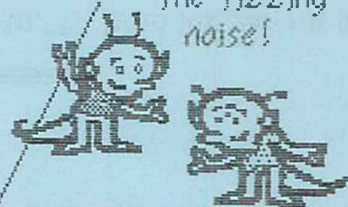
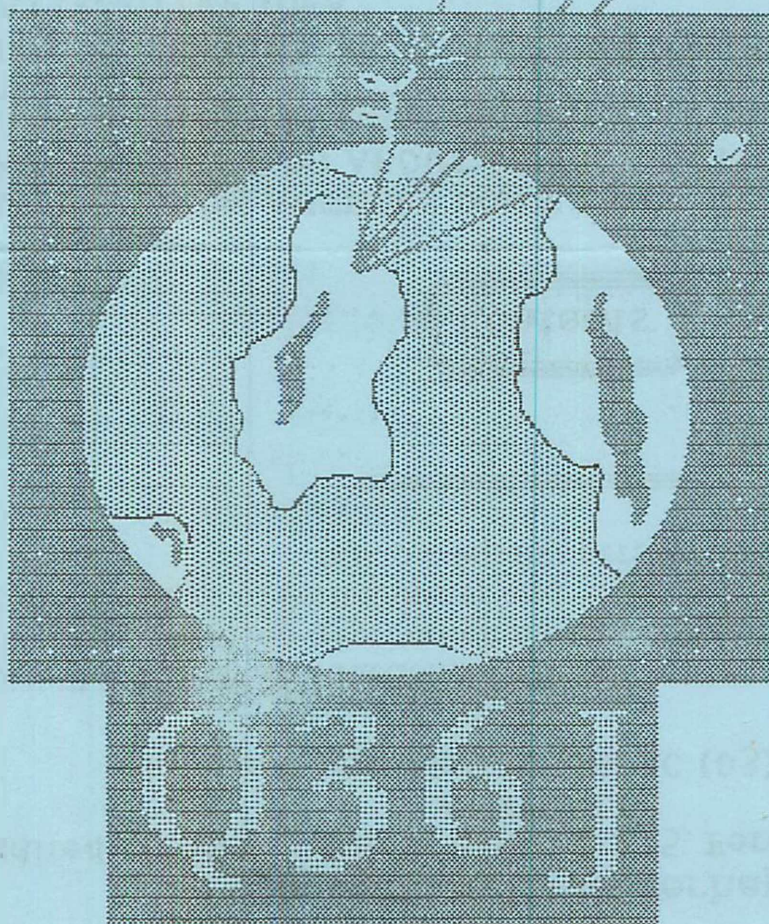


Yes, it seems incredible  
but it explains the hole  
in the ozone layer and  
the fizzing  
noise!



The inhabitants of  
the distant planet  
Cherrybomb discover  
a disturbing truth  
about the nature  
of their planet.



# Q36J (Marc II)

December 1990(Perhaps)

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A F.Y.W.D.W.W.W. Production. Produced by Marc Ortlieb with help from  
Tosche and with sleep deprivation mental aberrations provided by Michael  
Ortlieb. (Thanks to Paul Kantner and "Stairway To Cleveland" for helping  
me to keep my perspective.)

## Contents

|   |         |
|---|---------|
| SCIENCE FICTION AUTHORS DON'T KNOW SHIT | Page 2  |
| WHATCHA GONNA DO ABOUT SCIENCE FICTION  | Page 8  |
| BRAIN CONTROL?                          |         |
| LETTERATURE                             | Page 10 |
| CRYPTIC SOLUTION                        | Page 13 |
| AN ATTRACTIVE IDEA                      | Page 14 |
| ANNIE'S TELLING ME                      | Page 16 |
| A NATIVE TONGUE                         | Page 17 |

Q36 supports DUFF, GUFF, and Minneapolis in '73. It no longer supports Sydney  
in '95 since it really can't see the point in all this frantic convention activity.  
Besides, Sydney may be a hotbed of heavy fannish activity, but little sign of it has  
escaped to be evident this far south.

Q36J (Marc II) has been produced using MacWrite, Superpaint, Pagemaker 3 and  
various other pieces of electronic jiggery-pokery. Some copies of Q36I (Marc II) have  
still to be posted. Such is the state of the Ortlieb energy and money bank.

Cover by Tosche as the lazy editor hasn't gotten around to soliciting better  
artwork. Exploding planet artwork gratefully received!

All uncredited material is Marc Ortlieb's fault.



'Grr, you little carnivore!' she whispered. She treated herself to a suspicion of perfume, an exclusive perfume that contained ambergris which (she hastily censored the image) is the undigested remnant of squid and octopus found in the intestines of the spermaceti whale."

Aldiss uses his scenario to examine the ways that people question the taboos of others while seeing their own as quite natural. Mihaly's nephew Aylmer Ainson, the son of the discoverer of the utod spaceship, is disgusted by the eating of "bits of animal cooked" but he, in his turn has shocked his carnivorous father

"... father came in unexpectedly one night on his last leave when I had my girl on my bed. I was kissing her between the thighs when he opened the door. The sight nearly drove him off his nut! Does it shock you too?"

Rather racey for 1964 but the book is very advanced. It deals with homosexuality in a manner far more sympathetic than was the norm in the early Sixties and the status accorded the leading female character is more positive than one would expect to find in the male dominated s.f. of the time. Hilary Warhoon's speech towards the end of the book would not seem out of place in a contemporary novel.

"You're all the same, you men. You're all cut off from the basic realities of life in a way a woman never could be ... all this fear of excreta - can't you see that to these poor unfortunate beings we have captured, their waste products are a sign of fertility, that they ceremonially offer their mineral salts back to their earth when they have done with them? ... You think excreta's bad, but it's the fear of it that's bad!"

*The Dark Light Years*, far from being just another shitty book, is chock full of goodies, just waiting to be discovered. Aldiss treads where no author, before or since, has dared to tread. (And why does everyone laugh during those Star Trek blooper reels where the catch phrase "Where no man has gone before" is played over a scene showing William Shatner outsider the ladies' dunny?)

Certainly shit has more humorous potential than serious, but it is a part of human existence with which few science fiction authors have come to grips. In excrement, the natural world offers numerous examples of interesting adaptations that could be the basis for alien beings - like rabbits producing two types of excreta, one of which it eats in order to pass it through the system a second time or the larval beetle that creates a protective cage of its own excreta which wards off enemies. Why aren't these sorts of adaptation utilized by authors? Shit can have more metaphorical levels than are utilized in common critique. It deserves more time in modern science fiction.

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## FOOTNOTES

1. Faanish footnote The name seems familiar doesn't it?
2. Now, is the captain's name merely coincidence?



The utods, as we discover, do have, as a central tenet of their civilization, the notion that excrement is sacred and that it is not something to be avoided. The belief system that Aldiss defines for them has clear similarities to Hinduism and Buddhism. The utods believe that, much as the components of their bodies are recycled in the ecosystem, going from the mud to trees called ammps and from there back to the utods, so their spirits pass into the mud and thence to the trees and back into new-born utods. From this comes a society deeply concerned with ecology and Aldiss makes this point particularly clear when he discusses the fate of a revolutionary movement among the utods brought about when Manna Warun simultaneously discovered the industrial revolution and cleanliness. The revolution soon died out when it led to utods hastening one another along the cycle and it is left as a brief but painful memory in the hundreds of millions of years of utod history. The utods themselves utilize biotechnology, with organism selected for their utility. Thus, what the humans see initially as a lowly parasitic plant in the utod's wooden spaceship turns out to be a superb carbon dioxide scrubber but all attempts to grow it in a nice clean human laboratory are abysmal failures.

