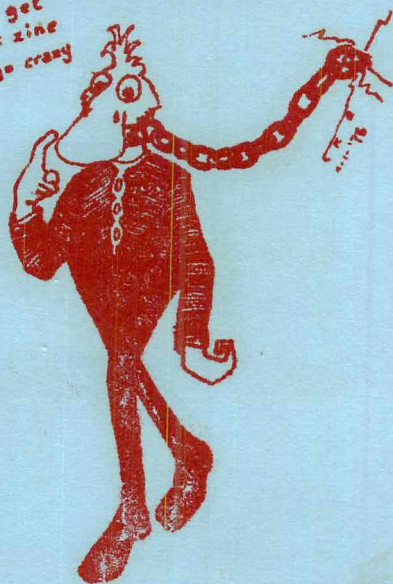


If I don't get  
out of this zine  
soon, I'll go crazy



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Not only does it look like INFERNO 12, but by Golly it is INFERNO 12. The real thing.....accept no ~~plp~~ substitutes. No ISSN this time because we're opting out. I've had these harassments. Like a letter from the agent of the Us of Oxford and Cambridge, as well as for the Scottish National Library as well as someplace else equally boring, demanding that I lay 4 copies of INFERNO on him as his due under the copyright act. To prove it the reverse of his letter was printed with the relevant section of the Copyright Act. Hell and dammit, that's five copies for officialdom, out of my meagre print run of 109. No Way! No Fucking Way!! I have no unallocated copies left so there is no way I could comply even if I wished to. So what happens now? Can they haul me off to the Tower or something, for cocking my snoot at Her Majesty's servants (a less serious offence fortunately than snooting my cock at them) and must I now live in perpetual fear of Officialdom's knock at my wee, small door? Will I have to change my underpants more than once a month just so's I don't get arrested in dirty undies? The ramifications are endless (N. a female 'endl', much saught after by male 'endls' for rude reasons ).

So, regretfully, the 'courtesy' copy to the Copyright Receipt Office is no more. I never gave a monkey's toss about my stuff being copyright anyway. However, I must point out to possible future contributors that anything published in INFERNO now goes straight into the public domain. So, if you intend to become dead famous and sell all your old correspondence for aye these many shekels, don't write to me. Of course this means you'll have to start doing without INFERNO in the near future, because it remains, as always, available only for active response.....and it must be worth it because Greg Pickersgill has started publishing again just so's he can obtain a copy, or so I assume. Otherwise everything is as before. That is to say, I am Skel and she (for those of you with inordinately long memories) is Cas and we are both living happily ever after at:- 25 Bowland Close; Offerton; Stockport; Cheshire; SK2 5NW.

This has been a colophon on behalf of the INFERNO party. It took six blobs of corflu and one pint of Skel-lager. I shudder to contemplate today's fourth or fifth stencil.

24 APRIL 1976 (SKEL)

There must be something wrong with me. Really wrong that is. MANCON 5 has been and gone and I still haven't gone gafia. In fact, ever since it was over I've never felt more like a spot of fanac, with the exception of the period immediately after we and the Mearae had arrived, thoroughly knackered, back at the skelhouse, and Cas said.....

[illegible]

"I know what's wrong with us. We're all suffering from con lag."

[illegible]

MANCON 5 itself went very much as expected except for the fact that the programme itself became a shambles at a ridiculously early stage, as far as re-arrangements and re-scheduling were concerned. There were problems of course, like the fact that yours truly codsed up the meals business, resulting in Bob and Sadie Shaw having to make do with chips and egg for lunch the first day because we'd misunderstood and sold meal tickets to some people as they arrived and Owens Park needed at least 24 hours notice to defrost stuff. Bob never mentioned this and we only heard about it from the people at the next table. In effect, the problems we had were all of the sort you get when trying something radically different.

The Con Hall and the PA system were considered by many to be the best yet whils the book room was greeted with much dribbling of drool by the dealers. The weather, especially arranged by the committee, was excellent, which was a damn good job because without it we'd really have been in the shit.

To summarise, some people came to enjoy themselves and did whilst others came to have their worst fears justified, and also did. A con is what you make it and some people just were not prepared to do so. A case in point may be that of a certain lady (whom I suspect to be Simone Walsh but never having met her I could be wrong) who immediately upon arrival



began canvassing people as to what was wrong with Owens Park, and was somewhat gobsmacked when Phil Rogers told her that it was definitely adequate, thank you very much.

Points arising:- As people tended to book in at the last possible moment we were somewhat surprised at the number of people who were present on the Thursday night. Over 150..... and no programming laid on until Friday lunchtime. Future con committees please note. Alternatively, this may have been something to do with the low cost of the venue, in which case future concons please ignore.

One advantage was not having to vacate one's room until as late as 10.00 pm on the date of departure (contrasting with about 10.00 am at a hotel) virtually giving attendees an extra days con for no further outlay.

Another surprise was the attendance. We expected it to level off and even drop somewhat on SEACON '75. On the contrary, it rocketted. Approximately 600 people attended MANCON 5. Future Concons could also bear this in mind. At least 600 people would like to attend your convention. Convention facilities ought to be able to cater for this number. That is not just to say rooms and overflow rooms, but facilities.

If you estimate ten people to a concom then 600 people at MANCON means that we can attend the next 60 eastercons without feeling guilty about taking rather than giving, before we feel 'obliged' to put on another. Fandom has a breathing space, so relax and enjoy the next sixty years. It certainly is a wonderful thing. I wish the Brum group every success in their endeavours to cater for 600-700 people in 1977. I am somewhat more dubious about the 1978 bid because two people plus someone else who will be doing their 'finals that year' is not enough. They will need at least eight active committee members at the convention itself and up to half a dozen more taking care of specific duties prior to that. OMFACON had about five active committee members at the con itself and they were run ragged by about 300 attendees. Work it out for yourselves. (one way we tackled the problem was to pay \*shudder\* two girls to man (?) the registration desk so that only one committee member was thus tied up).



grubbing arsehole.

I reiterate..... Rob Jackson is a nice guy (generally) and MAYA is second only to TRUE RAT (I discount KFN, which I prefer, because I am too involved with it) as far as British fanzines go. But your good nature is being taken advantage of, Rob. Dig your heels in and tell them "No!"

JIM MEADOWS III 31 Apple Court; Park Forest; IL 60466; USA

Hey! I want to stick up for American humour on television. I don't know what gets imported to you people, but I do know that in this country an unlikely organization as the commercial TV networks is putting out some rather good series. I don't want to call it better or worse than the best of British TV-radio humour, because I don't think it right to compare the two.

The wild British humour which you cite as being the best of the bunch is no-stops nothing-sacred rubberbladder sort of humour. The Monty Pythons, the Goons, ISIRTA and so on. This is anything-for-a-laugh humour. The American situation comedy is not like that. For good or ill, TV networks and American TV as a whole is tied into the warm, loveable family group comedy. This means the situations revolve around a family or family-type unit, the members liking each other, with enough small or large quirks for conflict. Things sometimes/often get serious. These are real people, or at least that is the ideal. The USA sitcoms are closer to 'No Honestly' than 'Monty Python'. Because of these limitations, nothing too outrageous can happen, nothing that cannot be explained. This does not make it inferior to shows like 'Python' and 'The Goons' only different. Writing good material for USA sit-coms requires the ability to vary on the theme of a well-established personality, and to switch quickly and effortlessly from humour to drama. Some of the situations, when described briefly, sound very much unlike sitcoms from the USA, but that is where they are from.

In 'Maude', a series centering around a brassy super-liberal woman, the central character is being revealed as being a manic-depressive. In the TV series of M\*A\*S\*H, when the actor who played Col. Blake decided he wanted out, the producers



decided not to replace him with another actor; instead, they killed off the character he played. In 'Barney Miller', a series about an atypical New York police precinct station, one episode dealt with a policeman who had to come to terms with killing a man in the line of duty for the first time. In 'Hot L Baltimore', a series loosely based on the play of the same name, a homosexual couple (an obviously homosexual couple) was part of the regular cast. In 'All In The Family', the series is currently taking a few good looks at Archie Bunker as a human being instead of a bigot, and as a man. Also his daughter, who must get used to the fact that he is no longer a parent, but a married man who is not getting any younger. Now subjects like these can be handled on the shows you have cited that I am familiar with - for the length of one skit. American sitcoms have been able to deal with them with some degree of realism in a very narrowly structured format. This also takes a certain amount of skill. I know that an awful lot of American TV is drek, but I do like to point out some of the decent stuff as it goes by, so please excuse me if I get annoyed by generalities such as the one you made on page seventeen.

