone off really well. Later in the evening the wine started to have effect and my stomach and my head urged me to bed.

Saturday, I missed "Zardoz", having seen it before, and went to do some work on my Dr. Who display. After the film had finished I dashed downstairs to see "Cosmic Zoom". It is fantastic stuff, I'd never seen it before (saw it twice before the end of the con). Then I quickly departed as "War Games" was about to come on, I'd already seen it due to the quirks of my high school history teacher, and returned to my work (This was as I remember it, but it conflicts with the printed programme.)

When I returned, having finished the display plus books, the fen were in a miserable mood (as Bob has explained in his WAYCON report). Even I, who only saw the end of it as I came in, was thinking about it. I was thinking that the basement toilets for the downstairs facilities would make great bomb shelters. Great huh? Now you will understand any nicknames in reference to WAYCON such as BombCon, because on Sunday we showed "Dr. Strangelove" and on Monday "Silo 15" - the A-bomb theme was repetitive.

The afternoon I spent at the speech by Dr Millech on "Aspects of Early SF", and a talk by Ian Nichols on Michael Moorcock - both I found very interesting. The evening, of course, was the banquet and fancydress. I arrived as Princess Leia, to be introduced by certain fen to a Luke Skywalker (true identity unknown to me at the time - a little embarrassing for both of us as having our own attachments). Later Bob received his award for services to W.A. fandom, I was extremely proud of him, knowing he did deserve it. The amount of work he did just for the con, I consider tremendous. There was also

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SwanCon 3 and all the work he does as President of WASFA.

After departing from the banquet/fancy dress, a group of us plonked ourselves upon the landing while others proceeded to play D & D in various rooms as well as attend the usual room parties. One of the topics that came to ear while talking was Vegemite fandom, introduced to this neo and others by Rob McGough - which has now had some interesting developments in the west. As the night went on I proceeded to get extremely sleepy and verged on conking-out. So I said my adeus and wound my way to my beautiful comfy bed. (It's strange how soft that bed got by the end of the convention).

Sunday morning I spent in fits of mild to raging panic, this was due to the panel - "The Future of Spcae Flight". I was totally unprepared despite my eagerness initially and the number of books I had in hand. Due to my word of mouth to others - not my fault, honest - others misunderstood me and thought the panel had been cancelled. The word reached our Great BeanbagMan (Chairman), Tony Peacy... all I had said was that it should have been cancelled due to unpreparedness by a majority of panelists. Well, in the end the panel got postponed to the afternoon, replacing the other panel I was on, to make room for the Book and Paraphenalia Auction that was still going great.

Before the panel in the afternoon the T-shirt incident ocured, the incident is almost fully documented in Bob's article. I wish to make my part clear - quote "I had washed one and hung it in the window to dry" should refer to me, this me (strange what conventions do to memories). After washing the T-shirt I hung it on a coat hanger in the window. Immediately I had thoughts that it might get blown out the window ("No wind? Okay") and left. Later I returned, while talking with Bob I noticed the T-shirt had gone out. This seemed extremely funny at the time, not for Bob as it was his highly prized "Rights for left-handers" T-shirt, which he uses to stir the Perth public. Well, the problem was solved and I still think of myself dying of laughter on the bed and also quizzing, "What wind?! Psychic forces?"

After lunch the panel went quite well, due to Mr Nichold, our chairman. What happened after that I'm not quite sure, I was recovering from the shakes as it was my first time in the limelight. At about 6.30 Bob and Rob McGough were setting up the films for the evening session only to find there was a licensing boo-boo. "Everybody upstairs", cozy yeah, and a little uncomfortable. I got one of the projectionists seats to sit on, plus the projectionist! Only two films got shown as the manager wanted to get to sleep and not hear the films. The rest got shown in the morning, to my disgust, as I would have to attend a lecture at 11am on Monday.

