

MAD DAN REVIEW

3

ECOLOGY SPECIAL



THE MAD DAN REVIEW

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Editor Marc A. Ortlieb.

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JUSTIFICATION PHASE VI

Well, for a start I gotta apologise for the lateness of this issue. I said in G'Nel 1 that my publishing was going to become more infrequent now I'm back in Adelaide and I wasn't far wrong. I keep getting interrupted by visitors, parties, concerts, dinners, Drama lectures, and just fun living. But as Paul Anderson pointed out to me at last Friday's Bangsund Memorial dinner, that's no excuse.

The article on the cat in sf has been shelved in order to get this edition out as soon as possible. It should appear somewhere sometime. Look forward to seeing as many people as possible at Unicon II. (OmegaCon here in Adelaide here was fun) Please excuse some of the duplicating. My Gestetner is turning out to be a proper bitch and sometimes she gets the best of our constant battles.

Please note my new address. (Yes another one.) Flat 2/18 Flinders St Edwardstown S.AUST 5039.

yours sciencefrictionally

Marc A Ortlieb
Marc A Ortlieb

adcor prindiv

RUBBISH

Well, I said that this was an ecology special and it is. This particular part is where I recycle all of the rubbish Ortlieb's been hiding in his folder along with his rejection slips from Southerly and The Women's Weekly. I doubt that it'll be any good to anyone but who knows, someone might pick up an idea or so from it. Tell you what, I'll provide a free copy of the Mad Dan Memoirs to anyone who actually decides to finish one of the things. (Reminds me of one of those "Worst ever story beginnings" they ran in F&SF a while back.)

Phaedra

"That's it is it?" Elverston rubbed his jaw reflectively. "Quite an incredible sight." The object on the view screen was about ten kilometers long though with no point of reference, its size could have ranged from the microscopic to the macro-cosmic. Its shape was one that Elverston had never expected to see in space. It was the needle pointed wide vanned space moth of twentieth century speculative fiction. The smooth streamlining belied its deep space origin but it was too frail to have ever known the turbulence of an atmospheric landing.

Jacobs adjusted the cameras for a closer view. He swept the craft in search of insignia but its white hull betrayed no trace of markings. There was a slight bump which he assumed to be an airlock.

"There's no doubt about it. We've got to send a manned expedition" muttered Elverston "But how will we convince the Ecocouncil of the validity of the project." Jacobs turned in surprise. "They couldn't refuse. They're not that thick headed."

Merther Quost

Once upon a time there was a small bacillus. To be specific, it was a small *Escherichia coli* bacillus. As bacilli go, it was nothing particularly spectacular. It was about two microns long and point nine microns in diameter but this slight obesity did not worry it overly much. To be perfectly truthful, the fact that it had no nuclear membrane, did, on occasions give rise to certain inferiority complexes but it knew that its chromosomal material formed an attractively curved double helix and, after all, that was all that really mattered.

To make a short story long, our particular little bacillus lived in the digestive tract of a prominent biochemist by the name of Professor Keppelmann. This in itself was no small distinction. Most bacilli have no choice but to live in the digestive tracts of people with commonplace names like Smith, Bloggs or Black. The name Keppelmann is obviously more prestigious, besides which, Keppelmann was a biochemist. Oh! But of course! You're not a biochemist are you? You would then be unaware of the significance of this seemingly inconsequential fact. You

see, whilst a common or garden zoologist or botanist divides the living world into animal and vegetable, the biochemist divides the living world into *Escherichia coli* and not *Escherichia coli*. So our friend, to whom we may refer as Col without being guilty of lese majesty, was living in what one might call the Buckingham Palace of *Escherichia coli* habitats.

Having described Col and the nature of his home, I have been informed that it is my duty to outline some form of plot. Before I do so, I feel it necessary to mention a sordid fact that will play an important part in the following epic. Col was a streptomycin addict. Despite government warnings that strep was a health hazard, Col would happily down ten millimoles a day to the obvious horror of his neighbours. This wierd craving had been a part of his family for years. There was a highly disreputable (and highly accepted) story to the effect that addiction had been caused by certain immoral acts committed by Col's great to the seventh power grand mother/father.

It was this addiction which lead Col to undertake what would be refered to later as the "Great Trek".

Pallas

Two snow white sheep trotted down the marbled path. Flanking them marched two men in silver bordered cloaks, their gem encrusted scabbards gleaming in the olive dappled sunlight. The grey eyed one guided them to the bowl which lay secure in a granite nest. Emprisoned within her golden armour, she gazed at the approaching party with frozen benevolence. Her bronze tipped spear and tendrilled shield were the only protection needed by the group.

The priestess stepped forward, her simple white cloak serving only as a background for the golden owl pinned to her left breast. A hush descended upon the crowd as her voice rose to the heavens.

"Gracious Athene, in your infinite wisdom you have chosen to honour one among us. Today, in thanks, he humbly dedicates this shrine to your name. While he is aware that he cannot presume on you to accept such an offering, he hopes that this dedication will come to your notice and please you."

Her hands snapped an order instantly obeyed. Twin blades flashed and crimson streams flooded the bowl. The corpses were rapidly dismembered and fat sheathed bones were placed on the fire. Splashes of red wine boiled briefly before joining the ascending vapours. Beneath the eyes of the goddess a short balding man inhaled the fragrance of the charring bones. He shivered slightly and huddled closer to the fire.

"Shit it's cold. Better get some more wood." The rag encrusted bundle limped into the darkness.

His stooping figure crept among the concrete tombstones where the moonlight created strange black monsters from the rusting bodies. Within the steep valleys the creature stumbled across the skeleton of a bicycle. It groped amongst the eye-sockets of the city for the crumbling remains of windowframes.

Occasionally it stopped, its eyes flashing at some sharp sound. Finally, fully laden, the delicate balance between fear and need tipped and it scuttled back to the haven of its fire.

The collector froze in its tracks. The spluttering embers of its fire cast the shadow of a tall thin man across the ground. He melted back into the darkness and selected a sturdy stick from his hoard. Again he returned to the dying coals, this time armed for battle. The shadowy form turned to face the stumbling noises. Within a frame of grizzled hair was a face marked by several decades. Shining in the middle of his forehead was the grey eye which marked a holy one.

The young warrior gasped. His club hit the ground only seconds before his head. He had intended harm to a holy one. His mind could scarcely grasp the enormity of his sin. As he lay on his belly he contemplated the manner of death which, even now, must be winging toward him. A sound stood on the edge of the closed system which his brain had woven.

"It's all right. Don't worry"

"But Lord" protested the youth "I was ready to harm you."

"You weren't the first and I doubt very much that you will be the last" replied the old man "Besides which, you didn't succeed which is more than I can say for some of your predecessors."

Jigsaw

The ship ploughed its way through the icy green waters of the southern ocean. Ahead lay the mist enshrouded cliffs of the South Eastern Republic. David braced himself against the biting wind and swept the horizon for a glimpse of the Cape Light-house.

It was there, as it had been for three hundred years. The windows which had shielded huge electric lamps had gone as had the lamps themselves. Replacing them stood huge glass lenses which would, come nightfall, bend the light from the hot oil flame and throw it out to sea. David was startled to see the worn stone of the edifice. In his books, it was new with shining white paint. The reality though was more impressive, its rough stone face pitted by time itself.

The captain had brought the ship around and was tacking into the wind. Again David cursed the regulations forced upon them by the Council of the Mount. Were it not for the Republic's views on metallic objects, the party could have been using a motor launch. Still, when in Rome.....

David allowed his thoughts to drift. Rome: a semi-mythical place along with New York and London. The names had not changed in two hundred years. The names were as dead as the places which had once owned them.

It would not have been so bad, thought David, if the South-East had possessed mineral resources but the area was sadly lacking in metals. The only metals available were the debris of the Pre-Collapse civilization. David was fully aware of the fate of any metallic debris. The mayorial Guard was renowned for its

weaponry and its members on parade sounded like an iron foundry. The average citizen with his flint and wood farming implements had little say in the destination of the occasional can which might turn up during the course of his agricultural activities. The idea that metal was sinful unless blessed by the Mayor was deeply ingrained in the people and naturally, any metal blessed by the Mayor had to be used for religious purposes such as arming the Mayoral guard.

The result of this which particularly alarmed David was that he and his party were limited to non-metallic weaponry. David was no athlete. His medium-heavy build was not suited to the staff and his accuracy with the bow was sadly deficient. After pestering the weapons branch for several weeks, they had finally produced a weapon which suited David. Superficially it resembled an ordinary cross bow. The art lay in the shafts which were packed with enough explosive to break anything within ten meters into its component parts.