#### PAGES OF 'RANT' AND PAGES OF 'RAVE'

Most of the shows you mention are unfamiliar to the UK audience (thank ghod) but thanks for putting me straight on 'Maude'. I caught the last six or seven minutes of an episode of this once and couldn't make head nor tail of it. Thanks for telling us it's supposed to be a comedy.

A lot of what you say is irrelevant. Comedy shows are supposed to be funny. That is their sole raison d'etre. For them to boldly go where no sitcom has gone before is only laudable if it gets laughs. Social significance as an end unto itself is OK for plays and TV films and documentaries, but a comedy is supposed to make you laugh.

'All In The Family' is a definite "miss" in this house. It is a weak and watery version of 'Till Death' and Archie Bunker is about as bigotted as Alf Garnett's left tit. By the time you allow for the the fact that the humour is US slanted you can see why the whole thing is a non-event over here.



Another point I'd like to take up is that casual, offhand mention of a cop coming to terms with killing a man in the line of duty, for the first time (this sitcom sounds like a real bundle of laffs, don't it just?). Over here a cop kills someone every thirty-years or so. For any policeman to have to come to terms with killing someone would be a relatively unique experience. For any one policeman to do it more than once would require such a stressing and warping of probability that no bookie would ever sleep again.

I am also somewhat concerned with the unspoken assumption that it would only be the 'first time' that needed coming to terms with, and that afterwards killing people in the line of duty would become just a job of work, no more irksome than, say, Saturday morning overtime. True, eventually everything loses significance with repetition, but surely it would take more killings than any single cop was likely to make before this happened. Wouldn't it?

Or are US TV 'cop' shows nearer to the truth than we dare to believe? Nowadays it seems that unless at least four people are killed it is not worth making. Proof that even 'overkill' can wear out its novelty-factor. I remember an early episode of 'Z-Cars' in which NOTHING happened. No crimes were committed at all and the cops were all sat around in the station muttering "Boring-boring" to themselves, and discussing how good rolled-up chip-papers were for late-night back-street soccer games. It was tremendous, but it wouldn't have sold a single wheatypop to the masses. It was an episode which fleshed out the characters of the cast, and couldn't have been shown until more traditional episodes had established the show as a firm favourite. True, but how many US 'cop' series have had an episode without a single crime being committed?

STOP BREAKING DOWN 1 & 2 - Greg Pickersgill; 4 Lothair Road; South Ealing; London W.5.

.....which suffers from being a perfectly adequate but ordinary fanzine which has to carry around on its back the fatuous over-raving reviews of many of Greg's less discerning friends. Fortunately the second issue

was better, leaving one wishing that Greg's hangers on had more of that 'integrity' which they are continually insisting to be one of his attributes. That Greg does have such an attribute in abundance is atestified by his admission that he wanted to give the Nova Award to SHREW, a fanzine to which he and the other judges had a definite bias (= preference, in that most of them publish fanzines of a similar tone), but realised that only the judges and three other fans would feel this way, so awarded the Nova to MAYA.

I would like to say here that whether or not a Nova panel is 'representative' or not is the responsibility of the person who selects that panel of judges. Once one accepts the principle that an award is going to be judged by someone whose opinion 'counts' rather than by popular vote, then one is obliged to carry through with the idea and let the judges give the award to the zines they prefer. Greg and the others would have been perfectly justified in giving the award to the type of fanzine they preferred. Fortunately they realised their greater duty (to fandom and the Nova Award) and corrected the mistake of the Novacon Committee. They awarded the Nova where a more representative jury would almost certainly have awarded it. Good on the Rats. This in no way excuses the speech with which the Award was announced, however.

Skipping many months (and several lines of argument) the skelsermon now moves to Pat Charnock's article upon receipt of her stick of rock. I have already spoken to Pat at MANCON about this, but further discussion with other people has since padded out my personal recollections of this event. I put the whole sequence back together more with logic than memory because the latter only provides one brief flash of insight into the proceedings. I also use the testimony of other people who were present, but who were less drunk than I at the time.

A lot of shit went down at Boakcon about the way the award had been cheapened by the speach that went with it. A lot of us were pissed off that something like that could have happened at something which was supposed to be a prestigious event. Now comes the single flash of memory. Myself and others (Gray and Mike and Williams and definitely a couple of others whose identity doesn't come through the alcoholic fog) pissing our drun-

ken little minds at 'THE IDEA'. Now comes hearsay.....I am told that the original idea was to send one of those imitation kippers, to say in effect, that something 'smelled', but that Gray ballsed it up and sent an ordinary stick of rock. I do stand by what I told Pat, that is I still think the idea sound except that it ought to have gone to the person responsible for the announcement, and not to Pat, who merely got caught in the backlash. I do not apologise for the intent, but I do extend my sincerest apologies to Pat for the execution.....but what else can you expect from a load of drunken fans, uh Pat?

The other point from SBD 2 which elicited some response was the line by Greg in which he said, "...no way is Keith Walker going to win any Award." The response follows, and was written jointly by myself and Mike Meara, entitled.....

#### CINDERELLA WALKERFELLA

Cinderella sat alone in her room. She was depressed. Her wicked stepmother, Gregola, had forbidden her to go to the Nova Ball, saying, "No daughter of mine can go to the Nova Awards with such a tatty crudzine." So Cinders had watched her ugly sisters Roberta and Patricia make their preparations for the Awards Ball.

"Oh, how I wish I could go to the Ball" sighed Cinders. Then, suddenly, in a flash of light and a puff of smoke, appeared the Fairy Zinemother. "Cheer up Cinders" said she. "You shall go to the Ball." I can change your shameful crudzine into a thing of beauty."

"Oh can you? Really", asked Cinders.

"How the hell do you think Glicksohn got his Hugo?" asked the Fairy Zinemother, rhetorically. So saying she waved her magic wand and suddenly Cinderella's crudzine was transformed from a slovenly mess of typos, bad grammar, bad layout and patchy repro into the most beautiful fanzine you ever saw.

"Oh thank you, Fairy Zinemother!" cried Cinders. "Now I too can go to the Nova Awards Ball."



"Yes," said the Fairy Zinemother, "but remember, you must leave before midnight or else your beautiful fanzine will revert once more into the archetypal crudzine."

"Yes", said Cinders, "I will remember."

## CHAPTER TWO

The Ball was in full swing. Whilst the music of the Burlingtons throbbed incessantly in the background all the trendy fanzines proudly disported themselves before the searching gaze of the judges. Le Duc du Chienette-Inferne and the Countess von Tsubstances accompanied each other as usual. Il Rodente Veritas and Teressa Butler made a strange pair as they followed them around the floor whilst Pietr Ovulov and La Contessa de Cheltenham remained relatively inconspicuous, being overshadowed by Jean le Scabbe and Minima du Grotte who were noticeably out of step.

Suddenly a stir at the end of the hall stilled the crowd as Cinderella made her grand entrance. Prince Goldilocks, chairman of the judges, was immediately captivated by her impeccable reproto, her daring layout and the exquisiteness of her grammatical perfection. With one kitten-like bound he was at her side. "I am Prince Goldilocks", he said bluntly. "Let us dance."

"Yes." she breathed, whilst some of his pages looked blankly on.

## CHAPTER THREE

The festivities were now dying down. Some of the judges were anxious to give the award to one of the Ugly Sisters because of her frequent appearances throughout the year whilst others favoured Cinderella whose delightful single appearance had so captivated Prince Goldilocks. After many hours of debate the panel was still deadlocked.

Inevitably Prince Goldilocks made his casting vote in favour of Cinderella but, to avoid speculation, he decided that

the announcement should be made by a little-known fan from somewhere central, a western noble.

A hush descended upon the assembled crowd as the spokesman arose to announce the panel's decision. However, at the very moment that he did so the chimes of midnight sounded. On hearing this Cinderella rushed from the hall, leaving her front cover behind her on the stairs. Seeing this Prince Goldilocks rushed down the stairs, seized the cover and waved it in the air, saying, "I will take out a life-time subscription to the fanzine that fits this cover."