Monday - well I didn't attend that lecture. Instead I watched the McLaren film "The Eye Hears, The Ear Sees". It was most inspiring - really I mean it and to continue my fervour the film left me with a genuine break off the trailer to start my 'career' in animation (psychic forces?). "Duel" was shown first, then "Night of the Lepus" which started just as I was about to leave for a Geography lab. I was infuriated, especially upon seeing DeForest Kelly's name in the credits, I being a moderate Trekkie.

When I returned madness reigned due to an ornithopter competition, SF charades - it was the traditional Silly Competitions.

After the closing, the Ornithopter squadron "took off" from the oval next to the hotel. This was for Rob McGough and his camera. We are still to see the results (I was conned into it). Later, eventually the close group of WASFA

and eastern fans converged on Sally Underwood's place, from where we saw Leigh and Valma off to the airport, and Peter Toluzzi too.

A small group went with them to the airport - a pity they could not have stayed longer, a few of us would have liked the chance to get to know them better as we all got on well.

The West welcomes all east states fan - come over to the next one. Well, I guess I'll be involved with the next con, it's already April and I have been instated as the Official Secreatry of the PERTH in '80 Con...

*(This report from Caroline is part of a matched set. The other half of the set has been written by Bob Ogden. GIANT WOMBO isn't big enough to hold them both in one issue, so it seems, and so you you will have to make sure that you get the next issue to get the other side of the story.)*

*(Continued from Page 3)*

though she doesn't have to go to classes or out to schools for "school experience" there are essays to be written and reports to be done, and a list of books as long as your arm that should be read.

Fortunately for Valma she could pick her own field of reading and we are saving money by her reading juvenile sf. It's going to reach the stage very soon when she knows more about the field as a whole than I do. I am not complaining too much about this though because it means that now I've got somebody to read all the stuff that we've got on our shelves and sort out that which is worth reading. Valma also has access to a library that has got more books again. Sometimes Valma says that she feels guilty that I do most of the work on GIANT WOMBO. I tell her that I'd rather be typing stencils than reading some of the stuff she has shown me... she even got halfway through an Andre Norton novel before having to give up, which is about seventy pages more than I've ever got.

I also tell Valma that next year she is going to be doing most of the work on this fanzine while I take a rest. The work load will come out more even but really I'm the fanzine fan of the family and I actually enjoy typing stencils.

#### THE GLORIOUS STATE OF AUSTRALIAN FANDOM

Since I stopped producing FANW SLETTER things seem to have got a lot worse and then to have got better again. For a while there fans in Melbourne would begin sniggering everytime somebody said the word "Sydney" and we get the impression that Sydney fans went into a rage whenever anybody said the word "Melbourne".

Everybody will be pleased to hear that this no longer seems to be the case, after whole months spent feeling hostile about each other and the things that get done in various places everybody seems to have let off enough steam to be actually able to talk to a fan from the other city. Some might think that this is a good thing, but is it?

Shouldn't the fans in Adelaide and Perth and Brisbane start to get worried that a united Sydney and Melbourne fandom will turn on them in a fit of vicious rage... Perhaps they had best stir us up again just to be on the side-lines and safe.



## COOKERY CORNER

with Christine Ashby

Fandom is rapidly dividing into "them" and "us"; that is us who cook nourishing family-style meals, and them that get invited around to eat the results. The latter sort of person still unhappily form the majority, and we all know many fans (usually young males) who live on baked beans and vitamin pills between dinner invitations. Valma and I have decided to offer counsel and guidance to these lean and hungry mortals - and to the rest of you - by means of regular cookery columns in our somewhat irregular fanzines.

The mistake our undomesticated friends often seem to make when cooking for themselves is to start off with frogs' legs bonne femme en surprise before they have even perfected the art of boiling eggs. There are people out there with cupboards full of every known spice and herb, and very little else except cans of cat food. Take my word for it, you've got to begin with simple and reliable dishes that you know you'll enjoy eating. With this in mind, having already published elsewhere the very basic "Disaster Mince" and the more advanced "Cousin Rosie's Idiotproof Goulash", I think it is time for a really yummy basic desert - "Robin Johnson Memorial Chocolate Puddin'".