Aldiss weaves in an ecological message that smacks more of the green movements of the eighties than it does of the still technologically gung-ho society of the early 1960s. He throws the utod and human attitudes into sharp contrast, making it clear which approach he prefers. The utod attitude is expressed by the Cosmopoliten

"As children of the Triple Suns, our defecations must touch no planets unlit by the Triple Suns; there are limits to all things, even fertility."

The human attitude is expressed in terms somewhat blunt for 1964

"Fertility was the curse of the human race, Ainson thought. Too much procreation went on; Earth's teeming loins had to ejaculate once again, ejaculate its unwanted progeny on to the virgin planets that lay awaiting - well, awaiting what else?"

The message is that, by living in one's own shit, one takes responsibility for one's own actions - one does not merely flush away one's responsibilities. Tom Lehrer, writing in 1965, put it succinctly in his song Pollution

"The breakfast garbage that you throw in the bay/They drink at lunch in San Jose."

That's not to say that Aldiss doesn't have fun with his ideas. Like Bette Midler, he can't resist fart jokes. When dealing with the problems of translating the utod language, their anatomy is considered. Utods have a mouth, six breathing vents and

"Thirdly, our friends also produce a variety of controlled sound through the rectum situated in their second head."

It is not only the egestion phase that Aldiss examines in *The Dark Light Years*. He uses the book to examine a few other human foibles. Humanity has removed itself so far from its own nature that the eating of natural food, especially meat is considered a mild perversion.

"... she watched the flush fade from her cheeks. Perhaps it had been caused not by emotion but by the meat-of-animal she had consumed. She inspected the little white teeth arranged behind her red lips, liking the savagery of her smile.



But, for the true masterpiece of coprophillic science fiction, one must return to Brian Aldiss. (I refuse to consider Delaney's *Tides Of Lust* S.F., fantastic though it may be.) Aldiss utilizes shit more thoroughly than any other author with whom I am familiar. Shit has a wealth of connotations and associations seldom plumbed by novelists. The reason for this is that shit is inherently funny. Our earliest jokes are shit jokes and our primate relatives are renowned for flinging the stuff about in a more simple and sincere manner than our politicians. Evelyn Waugh was able to write a serious book about the death industry, but no one has managed to write a serious piece of mimetic fiction about shit. Aldiss brings shit into the science fictional world, where it is possible to deal with its imagery without getting too bogged down in its humorous overtones.

Shit has shock value. Perhaps one of the most memorably passages in the annals of science fiction is the following

"He climbed into the beautiful object. It stank to high heaven; and that was where it had been intended for. Five minutes inspection left him in no doubt: this was a . . . well, it looked like an overgrown seedpod, but it was - Captain Bargerone<sup>1</sup> had to see this: this was a space ship.

A space ship loaded high with shit."

It was this image that hit Ellison and caused him to make the comment quoted earlier. Aldiss certainly takes advantage of shit's impact. People remember the book because it is about shit. This is unfortunate because, often, that is all that people remember about the book. When I was preparing an earlier version of this piece for a Nova Mob talk earlier this year, I thought I'd be able to cover the book with a passing comment or two but, when I re-read it, I realized that there was more to *The Dark Light Fears* than spaceships full of excreta.

One of the most consistently difficult tasks confronting science fiction authors is the construction of convincing aliens. Often the author relies on physical appearance - thus you get the alien whose body is revoltingly or appealingly alien, but whose personality is Twentieth Century American. Describing an alien culture should not be more difficult than describing an alien body but few authors make a decent fist of it. Aldiss uses a common scientific and science fictional technique in that he takes one facet of our culture and reverses it thus achieving two major goals. First he creates an alien culture that the reader can imagine; we find it easier to relate to mirror images than we would to anything truly alien. Secondly it allows him to examine in detail that cultural facet that he has reversed.

The facet that Aldiss reversed in *The Dark Light Fears* was western civilization's attitude to waste. Sir Mihaly Pasztor, the exobiologist trying to communicate with the utods, a group of aliens encountered by an Earth exploration ship explains this to them while trying to open up communication.

"To our way of thought," he said, "civilization is reckoned as the distance men has placed between himself and his excreta."

In a later dinner conversation, Mihaly's dinner guest, Mrs Hilary Werhoon<sup>2</sup>, says to him

"Perhaps we cannot converse with them until we have decided for ourselves what constitutes civilization. Don't raise that suave eyebrow at me Mihaly; I know civilization does not consist of lying indolent in one's own droppings - though it's possible that if we had a guru here he would tell us it did."



I hooked my toes [in the toehold slots] leaned back and caught her as she floated close. She dropped her trousers, or rather drew them down about her legs in the absence of gravity, baring her bottom. Then she doubled up her legs and squatted against the funnel, while I held her by the shoulders and gently shoved her in to the wall. Otherwise she would simply have floated away from it, especially when - well, a rocket moves in space by jetting gas, and a person would move similarly by jetting liquid.

I closed my eyes, in deference to her modesty, after the first guilty glimpse that verified that she definitely was not male, but could still feel the slight motion of her body and hear the fluid striking the funnel. Then, abruptly it became very exciting for me. I was lucky to have urinated first; had I done it last, I would have had more difficulty than she, albeit for a different reason."

One of the few Americans with a lavatorial streak in his writing is Damon Knight. His "*The Big Fat Boom*" deals with alien visitors who start paying vast sums for cow pats, based on an artistic merit obvious only to the true devotee. The story is aimed at the pretensions of modern art; its choice of subject matter allows full use of the metaphorical potential of shit.

#### *The Big Fat Boom*

"'Funny we never thought there was so many kinds of [cow] pats,' Martha said dreamily. 'The emperor - that's the one with the double whorl?'

Llewellyn grunted, picking up a magazine.

'Seems like a person could kind of -'

A kindly gleam came into Llewellyn's eyes. 'Change one around?' he said. 'Nope - been tried. I was reading about it in here just yesterday.' He held up the current issue of *The American Fat Dealer* and began to turn the glossy pages. "*Fat-G-Grams*," he read aloud. "*Preserving your Fats. Dairying - a Profitable sideline*. Nope. Oh, here it is. *Fake Fats a Flop*. See, it says here some fellow down in Amarillo got hold of an emperor and made a plaster mould. Then he used the mould on a couple of big cull pats - says here they was so perfect you couldn't tell the difference. But the Hurks wouldn't buy. They knew.'"

In a concert, Bette Midler said, in an embarrassed tone "I can't believe I've been reduced to telling fart jokes!" In "*Cabin Boy*", Knight doesn't even apologise. The story features aliens who communicate via scent. It's one way of emphasising how alien they are. During their first contact with humans, Frances McMenamin, one of the humans, realizes that the odours that Tommy, the cabin boy, is emitting are more than indicators of poor diet.