#### CHAPTER FOUR

After trying many fanzines, none of which matched the cover, Prince Goldilocks had almost despaired when finally he reached Madame Gregola's house. The two Ugly Sisters were called and each insisted that the Award-winning cover would fit her fanzine. Pat's zine was submitted first but was discovered to be the wrong size. Next Roberta eagerly proffered her own fanzine but Prince Goldilocks hadn't got the 40p required to purchase a sample copy. With regret he turned to leave. Just as he was departing however he espied a strange device in the corner and rushed eagerly to try it.

"It fits perfectly" he announced. "To whom does this belong?" The sisters were forced to admit that it was used solely by Cinderella. "Bring her to me." he demanded. "You," he said, "are to have the Nova Award, as this cover I hold in my hand was obviously produced on this very machine of yours."

"But", cried Cinderella Walkerfella, "that is my lawn-mower."

#### 25 APRIL 1976 (SKEL)

Cas says I'm spoiling for a fight. I say I'm pissed out of my head. You figure it out, I just wanna ask how come any female can live in a slanshack with approximately 106,345 other males and still complain vociferously about not getting a con with a private bath?

BOOWATT 7 - Garth Danielson: 616-415 Edison Avenue; Winnipeg;  
Manitoba; R2G 0L9; Canada.....

.....which frankly amazes me. How any fanzine with such a good title could be so totally, tediously boring is completely beyond my comprehension. It's not that it bored me in a way that I've never been bored before (singing:Doo Wah Diddy, Diddy Dum Diddy Doo), but that it contains a type of boredom guaranteed to be repeated issue after issue: Plain Olde Fashioned 'Here I am with  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a stencil to fill and nothing to say' crap. Unbelievably, this after seven issues of BOOWATT and twenty-two issues of BOOWATT WEEKLY.

The best example of the tedium is a three page report on Minicon 11. Nothing happens. Worse, much worse though is that not only is Garth someone to whom nothing interesting ever happens, he is completely lacking in that fannish talent required to transform tedium, in the retelling, into what the reader would be convinced was one of life's greatest experiences. If Bob Shaw had sat in the same seat it would have been a fannish classic. If even I had been in that seat it would at least have been made interesting (or else it would have been omitted entirely). Garth, take Ed Cagle's advice and start telling a few lies.

This has been a bad review/reaction. Who knows, if United hadn't been unbelievably (but, on the day, justifiably) beaten in the Cup Final by Southampton, yesterday, I might have done as Keith Walker said and "tactfully ignored it". It just goes to prove you can't believe anything he says. Besides, I could think of something good to say: "Nice cover." Fortunately, in the same post I recieved.....

KRATOPHANY 8 - Eli Cohen: 2920 Victoria Avenue; Apartment 12;  
Regina; Saskatchewan; S4T 1K7; Canada.....

.....which has such good vibes that I insist on thinking of it as TRUE KRAT. There could be no finer praise for any zine. Just a couple of points though Eli.....

Why don't you let your obviously sentient avocado breed with one of Pete Roberts pedigree aardvarks? The resulting



'aardvarcado', whilst probably not a thing of beauty, would almost certainly be a joy forever. Tough to peel though. The other point is brought up by the line of Aljo's, "Excuse me, I have to take a shit." Why does he have to take a shit? Why can't this shit take itself? Just how old is this shit anyway? What are shits doing in the pages of a cosmopolitan zine like KRAT if they aren't old enough to go by themselves? Eli, I am surprised at you!

3 MAY 1976(SKEL)

There are some spontaneous fannish statements that deserve to go down in the annals of fandom, preserved in a posterior manner (ie for posterity). Then again there are those fannish statements that just deserve to go down, preferably for the third and final time. I'm not sure into which category Cas' utterance of this very evening ought to be consigned. Let's face it, "Nyaar, I've got a telepathic arse" is anything but an everyday boast.

I shall not explain the context. You may mull it over to your hearts content. You may croggle your minds with it, at no extra charge. Wrestle if ye will with all the many imponderables, seeking in vain to drive the mystery from your fevered brain and still the voices that nibble rat-like at your curiosity, screaming "Why, why WHY???" throughout your long and sleepless nights.

Or simply forget it.

But.....what can I use next to follow Cas' telepathic bum? I haven't got a letter from Glicksohn. Get me out of this Pam.

PAMELA BOAL 4 Westfield Way; Charlton Heights; Wantage; Oxon.

I have always enjoyed talking to you through SMALL FRIENDLY DOG and now I have had the pleasure of actually meeting you, I shall enjoy it even more. Yes, the skelkids are certainly lively but they are the sort of children I like, real developing people, not muted appendages of their parents. I do wish I could have seen more of you all. When you have to

rely on people to take you from A to B it's a bit of a problem. You can't say, "You're nice to talk to but I want to go and talk to someone else. Please find them and push me there."

Of course, now you've seen my great (large) sons and my husband whose hair colouring befits our age, my secret is out. Actually it has given me a quiet smile now and then that some faneds assumed that this letterhack so recently a neo would be of the usual neo generation. Mind, you would have known better from Pat and Mike.

Leroy Kettle is right about one thing, 'Last Of The Summer Wine' is truly humourous. I suppose it could be called 'situation comedy', but for me both the writing and acting of the series put it far above any other situation comedy on any channel.

Believe it or not, there was a time when every home did not have TV. We were into the late fifties-early sixties before TV became a standard fixture and the status symbol became not having one rather than owning one. That being the case the bulk of the British people never saw a Goon Show on TV, but I doubt if anyone over the age of five at the time failed to listen to the radio series. It was a religion. I was in the WRAF during the Goon Show radio days. People began negotiating for seats near the radio, from the moment the corporals' club opened, on Goon Show days. As one of the few females that used the place I could count on a reasonable amount of courtesy..... not Goon Show nights! On the night that the club radio broke down I was the heroine of the hour because I managed to get the loan of my Flight Sergeant's radio. When my replacement was fixed up I naturally got a seat near it, didn't I? Did I heck as like! Mind, I used to drink in those days, so was able to drown my indignation without financial loss.

If I thought of SMALL FRIENDLY DOG as a zine instead of as a delightfully long letter, I would say it is your best issue yet. As it is, thanks for a lovely letter.

WE LOVE MUFFIN, MUFFIN THE MULE.....

Yes folks, nostalgia fandom strikes again. If Greg can

produce a whole issue devoted almost entirely to the drekky stuff then who are you to say me nay?

Actually Pamela we did meet fleetingly at OMPAcon but it was so fleeting that you were only 'that woman in the wheel-chair' to me until les mearæ suggested I put you on my mailing list. But who is this "Pat and Mike" you mention, unless..... could it be Mike and Pat?

I always order couples in my mind on a personal basis. It all depends upon how we first came to interact. My first contact with les mearæ was with Mike (I wrote to buy some books of him just prior to his marriage, I think it was - sheesh, remember Mike? Of course you'll still have all those letters that followed, won't you Mike, seeing as how you never throw anything away.....Christ, but your nappy collection stinks.... I must remember to ask to see them letters again next time we're round at your place. Damn, now I've caught naustalgitis) .....where were we Pamela? Oh yes, I first interacted with Mike (and it'th thtil thore) so it'll always be Mike & Pat to me, never Pat & Mike. Likewise Darroll and Ro, Pat and Grah, Alan and Elke and Et & Cetera.

What's all this about there once being a time when there were no TVs? Next you'll be trying to kid me that there was a time when there were no talkin' pikchers. Seriously I do remember when the skelparents first got their first TV (THE ONLY ONE IN THE STREET \*Ghoshwhow\*Snirk\*Whow\*SNIRK\*)(mind you, it wasn't a very big street, but we won't go into that), mainly remembered for the fact that for the next several weeks there were always half-a-dozen friends or neighbours in watching TV with us on an evening.. After this, the skelparents desire for privacy overcame their pride and good-neighbourliness and home became home once more. That's the thing about 'home'. It's the place where you can relax and be yourself. No need to put on a false front. It's amazing how snarled up you can get inside without this refuge for relaxation. A perfect definition of 'home' is 'The place where one can fart and not feel em-barrassed'. Now there is security. It is also, a good and valid test of true friendship. A 'true friend' is someone for whom one doesn't feel the need to leave the room before giving



an anal rendition of the '1812'.....and they say that friendship has its own rewards? But back to early TV..... I remember that my one resentment upon starting school was that I'd then miss all the trade-test transmissions, which were invariably heralded by a picture of a particularly thorny transmission mast, from which emanated strange waves of some mysterious force, quite possibly that selfsame 'mysterious force' which was to stand Gene Rodenberry in such good stead many years later, as well as providing 'Scotty' with his main speaking line. Yogi Baird, what have you wrought? See Pam, I can nostalgia with the ~~not~~ best of them.