Anyway you get the idea. Ortlieb comes up with an idea, follows it for a hundred words or so and then forgets what he started out to do in the first place. As his official representative, I hereby renounce his rights to the above story beginnings. Anyone who thinks they can make a story out of them is free to do so. I have a suspicion that Ortlieb would like to see any outcomes but it's not that important.

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#### THE REVIEWS

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Leo P Kelley "Mythmaster" (Coronet, 1974)

I have a habit of following up authors whom I enjoy or in whom I see promise and in this case I'm glad I did. "Mythmaster" is a book which fulfills the promise of "The Earth Tripper" and "Man From Maybe". The book deals with characters who are recognisably human and who have human strengths and weaknesses.

I will admit that the characters are not exactly the type of people you would expect to meet in your local deli. Shannon, the Mythmaster, is a slave trader dealing in human fetuses; Starson, his astrogator is homosexual and Reba, his lover, is a highly paid whore. Despite these initial problems they come out as believable in their fight against Oxon Kaedler, a burned cripple who must live in a sterile free-fall environment to survive.

Kaedler is the faceless corporation man and against him

is Shannon, the free rogue. Kelley does not make the mistake of trying to resolve the situation. He presents life as a battle between predators. To him, the only consolation available to humans is love and in a semi-cop out ending he leaves Shannon and Reba in an Adam-and-Eve ending. The book is however more cohesive than the other two and I found it worthwhile reading.

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Roger Zelazny "Nine Princes In Amber" & "Guns Of Avalon"
(Sorry I can't list the publisher. I've mislaid my copies.)

I'm getting fed up of hero-god fantasy-epic series which end up as cliff hangers. I've read Farmer's "Tier world" series and now Zelazny's Amber books. The resemblances are marked. In both there is a squabble for a throne. In both the major protagonists are semi-mythical figures who can stroll through worlds knowing that they are merely shadows of the true world. In both series each novel ends leaving you begging for the next one. (The ending of "Nine Princes" sent me madder) (The similarities aren't accidental. The copy of "Behind the Walls Of Terra" which Dave Malleyday owns includes an intro by Zelazny which says how much Zelazny enjoyed the tierworld stuff etc etc.)

I have to admit it's good heroic fantasy, lots of adventure, a little sex, a little humour, good hack fantasy but I wish for Zeus' sake they'd bring out the whole series at once. (Now I know why Eric Lindsay avoids series.

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Dan Morgan     "The Minds" series (Corgi)

After the above Zelazny review I feel a bit of a twit reviewing a series. However in this case I am justified in doing so because "The Minds" series is one which you can read without having read any of the others. Each novel is a whole. Mind you, the previous novels do give you extra info on the characters involved but that is not essential.

Basically the novels are a history of a psi research group and its troubles in a politically rightist England. The novels fall into the trap of spending a lot of time discovering new psis (a problem which Zenna Henderson's "People" stories often has) but does have several interesting twists. The character Victor who runs through the novels is an interesting variation on the mutant super-psi and Becky isn't quite the type of spinsterish researcher on normally finds in such novels. Well worth reading.

"The New Minds" "The Several Minds" "The Mind Trap"  
(I've got the fourth but I can't for the life of me remember the name and I can't find it in all the cardboard boxes I've got cluttering up the place at the moment.)

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Zenna Henderson "Holding Wonder" (Avon 1971)

This one really amazed me. I fell in love with Henderson's writing style when I first encountered "The People" in F&SF.

I had however, considered her to be a real sweetness and light merchant. (I'm not putting her down. I really love People stories. This collection certainly puts paid to that idea. There are a few nice stories here, including a People story but one or two of the stories would give Sonya Dorman nightmares, in particular "One of Them" and "As Simple As That". Speaking as a MCP, I consider that there are some stories only a woman can write. Zenna Henderson shows the full range.

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Andre Norton "Night Of Hasks" (Ace, 1964)

While on the topic of women writers here's another: The book is a standard Norton juvenile. Lots of adventure, well written description and a happy ending. The nightmare world of Dis is a masterpiece and the book is less shallow than most others of its type.

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James White "All Judgement Fled" (Corgi, 1969)

White's medical officer protagonists are always most interesting and this novel provides no exception. A first contact story which could easily be the ancestor of Clarke's "Rendezvous With Rama". Lots of confusion, a homicidal alien race which could be the crew or may just be animals and a hostile ground support team make the novel most worthwhile.

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James White "Deadly Litter" (Corgi, 1964)

White's great strength has always been in his ideas. "Fiction for young engineers" I think Ursula LeGuin said in another context. Bearing that in mind, "Deadly Litter" is a fascinating collection. The story "Grapeliner" deals with one of the nicest interplanetary space liners I have ever met. (White develops the idea further in a later novel about plastic lifeboats.) The title story considers the premise that a tea leaf at high speed is quite an effective micrometeorite. Sort of an interstellar KESAB. White's preoccupation with the psychology of space travel take key places in the other two stories.

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Z RECORDS
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I'm getting there slowly. Since my Airplane article in MDR2 I've plugged three more gaps in my collection and also added an album by the Dead/Starship collaboration.

Jefferson Airplane Takes Off (RCA Victor LSP-3584 RE)

Very much an album for us Airplane freaks and for '60s nostalgia people. Sounds like early Byrds or Buffalo Springfield. The lead guitar occasionally gives hints of what it will be and Casady's bass is superb. The group were into folk-blues at the time.



Mark ... Jefferson Airplane ... (Grunt FTL 1001)

Chronologically, a direct follow on to "Blows Against The Empire". Balin and Dryden are not here but Papa John Creach is. Dryden has been replaced by Joey Covington.

There are four directions on this album. Slick comes over with lots of politically activist type stuff; Covington with some cute lyrics, Kaukonen provides some basic blues and Kantner lets rip with the real heavy sf stuff.

The Kantner tracks develop ideas from "Blows Against The Empire". "Rock and Roll Island" suggests a move to an island where people can be free. (This idea is mentioned in the Kantner interview quoted in IDR2). The track is a montage of science, hope and music.

"Can you make it to the island

Rock and roll island

In the middle of the time seas"

and

"California rock and roll thunder

Gonna bring you up from down under."

This is one of Kantner's more optimistic tracks and gives him a chance to air his "We are seedlings of the sun" theme.

"When the Earth Moves Again" is Kantner's Velikovskian-Dannekian track. It is concerned with the idea that we are not native to the planet and connects with his "White Boy" from "Baron Von Tollbooth".

The final track on the album, "War Movie" is Kantner's peaceful revolution song. Music and science combine to free the people.

"The laser way won the day

Without one single living soul going down."

Fixed in with this is David Crosby's idea of "egg snatching" (stealing the minds of youth.)

"....send out the sun finders

Thirteen battalions of mind raiders

Three hundred master computer killers"

The last line is ambivalent. I think Kantner means killers of computers since computers destroy the individuality of man but he could mean that the computers themselves are the killers.

The album is, from all points of view, an interesting one. It is, in its variety, a good introduction to the music of the Airplane karass.

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Manhole ... Grace Slick ... (Grunt BFLI-0347)

This album is an early Starship incarnation. I would think that it would be just pre "Baron Von Tollbooth". Featured on the album are Chaquico, Barbata, Kantner, Fricberg and Slick plus on bass, Seeder Pears who can only be Peter Sears.

Side one is all Slick but she is experimenting with Kantner's get the hell out of here idea as she will do later on "Dragonfly". The track "Manhole" takes up all of side one except for a short semi-instrumental track called "Jay". In "Manhole", Slick combines her idea of Spain with the escape idea. The

"And if you hear the singing silver wind
Fly, sailing human bird-
Fly into me.

The last line translates roughly as "Get together, make one hell of a noise then get out." A fitting summation of Kantner's theme.

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Music to drive John Alderson mad from the Dead/Jefferson/Crosby family. A highly electronic piece of music in which voice becomes merely another instrument and strange synthesised sounds take the stage. Not recommended to anyone with a case of acute computer paranoia.

[illegible]

ZINES

I'm going to go mad or blind and not for the reasons you were

thinking either (well maybe for those reasons as well.) It's the Sydney Uni Fordograph. Why? Perhaps it is cheap and it does, without a doubt produce really nice illos but it's hell on the eyeballs. Added to my Jon Noble tongue removal fund is my "Buy Sydney Uni A Gestetner Fund. All contributions can be sent to me in cash please. (Hmn. If some idiot reads this and sends money I can afford that Hot Tuna album. Hey! What do you think you're doing? Get out of my thoughts at once! Man can't get a moments privacy in this zine.)