"The egg released a sharp odour.

'If ever we tell anybody,' Said Roget in an awed tone, 'that you taught a six-foot Easter Egg to count to ten by selective flatulence-'

'Hush fool,' she said. 'This is a tough one.'

The story also explains those iris-ing doors so beloved of science fiction writers. The alien space ship is the mature stage of the species and the Captain; the crew enter and leave through its sphincters.



way estimated that the said knee-joints were at least ten feet from ground level, that the thickest diameter of the great body was about eighteen feet and that from head to tail the brute measured well over one hundred feet"

#### *"Poor Little Warrior"*

"... what primarily attracts you is the thunder lizard's hide. It gives off a smell as deeply resonant as the bass note of a piano. It makes the elephant's epidermis look like a sheet of crinkled lavatory paper. ... See the bronto's tail lift ... Oh lovely, yep, a couple of hayricksfull at least emerging from his nether end. That sure was a beauty folks ..."

White seems an exception to the rule that British authors are happier in shit than American authors. Aldiss is more the norm in this respect, as the above quotation shows. Even iconoclastic Ellison is scared shitless, as seen in his introduction to Brian Aldiss's "The Night That All Time Broke Out" in DANGEROUS VISIONS 1. Harlan Ellison says "He [Aldiss] also did this novel called THE DARK LIGHT YEARS which was all about shit. Now that is what I call a dangerous vision." But more of that later.

Keith Roberts THE FURIES contains one of the most heart-warming excretory references in the genre. Jane and Bill have been trapped in an armoured car for several hours, with the nasty wasps crawling over the vehicle.

#### *The Furies*

"I went back to Jane. She was sitting up when I reached her; I said softly, 'Hello love, how do you feel?' She put her head in her hands. 'Awful. Bill, can't we ... Can't we get out? Isn't there any way?' ... 'We'll just have to wait, Jane. The worst's over now. They won't stay much longer, you'll see.' ... She said miserably, 'I want to spend a penny. I've wanted to for ages.' I said, 'Oh God ... Look, if the worst comes to the worst you'll just have to spend it. It's better than being killed.' I shook her shoulder gently. 'You're a big girl now, Jane. I shan't worry if you don't.' She didn't answer, just sat trembling."

In Edmund Cooper's TRANSIT, a group of people have been abducted by aliens for testing against another species and they decide that they had better not let any of the group out of the sight of the rest. "But there are some things that ladies and gentlemen do in private."

"Not any more," replies the strong hero and proceeds to piss in no particular direction.

Piers Anthony - American by habitat but British by birth, examines the more erotic potential of urination in his "Bio of a Space Tyrant" - a truly shithouse book. In a way the following is a sequel to the famous directions for the use of a zero-g toilet in Kubrick's film 2001: A Space Odyssey. Hope Hubris is the interplanetary equivalent of a ship person on a freefall trip through the Jovian moons when he discovers that his roommate, Helse, is a female disguised as a male for an assortment of reasons. The craft has plumbing designed to allow males to separate urination and defecation in freefall but Helse isn't equipped to use it.

#### *Bio Of A Space Tyrant : Refugee*

"'You'll have to hold me against the wall,' she said.



## SCIENCE FICTION AUTHORS DON'T KNOW SHIT

Marc Ortlieb

"Oh the Intergalactic Laxative will get you from here to there  
For cosmic constipation, there's none that can compare.  
If shitting is a problem when you're up there in the stars  
The Intergalactic Laxative will get you from here to Mars."  
Donovan Leich "The Intergalactic Laxative"

Science fiction prides itself in being a literature of ideas - ideas of the future, of vast spaces and aeons of time. It's not surprising then that it has little time for things more commonplace, such as egestion, excretion or flatulence. Granted that even in the most mimetic of literatures such things are not considered topics for polite writing, science fiction seems particularly prudish when it comes to the elimination of human wastes. Where science fiction authors spend uncountable days narrowing down the trajectory of a space ship, or the orbit of a moon, they pay scant attention to the basic biological functions of their characters. An exploration of the way in which science fiction has treated elimination gives us a new view the interaction between science fiction and the real world.

Much as the prudish authors of the Bible stopped short of describing the amount of work necessary in order to keep their two of each type of animal in clean pens, all done by the wives of Noah, Ham, Shem and Japeth, one assumes, authors of sf tend to sweep excrement under the carpet. Some even resort to the time-honoured creationist methodology and suggest that God/nature/whatever stops the dramatic personae from pooping. Anne McCaffrey's dragons are never caught crapping. When a terrified stable boy contemplates the thought of cleaning up after a full weyr of dragons drops on his doorstep, he is reprimanded with the comment "Dragons aren't like runner beasts [read horses]"

Further examination of the text solves the mystery of dragon coprology. We are continually reminded that dragons "go between" which means that it is indeed fortunate that Between is as cold as McCaffrey describes it, otherwise even the mustiest of dragon riders would be unable to cope with the two or three heartbeats one spends there during each teleport. (It also means that dragons are real fast movers.)

Roland Barthes, in his celebrated essay on the strip tease, pointed out that what is left hidden may be more important in the process than what is revealed. Both tell us something of the system through which the author wishes to show us something of the world. That science fiction writers chose to ignore such body functions tells us a lot, as does the fact that some authors can't avoid the temptation to discuss body functions.

James White, in his hospital station series, goes into great detail about the atmospheric and eating facilities provided for the surgeons and patients, but never do we get a description of an alien bedpan. His characters spend hours trapped in oxygen bubbles, surrounded by chlorine breathing forms, with nary a thought of anywhere to piddle. Indeed, it is interesting to compare his view of dinosaurs as expressed in "The Trouble with Emily" with a far more earthy dinosaur in Brian Aldiss's "Poor Little Warrior".

### *Hospital Station*

"Suddenly a great grey-brown, mountainous body broke the surface, a long tapering neck and tail slapping the water with explosive violence . . . Con



## WHATCHA GONNA DO ABOUT SCIENCE FICTION BRAIN CONTROL? (An editorial, of sorts)

While peer approval is flattering, there are times when I find it to be a pain in the arse. A couple of the letters I received after I sent out Q36I got me thinking about what I am doing and why I am doing it. On Joni Mitchell's live album MILES OF AISLES, the audience are yelling out for "Carey", "Both Sides Now" and "The Last Time I saw Richard" and she comments

"That's one thing that's always like been a major difference between like the performing arts to me and being a painter. You know. Like a painter does a painting and he does a painting that's it. You know he's had the joy of creating it. Someone hangs it on some wall. Somebody buys it. Somebody buys it again maybe nobody buys it and it sits up in a loft until he dies. Nobody ever said to Van Gogh 'Paint A Starry Night again man.' He painted it that's it."