SFD is not a letter, nor is it really a zine. It is me. or rather bits of me. Bits of my life. Just as they are going down at the time. If I am feeling pissed off then SFD will reflect that feeling (see substantial portion of this issue prior to page fifteen) but enough is enough so I will not respond to ~~Maule and Walker~~ Maule and Walker regarding CHECKPOINTS 67 and 68. Pamela, you've done what Pete Roberts asked me to do last issue, put the 'friendly' back into the SMALL FRIENDLY DOG. By the way, I told Cas that I'd mentioned to you that I intended changing the name of INFERNO to SFD just as soon as I myself stopped referring to it as the former title. She says "No way!" Her half of the zine (which is averaging two full stops and a comma per issue) will remain under the same nomenclature. We'll see, we'll see. The trouble with you Pam is that you're too diffident. You let Dave Rowe push you around too much. (Hee-haw, yes Leroy, another joke in incredibly bad taste. But I don't care, I tell you!) (But I do really Pam. If I found out that that joke had offended you, that I'd misread your character, I'd die. So much for my drunken, devil-may care posings). Speaking of Dave Rowe.....

DAVE ROWE 8 Park Drive; Wickford; Essex; SSR 9DH.

Taking care of the kids was fun. They very rarely got out of hand.....the only time I can remember was when I was guarding the artshow and Michelle, Nicholas and the mini-Presfords arrived, complete with bottled coke. It was difficult keeping the sticky brats out and then a couple slipped through. Several demands to leave were made and left unheeded.

Slowly my threats increased. "Get out or I won't give you another twizzer" I said, and hardly saw the going of them. Now if we could only enhance this ploy, Britain could win some Gold in the 1984 Olympic sprint.

I can't agree with you over 'Amazing Stories'. The programme was crud, with only the 'silly' humour having any effect - with the notable exception of the parody sequences which at times were killing, but needed an audience that had already seen 'Invasion Of The Body Snatchers'. Schuman seemed to have written it after reading a couple of copies of SFM and possibly Vision Of Tomorrow. Perhaps I'm 'agin' it because he was basing it on a fandom he obviously knew nothing about, then again perhaps it's just because there seems to be very little TV worth watching these days.

9 MAY 1976 (SKEL)

President Ford could have done with your technique a while back, saying to the Cambodians, "Give us our ship back or I won't give you any more twizzers", a technique which would have ruffled less feathers.

Why am I the only one who liked 'Amazing Stories'? I thought the whole thing was marvellous. Nor did I get the impression that he was so ignorant of the SF aspect of SF fandom. Not only did he parody John Russell Fearn, but also the split between old wave/new wave writers and fans. Also the 'proud and lonely' aspect of being a fan. He appeared to be eight to ten years out of date perhaps, but not ignorant. I even took the term SF Jamboree to have been used deliberately as giving a better idea of the function to the mundane masses. To them, the term 'convention', in this context, would be almost if not completely meaningless.

I suppose I may have been seeing more in it than was there, because too many people whose opinions I respect have taken the opposite view to mine. I still found it hilarious though and maintain that it would be an ideal item for the MANCON 5 programme, although I suppose it would have been just one more item that needed re-arranging.

14 MAY 1976(SKEL)

Lookit lookit! Here I am on page twenty and I still don't know what's going to be on this issues covers. You know more than I in this respect, and I'm the bloody editor. Oh, I know I promised lastish that the front cover would be by Janet Wild but alas it cannot be. It still needs inking. That munsh does not need inking. That munsh needs her sweet, delightful, wrap-you-around-her-little-finger head kicking in, for getting at Skel's rotrings and dropping the one he uses most, point first, onto the floor. I could draw around corners with it now, if only it would draw at all. So, skelillos are a no-no from here on in, until the skelfinances can spring to a replacement. Cas, Man cannot live by bread alone. See Cas, even the Bible realises that a Man needs his rotring. How about it, eh Cas?

Shoes? What shoes? Look luv, couldn't you just selotape over the holes again? Just for a few more months? Christ luv, what's so important about dry feet anyway? The Bible doesn't say anything about dry feet. OK, show me! Show me just where in the Bible it says women should have dry feet. Go on, show me! Shit!!! 'The Gospel According To St. Wife' - Capter six, verse 12 :-

"And the Lord spake unto Cas, saying "Don't take any of that crap from that drunken bum. Tell him where to stick his ruddy rotring. A woman's work is never done, ergo her feet should never be wet. That is special god-grade logic. Don't bother trying to work it out, your crummy mortal minds cannot encompass it."

Damn! Mind you, it's funny Cas. I'm sure yours is the only bible I've ever seen with a mimeod supplement.

So there you go. Should anyone want skelart in the near future, tough shits (Mike. Well, there's only you ever seems to want skelart). But what about future covers for SFD? Dave, Harry.....Helping me! Helping me!!

DRIFT 2 - Gary Farber: 271 East 197th Street; Bronx; NY 10458.

.....in which Gary says he is dissatisfied with the



English language as a semantic basis for communication. That is as may be, Gary, but an awful lot of people have used the English language to communicate very well. I suspect the failure is your's and not that of the language. I would like to have dealt with this in greater depth but on checking my 'Pocket Oxford' I find the word 'semantics' is not listed and I don't want to argue off at a tangent so instead I will merely change the subject entirely. Well, almost.

I have taken to fandom like wuck takes to daughter. I find it difficult to imagine myself and fandom not interrelated. And yet.....yet I'm pig-indolent. The English language is the language of international fandom. There are fanzines published in other languages but their readership, other than in their country of origin, is negligible. Thank ghod I had the good fortune to be born in an English speaking country (what a coincidence, that England is an English speaking country..... but more of this later). At school I learn't French and German (to which I switched from Latin, never understanding why it should be important that 'I wash' should be different to 'We wash', when they're all dead anyway.....probably from too much washing), and had a brief encounter with Spanish before the powers that be decided Franco was a bum and that no decent, self-respecting grammar school should teach such a fascist language anyway. However, the only one of these I ever really grasped was French, finishing my school career at that vital stage when I was just beginning to think in the language. This is the watershed point after which the language becomes 'easy'. Unfortunately I wasn't quite there and whilst I never intended to let the language go, my lusting after new winkle-pickers and the wages needed to afford such meant that I did not stay on at school, and who wants to read French when they don't have to? When they can read SF instead?

But what if I'd been born in France or Germany, say. Would I have been different enough to really master a foreign language, especially one as reputedly difficult as English? And if not, as I suspect, what of me and fandom? Obviously a whole timeline was nipped in the bud when I uttered my first cry, in English. Mind you, God was English. That's why the midwife made that famous speech when she smacked him on the





WALT WILLIS 32 Warren Road; Donaghadee; Co. Down; N.I.

I have 3 or 4 British fmz sitting around here with marginal checks for locs, waiting for me to overcome my diffidence, but yours is the first to arrive since the Mancon and I'm impressed by this triumph of hope over experience, as Johnson described bigamy. Besides, I like the thing.

I like the stream of consciousness editorial stuff, and the occasional flight of fancy like the space diary. If in reality you carefully first-draft all this out, inserting what I used to call "wee thinky bits" and Bob Shaw "clever touches", please don't tell me: let me keep my illusions. I never felt the same about Trolloppe after I read that he wrote exactly 5000 words a day: so that for example after he'd written 4995 and come to the end of a book he would take a new page and write, "BARCHESTER TOWERS. CHAPTER ONE. In".

The bit about buttered toast was eerily like "this is where I came in", because this exact subject was what my very first fan article was about. Some weeks after it was published Paul Jennings had an article in The Times or somewhere on rather similar lines, and naively I sent a copy of mine to him expecting him to be interested in this coincidence with perhaps a word of encouragement to his faithful admirer. Instead I got a very cold and terse letter designed solely to make it clear that he had written his article ages before he could have known about mine. Apparently he thought I was accusing him of plagiarism. Pros!