Anyway. Now I've got that off my chest: to the review. A pleasing edition. I've always had a thing about the wizards in LOTR and Jon makes some interesting points about them in "The Technology Of Middle Earth". "Seventy Six Black Wargs" is a really nice parody. My loc is brilliant ("Help! I'm being pushed out of Ortlieb's skull by a giant Daniferous Ego" Dan) (Well the letter filled a couple of pages anyway-Ed) Also included is a loc on the Dr Who edition from Nikki White. Jon's asides are devastating.

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Forerunner Quarterly Oct 1975 (41pp Quarto) Roneo irregular
\$1 per issue or 4 for \$3.50
or trade or article etc
"Ark Royale"
6 Bellvue Road
Paulconbridge NSW 2776

An impressive zine. Good articles on Chinese Comics LOTR (Jon again), J.C. Superstar and an article on Jays from the man who gave us sheep in sf. I must admit I skimmed through the book reviews. I'm not really into old fashioned fantasy. Susan seems to be having trouble getting others to write. This is nothing short of criminal. Get the lead out all you non-communicative fans. (Says he whose zine is two months late.) Susan's editorial and con report are really good. A zine well worth getting.

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Chao 18 and Chao 19 (28pp&34pp Quarto) Roneo&Offset  
\$1 per copy  
John Alderson PO Box 72 Maryborough  
Vic. 3465

Once more beautiful covers. (I'm getting paranoid about covers Everyone keeps telling me mine are shitty. One case of a book being described by its cover.) Included in 19 is a rough transcript of John's AussieCon speech on the role of sheep in sf. A rather rude look at the official post office publication. 18 includes some interesting comments on the evolution of the English language. In dealing with drama I feel John has been a little simplistic but when one is trying to sum up a whole century of drama in one paragraph then one cannot avoid this problem. I think John is trying to cover too much in his "Watershed Of History" but that's neither here nor there. Get this zine.

Starling 32 (32 pp American quarto) mimeo irregular (I think)  
Aust rates 3 for \$1 from Leigh Edmonds  
PO Box 74 Balaclava Vict 3183  
Hank and Lesleigh Luttrell 525 W. Main Street  
Madison WI 53703

I can't help but start with the cover. It's truly magnificent. One of the best cartoons I've seen out of prozines. Reminds me of a sketch from "At last the 1948 show". Hank's "Notebooklings" I enjoyed despite the fact that he knocks my favourite Harrison novel "Bill The Galactic Hero." Juanita Coulson's article on writing Gothics is enlightening. I didn't realise that Anne McCaffrey wrote Gothics. The letter column is really good. Eric Lindsay's letter column is the only thing I've seen come near it. The idea of using recycled paper is nice but tell me, how is it done? Do they recycle their own or do they have it done for them. I've got vast quantities of recyclable paper but don't know where to recycle it.

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Rataplan 17/13 (48 pp Quarto) roneo irregular
\$1.60 for four or the usual
Leigh Edmonds PO Box 74, Balaclava, Vict. 3183

Incredible "Wet Dream" cover. Nice article on winter by Lesleigh Luttrell. Lots of lovely letters. No sf. Oh well, You can't have everything. (Please forgive me for the shortness of this review. I'm running out of steam and I gotta get this zine out.)

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Actually, I might just give it a miss from here on. Other zines received which I really ought to review are listed below. Each has its own specific charm and beauty but in this heat I'm just too stuffed to give them the attention they require.

Sri Lanka Roger Weddall No address given. See Ghetto Letters in this edition. Mainly fiction with a crossword and a Panshin review

AD 3 AUSTA Student's Association Office, Adelaide University,  
North Terrace, Adelaide S.A. 5001.  
Mainly stories. Some nice artwork though a lot of it seems stolen.

Enigma Vol6 No 4 SUSTA Box 249 Holme Building Sydney University  
NSW 2006. \$2.50 for three issues.  
Far too good to skim over. Get it.

Osiris 19 Del & Dennis Stocks PO Box 235 Albion Brisbane  
Qld 4010.  
Again too good to brush off with a few comments even considering the slipping capitals. Get it.



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 THE GHETTO  
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THE BOOK OF BANGSUND Vol 98 Ch 3

Verse 1

Thus did it come to pass that John did leave his Canberra home to brave the wilds of South Australia and glad of heart was he to meet the wines of the Barossa and the Coonawarra. Thus was it said by one of the faithful "Let us proclaim an evening of feasting that we might share in the joy of the grape".

Verse 2

So it came to pass that on a Friday several of the faithful did meet in the hotel known as The Botanic and there did wine and dine and truly it is said that the servers of food and drink did regret their coming unto that place. Such was the first Bangsund Memorial Dinner.

Verse 3

Let us not count the faithful by number nor by name for they know who they are. May those who, for various excuses, have missed a Friday gathering repent of their sin and remedy it. For truly is it said that the Botanic is the place to be at six o'clock of a Friday evening.

Verse 4

Speak not of Delgraves for that is in Melbourne and the nature of Victorians is well known to the faithful of South Australia. Merely remember that, if you receive the Word before the 27th of February that the dinner on that date is in the University Bistro because some ungodly sod has booked the Botanic.

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OMEGA CON REPORT

HA! You thought I wasn't there didn't you? Well I fooled you all. Who do you think stole half the fruit salad before it reached the tables? Who do you think Kilgore Trout really was? You didn't really think it was that Paul Whatsisname fella did you? Yeah, I was there and this is the dinkum account of what went on. (Caution! Some of the following may not be suitable for the ears of children and if you think I'm going to repeat the Milligan joke about that you're mader than I am.)

The Con was held in the most inaccessible place imaginable. The road was long and winding and Ortlieb got to know it as well as he knows the Beatle song of the same name. (Not at all, Ed.) The Grace Valley site was perfect for a science fiction convention being a perfect double for Camp Leon Trotsky.

Despite a notice to the effect that blankets were available at the site, none were forthcoming. (I realise that trufans don't

sleep during cons but this was ridiculous.) Several fans were only saved from frostbite by the thickness of an army greatcoat. One who shall remain nameless but whose initials stand for Marc Ortlieb retreated to the warmth of his Adelaide residence for the evening. (This was his second trip back to Adelaide that day, the first being caused by an audition earlier in the evening)

Several con members were heavily into a war game provided by Robin Johnson. Indeed, this caused Ortlieb's third return to Adelaide. He had just returned from a nice warm bed and was contemplating lunch when a certain Roman gentleman walked up with a stencil. It appeared that thirty copies were needed. It appeared that Ortlieb was the only person with a Gestetner handy. It appeared that Ortlieb wasn't going to see much of the Con.

However, appearances can be deceptive and that was the last visit Ortlieb made prior to his final departure other than a quick trip into Stirling to refurbish his dwindling supplies of iced coffee.

As I am lead to believe is normal con practice, the panels were dull until livened up by a quick argument or two. The tin shed which was the official centre of con activities was markedly similar to an oven and to prevent further wilting many panels were held outside in an open ended tin shed. The passtime of flicking beetles helped cure monotony and the occasional bull ant prevented sleep.

Mr Trout, the guest of honour came and went but other than a few snappy answers, he failed to have much effect on the con. I personally have always considered him a highly overrated author in any case.

Other than war gaming and buying books at highly inflated prices, one of the favourite con sports was "me-spotting". This was played with the help of a video tape recorder, a television set, the AussieCon tapes and monstrously inflated Egos. "That's me. Over there. Just behind Tucker." I considered it a juvenile passtime. Besides, I didn't see me once.

But speaking of television sets, a most unusual phenomenon was observed. Following a panel in which Star Trek was literally ripped to shreds, there was later seen, clustered round a T.V. set, 90% of the Con attendees watching an old Star Trek episode. Hmn.

One or two highlights of the con were

- (1) A plum pudding heavily diluted with cheap brandy.
- (2) A Kilgore Trout Annual Three Legged Race won by an unscrupulous Melbourne team. (I could have won it all by myself if they'd let me strap two of my legs up behind my back).
- (3) Several cases of mild alcoholic poisoning. (Regulation prohibiting booze on the campsite? What regulation prohibiting booze on the campsite)

But to approach the event of the Con. It is a fannish habit to indulge in the gentlemanly art of buck passing. Thus Mr Orzanski was heard to proclaim "It's all Bruce Gilesie's Fault!" But I have no doubt that Roman will elaborate in his

own con report. Nevertheless, it is reported that the Gillespie did say "How about putting out a con one shot."