Fanzines aren't pieces of art, nor are they million-selling songs but I do feel that they deserve to be judged on the basis of what they are, not on the basis of what previous issues used to be like. Considering the changes that I've gone through since last I put out Q36s, perhaps it was foolish of me to ressurect an old title. My interests aren't identical to what they were then. To take but three examples, I've become far more aware of the fun to be had in writing sercon articles, I enjoy cryptic cross-words and I enjoy playing with computers. That makes me a different Marc Ortlieb to the one who put out the first sequence of Q36s. Also I don't have easy access to John Packer or to the type of duplicating equipment I used on the previous series. Sorry to those who don't like Macintosh clip art, but that will be the mainstay for Q36. It's easy to use Pagemaker to integrate it into the formats I'm playing with. (Since noting that, I have gained limited access to a laser scanner - artwork is now welcome, provided that you don't mind it going through the scanner and then being translated to print via stencil.)

Play is the key to Q36. I pay the bills and so I feel quite free to play with ideas, formats and writing. Sometimes I play at being a skiffy critic. Sometimes I play at being a fiction writer. It's still a learning experience for me. Horrible thought huh? A thirty eight year old teacher who still wants to learn things and who is interested in changing his fanzine. Oh yes, that's the fourth example I should have mentioned when discussing my changing interests in the paragraph above. I'm enjoying teaching at the moment and find that while, in previous years, I might have used school to hone my fannish talents, I'm now using my fannish talents to hone my teaching skills. Some of the pieces in Q36 start life in my Year 11 English class.

All of that is not to say that I don't expect criticism. I'd better. As you'll have noticed, I'm more than willing to dish it out. By all means tell me what you don't like in Q36 but please don't put it in terms of what Q36 used to be like. It's not likely to change my mind about what I put into it and it'll only annoy me, with no really constructive results. I publish Q36 because it's what I want to do and I publish the sorts of things that I figure are going to be fun/interesting/ challenging to write. Were it not for the fact that I like the title, I'd change the name of this zine to STAIRWAY TO CLEVELAND, in honour of a Paul Kantner/ Paul Warren track from the Jefferson Starship album MODERN TIMES.

"Why dontcha sound like you used to in '65, '69, '75  
Everybody stand up they gotta make a comment  
Critics say they'll never make it, never make it  
Never, Never, Never, Never, Never, Never, Never, Never, Never, Never.

Fuck you! We do what we want."



One of the things I want to do is play with Michael who is now twenty months old and I tend to write about the things I do - hence pappy talk keep talking pappy pappy pappy talk. Denny Lien kindly sent me a copy of the OUTLAND strip in which Steve Dallas is reintroduced as a born-again father and he proceeds to bore the living hell out of Opus with his descriptions of babies throwing up and drooling. Well, Michael has more or less gotten past the throwing up stage, but he's still dribbling a lot. It's his canine teeth coming through. It makes me wonder. (It really makes me wonder.) What sorts of teething troubles would baby vampires have? And what about their mothers? "Fangs for the Mammaries" is a lovely song, but I suspect that mummy vampires get their babies onto the bottle p.d.q. once the little monsters start teething.

We must stop talking Michael to the zoo. I'm sure he's been nattering to the young white cheeked gibbon. Though he hasn't got the brachiating right yet, he is climbing and trying to swing from the backs of chairs. It's fortunate that they have adequate protection for the felines there too. He terrorizes our cat, Ursula, and, when shown photographs of the bobcats in his zoo book, a gleam comes to his eye and he says "Bussy".

He's destined to be a strange child - he can almost literally say that he cut his teeth on fanzines. He would have had I been a trifle slower in removing a copy of THE ROGUE RAVEN from his grasp. He is already a bibliophile, though his choice of reading material isn't quite up to Nova Mob standard. Current favorites are BRIGHT AND BEAUTIFUL, a bit of Christian propaganda given to him by some of Cath's church friends, WHO'S THAT LOOKING IN THE JUNGLE?, FREDDIE FROG and particularly the Spot Books. The first doesn't worry me too much. I censor it when I read it to him. I'm quite happy to read such captions as "Bright water, beautiful fish" but I skip the commercial at the end. The animal books are delightful to read to him and I won't burden him with my fears that there may not be such creatures as pandas and leopards when he grows up. The Spot Books worry me a little. I'm sure it's only a baby step from liking that series and going on to Piers Anthony.

Of course he is a hardened convention goer - having attended Conjunction and Danse Macabre. We even took him to the OTHERWORLDS FAIR arranged by Wendy Ratter in a scout hall in Brunswick. That was a strange little gathering. The hucksters' room was one of the weirdest mixes I've ever seen. There were non-stop videos, book sellers, knickknackery, the usual Star Trek/Blakes 7/Cattlecar Galaxative and the like stalls and there was Karen Pender-Gunn selling little stuffed stegosauri. The Richard III Society were even there, doing their best to clear the name of a knave who, at best, was no worse than the rogues and rascals who ran England at that time.

There were occasional pieces of entertainment, provided by the S.C.A., the Varangian Guard and an assortment of medieval types, including a belly dancer. Michael loved that. When she was doing her warm-up exercise in a small room just off the main hall, Michael was drawn to her by the sound of her jingly bells. He perved throughout her stretching exercises and obviously picked up a few pointers because, when her turn came, he joined in, swaying his little legs to the sinuous and sensuous music. As I said earlier, we're a little worried about him.

But there you have it. Q36 will continue to be about whatever I feel it should be about. Particularly it will be about eighteen pages, because that fits it into the cheapest postage category and Australia Post isn't making the faneditor's life any easier with its price increases. The zine is not currently supporting any Worldcon bids but is having fun watching the current Sydney bid self-destruct. 1985 was more than enough.



## LETTERATURE

Herebelow follow a few comments about the previous issue of Q36 which, for reasons alluded to below, will have to be known as Q36I (Marc II). As I mentioned in the editorial for said issue, I don't see the lettercol being too prominent a part of this zine. I can't guarantee an adequate frequency and there's nothing as stale as a LoC looking at issues that were forgotten by the last generation of fans twice removed. I also intend to play with the lettercol format for a while. If you are one of those purists who object to your letters being butchered, please note that. [Yes Joseph; I know I should have warned people of that before sending out Q36I(MarcII), but I figure that people who send letters to fanzines are pissing in the wind and they should be happy that they don't get the whole lot back.]

**Irwin Hirsh** and **Alan Stewart**, among others, pointed out in conversation that I'd already done Q36I. Well, what about bananas? Have we done bananas?

Both **Mark Manning** and **Gerald Smith** note that Q36I wasn't up to the legendary status of the Q36s of yesteryear. I suspect that this issue will disappoint them even more. Sigh. It's tough being a legendary faneditor.

**Mark Manning** "Things I like include, literally before anything else, Gunny's cover illo. Only the fact that there are still Jack Vance novels I've yet to read prevents me from blowing my brains out in envy."

"'Cryptic Crossword' I barely looked at, while killing trees to print 'Plot Devices' would have been illegal in most jurisdictions."

**Gerald Smith** "Surprisingly (to me anyway) for an Ortliebzine, the best thing in this issue is the sercon review of recent Australian short fiction."

"I am unfortunately moved to say that 'The Compleate Quiz Team' was disappointing. Too full of in jokes, for the most part lacking in the humour needed to sustain it and, in the end, overly long for the punch line."