Mike Glicksohn's explanation of why I never ran for TAFF reminds me rather uncomfortably of the slogan JESUS CHRIST FOR TAFF! (HE'LL WALK IT). In fact the reason I never ran for TAFF (or as we modest Britishers put it, stood for TAFF) was that I figured I'd had my turn.

I hope you'll pardon me for suggesting that your letter of comment under my name doesn't exactly reproduce my style. No doubt you need a little more practice. I have these 3 or 4 British fanzines with marginal checks.....



20 MAY 1976(SKEL)

Did I do any better that time, eh Walt?

I am dehydrated. I have been off work two days with a streaming cold. During this time I have lost gallons of precious bodily fluids via nasal drip. Un-for-tu-nately I wasn't able to replenish this by means of throatal skelbrew because the skelbrew had only been in the bottle a couple of days and was as dark and mysterious as an Ethiopian's inside-leg measurement. Quensecently I am not feeling at my best. My creativity quotient is about zilch. This looks like a good time to sit back and run a few of the letters that got squeeze out of the last, slim-jim issue. Just give us the facts ma'am.

PAULINE PALMER 2510 48th; Bellingham; WA 98225; U.S.A.

I've not heard Judy Collins do 'The Moon Is A Harsh Mistress' but I did get to hear Dale Miller in concert the other night and he did a number which he introduced as the only song he's written that he ever performs in public. It was called 'Star Trek Blues'. The music was superb but the lyrics stole the show: it began with "Gather 'round, all you Trekkies" (which got a good laugh right off), then had a lovely, almost lullaby-like part which began "you can date Mr. Sulu", then proceeded to name/describe all the major ST characters a Trekkie might care to go out with, building up to a climax (\*ahem\*) with: "but if you date Captain James T. Kirk, he's going to shove that Captain's Log at you!"

When my daughter was Bethany's age, she too seemed to enjoy the Christmas boxes (and discarded wrap) as much as the gifts, and our cats have always felt pretty much the same way. Tilda still (advanced age of going-on-eight) carefully collects the ribbons, bows and name tags for assorted private uses, while I collect and store the boxes, ostensibly for future re-use the following Christmas (but these she pillages as well, throughout the year, for the construction of all sorts of strange and wonderful projects). Anyway, our cat's favourite 'gift' this year was a box I think he must have had his eye on for days before Christmas since as soon as it was opened and

emptied, he leaped into it, a perfect fit. We all laughed and left him there, happily snoozing with a few discarded ribbons draped over him. Later, when all the mess was cleaned up and nothing was left but him in his box, he pushed it over to the furnace grate, where it still is. Our furnace has a floor grate thru which the heat is blown up into the living room. He naps in it while the furnace is on, which allows him to take advantage of all that nice direct heat without having to worry about getting his balls burnt.

I read PODKAYNE OF MARS several years ago and enjoyed it for what it was, but I did get rather irritated with its packaging - a paperback reprint which blurbed a bunch of bs about social commentary and about being "by the same author as STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND", implying it was a similar-type book, and when I picked it up I wasn't paying much attention, just getting some SF I hadn't yet read, so it was I suppose partly my own fault. But nevertheless there was not one single mention (I looked it over very carefully later) of the fact that the book was a juvenile. Now I enjoy reading juveniles. There are so many good ones that weren't available when I was a kid, but I do object to a book being sold in a manner that overtly suggests it is an adult story when it is not. It was a good story, but as 'social comment' or whatever else the jacket promised, it was rinky-dink. I don't remember reacting to anything in the book as being particularly sexist, but then I read it before anyone thought of saying the totally disparate words 'fem' and 'lib' in the same breath. I recall, like you, seeing Poddy as a tomboy, though.

#### AH, YOU AN' ME TOO

.....which title covers both the failings of publishers and the Royal Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Poddy. Founder members include thee, me, Harry Warner and Anthony Boucher, who said, in NIEKAS 9 (September 1964) "Personally, I found 'Podkayne' a very entertaining book. I think it illustrates at its very best Heinlein's superlative skill of the indirect prediction of a future civilization." and "As a male, I found Poddy completely enchanting; I found her a very successful creation." That'll do me. I don't really care who's right or



wrong anymore. Even if Heinlein has put one over on me it is somehow reassuring to know that he must have put the same one over on Anthony Boucher. No mean feat, this.

But, I always thought that 'rinky-dink' meant a thing was good. Helping me, somebody.....

STFR 5 - Mike Glyer: No address included.

.....well, it was on the envelope but I'm buggered if I'm going back upstairs for it. In this Dave Locke talks about people writing OK when they are only talking to their own typewriter but getting all psyched up, stiff and formal when they try to tackle an 'article' for someone else. Too fucking true, Squire. I just finished a contrib for Roy Kettle and it is so much more formal you wouldn't believe it. Instead of hacking the thing straight onto stencil, drunk, I did three drafts.....and never touched a drop. The end result is so alien to me that I can't even judge its worth. Not to worry, I suppose I can rely on Roy for that.

Thankfully, not many people seem to want contributions from me. In the mumblety-mumph years I've been around fandom I have only contributed two written pieces to someone else's fanzine. Mike Meara asked me for that 'different' review of 'Darkness on Diamondia' for LURK and Alan and Elke Stewart touched me for my 'Points East' column (although they seem to have ceased publication whilst holding firmly to the second installment), and Terry Jeeves got me to contribute to his Heinlein Symposium. ~~There are three.....~~

Could it be obvious to people that my talents just won't transfer from the personal to the general? Or are they trying to tell me something? Probably the latter because I've had as many items rejected as I've had accepted.

My very first attempt at a contribution to a fanmag was a poem I sent to Terry Jeeves. I realised that this was probably not the ideal place for it, but the poem was full of Analog-ish sentiments and it rhymed good too. Terry slung it back at me because he "didn't care for modern blank verse". This from



a poem so trad it could have been written by Humphrey Lyttleton. I think it was about then that I decided to publish my own fanzine. However, I was far too smart to publish any of my poetry in it, except for one bit of doggerel that was distributed only through OMPA. Actually, as it had such a small circulation, only about four of whom are still with me, I think I'll repeat it here:-

#### A FANS LOVE FOR HIS SWEETHEART

I cut my love a stencil  
to show my love was true  
for with a love as strong as mine  
.....well what else could I do ?

I cut my love a stencil  
and I corflued all about  
then ran off pages of my love  
..... until the ink ran out.

I cut my love a stencil  
and gained such egoboo  
that for the very next mailing,  
..... I cut another two.

.....but I digress. There's not many people who could tackle a three-verse digression. I feel kinda proud, but humble, of course. Anyway, the second rejection was a piece I co-authored with Mike Meara which Dave Rowe turned down for reasons which I still find somewhat dubious, being in effect that there isn't anywhere in the whole world that can cut electro-stencils for him. Anyway, we have thwarted him because that piece, slightly modified, is supposed to be in KFN 5, probably within the same envelope within which you received this. Whaddaya mean you've read it, already? How could you get your priorities so wrong?

The last of my three rejections was a LoC I sent to Pauline Palmer. She was supposed to write back instanter to the effect that it was too good for a LoC and could she please

run it as the first installment of a column? Whereupon I would have hummed and ahh'd before graciously consenting, provided she titled the column 'The Non-committal Pillow'. Alas you ~~must have had too much sense~~ just weren't awake to the possibilities, Pauline. And now Bill Breiding wants me to try my hnad at something for him, and of course I must try, so if you don't see anything by me in STAREFIRE 258 then you'll know that got rejected too. And all this because I read a Dave Locke column over two stencils ago. It certainly is a wonderful thing. Fuck off Dave!

DAVE PIPER 7 Cranley Drive; Ruislip; Middlesex; HA4 6BZ.

No, I didn't know that about 'nappies' and those other things. Does that mean that little 'uns Over There just shit bigger and better than ours? Or have they just got bigger bums? These are important questions, lad, the whole fate of Western Civilisation could rest upon the answers. I really feel that some very serious research should be carried out on this subject. Unfortunately I never go to conventions so I can't, but I suggest that when you get to the con and run into Roytac...well, explain to him that it is important and ask him if he wouldn't mind taking off his trousers and compare his bum size with, oh I dunno, Meara's? Er, the male half, that is. Let me know how it goes, willya?

DAMN, TRUST ME TO FORGET THAT BIT ABOUT 'THE MALE HALF'.