I was brought up on this pud. The recipe may in fact be found in the P.W.M.U. Cookbook (absolutely essential in any kitchen, Presbyterian or otherwise). However, we once made it for Robin. "Ah!" quoth he, twitching his nose appreciatively, "self-saucing chocolate pudding! This really is very good. You must give me the brand name so that I can make a note of it." It is Robin's good fortune that the P.W.M.U. Cookbook is but a slender, soft-covered volume!

At the end of the meal, be warned that your guests will volunteer (like a Canadian fan who shall remain nameless) to take the dish to the sink so that they can scrape it clean en route. You will of course be ready with several good reasons why you have to take it to the sink yourself. This pudding is infinitely better than any of the packet varieties, and no harder to make. It is also cheaper.

One thing to remember - you must use proper metric measuring cups and spoons, and be exact about the quantities. Baking is much more scientific than concocting soups or stews, which may be what scares some people off. The mixture can be halved quite successfully if you only want enough for two (or one if you happen to be Carey Handfield.).

1 cup self raising flower  
3/4 cup sugar  
2 tablespoons butter or margarine  
1/2 cup milk  
2 teaspoons cocoa.

SAUCE: 1/2 cup brown sugar, 2 teaspoons cocoa, 1 1/4 cups boiling water

Use a medium sized pyrex dish for preference. Sift flower and 2 teaspoons cocoa, add sugar. Melt butter and mix into flower mixture (sort of shop at it with a spatula until it looks like wet sand). Add milk and mix. Combine brown sugar and remaining 2 teaspoons of cocoa, sprinkle on top of mixture in dish. Pour boiling water gently over all this. Do not cover. Bake in the middle of a moderate oven ( 350 fahrenheit, 180 celsius) for 45 minutes. Serve with cream or ice-cream. If you are Leigh Edmonds, lie around groaning contentedly after.

## FEED-BACK

### *Letters of Comment and some editorial responses*

Leanne Frahm, 272 Slade Point Road, SLADE POINT, Queensland 4741.

One of the things I've found most interesting about fandom is the continual squabbling about awards. I find it so interesting that I read it all out loud to Malcolm the Praying Mantis. And now that I find in Giant Wombo 1 that you're dragging the well-meaning but simple minded arachnid into the controversy, I feel it only fair to ask a mantid for his opinion.

Mantids are naturally more rigid in their thinking -- it comes with the carapace -- and Malcolm doesn't like any of Jim's ideas at all. Slip-shod, he says, too hairy by half.

For instance, Jim says "Science Fiction is supposed to be a fiction of ideas so we should give awards for ideas and give fiction a rest!!" (Hear! Hear!" says you.) Well, you and Jim might think sf is supposed to be a fiction of ideas, but that doesn't make it mandatory for the rest of the world. Malcolm doesn't really mind an old idea if the fiction is a bit fresh, clever, thought-provoking and well-written.

Malcolm thinks the suggested catagories are quite unworkable -- his grandfather was notorious at the Bar. What happens, he says, to a story about alien invasion by way of time travel? How do you select nominations for "Best There are Some Things Man Is Not Meant To Know" when half the readers might already know and the other half are just dumb? Does Jim realise that "Best Extrapolation of Current Trends" could cover every other category?

Sloppy thinking, says Malcolm. Jim should go back to terrorising mosquitoes and leave the big game alone.

Despite Malcolm's criticism, I enjoyed Giant Wombo -- except for Cookery Corner, you were joking, weren't you? -- and I'm glad to see it finally in circulation.

(Thanks for the nice words in the last paragraph, but it's already too late - Jim is currently studying various forms of biological warfare against praying mantis people. "What ordinary person," says Jim, "pays any attention to praying mantis people anyhow?" Silly stiff green things, and just like one of them to criticise a new concept because of rigid thinking. I bet a praying mantis person never thought more than two lateral thoughts at the same time.