The result was that an intrepid band of typists and others gathered in the kitchen after the films to type up some stencils. (I forgot to mention. By some fluke of accoustics, whilst you couldn't hear someone on the other side of the main shed, anyone in the bunkhouses could hear the merest whisper from the main shed.) By four in the morning, the number had dwindled to approximately seven: Melbourne was represented by the inimitable Roger Weddall, the beautiful Claudia Mangiamole, one Francis (Blast lost his last name) who gave the worst zine title of the millenium, and Ken (whose last name I've also forgotten.) The Adelaide contingent was made up of the double os (orzanski and ortlieb) and Kevin Dillon represented New South Wales. (I omit the vast number of people who just passed through. The staying power of the originator of the idea was noticeably lacking.)

At about five it was decided that enough was enough and amid jokes about whist not being played with a knife (well it seemed funny at the time) everyone trooped out to meet the sunrise.

True to form, it kept us waiting for two hours during which time the group managed to wake all bar the most hardened of sleepers. And the language. You'd think that they weren't interested in seeing the sunrise. Finally, at seven am, the group decided to call it a night. (Which was totally incorrect. By then it was well and truly a day.)

The final day of the con dissolved in a flood of chocolate frogs and water as the site was cleaned. At last thought the weary multitude, the end. But it was not to be. There was a wind up party that evening at Roman's place and a trip to see "The Little Prince" was organised for the next day. The theatre was rather taken aback by the rather large children who, producing a flurry of student cards invaded the place.

The film was followed by a book buying spree which left several wallets in a critical condition.

Finally there was another film excursion, this time to see "Crystal Voyager" and "Fantastic Planet". The Con finally ended at Joy Window's place where the remains of the con biscuits were demolished.

It was fun. Roll on Unicon.

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### The Fansight Saga

#### Part Two:- The Collector

"Excuse me. Do you have "New Writings In S.F. 10"?"

=====

"Where the hell can I get the sequel to that Van Vogt thing?"

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"Bloody hell! I'm missing the November '67 If. That totally buggers up that serial."

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"Excuse me, if any of the F&SFs on this list come in could you hold them for me?"

"Not another book sale? I haven't paid my Union Bookshop account this month."

"Bloody Halleday just got Zenna Henderson's "Pilgrimage" and I can't find a copy anywhere!"

"Hey Darryl! Guess what. I just picked up a copy of "Mission of Gravity". Sell it? Five dollars? You've got to be kidding."

"201, 202, 203, 204, 205. Bugger it. Halleday's got four hundred and fifty three."

"Bookshelves. I gotta have more bookshelves. Arghh!"

"Heads I eat, tails I get that copy of Galaxy."

"What do you mean I can't buy sf I can only exchange. I don't get rid of sf."

"More bookshelves. I gotta have more bookshelves. Arghh!"

"You mean that's all you've got? Mumble. Why don't more Maracoorte people read sf?"

"Could you keep a copy of any sf magazine that comes in for me please."

"Hi Mum. It's Marc here. Could you keep a bed for me. I'm coming up this weekend. What time can you expect me? Well I've got to check out the bookshops first. Expect me when you see me."

"Sorry beautiful one. It's just that I can't support a wife and an sf collection."

More bookshelves. I gotta have more bookshelves. Arghh!"

Well. That's it for the ghetto this issue. Be sure to tune in next issue for part three of the Fansight Saga in which Ortlieb gets his lumps. By the way, Ortlieb would like it known that he is in the market for the following books (reasonably priced) Zenna Henderson "Pilgrimage": Anne McCaffrey "Restoree" and "Decision at Doona": Any pre-1960 copies of F&SF. Please contact him at Flat 2/18 Flinders Street Edwardstown S. Aust. 5039. Ta.

wellitsonewayofgettingtothebottomofthepageisntit?



55% 55% 55% 55% 55%  
% GHETTO LETTERS %  
55% 55% 55% 55% 55%

Mike Glicksohn 141 High Park Ave Toronto Ontario Canada M6P 2S3  
22-10-75

One thing you should do is be a little more careful where you leave your stencils when you're getting an issue ready. It looks like a maddened chicken attacked the cover stencil while you weren't looking and left numerous terrible looking scratches all over it./Mike of course refers to MDR 1.Ed/ If you ever locate a local with any artistic talent,you'd better not let it happen again.// Ignorant Philistine doesn't recognise a fine piece of neo pseudo Dadaist expressionism.Dan//

I'm against,even in jest,your referring to what you plan to do as a "crudzine".No one should willingly create something that is not representative of his/her best effort and even to pretend to plan on doing so bothers me a bit.You ought to be proud of what you're trying to do,and I expect you are,even if the execution sometimes falls short of the conception,and I'd prefer to see you show that in the way you write about what you're up to as well as in the way you write what you're up to.

/Here I disagree with Mike.I produce this zine,cud or whatever,for my own enjoyment.I'm not the type of person to aim for perfection so I make the most of my imperfection.There's nothing worse than pretentious writin on toilet paper.Be what you are and enjoy it./

Eric the Lindsay was essentially correct in his view of cons and fandom,at least the part that he and I inhabit.S.F. may have been the initial stimulus that got us involved,but like a great many fans,I no longer have any time to read the stuff,yet still go to cons to meet my many friends,occasionally publish fanzines that never mention sf just because I like doing it and write hundreds of letters of comment each year filled with stuff about fans,fanzines and fandom.It's a great hobby,believe me!(Eric actually reads and reviews a lot of sf, but we're still good friends despite his aberrations.The only reading I do nowadays is off the labels on scotch bottles.)

\*\*\*\*\*

Lesleigh Luttrell 525 N.Main St.Madison WI 53703  
28-10-75

The problem with a hobby that relies so much on the postal services of the world is that contact between fans is often based on slow and unreliable postal systems.For example,right now the Canadian fans are virtually cut off from the rest of the world by a postal strike,the third they've had this year I think

\*\*\*\*\*

Lesleigh describes the plight of the neo-fan in the USA where they have better media coverage of cons and larger cons.15,000

at a Star Trek Con.Ouch!

\*\*\*\*\*  
Fans have been making generalizations about fans for a number of years and one that they almost always come up with is that fans tend to be introverted.(others are that fans tend to wear glasses,that they are often oldest or only children,that they read more than other people.)I suspect that there is quite a bit of truth in those generalizations but it would be hard to imagine a less introverted group of people than fans at conventions.  
\*\*\*\*\*

Lesleigh goes on to say the same things about fandom as Mike did in the previous letter ie sf brings fans together but once they are together,they often forget sf altogether and just become fans.It worries me.I love sf.Do I have to give it up to become a trufan.Maybe,despite Mike's protestations I'll stick to being a crud fan.

~~~~~  
A Bertram Chandler Flat 25 Kanimbla Hall 19 Tusculum St Potts Point NSW 2011 6-11-75

Bert's main complaint is that I mentioned his "naughty seamen type words" in IDR2.He claims seamen have no reputation for swearing.Also enclosed was the poetic fragment which is to be found in Alician Fields.Bert continues

"Have you heard anything about SF/Expo/76 to be held in New York next June?It seems that the organisers are trying to lure the filthy pros there from all over the globe.I shall probably attend myself;to quote my agent in New York 'He don't know the specifics of SF/Expo/76 yet,only that it's going to be one of the biggest conventions ever' Authors already listed as attendees range from Asimov to Zelazny."

~~~~~  
Roger Weddall 12 Midvale Ave North Balwyn Vict 3104 13-11-75

Roger's letter comments on record availability in Melbourne, Melbourne weather and my typing.The first is a favourable comment,the latter two rather less favourable.Now that I have the Gestetner though maybe I can concentrate on improving my typing and buying a new typewriter.

Roger also made a few comments about Adelaide in the early nineties but seems to have conceded that Sydney must wait till '88.(Actually I've seen Roger since and we're still not certain that Sydney should wait till '88.)

In his second letter received at the same time,Roger informs me that I am to disregard the previous letter and gives an incredible contents list for his next letter.If it is anything like it promises to be,I'll duplicate it and send it out as IDR4.

~~~~~  
Roger Weddall (again) 20-11-75

Along with Sri Lanka came a letter with news of the change of venue of Unicon II to Ormond College in Melbourne Uni.Comment

on the fan scene at Melbourne Uni. A rehash of the reasons for Sydney in '88 rather than earlier which Eric Lindsay gave.

- "(a) A bid in the early '80s is expected from Sweden or Italy.
- (b) '88 is apparently our BiCentennial just as is '76 America's. It seems that Government money will be fairly free at around this time.
- (c) Eric has circulated over 1,000 leaflets for Sydney in '88 and the trouble it would take to undo these is great."

Roger has come to the conclusion that Adelaide will have to wait till '95. (Ah well. At least that means I won't have to work on it. By that time I'll be the aged patriarch of the Adelaide scene and they'll leave me some simple task like collecting an honorary Hugo.)