Anyway, Chrystal, I hope that explains to your satisfaction why Roy and Pat were together, naked, in that bedroom, and just exactly what I was doing with that cine camera. I trust that you are ashamed of yourself for jumping to such conclusions and that you will apologise to your husband just as soon as he is considered fit enough to be discharged. As for me, the doctors are hoping to operate this weekend and they assure me that both the camera and I will be non the worse for wear and that I will be able to sit down again REAL SOON NOW.

Oh, and Dave, the next time you get any bright ideas for furthering the state of scientific knowledge, you fuck off too!

GEGENSCHWEIN 27 - Eric Lindsay: 6 Hillcrest Avenue; Faulconbridge; NSW 2776; Australia.

.....which contains an article by Philip Jose Farmer on 'Phonemic Spelling' in which he raises the point that any spelling reform is going to cut future generations off from their literary heritage. Why, I ask myself, are they all tackling things backwards? Why not attack the problem from a different angle? Instead of spelling words as they are pronounced, why not pronounce them as they are spelled? This method is simplicity in itself. If one decides that 'OUGH' should be pronounced 'uff' as in 'rough' the one has to be consistent and a farmer from Sluff would have to pluff his his fields. If on the other hand it was decreed that it would be pronounced 'ow' as in 'bough' then he would have to vough to milk his cough.

A system like this would of course mean that the whole vast heritage of English Literature would not be denied to anyone, although it might affect a poem or two. All that would be barred to future generations would be the relatively short era of recorded sound.

No, that's OK your Majesty. I'll wait 'til next time for my O.B.E. Yes I know, such a simple idea really.

#### NOW JUST HANG ON A MINUTE

Quite a few people seem to think I said SPACE 1999 was a better SF series than STAR TREK. No way! What I did say was that it was better television. I still think it made better TV for non-SF readers. For a very small minority, it was worse TV. That was for people who demanded credibility and knew when they weren't getting it. That is, for SF readers and SF fans. I said this two issues back. I also said, in effect, that as SF it was lousy. Everybody else seems to agree in this latter respect, pointing out its faults and saying how much better STAR TREK was in that respect. Often though they go too far. One cretin even made a comparative criticism on the basis that all the aliens (conveniently humanoid) spoke English (even more conveniently) in SPACE 1999. And yet, for the life of me



I can't remember a single episode of ST which used sub-titles when the alien spoke 'Rigelian'.

However, let's change the subject. Here's a letter from an old and tired fan with a neat line in excuses for not LoCing.

OLD AND TIRED FAN Somewhere in the USA.

I've two of your small INFERNOs and haven't done much about them. The trouble is that my normal bad health has gotten badder the last year, with a marked decrease in the time and energy I have to devote to fanac. I've had to give up going to fan events and correspondence is decreased toward infinity. But my interest in fandom is still there and when I can I'm trying to respond to the few (gratefully few, for various reasons) fan-zines I receive. Regretfully, it is still the Red Queen's Race for an old Letter Hack. If you write one, and it gets published you get three more new zines, and unless they are utter crud-zines, you feel badly about getting farther behind.....my current fate, particularly with UK zines which at the moment make up nearly 50% of the crop. On a limited diet I'm trying to stick mainly with zines that best keep me in touch with current fandom and fans, so that I don't become too out of touch. I'm interested mainly in fandom as I read little of the current SF, it being ever more depressing.

On the other hand, I'm not much interested in the strictly personal-zines, and just told the ed of DON-O-SAUR that it was unlikely I'd respond to future issues as he was too introspective.

EAT SHIT, THOMPSON!

You hit a fairly good balance, though I'm not all that happy with your format. I don't dislike it, I just don't feel at home with it, due I'm sure in part to having grown up with the regular form that Bentcliffe uses. The trouble I find with

yours (and others similar) is that I don't know when I've read it. It is too long to read at one time, as there is no solid theme to hold the interest (and my attention span isn't much more than 12 pages), so I pick it up and read awhile. Then, next time I pick it up, I don't know where I left off, so start somewhere. I wouldn't re-read, but I might be skipping...and my memory isn't great.

.....AND THIS MONTH'S COMPETITION IS.....

.....to guess the identity of our mystery guest. All answers please, on an unopened whisky bottle. At least now Mike Glicksohn can write in and say how much he sympathises because of the 2,467,933 zines that smashed through his door on the first day in July. Some future geologist is going to be really baffled when he tries to explain the layer of rock he discovers in the Toronto area, formed by forty feet of compressed fanzines. Mention of that gentleman reminds me though that this isn't a proper fanzine yet, which fact we can immediately remedy.

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

You musn't get upset that Gillespie called you 'Peter'; this is no reflection upon your skill as a writer or editor (think of yourself as a 'Weston' rather than a 'Presdorf', if that'll help) but merely Bruce's way of counterattacking the Monty Python inspired notion that all Australians (and hence all Aussiefans) are named Bruce. A little reflection (the only sort Dave Locke ever sees) would indicate that it is quite easy for an overseas fan to get the idea that most English fans are called Peter and most North American fans are named Mike. And it is a skel of a lot easier to address all LoCs the same way, thereby avoiding the debilitating extra mental effort required to ascertain whose load of old rubbish you're actually writing to this time. Besides, think of how incredibly much worse it might have been! Imagine getting a letter which starts off "Dear Keith....."!

Your speculations in regards certain well-known natural laws, their peculiarities at the equator and possible scientific



advances based upon their exploitation, were delightful indeed. However, while you correctly summised that toast lands on its edge, you failed to note, as have so many other unwary and unscientifically educated tourists, that water at the equator, prevented from circulating leisurely to the left or to the right is forced to vanish straight down the emptying orifice, whatever it may be, with an enormous slurping sound caused by its unmodified speed of departure, no doubt. This unexpected phenomenon has been the undoing of a great many equatorial visitors, and is probably behind the so-called Bermuda Triangle mysteries as well. Good advice therefore, is that when near the equator never pull the plug or flush the toilet whilst still in or on the device being used. The unfortunate alternative, known locally as "getting bogged down", is scarcely to be credited.

You know, I don't think English faneds should encourage Leroy in this strange attempt of his to build up vast amounts of negative karma. Sutra self, of course, but this odd pattern I've noticed of late disturbs me slightly: In letters to fan-zines all over the world, I mention one Mr. Leroy Kettle. This is usually in terms like 'brilliant', 'non-pareil', 'possibly the best fanwriter active today' and other such overblown and complimentary things that Leroy paid me to say when we met at SEACON. And lately Leroy has been mentioning me in his letters, but invariably he casts aspersions on either my writing style or its content, even going so far as to suggest I make poor puns. This despite the fact that I've never made as much as a single one of the obvious puns his name is heir to. Is this the sort of Leroyal treatment I deserve after nominating the blackguard for a FAAN Award this year?

He makes some good points (he must, I make them too later on) but he's also demonstrating some terrible taste, casting the natural superiority of the British sense of humour in serious doubt. Early issues of NATLAMP (or POON, as we call it here) were indeed brilliant, but at that time it was a humour magazine with a sense of satire and morality to present (and a different one to attack). Within the last couple of years though the magazine has largely degenerated into a gross-out magazine with far too much emphasis on simple shock and scat-



Americans in your eyes? I diagnose too much reading of 'Gold The Man'. Try Vector Magroon's 'The Burning Void', but have a bucket handy.

1 got a letter from one B.P. Harrison who wanted

most concerned lost his father to appendicitis (age 12).

20 JUNE 1970 (BRIEF)

1. The first step is to identify the problem or goal. This involves understanding the current situation and what needs to be achieved.

10-11-68

enjoyed. A good tanzone, and a shock to my system. Das, I think

enjoyed. A good fanzine.....and a shock to my system. But, TZTHNN was quarto Keith, not sixmo. I would've LoCed this issue were it not that SFD 12 deadline is less than a fortnight away. Genuinely good stuff.

LOGO 3 - Kevin Easthope: 6 Ipsley Grove; Erdington; Birmingham; B23 7SY.

.....in which you take umbrage, Kevin, at 'secret' fanzines. Wrongly, I feel. Darroll isn't being elitist when he says that is fanzine is not generally available. I very nearly took the same step. I produce my zine for my circle of friends, although I may never even have heard of any particular friend. Being part of the circle is a state of mind. If you get SFD and feel you belong then you do. If you don't then you don't. It's not a case of whether or not I know you, or even whether or not I've heard of your name, but simply a case of how you react to SFD.