If people aren't careful, GIANT WOMBO will have to prove a point by holding its Go-Hu Poll, giving awards according to the Jim System.)

Richard Faulder, PO Box 195, Coonamble, NSW 2829.

Christine Ashby's points on financing conventions are very well taken. I have found that a good approach is to use the facilities (treasurer, bank account, account book, etc) of a fanclub, rather than set up a seperate system (although this is obviously not possible in the case of a WorldCon in Australia). If the treasurer is halfway competent he/she will be able to seperate out the convention material from the rest (I had no trouble). Agreed - avoid having to countersign cheques. Agreed - all money must go through the Treasurer so a receipt can be issued. Oh, while I think of it; the other advantage of running a local con through a club is that this avoids the problem of the committee arguing about how to divide up the loss or profit afterwards. I found that the best accounting system was set up thus:

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Date:	Transaction:	Credits	:	Debits	:	Balance
	Source:	Destination:	Amount	Source:	Paid by:	Amount

This system has separate balance columns for account and cashbox, with double-entry bookkeeping to indicate transfers between them. Credit sources are: cheque, cash, postal note, bank, cash. Credit destinations are: bank, cashbox. Debit sources are: bank, cashbox. Paid by is for the officer's signature. Admittedly this needs to have the columns ruled up by hand, but it does have the advantage of allowing one to know exactly where all the money should be.

The thing that bothers me about books such as Ms Pizzeys is their sexism. They assume that all fault lies with the man, and even if the woman is guilty of some misbehaviour, the husband or her father, or some other man is at fault. What, we must ask, is forcing both partners to stay together with such violence results? Something is forcing battered husbands to stay with their wives (although to mention battered husbands would be to harm the anti-male case being built up). Why are husbands becoming drunk enough to bash the other members of their families? The problem will not go away until society decides what the really basic questions are in this situation.

*(The basic question in the issue of wife-bashing is whether we are going to sit around asking questions and counter-questions or whether we are going to face up to the fact that situations are not resolved by talking. Making such matters of this public knowledge and matters of public concern, that is the first step and what the book and the review of it were meant to do. While I am pleased to get responses such as this which indicate that people are taking notice, I am distressed to see that people are trying to hide from the issue by throwing up smoke screens.*

*Feminism, the kind of awareness which will do a lot to stop the problems of violence in the family, aims in the long run to be an improvement for both men and women. However, let up please face the fact that at this moment the priority is the protecting and raising the consciousnesses of women who are suffering - for they are plainly the vast majority of cases.)*

Andrew Brown, 23 Miller Crescent, Mt. Waverley, Victoria 3149.

I am intrigued by the opening comment that in a certain part of Central Victoria there are Giant Wombo Holes. You see, I am fairly sure that I've seen one, but they must have moved it for my benefit because I saw it near a place called Campertown in the Western District. Of course, all the sign says is the crater of an extinct volcano, but we know better, don't we?

I believe it is also possible to see the fossilised droppings of these mighty creatures in the Northern Territory, near Alice Springs. Heavens above, it's even a tourist attraction. They call it Ayres Rock, and well they should - fossilised or not that amount of Giant Wombo dung must have an air to it. So now you know the true story of Australia's answer to Naru.

I must say that John Foyster is doing his best to be fair to UniCon IV. So fair that he greatly maligns mainstream Melbourne fandom - "taking a break from large-scale activities" indeed. What about BOFCon, Monoclave and the second Writers Workshop? Hmmm, I shouldn't say anything about this, since I was overseas at the time, but from what I've read, saying that "The... organisers showed some of the skills essential to managing large conventions" and giving the example that follows, leads one to the conclusion that the organisers were actually forced into showing some of the skill essential to managing large conventions.

On the other hand, one might say that this is a beautifully crafted example of

damning with faint praise...

If I could just move on to the Cookery Corner...you will find below a recipe for spaghetti sauce, handed down from generation to generation last year. That is, I asked my mother to teach me.