~~~~~~~~~  
A. Bertram Chandler 17-11-75

/Bert and I ran a long sequence of discussions on paper over the obscenity of sailors. I think I'll scuttle the entire thing after printing the letter below./

"I suppose mariners are like the members of every other profession they vary from the licentious to the pious. It brings to mind the good(?) old days when the average magazine editor was shit scared of having his (or her) pages befouled by the coarse writers. It used to give me great pleasure then to log a man for some offence against discipline, as entries in the official log must be an absolutely correct account of what has been done or said. 'B. Smith, A.B., Article No. 7, when ordered by the Chief Officer to do such and such, said "Get fucked" For this offence he is fined so many dollars.' I used to say that this was the only time that I could write the four letter words without some bastard blue-penciling them....."

/Bert continues with mention of other swearing sailors and then donates the anecdote below. I'm afraid I read it whilst supervising some year nine students and when I broke out laughing I could not explain my reasons. Oh well./

"Your mention of the Goon Show reminds me of the story of the small travelling circus in Germany. It struck, in a little town, a remarkable unresponsive audience. The clown clowned, the daring young man on the flying trapeze risked his neck, the equestrienne performed feats that would have done credit to a lady Cossack - but not a single clap or cry of applause. Then it was the strong man's turn. He almost bust a gut lifting heavier and heavier weights, but to no avail. So he sent out for the elephant. Mind you, it wasn't a fullgrown one, but even so.... He squatted and got one hand under the beast's belly. He straightened up and then, with every muscle bulging and quivering, lifted the animal above his head. He glared around the tent - but the audience was still sitting on its hands. He dropped the elephant and demanded, "Can anybody here speak English?" A bespectacled, weedy, schoolmasterly type raised his hand. "Ja, Ja."

"Then fuck you for a start!" said the strong men."

/Finally Bert comes to the conclusion that at sea,swearing should be used only when the occasion warrents it./

Sheryl L Birkhead 23629 Woodfield Rd.Gaithersburg MD 20760  
3-2-76

"First off is my natural choice of fannish material over sercon -- meaning the book reviews are a bit lost to me (on me,for me?) - anyhow,I've found I rarely agree with anyone on the evaluation of a book,and since my finances aren't such that I'm going to run right out and buy a specific book anyhow...That of course,is not to say that reviews aren't good - simply that I'm not the most appreciateive(and I also can't spell) audience for them!

Ah yes,must remember that the Duff race ends soon and had better vote -- but I'll bet I keep saying that and forget!

Not to knock your cover or anything// Another of these overseas Philistines.Dan//....but....perhaps you could design a typed cover that is a bit more attractive?Uh,holler,but don't hit -- please.And yes,I know - if you don't have something constructive to say,don't sat anything at all --- sorry./No need to be sorry.As I said in a letter to Mike Glicksohn which never got posted due to the Canadian Mail strike,a magazine should reflect its interior philosophy.MDR is a personal zine.As such it reflects my personality.The cover of MDR1 fitted perfectly. Let the Freudians make of that what they wish.Ed/

Don't know if you can use or even want any doodles I can squeeze in the remaining space,but since my thoughts seems to be getting less organised (if that's possible) instead of the other way round....

/The doodles are beautiful.One of the is the little "Write Monster" which appears in the Sue Clarke Forerunner reviewed in this issue.Unfortunately I have no way of transferring them to stencils and I'm not so sure that I want to.They're mine!Anyone who wants to see them will just have to drop by. Ed./

~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~  
The Rt.Hon.A.Friend 8 Brooker Court, Woodville Park S. .5011

DIRECTIVE:NUMBER J18074PQ/3517a4

FROM:The Central Committee for the Examination of Women's Bodies  
(Inside leg measurements taken-free 'phone & quote service)

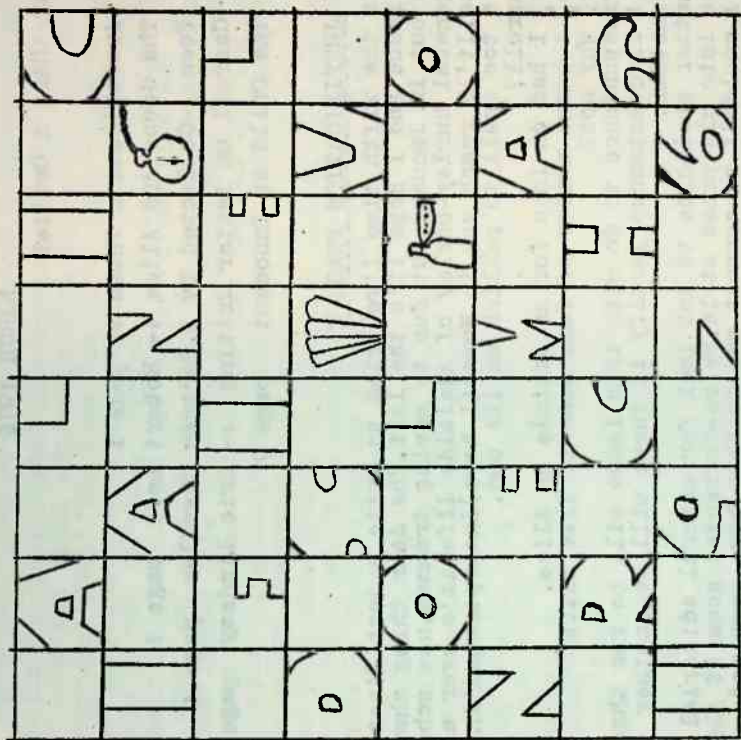
TO:The person calling himself MARC A. ORTLIEB(Henceforth refered to as Leaping Jim McGurk)

Whereas,it has come to the attention of the committe that a Certain Person has been conspicuous in his absence from the last two (2) John Bangsund Memorial Banquets,that Certain Person is now made aware that,should he not be present next week,the Committee (in It's infinite wisdom)will be left with no other alternative than to send round a couple of big lds to tear









ALICIAN FIELDS

MARCH 1976

Editor Marc A Ortlieb

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JUSTIFICATION PHASE V

This is the fifth time I've tried to write a justification for this issue and I hope it's the last. The damn thing should have been out in January but due to moving traumas, new schools and the general hurley-burley of Adelaide life, it's over a month late. It'll reach you in March (I hope) incorporated in MDR 3. It's too small to publish on its own.

Why Carroll?

- (a) I had an idea for an article on Alice.
- (b) A large number of fans seem to like Alice
- (c) Why not?

Any correspondence to do with this issue will be run through MDR and if circumstances justify it there will be another edition sometime.

I had better apologise to Rob Lock for several editorial incursions into his prose style. He re-corrected some of them but some I couldn't re-correct and so they have remained.

While apologising, I'D better apologise for the poor quality of a few of the pages. I'm still getting the hang of my Gestetner's little idiosyncrasies.

Marc A Ortlieb

15-2-76

adcor prindiv



THE GOONS AND ALICE : The nonsense worlds of  
 Milligan and Carroll.  
 Robert Lock

Martin Gardiner begins the Introduction to his "Annotated Alice" with the frank admission that there is "something preposterous" about the book. Let it be said right now, an air of high preposterousness must inevitably hang over any serious analysis of the fabulous, highly-esteemed, all leather and horsehair Goon Show. Analysis implies dissection and categorization, order and careful reasoning. The Goon Show, at first encounter, seems like a pretty good approximation of total aural anarchy. Not so and herein lies the fascination for yer actual consenting adult critic. Hereunder (take a deep breath folks) begins the preposterousness.

The Goon Show grants us a strange and marvellous insight into that state which we earnestly refer to as "reality". It does this by distorting the conventions of the "logic" by which we apprehend reality, and so leads us into a baffling, half-familiar world where the arbitrariness of our perceptions and beliefs is wildly exaggerated. The Goon Show world is an endlessly inventive parody on our own.

Milligan's particular distorting mirror is not, of course, the only one. To drop a sparsity of names: Tolkien and Lovecraft in one medium; Dali and Escher in another; Gogol in a third. The special genius of Spike Milligan shared with Ed and Bear and Lewis Carroll, is that his fantasy world is funny. However, while we laugh at the nonsense, we learn something about the nature of sense.