We all get letters from new fen asking for sample copies. We all send them, even though we know that the new choom is expecting SFR not SFD, and that we are wasting 19 out of 20 sample copies. I got a letter from one R.P.Harrison who wanted a copy of TZTHNN. I sent one and he sent me a 'LoC' explaining what I'd expected, that it wasn't his scene (although he was most concerned lest his failure to appreciate it upset me). Then he read about SFD somewhere, and sent a request for that. I never responded. He is now probably convinced that I am an elitist who won't send my zine to neos or, that I was so upset by his mild adverse criticism that I refused to send him SFD. All Darroll is doing is cutting out this whole scene by simply deciding when he thinks any particular fan might appreciate his fnz. I think we'd all trade with everybody, had we access to the magic Ream which feeds continuously into the duper whilst never containing less than 500 sheets of paper. There are lots of people I'd love to trade with but unfortunately I can only afford to produce 110 copies. What to do? Darroll has his way, I have mine. Damn, and I was pinning everything on being a secret bastard of Paul Getty but as I'm not mentioned in his will I must assume I'm stuck on 110 copies a while yet. What are you gonna do Kevin when 500 people want LOGO?



K 3 - Dave Rowe (& Bernie Peek): 8 Park Drive; Wickford;  
Essex; SS12 9DH.

.....which is regrettably the last issue. Dave just does not seem to have the staying power necessary for a faned. However, the person who I wish to respond to here is Alan Stewart. I find myself totally opposed to your theory of fnz circulation Alan. Being a UK faned I'd much rather supply the US 'market' first, simply because it is far more exotic. Day to day trivia is much more interesting when it is foreign trivia. Like me, Dave Piper may get up and catch a bus in the mornings, but US citizens will catch a greyhound. The very difference in terminology conjurs up visions of long duty roads, horizon-to-horizon wheatfields, tall buildings and offset fnz. Dave and I go by bus. Boring-boring.

Nor do I think the American faneds "supply the home market first." They supply the active fnz fandom first, most of which is in the US. There is a vital, non-chauvenistic difference. I send my fanzine to the people who appreciate me. US fans seem to appreciate me more, because I am different. Stop being so parochial Alan.

#### DOES ANYONE HERE KNOW BRIAN PARKER?

If so, please tell him why he isn't getting INFERNO any more. He was at Mancon. I know this because we even went out for a meal together. What I didn't know at the time was that he never registered. To my way of thinking this is one of the worst types of fannish dishonesty.....dishonesty towards one's fellow fan. Anyone who would rip off a fan one way would, to my way of thinking, not think twice about ripping them off in some other manner. To me, by 'stealing' from the concomm Brian indicated his indifference towards behaving honestly in fandom and I would personally advise anyone dealing with him in future to do so on a 'cash-in-advance' basis. I personally will have nothing further to do with him.

KEVIN EASTHOPE 6 Ipsley Grove; Erdington; Birmingham; B23 7SY.

In connection with that alternative universe thing you



mentioned, a '...proscribed Speculative Fiction Study Group.' Have you ever thought how well suited is fandom to forming an underground resistance in the event of alien invasion (whether terrestrial or not)? We have scores of duplicators all over the country for putting out 'subversive' literature. We have contacts in all walks of life for the collection of information and a central data bank in the Fanzine Foundation. 'Fanspeak' could be developed into a true secret language, incomprehensible to the oppressors and we'd have a fairly decent two man assassination squad in Mr. Pickersgill and Mr. Brosnan. Who needs guns and bombs when we've got SCABBY TALES?

DOUG BARBOUR 10808 - 75th Avenue; Edmonton; Alberta; T6E 1K2.

I truly enjoyed the catch up article on the space program from 'The Journal Of Contemporary Studies, 1975' but I feel it was very poor of the author to leave out any mention of the importance of fuel reserves in the northern colonies in the Americas. As one who has lived there all his life I can say that we have always felt that our great vast wilderness has been of great importance to the space program because of our oil and mineral supplies.....and if the powers that be in Europe had only seen things without all that red tape in front of their eyes they would have long ago realized that the so-called Upper Canadian Shield would have provided a much better launch-site than Salisbury. Ah well, that's all in the past, isn't it?

23 JUNE 1976(SKEL)

When I was but a lad and the ice-cream man came by I used to ~~let the lolly pop~~ ~~let the lolly pop~~ GO OUT' AND ASK FOR A LOLLY. Things was simpler then. Life had a slower pace. A lolly was but a lolly. We savoured it for its qualities: its coolness on a hot day, its rich fruity flavour, its long lasting quality and its ability to refresh. If a lolly was all of these then what else could a lolly be?

Silly question. The kids have just rushed out for ice-lollies, amid cries of "I wanna Dalek Death Ray" and "I'm having a Count Dracula". There is a special place in Hell

reserved for executives of Walls Ice Cream, who have turned a thing of fruity into a cloy forever.

MIKE MEARA 61 Borrowash Road; Spondon; Derby; DE2 7QH.

The idea of Alice Cooper in an SF film is worse than Marc Bolan having written SF film scripts only because the former case is a step nearer actuality. Surprisingly, I can see David Bowie as Newton in 'The Man Who Fell To Earth'. From the few bits I've seen, however, Nicholas Roeg may have read a different book, or else the only copy he could get hold of was a Hindustani translation with several pages missing. I should very much like to be as impressed by the film as I was by the book, but.....we shall see.

The reason there's never anything for you from the Turd Fairy is obviously because you flush the whole lot away after you've donated it. You can hardly expect her to go chasing through the sewers of Stockport in an attempt to identify your particular offering, distinctive though it may be. I imagine she's got better things to do, and besides, she'd get her nice white dress all dirty.

Funny word, 'peccadillo'. Sort of like a cross between an armadillo and a Giant Attacking Budgie. Probably a good idea for a D & D monster in there somewhere.

I am frankly amazed that you consider 'Man About The House' abysmal, just as I am amazed that Kevin thinks 'I Didn't Know You Cared' is grwat. (Yes, I am amazed he thinks it is grwat: however, he also thinks it's 'great' which is almost as amazing.) I think IDKYC is one of the most abysmally awful 'comedy' shows ever to appear on TV, rating it possibly slightly more enjoyable than 'Some Mothers Do 'ave 'em'. Mind you, my fantasies about doing rude things to the birds in MATH may have something to do with it. It's difficult to be objective, isn't it? I am thankful that British TV is the best in the world, but I am more thankful that I have a sufficient number of more interesting things to do that I don't watch it very often. 'Best', in this instance, doesn't imply 'good', all the time, or even a fair percentage of it.



It's a fascinating, almost science-fictional concept, the truckers using their own radio network to evade the police. CB radios in cars is a really fannish idea: Imagine yourself lost on Spaghetti Junction on your way to the next Novacon. You'd call up Rog Peyton. "Hey, Andromeda Strain, I'm heading E by NE on the M56<sup>1</sup>. Which way is the hotel?" The idea for thinking up call-signs for other fen is rather tempting. However, I'm too bushed to do anything with it at the moment.

### THWOK! BALL IN YOUR COURT SKEL

Well, anyone who hasn't pubbed his ish for a long time, say Jim Goddard, would be 'The Long, Loud Silence'. I suppose Gerald Lawrence would be known as 'The Traveller In Black' (Hey Dave, has he got any other clothes?). Jessica, you'd have to be 'The Changeling', just as Ian Williams would have to settle for 'The Mad Goblin'. I don't know of any homosexual fans, but 'Genus Homo' is just waiting for them. How about 'A Feast Unknown' for Brian Burgess? 'Next Of Kin' for Cas (in joke for anyone who's ever travelled with her)? I suppose I'll get stuck with 'One Eye'. Sheesh, looks like we got a convoy.

RICH BARTUCCI PO Box 75; Cedar Brook; New Jersey 08018; USA.

Though I've not encountered Jehova's Witnesses in the neighborhood, Kansas City (where I'm writing this) seems to be infested by large numbers of all-over Baptists and not a few wild-eyed Methodists. There are more churches per square mile in this Bible-Belted region than, I suspect, in the Vatican. Now, from the name you must surmise that I'm a Roman Catholic (or would be, if I were still in the habit of attending Mass); picture the incongruity of a member of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church being accosted in the streets of this midwestern melanoma of a city by ladies with tracts entitled "Is Jesus Christ Your Personal Saviour?"