**Mark Manning** " 'The Compleate Quiz Team' almost attained classic Ortliebian proportions."

Okay. It's a cheap trick - juxtaposing contrary snippets that way - but as I believe Linda Lovelace said before converted to fundamentalism, a cheap trick is better than no trick at all. While several people mentioned that they found the cryptic crossword to be a waste of space, **Alan Stewart** and **Ian Gunn** mentioned that they had fun doing it. You can't please all the fans all the time.

**Brian Forte** "I don't know about you, but it feels more than a little Twilight Zoneish to discover that *both* of my children are older than the solitary issue of a former teacher of mine."

"I've been gafiating for years now and this whole bunfight between The New Wave and the Boring Old Farts interests me. My first question is where would I fit? Being corrupted as young as I was my feeling is that, whilst probably about the same age as these Young Turks, my mind set and memory is, at least marginally, aligned and identified with the Boring Old Farts. Given this, I've more than half a mind to set up shop and begin trade as an Independent. This, of course, would offer so much more in the way of opportunity with regard to such things as acquiring inside gossip, learning secret and arcane insults, discovering just who is crossing the line and doing such things as talking/fraternizing/sleeping with the opposition and the like."



**Pauline Dickinson** "Whilst unfortunate, but undoubtable, signs of middle age beset one, it's still reassuring to see signs of vitality in other old dogs . . . having to cope with a one year old is a wearing experience, but it certainly holds back approaching senescence."

**Sheryl Birkhead** "Nice cover - uh - if Ian numbers his work - 590 - whew! VERY nice cover."

"Your stroll toward school sounds quite 'right'. Did you actually have the 'offending' herb identified? One episode of a sitcom here revolves around a landlord's wife entering a flower arrangement in a show - including some attractive 'weeds' - one of which is identified (amateurishly - and it turns out incorrectly) as a can...- well, you get the idea."

I didn't get a museum identification of the herb and so it might not have been exactly what I thought it was, though three teaching friends who admit to token familiarity with the herb agreed with my identification. Someone else did too. About six weeks after I first saw the plant, it was thoroughly stripped of its leaves. Nothing but a few raggedy stems left. Sigh. It was too young to smoke too.

Sheryl notes that I don't talk much about parenthood. I guess I'm too aware of the fact that proud pappa natter can be boring, both to those who have been through it and to those who want nothing to do with children. **Denny Lien** sent me a clipped OUTLANDS cartoon which re-introduces Steve Dallas to Berke Breathed's new strip. Steve has become a father and babbles to Opus about the joys of fatherhood in a way that I am wont to do if not stopped. "When he threw up for the first time, I was so moved, I wept!"

**Craig Hilton** "Please note my new permanent address. (See below) I'm buying a solo medical practice in the country. Big step. Julia will be joining me shortly. Bloody big step. But all is going well so far.

Collie is a coal-mining town, 10-15,000 people - one of the biggest towns in the south west. Lots of wineries nearby. Very chilly, sort of Melbournean climate. Two and a half hour's drive from Perth."

Craig also sent a copy of THE RAT TALE SONGBOOK, inscribed "For Marc Ortlieb, who likes that sort of thing." True. I don't know if Craig's selling this one, but send him money anyway. As with any filk book, there are tunes I don't know, but this is a showcase for Craig's musical and lyrical talents and demonstrates his twisted sense of humour delightfully.

**R Laurraine Tutihasi** "Do you know anything about the Sydney bid for 1995? They were not visibly present at Nasfic, and they are competing against Atlanta and Glasgow. Atlanta is a very strong bid, since they put on a good convention last time. Two foreign bids will probably insure that Atlanta wins. I understand that an Australian was there, but I was never where he was."

In short no. I once received an invitation to one of their meetings, but the only recent development on that front was an editorial by Eric Lindsay suggesting that, if they had any sense, they'd pack up the bid before it cost them real money.



## Graham Stone

"While it is easy to read into material intentions beyond the argument, I detect some assumptions in your 'Plot Devices' which are not self evident to me. Specifically: that it is difficult for Australian writers to penetrate the American market; that there is a secret to be found to achieve that end; that Australians ought to write distinctively Australian fiction.

Surely you are aware that Australian writers have sold stories to American SF magazines for the last 59 years. By my count 134 by 29 writers, and that's not counting Chandler, Armour, Beattie, Dwyer, Hall and Stevens for various reasons. It would be difficult to get any estimate of the ratio of rejections to acceptances, and it could be that there are hundreds of Australians who have repeatedly tried and failed. I personally know of only one however, and in my opinion he will make it with a little more experience.

One of the things that creative writing is about is expressing and affirming the unique personality and visualisation of the cosmic all of the writer. Since this grows out of personal history no doubt his geographic and social environment has some part in it. But it should not be deliberately emphasized. Literary Barry Mackenzies are not likely to do well. It is one world, in which regional peculiarities are disappearing: the English speaking world in particular is almost completely homogenised to a bland cultural mush. Well, not quite yet. But it's happening. There is still a place for individuality, but not for local or national identity, civic pride, community spirit - it's because that's been lost, as much as anything else, that the problems arising from too many people are so obvious and city life has deteriorated so badly. However, these problems are not the issue here. If a distinctive Australian kind of science fiction were created who would want to read it? And I don't mean "who else".

Another assumption seems to be that it is a sin to write something that is less than brilliantly original and a revelation to the reader, the more so if the resulting story is sold and printed. Science fiction, like all popular fiction, is read primarily for amusement and relaxation, though we may like to think it has, or ought to have, or once had, a message and a purpose beyond this. One reason for writing for publication is to make a living, or at least a little added income. What is wrong with this?

I seriously doubt your statement that 'McMullen admits that he works to formula in order to get his stories published overseas.' but, aside from the disdain implicit in 'admits', as in tearfully confessing to a wicked act under relentless interrogation, there is another illusion here. The notion that there is a Formula, that there is a simple procedure that anyone can learn that will produce a saleable piece of fiction. Yes, after reading a few hundred stories in an established tradition one has the feeling of having read the same thing before, and of knowing what is coming next. It is even possible to recognise in a story a logical structure, a series of steps all contributing to the whole. Can we then apply this and write a story just as well? This kind of approach is little more relevant to being able to write a story than 'Where do you get your ideas?'

I can tell you why more stories by us benighted savages are not bought by those lofty arbiters the American editors. Campbell said it, I can do no better. "The reason 99% of the stories written are not bought is very simple. Editors never buy manuscripts that are left on the closet shelf at home."



## VAHFs

**John & Jan Newman** with their CoA (See below); **Joyce Scrivner** with an assortment of Minneapolis gossip; **Mike McGann** who sent a cartoon and a photocopy of a report on Danse Macabre in which he attempts to add fuel to an argument he's having with assorted Sydney fans

## ADDRESSES

**Sheryl Birkhead** 23629 Woodfield Rd, Gaithersburg, MD 20882, U.S.A. A superb fanartist - and delightful letter writer.

**Pauline Dickinson** Selection Department, University of Sydney Library, Sydney, N.S.W. 2006 Australia. Curator of a fantasy and science fiction collection that includes most of Ron Graham's collection.