On the most superficial level we learn that the incredible may still happen, that the possible and the impossible may be too closely intertwined for easy separation. Can bridges grow hair? Can a person be a painting or a playing card? Can he survive a multitude of dynamite or H-bomb explosions? Drink a lake? Be a character in a story? In the nonsense worlds, the characters may even acknowledge the audience and the hand of an author - a Jim Spriggs or a Red King - in the plot.

Milligan and Carroll are both well acquainted with the English language and with the conventional packages into which it divides the real world. For them, the categories are not so clear as they may seem to us. They can get lost in the names of names, or create places where there are no names at all. Boundaries are blurred, like musical instruments really weapons or are they only diseases. Alice may well complain that

"Things flow about so here!" (1)

Then listen to the Red Queen.

"when you've once said a thing, that fixes it, and you must take the consequences." (2)

In the nonsense worlds the literal and the metaphorical meet and fuse so that a poetic licence has an expiry date, and after a swim you can dry yourself with a history instead of a towel. Language is used in the most creative and in the most

worlds any of the alternative meanings of a phrase may be quite valid: when holes are drilled you can hear them stamping their feet; a very deep breath is needed to blow open a safe and if you beat time you may find yourself under arrest for assault.

In our world the study of semantics tells us that all names are linked in a web of allusion; for Milligan and Carroll, words may take their shape from the things that they describe, like Humpty Dumpty's name or Moriarty's numerous FX (sound effect) aliases.

We accept that objects may share certain properties while being quite dissimilar in other ways; in nonsense worlds a cardboard replica or a photograph may be completely satisfactory as a stand-in for the real thing. A pig-like child can become a pig and you can ride off into the sunset on a pair of coconut shells.

To the Goons, the correlation between things, their functions, and the sounds that they make is extremely flexible. Milligan exploits to the limit the principle that, on radio, a thing is the sound that it makes - in other words, if you have the sound effect for a cannon, then as far as the audience and the other characters in the story are concerned, you have a cannon.

In the nonsense worlds, cause and effect are confused and you may be tried before your crime. Time may run backwards, or stop, go slower or faster or it may even be edited so that five nights are run together at a time. And size, shape and direction are all uncertain, all variable.

In his Introduction to "The Annotated Snark" Gardner quotes G.K. Chesterton on nonsense literature. It is "not a subject for children to play with; it is a subject for psychologists to go mad over." (3)  
Milligan's nervous breakdowns while writing the Goon Show are sombre confirmations.

"I've been a neurotic ever since. So you can say I gave my sanity to that show." (4)

The eccentricities of Carroll and Lear are well known. Why do we find humour in their creations? Where is the dividing line between fantasy and nightmare, laughter and insanity?

Partly perhaps in one essential consistency which the nonsense worlds share with our "real" world - the consistency of personality. Characters, and the relationships between characters, are the only things permitted stability. Seagoon, Bluebottle and the other persona of Milligan's creation may be cast in very different roles for the purpose of working through an assortment of devious Goonish plots, but they are always instantly recognizable as themselves. There is no amorphousness or flow here. Bloodnok is and will always remain the moneygrubbing military coward, Grittype-Thynne the suave and plausible con-man. Minny and Henry know each other, and react to each other in a well-established pattern and so it is for Eccles and Bluebottle and Grittype and Moriarty. The personalities are exaggerated but they are not impossible. The fun lies in watching the interaction of solid, well-established characters

in a madly unpredictable environment. We may be comforted. Come what may (and in the nonsense worlds it could be just about anything) our essential humanity will survive. A crazy world may knock us down but never out.

As with Milligan, so with Carroll. His characters are undoubtedly mad, but their idiosyncracies are presented and expanded upon in a very careful and "rational" manner.

Humpty Dumpty is fussy and pedantic with a monsterously inflated ego. The Queen of Hearts is viciously short tempered, The White Knight is gentle, vague and impractical. The White Queen is so weak-willed and docile that even her change into a sheep (in "Wool and Water" from "Looking Glass") - albeit an impatient sheep - is largely consistent. And this change, which occurs in perhaps the most overtly dream-like sequence in the Alice books, is much less a personality transmogrification than the replacement of one character by another.

Alice herself is the great unifying thread running through Carroll's tale. Alice, always warm-hearted and willful, always ready to give attention and respect to all the rude and uncouth beings that she meets, always seeking the reason why.

Carroll and Milligan both know that mad worlds need a solid anchor in our common reality if they are not to topple into nightmare and insanity. Perhaps personality is the most basic of our foundations, at once the most immediate and (by definition) the most personal. And the most fragile.

Where does Carroll's fantasy stand when Alice changes unpredictably, gaining now Humpty Dumpty's bombast, now the Queen of Hearts' casual violence, now the Mock Turtle's floundering self-pity, when the characters lose definition and are permitted to merge and flow in the same way as the scenery?

Where does Milligan's fantasy stand if Eccles may talk sense sometimes, if Bloodnok may be a coward or may equally well be heroic, when Bluebottle grows older and more mature as we listen?

Bridges may be replaced by cardboard replicas and teeth transformed into castanets. Cigarettes can be trees or gorillas. Shops can become rivers and tears become oceans. The whole world can run backwards or change size arbitrarily.

Things change.

But deep down... people dare not.

.....  
..... And now for something completely indifferent: the Python Postscript. (a compilation of scribbled notes on Monty Python, lineal descendant of and heir to the Goons.)

Monty Python's Flying Circus presents no consistent personalities and, except for the occasional "straight man" the characters are all mad, but Python does not set out to create a world as such. Goon World and Wonderland and the Mirror Land are, by their own internal laws, consistent and self-contained. Python is based very solidly and recognizably in our world. It presents vignettes of ridiculousness carefully anchored on the everyday. In this sort of humour, only a few parameters are varied. The rest is all kept relatively "normal".



Q.V. "Monty Python and the Holy Grail" film. Here is an attempt to set up a consistent fantasy world, and, indeed, to keep close sight of immediately recognizable (though fictional) events and settings. Here, characters are established and maintained.

.....

#### TOPICS FOR CLASS DISCUSSION

- (a) Is there a difference in kind between visually-based humour fantasies (Python) and literary-based (Carroll)/aurally-based (Milligan) fantasies? A trick question, because of Python records and books and Milligan films, but still valid: refer to the degree of audience involvement in the author's fantasy. With a book, record or radio program, the spectator is more closely involved, in that these media demand that he supply something from his own imagination to fill out the fantasy. Film supplies sight and sound and usually demands little imagination q.v. the well known "T.V. vegetable syndrome". Does film (paradoxically) distance the audience by supplying more?
- (b) That revolutionaries do not enjoy fantasy humour. Laughter implies acceptance of ridiculousness. There is no concept of trying to change reality implicit in this. "Everything is ridiculous" is a totally unrevolutionary attitude. Revolutionaries say that "reality can be adjusted so that it is not ridiculous." The Goons say "The concept of reality itself is ridiculous."

.....