#### Mrs Brown's Spaghetti Sauce

Ingredients: 1 pound ground beef or pork/veal mince  
2 chopped onions  
1 large grated carrot  
2 sticks chopped celery - optional  
10 oz tomato paste  
cloves of garlic, mixed herbs, salt, pepper

First of all, you grate the carrot, and, if you feel like it, chop some celery, although I've never made it with celery. Then you put the meat in a saucepan and heat it at a fairly high temperature, sort of giving it a stir, so to speak. Meanwhile, you can go to the odious task of chopping onions. Erky - perky! Eventually (after about ten minutes, that is), the meat will have turned grey and will be pretty good. But not as good as it will smell when you've finished, you betcha!

Now put in the chopped onions and grated carrot. Celery too, if you're that sort of person. Mix in well. Then add the tomato paste. If you couldn't find any tomato paste at Woolworths, twice the amount of tomato puree will do. If you're feeling really creative, you will have found some Italian tomatoes, which I believe are ones with thin skins, and boil them till the aforementioned skins fall off. I guess three or four would do, but don't take my word for it. By the way, it is not the done thing to use tomato sauce instead. Anyway, you mix in your tomato whatever as well as you can.

Somewhere during the above discussion you should have found time to make little pieces out of a bigger piece of garlic, what we in the trade call a "clove". You take these, and a pinch of mixed herbs, and a pinch of salt, and a pinch of pepper, and throw the whole kaboodle in, stirring well (there are many well known fans who could teach you how to do this, but they will remain nameless in this letter). Then you add water until you get whatever consistency suits you.

Then you cook it in an oven for an hour at 250 farenheit, or what my calculator informs me is 121.1111 celcius. I guess you could ignore the .1111, though. After that, let it cool. Then leave it in the fridge for a night. This is supposed to let it develope character. I dunno why - my fridge isn't pyramid shaped or anything. So there you are.

(We seem to have reached about the end of the space for this issue so there is just time to pop in some names of people we also Heard From, but who we don't have room for this time. Liz Thurgood wrote to say that she had forgotten how enjoyable fanzines could be and sent along a recipe which we will print next issue (this is turning into a real food gossip fanzine isn't it). John Foyster scrawled a letter to us too, raising some interesting points about some failings of Sydney fandom which we won't be printing as this is supposed to be a nice clean family fanzine. Doug Barbour was the first overseas fan to write to us, just a quick note to say that he had received the issue and that he had been interested and moved by the article from Valma last issue. There is a letter from Harry Warner just arrived which we will have to print in part next issue. When you get a letter from Harry you know that it's about time that you got out another issue. As you can see, not a terribly overwhelming response to the first issue, but a good thoughtful one anyhow.)



GIANT WOMBO 2, edited and produced and all throbbingly exciting stuff by Leigh Edmonds and Valma Brown of PO Box 103, Brunswick, Victoria 3056, AUSTRALIA. Most issues of this fine fannish fanzine are to be had for about 50¢ per copy if you are lazy or for articles, decent letters of comment, artwork, trade. Asking nicely has also been known to work on the odd occasion. All the contents are copyrighted for the authors of the items. The editorial policy of this fanzine is to solicit contributions of art and writing, readers are to supply the response in the form of letters of comment and fanzines to read. What else? Well, this fanzine is supposed to be bi-monthly but since it is something like three months let's say, provisionally, that GIANT WOMBO is quarterly. Who knows what it will be next issue. We already have lead articles for the next two issues (John Litchen next issue and Dennis Stocks the one after) so that may spur us on to getting issues out more frequently. This is a U-Boat Publication.

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(The cover is by Ken Fletcher, the number of words in this issue squeezed out any other art.)

GIANT WOMBO SAYS: Ken & Linda for DUFF. They are fine fannish people who will grace SynCon '79 and who will enjoy meeting a whole lot of fans who are new to them. They have excellent taste in humor and in art. You can't go wrong if you vote for them.



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