"Of course not; we Catholics have a Group Plan."

Anyway, as long as there are Jehova's Witnesses, do you suppose that there might be some Yahweh's Barristers or Chthulu's Plaintiffs skulking in the theological woodwork? To put myself in the proper mood for this LoC, I've just made



myself a cup of tea; I pray to ghod I never have to write a letter to a Mongolian fanzine; where the hell would I get a pint of fermented mare's milk?

I FEEL ILL

On account of Rich wrote his LoC on the back of a diagnostic checklist for headaches, which is guaranteed to put the shits up anyone who's ever had one. I always thought that having a headache meant one of three things; (a) You've got flu, (b) You've got a hangover, and (c) The Mearae are stopping with you again (see 'b' above). Now it appears I may have "Subarachnoid Hemorrhage" or "Glaucoma" (which sounds vaguely like one of those glucose health drinks but I suspect I would not want a case.....not that I'd want a case of any glucose health drink either, for that matter).

Besides, I thought 'Subarachnoid Hemorrhage' meant 'Under A Bleeding Spider'. Could this be the translation of a Mongol term meaning 'Hungover on fermented mare's milk'?

However Rich, can you bring your medical knowledge to bear on a peculiarly fannish wasting disease. The first symptom is lethargy. The victim for instance can't be bothered hitting the 'shift' key when typing. Unfortunately the disease is progressive, as this latest letter I got from Doug Barbour clearly shows.....

DOUG BARBOUR Address as page 36.

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Can you do anything, Rich?

THE QUALITY OF MERCY IS NOT STRAINED.....

.....but the quality of response sure as hell is. In this neck of the woods at any rate. Ooo, but I've been mean this time. A right sod in fact. Let's see who's still here:

Abramowitz; Adamson; Arthurs; Bailey; Barbour; Bartucci; Beatty; Bells; Bennett; Bentcliffe; Birkhead; Boak; Boal; Bowers; Bracken; Breiding; Bridges; Brooks; Brown; Bushyager; Cagle; Carmody; Charnox; Clarke; Coad; Cockfield; Cohen; Conese; Connor; D'Amassa; Danielson; Denton; Dorneman; Dunlop; Easthope; Farber; Fortey; Gaier; Gillespie; Glicksohn; Glycer; Hall; Haskell; Hayden; Hilles; Hughes; Indick; Jackson; Jeeves; Jenrette; Kaufman; Kettle; Langford; Larsen; Lawrence; Lindsay; Longs; Lutrell; McMahon; Martin; Maule; May; Meadows III; Mearae; Nicholas; Offut; Palmer; Pardoe; Parks; Patten; Pelz; Pickersgill; Piper; Poole; Presford; Roberts; Robinson; Rowe; Ryan; Salmonsens; Sharpe; Sirois; Sneary; Stephensen-Payne; Stoelting; Strelkov; Tackett; Thompson; Tucker; Vayne; Waddington; Walker; Webber; Weinstein; West; White; Wild; Wiles; Williams; Willis; Wood; Skels (3).

That's 104 copies (out of 109, which is what I usually get by aiming for 110), with 8 people living dangerously. Out this time, some without warning, go :

Balazs; Bangsund; Brosnan; Bulmer; CRO; Easterbrook; Franke; Isaacson (whoops, he should still be in. Make that 105 and 9); Lien; Lunney; MacKay; Markstein; Norris; Parker; Quane; Stephenson. My, but I have been a little piss-pot, haven't I?

JESSICA AMANDA SALMONSEN PO Box 89517; Zenith; Wa 98188.

I'm sure there is some poor persecuted Yehu Witness somewhere who will sigh with gratitude that you treated one of their kind with sympathy and grace. Bill Pugmire who edits MIDNIGHT FANTASY was a Mormon Missionary in Ireland for a while, and during his stay some Catholics lynched a Witness, so the Mormons (being somewhat more intelligent if no less zealous) only tried to convert Protestants for a while.

I discovered an interesting way to scare a Witness once. First, you act like you're as crazy as they are. "Oh yes, you're right, you're right!" Then you point out "one little error, however, in your belief." The error can be almost anything, but it can only be one error, you must allow them total







beetle." Since then 'beetles' have been a family in-joke, but of course all family jokes usually end needing to be explained to non-family persons now and then. So one day a young gentleman friend of hers, Sean by name, was visiting and he farted. He looked a bit embarrassed, so Jack said quickly, "Must have been those beetles again." Sean's expression changed to puzzlement then, when we explained, to laughter as he quickly came back with: "No, it wasn't a beetle, it was a gashopper!"

You're absolutely right about buttered toast always falling butter-side down, of course. The thing is that Joseph Rothschild has probably never lived in a house that didn't have expensive carpeting and he therefore jumped to a false conclusion. If the value of the carpet had anything at all to do with it, all pieces of toast dropped in our house would happily land butter-side up. Alas, this is not true; they do not. It should also be noted that the probability of any given piece of toast being dropped increases with the degree and amount of additional adornment spread thereon. In other words, a piece of buttered toast spread with a copious quantity of honey is more likely to 'drop' (ie, leap suicidally out of one's hands) than a piece spread with a conservative amount of jelly or marmalade, which in its turn is more likely to drop than a piece of plain buttered toast. I might also point out that if, while being transported from skillet to plate, a sunny-side-up egg chances to slip off the spatula, it will always, inevitably, land with its sunny side down. Also, as it was discovered at the late, great P. W. Frames Pisces Party this March, a piece of cheesecake being passed over the table from one inebriated Pisces person to another will inevitably suicide into the most ash-filled ashtray on the table.

Anyway, CB radios are quite popular around Bellingham, with CBers banding (if you'll pardon the expression) into what can only be considered equivalents of fan groups. The most popular local sport is that a group of them will gather at a designated place, pick out one CBer to be 'it' and then, after allowing him a sufficient head-start, the rest spread out, keeping in constant CB contact of course, to track him down. Sounds fairly fannish to me.....

JEEVES for TAFF (last stencil 27/6/76) JEEVES for TAFF!!!!!!

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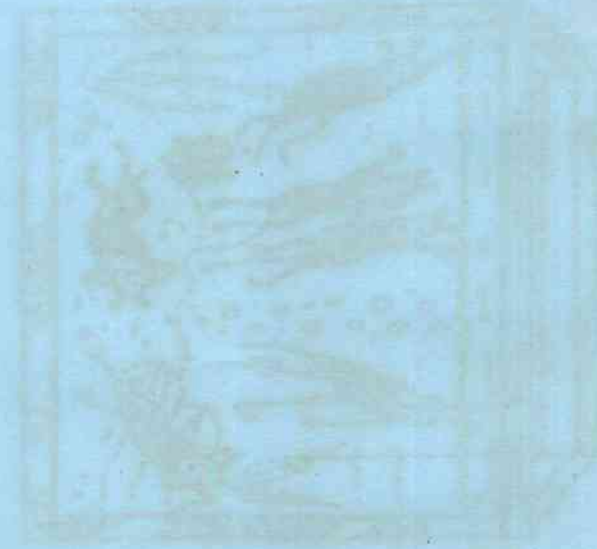
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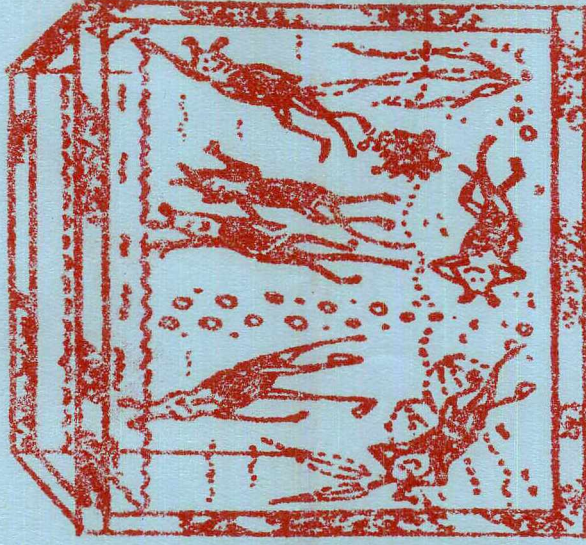
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