#### FOOTNOTES

- (1) Gardner, Martin ed "The Annotated Alice" (New York, Bramhall House, 1960) Page 253
- (2) Gardner, ibid Page 323
- (3) Gardner, Martin ed. "The Annotated Snark" (Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, 1962) Page 15
- (4) Milligan, Spike "The Goon Show Scripts Vol. II" (Melbourne, Lansdowne Press, 1973) Page 13

~~~~~

The following fragment was contributed by a well known ship's master by the name of A. Bertram Chandler. It'll probably set the good Charles Dodgson spinning in his grave.

"If fifty whores in purple drawers
Came marching down the Strand
Don't you agree," the Walrus said,
"The sight would just be grand?"
"Personally," said the Carpenter,
"I couldn't raise a stand."
But all the time the dirty swine
Was coming in his hand.

+++++

%%% %%% %%% %%% %%% %%% %%% %%% %%% %%%
 % CARROLL ON LETTER WRITING %
 % Eric Lindsay %
 %%% %%% %%% %%% %%% %%% %%% %%% %%% %%%

Dear Marc,

I note your planned journal Alician Fields, however; being at present unduely influenced by the effects of a party, at which the normal prohibition "hic non bibtur" was conspicuously absent, I find myself more able to emulate W C Fields, who hated children, and with good reason if they make as much noise as the ones on the streets near here. Having thus decided not to write on the Rev. Dodgson's children's pieces, it seems that I am to be restricted in my comments to his advice on a subject dear to the hearts of fans, namely letter writing. Carroll is well known to most fans: I have here for example a fanzine called "Vorpall", and I recall once joining Ned Brooks and George Wells in singing, each in his own separate key of course, Jabberwocky, while cruising down a US highway. However, perhaps Carroll's essay "Eight or Nine Wise Words about Letter Writing" is less well known to fans, and it deserves to be well known, not least because it contains advice that, if heeded, would improve the general run of letters emerging from fannish hands.

We may ignore the advice on stamp cases, particularly as the "Wonderland" is not available (those who wish a stamp case can obtain one from the Australian post office for 2c - they are also fine for credit card containers).

On beginning a letter, Carroll advises finding your correspondent's previous letter, so as to refresh your memory of its contents, and of their current address. Next address and stamp the envelope, lest you run short of time and address the envelope in a hasty scrawl while rushing to the post office, a procedure that may result in the letter being delivered, not to the intended recipient, but to the Dead Letter Office. On the note paper include your own address - the other person will either not remember it, or will have lost his address list when doing a reply. Include the full date. Like Carroll, I have found myself trying to put into order a series of letters in which the year or month have been omitted. Of course, if you never put your letters in order, you may not care about this, but your correspondent may.

The third section is how to go on with a letter, and the first point is to write legibly. Carroll dismisses the argument that you can write poorly because you are writing quickly by asking how you can justify saving your time at the expense of your friend's having to waste time deciphering your handwriting. In these days of cheap typewriters there is simply no excuse. Carroll's second rule here is: "don't fill more than a page and a half with apologies for not having written sooner!" On the subject of your letter, start by answering questions raised by your friend's last letter, and cover points raised by his letter. In referring to his remarks, quote them exactly, rather than

giving a summary in your own words, since this rarely conveys the same meaning to the other writer. Carroll follows this with five rules for dealing with acrimonious correspondence in a manner designed to restore friendships - since I hope that fans will not be engaged in controversies by letter, I will not summarise these. On enclosures, it is recommended that they be put in the envelope as soon as you mention them in the letter, otherwise you will find them on the table after posting the letter (ah, yes indeed.)

How to end a letter is Carroll's fourth section, and the main rule perhaps applies to an age more formal than our's. This is the question of the complementary close - "your's faithfully", "your's affectionately" &c. Check the last letter from your correspondent, and close in a manner "at least as friendly as his: in fact, even if a shade more friendly, it will do no harm!" In the matter of a postscript, it is useful, but should not contain the real gist of the letter, but rather serves to contain matters of small import, of which we do not wish to make a real fuss.

A correspondence register of letters inward and outward is recommended by Carroll. His is rather elaborate, and the description of it is lengthy. It includes provision for differentiating inward and outward letters at a glance, numbering letters, indicating whether a reply has been made or received, or goods delivered, as appropriate, along with an indication of the number of the letter in reply alongside the original letter number. Carroll includes a precis of letters, but the existence of carbon paper, for those who want a record of their letters, makes this less needful.

I have kept a similar sort of register for years now, providing a useful record of changes in my writing habits, and used it before ever reading Carroll's ideas. It enables you to provide statistics, for example, such as indicating that in the first eight months of 1975, I received 751 letters and fanzines, posted out 442 letters at an average cost of 18.7 cents, and 759 fanzines at an average of 11 cents. This lets you compare costs after the recent mail increases. In September and October I received 206 letters and fanzines, sent out only 85 letters etc, at an average cost of 40 cents. This sort of thing provides good material for padding articles, and for attacks on the post office charges, even if it has no intrinsic interest.

With his note on his mail register Carroll closes his essay, and with its increased rates, the post office does its best to ensure that we will not need one. I hope that such will not be the case.

Eric Lindsay
6 Hillcrest Avenue
Faulconbridge
N.S.W. 2776

15th. November 1975.

THE CHILD AS INNOCENT

Numerous explanations for Lewis Carroll's "Alice In Wonderland" have been advanced but they all, in my opinion, lack one thing: simplicity. Granted Charles Lutwidge Dodgson was a sexually maladjusted Victorian don but those who insist on reading "Alice" as merely a showcase of Freudian slips are neglecting the obvious interpretation. Evidence suggests that Dodgson was afraid of mature sexual contact and turned his attention to little girls where the problem of sex could not arise. In his relations with his child friends, Dodgson did not demonstrate any overt sexual behaviour and instead behaved as a platonic but loving uncle towards his child friends. To him, the young girl seemed the most perfect form of human being. "Alice In Wonderland" is, at least on one level, the celebration of the young girl as an innocent and if I may be excused the presumption, I feel that this is the idea that Dodgson had in mind when he wrote the book.

The main evidence for this thesis in "Alice In Wonderland" lies in Dodgson's basic equations

(1) Big = Bad

(2) Small = Good

I will state in advance that the equations are not strictly followed throughout the book but I feel that the exceptions are not sufficiently prolific to justify rejecting the thesis.

When we first meet Alice, she is an ordinary child in an ordinary world, however, the minute she enters the world of the rabbit, she becomes relatively too large. She finds a small door through which she can see a beautiful garden. She is too big to get into the garden. Martin Gardner, in his book "The Annotated Alice" suggests that the garden is that of Trinity College at which Dodgson could look while working and in which Alice Liddell (the original Alice for whom the story was first written) and her sisters used to play. It is the garden of childhood, and Alice is excluded due to her size. She can reach the key on the glass table but she can't actually get into the garden. Alice is in the position of the adult Dodgson. She can see the beauties of childhood but she cannot get to them.

Alice discovers a bottle and since it is not labeled poison, she drinks it. Whatever is inside the bottle seems to combine all the flavours of childhood. It tastes like a mixture of cherry tart, custard, pineapple, roast turkey, toffy and hot buttered toast. This weird but pleasant combination has the effect of shrinking Alice. She becomes a true child. Small equals Good. (Equation 2). Now she is the right size to fit through the door. The only problem is that she has left the key on the table.

In her small condition, she tries to scold herself, from Carroll's descriptions a rather pointless task. She realises that the task is senseless. There isn't enough of her to allow

an internal argument. She still has the problem of the key and to solve this she tries eating a cake which she finds. The cake's taste isn't mentioned but we are told that the cake disappoints her. Its action causes her to grow.

As Alice grows, she begins to exhibit adult mannerisms. She speaks condescendingly to her own feet, calling them dears. She works out a formal address for her feet which is devoid of real feeling down to the stilted "With Alice's love".

Now she can reach the key but can only look into the garden with one eye. She is further removed from the world of childhood than when she first dropped down the rabbit hole.

There is now more than enough of Alice for her to scold herself and she does so in terms of her new adult status: "a great girl like you". She can also adopt other adult mannerisms. She becomes very bitchy towards other children. This is seen as she is forced to search her memory for her identity which she lost whilst growing.

The other indication of her new nature is the White Rabbit's attitude towards her. We will see him later in the role of Alice's lord and master, but now he is frightened of Alice and runs away when she asks him questions.

Whereas when she was small, Alice stopped crying quickly, in her enlarged state she cannot stop crying until interrupted by the White Rabbit. This, one of her adult actions, will have serious repercussions on Alice the Child at a later time.

Alice undergoes another size change somehow caused by holding the White Rabbit's fan and almost immediately is in trouble. She is drowning in a sea of salt water. In this baptism she regains her innocence and starts thinking on the level of childhood again. (I cannot help but think of the sea in which Aphrodite continually renewed her virginity. Probably not the sort of thing of which the rather prudish Dodgson would have thought. It could be that the sea of tears is merely a Christian baptismal symbol). Alice regains her commonsense which deserted her when she was big and starts thinking of bathing machines and ways to get home.

That is not to say that Alice becomes immune to trouble, but she is no longer intentionally nasty. Her comment to the mouse about cats is accidental and Alice's intent is friendly conversation. The mouse on the other hand is far from civil in its attitude towards cats. (It should be noted that, in this sequence, the mouse is larger than Alice. She takes it to be a hippopotamus or a walrus at first. Thus it is cast as big=adult to Alice's small = child.) The important thing to note about the mouse is that its attitude towards cats is not the normal fear of mice but more a social distaste.