**Brian Forte** 20 Wilpena Tce, Kilkenny, S.A. 5009, Australia. Co-edits THE OAFF.

**Craig Hilton** P.O.Box 430, Collie, W.A. 6225, Australia. Superb fan artists and producer of silly songbooks.

**Denny Lien** 3149 Park Ave S, Minneapolis, MN 55407, U.S.A. Provider of Berke Breathed materials and one of my favourite humorous writers.

**Mike McGann** 483 Beauchamp Rd, Maroubra, NSW 2035, Australia. Produces FanArt-work.

**Mark Manning** 1400 East Mercer #19, Seattle, WA 98112, U.S.A. Edits TAND a fanzine of which I am rather fond.

**John & Jan Newman** P.O. Box 198E, Ballarat East, Vic 3350, Australia

**Joyce Scrivner** P.O. Box 7620, Minneapolis, MN 55407, U.S.A.

**Gerald Smith** GPO Box 429, Sydney, NSW 2001, Australia. Co-edits NORWEGIAN BLUE with Rod Kearins.

**Graham Stone** GPO Box 4440, Sydney, N.S.W. 2001, AUSTRALIA. Edits Science Fiction News.

**R Lorraine Tutihasi** 5876 Bowcroft St #4, Los Angeles, CA 90016-4910, U.S.A. who produces a perzine - CONVENTION LOG.

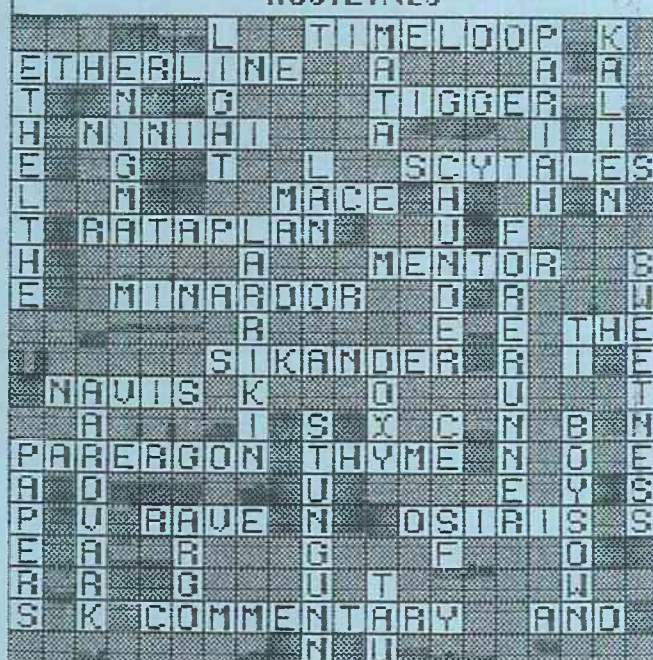
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## SOLUTION TO CROSSWORD IN Q361

Okay, it was a silly idea - publishing a crossword in a zine that makes infrequent appearances - but for those masochists who tried it, here is the solution.

You'll note that some of the answers strain the definition in the clues, but what the heck. That's half the fun of writing them.

## AUSTZINES





## AN ATTRACTIVE IDEA

"Shit!" said Terry Frost. "If these drinks were any smaller they'd disappear up there own glasses." Somehow he managed to put exactly the correct emphasis on the final syllable of the word glasses, causing Mark Linneman to chuckle.

"I hate to say it," he said, "but that pun works even in American. I'll bet you wish I'd said that huh?"

"I'm sure you will, Mark," said Dennis.

"Mind you," interjected Steve, looking up from some intricate calligraphy that he was perpetrating on the beer mat, "I would have thought that drinks were more likely to disappear in that manner if they were big enough. Think about champagne; they have different names for the different sizes of bottles. We could build a schwartzchild - the size up from a jereboam."

"A singularly appropriate name," said Linneman.

"I'm glad you said that," replied Dennis. "But Steve, surely champagne wouldn't be dense enough to form a singularity. I've found the stuff always leaves me light headed. John Packer reckons that the bubbles are the problem. They decrease the average density of the alcohol and so it rises to the head far more quickly. What you'd want is something really dense - say like a Bruce Gillespie fanzine."

"That's not fair," said Alan.

"Oh, I don't mean dense as in thick, I was thinking of the number of words and the amount of heavy literature that Bruce manages to fit onto the page. It begins to look like a black hole from a distance."

"No it doesn't!" said Andrew, whose ears had suffered the effects of an overdose of Husker Du and Captain Beefheart and so was unable to distinguish the subtle differences in pronunciation between the words "Hole" and "Whole". "Look, I know that Black Whole was a nice little zine, but it never came close to looking as good as one of Bruce's."

"Be that as it may," continued Dennis. "I figure that The Metaphysical Review is getting so massive that, sooner or later, it's going to reach the point where the money necessary to post it will be greater than Bruce's potential income for the rest of his life and then the zine will collapse in upon itself, never to be seen again in this continuum."

"That sounds like a potential fanzine piece," said Marc. "I can see a Carruthers story coming out of that."

"Not another one," groaned Carey.

"Yes. Why not. You see, it all starts with fans discussing the way drinks disappear up their own glasses . . ."

"You stole that line from me," interjected Terry. "I demand acknowledgement!"

"Okay Terry. Anyway, it turns out that Carruthers has been sitting in on the edges of the conversation and he butts in and starts telling the story of the time he was attempting to track down a fan, loosely modelled on Bruce Gillespie, who produced zines so massive that they collapsed under their own weight."



"It's got possibilities," said Steve. "You could substitute postal charges for velocity and then a fanzine would reach its Swartzchild Radius when the cost to post it is greater than the fan's estimated lifetime income. Even better, you'd reach a point where the faned could only afford to produce one cope of the fanzine, which he could not afford to post. That'd be a real singularity."

"Right," said Marc, taking the idea and running with it. "And you could even have a fandom existing within the singularity, a pocket universe - people who go to visit "Bruce" to read the fanzine, but who are held there by the attractive force of the huge fanzine. You could even fit in a little time dilation there too - those fans who drop in to read the zine take an eternity to read it but, to the outside observer, it seems as though they are frozen in time. I know I've felt that way sometimes."

"Fine," said Dennis, "but how will you explain Carruthers' escape from the gravitational pull of the zine?"

"Disney managed it in THE BLACK HOLE," said Alan.

"Look, I know I produce faanfction, but I'm not going to sink that low," said Marc.

"Taste has never held you back before," added Linneman.

"True but don't remind me of that comment I made at Swancon. Nope, what I'm going to have to do is go back and read my Stephen Hawking. He had a way that particles could escape from a Black Hole. Something about the production of matter/antimatter pairs. Perhaps the Carruthers who turns up at the bar is only an antiCarruthers. The real Carruthers is still trapped by the giant fanzine"

"No. That wouldn't work," said Dennis. "It would mean that you'd have to repopulate fandom with antifans for every fan who got trapped by the zine and where would we get enough large black cloaks and hats to outfit that many antifans?"

"Jack Herman?"

"Perhaps, Steve. But you're right Dennis. That won't work. I could try the idea that such giant fanzines have a wormhole effect and the Carruthers narrating the tale isn't the real Carruthers, but a Carruthers from a parallel universe who was sucked through the workhole created when the black holes created by the respective fanzine singularities linked the two universes. Now there's a possibility. Carruthers could have travelled from a universe where fannish conditions are different - a universe where Minneapolis won the 1973 WorldCon and so there are no such things as Minneapolis in '73 bidding parties."

"Perish the thought."

"Perhaps it's a world where Sydney won the 1983 Worldcon."

"Interesting."

"A World where people took the 1995 Sydney Worldcon bid seriously."

"Let's not get carried away now. We're talking science fiction, not wild fantasy"

"Okay, I think I've got the plot."



"Does that mean you're going to write another of those wretched Carruthers stories?" asked Carey.

"Why should I do something silly like that," replied Marc, pulling a Walkman from under the bar. "You mob have just done it for me."

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### ANNIE'S TELLING ME

(With thanks to Anne Revell, who provided the original stories.)

It was show and tell day and sweet little Melinda-Sue had brought her pets to school to show the class. She stood shyly in front of the class, hands nervously clutching her powder blue dress and toes tracing figures of eight on the wooden floor. In her hand was a little white mouse, its red eyes darting from place to place and its nose crinkled in investigative sniffls. At her feet were a fluffy grey cat, grooming itself oblivious to the twenty noisy eight-year-olds watching its contortions and a little barrel of a dog, wagging its stumpy tail and attempting to free itself from the leash that was keeping it from all these new playmates.

"Well Melinda-Sue," said stern old Miss Prussy, "are you going to introduce us to your pets?"

"Yes Maam. This little fellow is Mr Squeeky."

"Why do you call him that Melinda-Sue?"

"It's because he has the cutest little squeeky voice, Maam. And that there pussy cat is my Mr Fluffy."

"And how did you come to name him?"

"Well, he's so furry and warm and cuddley, there weren't no other name he could have had."

"And what about your cute little puppy dog?"

"Well, we calls him Mr Porky."

"Let me guess. You call him that because he is so round and eats so much."

"No Maam. We calls him Mr Porky because he fucks pigs."

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## A NATIVE TONGUE

Graham Stone, in his letter in this issue, accuses me of attempting to dictate taste to Australian science fiction authors and readers and comments

"If a distinctive Australian kind of science fiction were created who would want to read it? And I don't mean 'who else'."

This question does need to be answered especially since, in three recently released collections of Australian science fiction, we do find the Australian voice - "Australian" authors using science fiction and fantasy to address issues of particular concern to Australian readers. That is not to say that any of these writers are being particularly patriotic or introducing Australian content merely for local colour. It is simply that they are writing fiction without concern for the dictates of U.S. taste or sensibilities. George Turner, in informal discussion at the October meeting of the Nova Mob was describing the joys of rewriting a piece to suit the needs of an American editor. His editor was having difficulty with phrases such as "wouldn't come within cooee", explaining that the term "cooee" wasn't to be found in Webster's dictionary. George mentioned the trouble he had in rewriting such idioms which, to him, are common tongue. He considered substituting "wouldn't come within a bull's roar" but he doubted that his editor would find that much better.

There is a place for Australian science fiction that feels authentically Australian, much as there was a need for Americans to develop their own voice in fiction - something not readily accepted by them until Mark Twain experimented with using American dialect in Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn. Had their literary establishment had its way, local argot would have been kept out of the literary tradition. There is a place for Australian science fiction, written without concession to mid-Atlantic Amerenglish. If American audiences have trouble reading it, then let them do their research, the same way that we do when ploughing our way through American topicalities in their films, television and stories. (I couldn't see the attraction in Connie Willis's Hugo winning "The Last of the Winnebagos" partly, no doubt, because I had no feeling for what a Winnebago was when it was at home.)

The one thing that authors attempting to work this vein must face is that their audience will be small. There is a limited market for Australian fiction in general, which means that the market for a science fiction that addresses specifically Australian issues will be even smaller. Despite that, there is a wealth of ground to be explored, as seen in the three collections alluded to above - George Turner's *A Pursuit of Miracles*, Terry Dowling's *Rynosseros* and Lucy Sussex's *My Lady Tongue & Other Tales*. Each of these collections, as well as reflecting the authors individual creative muse - something that, as Graham's letter points out, every author must do - has strong links to its Australian origins.

To discuss all three collections in one article would try the patience of both reviewer and reader. Looking at short story collections is a complex business, dealing as it does with interrelating themes and up to nine separate plots. Here I intend to concentrate on Sussex's collection. I'm interested in articles on any of the other collections, including Rosaleen Love's collection, which I haven't finished reading yet.

*My Lady Tongue & Other Tales* contains nine stories, seven with distinctly Australian settings, one with more vague cosmopolitan setting and one with an Australian expatriate exploring the maze of the American pop sub-culture. Each story is set either in the present or within cooee of it, a characteristic of much contemporary Australian science fiction, though Terry Dowling's *Rynosseros* stories do tend to break from this. In common with much that is currently labeled science fiction,



these stories live in the grey area on the fantasy/science fiction continuum - occasionally straying closer to one or the other pole.

The book's cover, an adaptation of a 17th century needle lace pattern, is apposite. The collection itself has several uniting threads but there are gaps and missing ties, as there are in the cover painting. One of the strongest uniting threads is the link between art, technology and the real world - in the cover painting represented respectively by the lacework, the computer-generated women's faces and the severed head. Art is integral to the stories "The Man Hanged Upside Down", "Red Ochre", "The Parish and Mrs Brown" and "The Lipton Village Society"; It is peripheral to "My Lady Tongue", "Montage", "God's Black Sense of Humour" and "Quartet in Death Minor"; it is absent from "Go-To" but lace does have its holes.

"The Man Hanged Upside Down" is an urban fantasy that deals with the magic in painting, drawing together the European Tarot and Koorie paintings. Its setting will be familiar to anyone who has encountered any of the artistic sub-cultures. Its characters will be recognized too. There are those artists who have sold-out, the older established artists in conflict with the Young Turks and the shock troupes - those who push the frontiers of artistic definition for shock value. The major plot deals with a feud played out between two artists, Oliver, the established artist reaching the end of his career, and Phillip, the young iconoclast with aboriginal ancestry. Each uses painting to strike at the other, though, to Oliver, the paintings are seen as metaphor and weapons of satire, whereas, to Phillip, they are a means of manipulating reality - a true magic. The story is seen through the eyes of Mabile Marty, herself a sculptor, who works as an investigative journalist - raking up dirt on artists and their works for the voyeuristic public. While not the cause of the feud, she exacerbates it, comes to feel a responsibility for it, and finally resolves it, in the process re-awakening her own appreciation for the magic in art. The resolution appears trite until one realizes that the point of the story is not the feud, but the rediscovery of the potential of art.