"Our family always hated cats: nasty low vulgar things." (1)

The rest of the animals larger than Alice also demonstrate unpleasant adult characteristics. Lory makes the following comment

"I'm older than you and must know better." Even the Dodo who is considered to be representative of Carroll himself uses long words and Eaglet, representative of Alice's sister Edith,

has to reproach him. The mouse spouts dry history texts in an effort to dry them; another futile and boring adult pastime.

Alice manages to break up this particular group by a perfectly innocent mention of her cat, Dinah. She thinks that she is just making conversation in mentioning her cat's abilities but due to the confusion she suffers because of her size change she forgets that her audience do not see cats in quite the same light as she does. Even so, their exits are marked by adult formality and they make false excuses for leaving. All in all the entire procedure is carried out in a highly genteel manner.

We now reencounter the White Rabbit and this time he is larger than Alice. The result is a change in their relationship. Whereas before he was scared and ran away from Alice, now he is in charge. He mistakes Alice for his housemaid and orders her, in an imperious manner, to fetch his gloves and fan. Alice, being small and thus in the role of child obeys though she does ponder over her acceptance of the assignment. It should be noted that her pondering contains an element of fun which is normally lacking when she is large.

Whilst in the White Rabbit's house, she encounters another bottle from which she drinks. The result is that her size increases and once more she suffers ill effects. She grows so as to fill the entire room and has to lie down on the floor to avoid breaking her neck. She is totally trapped in the room.

Again we see the equation between Alice's size and adulthood. She thinks that she'll write a book about her adventures when she grows up but then realizes that she's already grown up and there's no room for her to grow up any further. Once again there is enough of her that she can argue with herself. She is not happy in her enlarged state.

The large Alice is much more violent and nasty than the small Alice. She is set in her opinions and refuses to let the Rabbit or Bill the Lizard anywhere near her. She is responsible for pushing the White Rabbit into a cucumber frame twice and kicks Bill right out of the chimney and into a hedge. (I realise that there is a nice Freudian interpretation here too. Alice curled up in a cramped room and a thing with a long tail coming /pun intentional/ down the chimney. That however is working on a deeper level than that in which I am at present interested.)

It is interesting to note that while the White Rabbit's attitude toward Alice changes depending on Alice's size, his basic personality does not change. He is the same size throughout the book.

Alice, in her adult size makes empty threats, another typical adult act. When the animals start throwing pebbles at her, she merely says

"You'd better not do that again." II
She doesn't explain what will happen if they do continue but relies on her adult authority in the same manner as parents and teachers often do.

The pebbles change into cakes which Alice eats. Her logic in

eating them isn't brilliant. She figures that the cakes can't make her larger so they must make her smaller. Fortunately she is right and she shrinks. This makes her happy immediately and she has no trouble escaping.

Alice decides that her next step must be to reach her "right size" and get to the beautiful garden. Her mind is unclouded and she can think clearly again.

Before anything else happens, Carroll shows us another way in which size/adulthood can be unpleasant. Alice encounters a puppy which is, to her, like a carthorse. It is friendly and wants to play. Alice finishes the game as quickly as possible because she realizes that she stands a good chance of being trampled. The puppy seems to represent the type of adult who, though not malicious, can easily hurt others, in particular children, without realizing it.

In thinking over the episode, Alice comes to the conclusion that she needs to be bigger to cope with problems like the puppy. This wish gets her into trouble in her encounter with the next character:--the Caterpillar.

The Caterpillar seems an exception to the rule that big equals adult because his behaviour is most adult despite the fact that he is exactly the same height as Alice, three inches. Alice is put in the wrong when she complains that three inches is not a good height. The Caterpillar is however of use to Alice and the advice which he gives is more substantial than the advice Alice normally receives from creatures. Despite his occasional gruffness, the Caterpillar does seem to have Alice's welfare at heart. He guides her to the mushroom which is to solve her growing problems although, until she gets the hang of it, the mushroom does cause a few problems at first. For a start, she shrinks too much, as was the case with the fan earlier. Then she reverses the effect and becomes giant again. The only problem is that her proportions have changed and she has a long neck which causes a pigeon to mistake her for a serpent.

This passage is another in which a size increase results in Alice losing her identity. The pigeon is certain she is a serpent and is out to eat the pigeon's eggs. Alice claims to be a little girl but with her new found height, her case is not convincing. That, plus the fact that little girls eat eggs, makes the pigeon certain that little girls are a type of serpent. Even Alice is not quite sure.

Through careful use of the mushroom Alice regains her right height. She continues her journey until she reaches a house four feet high. She is beginning to recognise the folly of being too big and she decides to shrink to more suitable dimensions before investigating the house.

It is worth noting that Alice becomes curious when she shrinks, curiosity being more a child's province than an adult one. Alice proceeds to discover two of the least pleasant adults in her adventure, the Duchess and the cook. The Duchess is rude, violent and ignorant. She believes in beating her baby and threatens to have Alice beheaded. The cook is irrational

violence personified. Both show incredible disregard for the safety of the baby and eventually Alice is lumbered with it. Alice shows consideration and kindness which Carroll apparently associated with little girls. Even when the baby turns into a pig Alice has a decent opinion of it though her comments on turning other children to pigs could be considered a little bitchy.

In the next sequence, that with the Mad Hatter, the March Hare and the Dormouse we see Alice in a rather unusual situation. She is larger than the Dormouse but smaller than the Mad Hatter and the March Hare. Thus there is an interesting interplay in which Alice is both child and condescending adult. The Tea Party seems very much an attempt by Carroll to sling off at adult social behaviour. Thus there are the standard tea party "entertainments": - witty but cutting dialogues, meaningless riddles, singing and recitations. Alice comes out of the situation worst off. There is however one place where Alice gets to act as an adult. While the Dormouse is reciting his little story, Alice behaves in the manner of an ancient aunt listening to her grand nephew reciting. She asks banal questions and interrupts what is obviously a piece of whimsy with dull fact. Eventually Alice leaves in a huff, a standard female tactic.

Alice's penultimate encounter is with the world of the nobility. She finds her way to the beautiful garden but it has been invaded. It is the site of the Queen of Hearts' croquet game. It would be interesting to learn of Dodgson's opinions of Queen Victoria because the view of nobility and it's hangers on presented in this sequence is not favourable. Once again, Alice is the child as opposed to all the royalty. She has a common sense attitude towards the entire affair. Though she does not set out to annoy the Court, she realizes that they are merely playing cards. The Queen is portrayed as the distilled essence of the tyrannical monarch. She expects to be obeyed immediately and centers her authority on capital punishment. The game of croquet played with hedgehogs and flamingoes seems to echo the futility of the entire Court social life. The King is portrayed as a pompous old fool, completely dominated by his wife. Once again a cruel portrait of adult life. Alice, as child comes out well. She saves the gardeners and her comments are sensible.

We meet the Duchess again but this time we see a different side of her nature. She appears as the unpleasant old aunt who is always giving trite advice and smothering the children with unwanted attention. This idea is enhanced when the Duchess gives Alice a totally useless present, all the words she has spoken.

Alice has a short encounter with the world of education when she meets the Gryphon and the Mock Turtle. This is not developed however. In "Through The Looking Glass" the education aspect is seen far better in the person of Humpty Dumpty. Thus I feel it is worth skipping passed the Mock Turtle to the trial scene where Alice encounters the law.

The trial is, without a doubt, the climax of the book. Here Alice encounters one of the most adult of pastimes and it is here that Alice is forced to leave Wonderland. The trial is a masterpiece of bungling and injustice. Conclusions are drawn on the flimsiest of evidence and all through the entire affair Alice is growing bigger and bigger.

As she grows, Alice gets more and more bitchy. In standing up, she tips over the entire jury box. Her comments toward the jurors, in particular the lizard are most uncalled for. She argues with the king, something which she would never have done on the croquet field. Then in a final nightmarish scene she finds herself beating off a flying pack of cards. And indeed, it is a dream becoming reality as Alice awakes to find her sister brushing the dead leaves off of her face. From being over two miles high, she becomes little Alice. The Child is once more innocent and her description includes the words tiny and little and eager and loving.

Carroll has painted a detailed allegory of the growth of a girl child into the world of adulthood. He has presented the perils of growing up and the simplicity of the small child. The book turns from the meaninglessness of Courts and Tea Parties and dry History lessons to the beauty of the Child's heart. Perhaps this is too bland for a cynical world. Let those who will seek deep Freudian significance in Alice's size changes. To me Alice is a mathematician's escape into the realm of fantasy. It is his opportunity to show his inner feelings about the grown up world in which he found himself. Carroll found the key into his garden of childhood. Let him rest there.

Footnotes.

(1) Gardner, Martin ed "The Annotated Alice" (New York, Bramhall House, 1960) page 42

(II) Gardner ibid page 63

Oh Carroll

Don't let em freud your dreams away

I'm gunna understand you

If it takes me all night and day.

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S.Aust. 5039. My thanks to Paul Anderson who pointed out that I had no excuse for procrastinating.