In "Red Ochre" Sussex takes the theme further. The story is set in Northern Queensland in an undefined future. Australia has been at war with Indonesia whose parting shot has been to spread mutagenic viruses. There are very few wild animals remaining and so Francis F. Fogarty makes a living with a peripatetic menagerie including a genetically engineered python, which causes troubles in one of the more paranoid North Queensland towns. One of Fogarty's crew, Ian Limrock, is bitten by the show's mongoose and the fearful police sergeant sends him to the local Mutie reservation. As a result, Fogarty comes into contact with Jon Blackmore, the reservation doctor. Fogarty is enticed out to the reservation with his animal show and he finds a changed Ian, one who has come to terms with his aboriginal ancestry - the origins of his surname, Limrock are explained; one of his ancestor was a rock painter. The Muties, to the townsfolk pariahs, are tied into the art/magic. They are changing into the aboriginal totemic animals depicted on the rocks renewing the land. As Ian explains to Fogarty, in the dreamtime legends, all the animals were people in the first place. What happens to the Muties is simply repeating that history.

The Lipton Village Society is a third examination of the way that we can manipulate reality through art. A group of ex-students are looking for a solution to the ills of the Twentieth Century and they find it by creating their own fantasy world and slipping away into it. It bears many similarities to Alfred Bester's "Disappearing Act" (STAR FOURTEEN Ed Frederik Pohl) but, in this case, what they are escaping from is not a terrible war, but a more terrible peace - Australia in the 1980s. The story provides an interesting look at the conditions of youth but does not have the strength of either of the above excursions into the creative process. Sussex distances herself from the students' plight through her use of narrator - Susan Gifford, a research officer for the Education Department - and, in doing so, allows the audience to view the situation at second remove.



The fourth story in which art is a central theme is "The Parish & Mrs Brown", a triptych in which an artist's wife flickers between the three phases of her existence until they all meld into one. I rather suspect that, as a male, I don't get as much from this story as I would were I female. It deals with the way that one's role is influenced by parents and lovers and is concerned with the way that one can be trapped in one's life.

In all four stories, the distinction between art and life is blurred. This seems a common theme in writing by those in the academic sphere - structuralism has a lot to answer for. What rescues the stories from becoming dry academic exercises is that they have a twist of humour to them - particularly "The Man Hanged Upside Down", with its wry digs at the artistic community and at those who see art as simply an investment opportunity.

In "Montage" the central event in the story - a scientific experiment gone wrong - is revealed through a young videofreak's film of the secluded beach where the accident occurred. This is a less obvious reference to the links between art and reality, but the connection is there. I found this to be the least satisfactory story in the collection. The idea of humanity reverting to barbarism because of science or war is not new and so any potential for mystery falls by the wayside. The protagonist's wait for the secret police is similarly trite. Perhaps this is the sort of story that Stone refers to. The one place it does score highly is in Sussex's portrayal of the beachside suburb. Sussex has a keen eye for the sorts of detail that make up a setting.

"Quartet in Death Minor" takes up a science fictional concern with iron lace, first noted in A. Bertram Chandler's "All Laced Up", in John Baxter's *FIRST PACIFIC BOOK OF AUSTRALIAN SCIENCE FICTION*. Chandler's story was pure science fiction - a time travel story. Sussex's is pure fantasy - an encounter with Death. It's a minor piece but it develops her image of 1980s Australian suburban living. Through the appearance of Death in the nighttime inner suburban landscape, we learn something of the quiet desperations of its inhabitants - the fringe dwellers of mainstream literature, rather than the mainstream characters of science fiction. Through the narrator, Magda, we explore the woman as victim, a theme that Sussex twists elsewhere in the collection.

"God and Her Black Sense of Humour" is a twisted mix of sixties sub-culture nostalgia and one of the strangest vampire stories I've ever read. It is humorous without descending to parody or slapstick. Sussex takes us through the autumn shades of the Summer of Love. Though not quite on a par with the snooty vampires who formed a talking point at one of Peter Toluzy's parties, Sussex has created a fascinating pair through whom to probe the notion of vampirism. The narrator is, like Marty, Fogarty, Magda and Gifford, more observer than participant. The central characters show women in a stronger role than that seen in any of the other stories, with the exception of "My Lady Tongue", but their power is dependant on the men upon whom they prey and the way in which they exercise this power, thus the title of the story. As in "The Man Hanged Upside Down", there is concern for the narrator's development following her excursion into the supernatural, but this is secondary to the ideas that Sussex has about the unnatural history of a pair of female vampires.

In "My Lady Tongue" we follow the picaresque progress of a self-confessed rake. That the rake is a woman in a lesbian enclave adds a novel dimension to the idea. It is one of the few stories I've encountered in which homosexual love comes across as a genuine alternative to heterosexual love, without condescension. Even the unpleasant male from Raffy's past - a bastard who uses drugs to seduce her - is shown in a generally sympathetic light. This is the one story in the collection where the point of view character is an active participant rather than simply an observer - though she has little role in the major events that are re-shaping her society. Raffy



has artistic leanings, being the daughter of a poet, but seems to limit her expression of her art to graffiti and wordplay. Through her love, we learn of the society that Sussex has created - not a Utopia because it has its conflicts, cliques and limits, but a working society in which men are not needed, except as sperm donors and there they are superseded by womyn scientists. Despite the serious note injected in Raffy's flashback to her one encounter with a male, the story comes across as a light-hearted dig at some preconceptions of all-female societies. It avoids the sterile didactic of self-conscious feminist fiction while still showing a viable alternate society.

MY LADY TONGUE & OTHER TALES is a collection of sf/fantasy with an Australian voice that adds to the diversity of the field. It is full of stories that show a writer developing her art in an Australian context. Certainly it may not sell many copies overseas ("Red Ocre" was originally destined for the Ellison/Dowling collection of Australian science fiction that seems destined to rot in the same hole as THE LAST DANGEROUS VISIONS), more's the pity, but it's a collection that deserves a place on the bookshelf.

---ooo---



Yes, you too can help to keep Australia a Worldcon-Free Zone. Simply encourage Sydney fandom to continue to mount futile and meaningless bids and Australian Worldcon Bids will lose any possible credibility and we'll be free of the bloody things for ever. Let's face it, both Australian Worldcons have had the sort of catastrophic effects that some will credit only to a massive asteroid collision while others relate it to massive volcanism on the sub-continent. Researchers report finding unearthly levels of iridium in layers of kipple under which can be found the fossilized remains of a flourishing Australian fandom. Where are the fanzines of yesteryear?

Of course, there are those who will argue that Australian fandom needs a drastic catastrophe so that the humble little mammals that have been nibbling at the dinosaurs' toes can have entire ecosystems thrown open to them so that they too can fill all the fannish niches - huge lumbering fanzines that, with one suck, dry up the article writing talent of an entire city, swift and vicious little fanzines that rip the jugulars from the slow-moving genzines.

Maybe we do need another Worldcon - but this dinosaur would rather not see it.



...the daughter of a poor, but seems to have her expectations ...  
 ...the daughter of a poor, but seems to have her expectations ...  
 ...the daughter of a poor, but seems to have her expectations ...

MY LADY ... is a collection of ...  
 ...the daughter of a poor, but seems to have her expectations ...  
 ...the daughter of a poor, but seems to have her expectations ...

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