

the  
**Space Wastrel**

VOLUME TWO NUMBER NINE PART B

JANUARY/MARCH 1988

REGISTERED BY AUSTRALIA POST: PUBLICATION NO. VBG 7972



## CONTRIBUTORS' ADDRESSES

Harry Andruschak: PO Box 5709, Torrance CA 90510-5309, USA // Richard Bergeron: PO Box 5989, Old San Juan, Puerto Rico 00905, USA // Sheryl Birkhead: 23629 Woodfield Road, Gaithersburg MD 20879, USA // Jenny Blackford: GPO Box 1294L, Melbourne VIC 3001, AUSTRALIA // Richard Brandt: 4740 N. Mead #111, El Paso TX 79912, USA // Mr & Mrs Brian Brown: 11675 Beaconsfield, Detroit MI 48224, USA // Cy Chauvin: 14248 Wilfred, Detroit MI 48213, USA // Bev Clark: 1050 8th Avenue, NE#119, Seattle WA 98125, USA // Vinç Clarke: 16 Wendover Way, Welling, Kent DA16 2BN, UK // Chuck Connors: Sildan House, Chediston Road, Wissett near Haleworth, Suffolk IP19 0NF, UK // Glen Crawford: PO Box 1, Avoca Beach NSW 2260, AUSTRALIA // John DeChancie: 1060 Barnaley Drive, Library PA 15129, USA // Greg Egan: PO Box 252, West Ryde NSW 2114, AUSTRALIA // Nelson: 2 Behan Street, Bentley WA 6102, AUSTRALIA // Richard Faulder: PO Box 136, Yanco NSW 2073, AUSTRALIA // Mike Glicksohn: 508 Windermere Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, CANADA // Bruce Greville: PO Box 876, Auckland, NEW ZEALAND // Ian Gunn: PO Box 65, Ashburton VIC 3147, AUSTRALIA // Michael Hailstone: 204 Station Street, Box Hill VIC 3128, AUSTRALIA // Michelle Hallett: 8/3 Oak Lane, Potts Point NSW 2011, AUSTRALIA // Joan Hanke-Woods: 1543 Fargo Avenue Apt #21, Chicago IL 60626, USA // Jack Herman: Box 272, Wentworth Building, Sydney University NSW 2006, AUSTRALIA // Joy Hibbert: 11 Rutland Street, Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST1 5JG, UK // Craig Hilton: 28 Success Crescent, Manning WA 6152, AUSTRALIA // Linnette Horne: PO Box 2836, Central Post Office, Wellington, NEW ZEALAND // Cathy Kerrigan: PO Box 473, Camberwell VIC 3124, AUSTRALIA // Bob Lee: 1720 Burgundy Road, Leucadia CA 92024, USA // Eric Lindsay: 6 Hillcrest Avenue, Faulconbridge NSW 2776, AUSTRALIA // Dave Lockett: 69 Federal Street, Turst Hill WA 6060, AUSTRALIA // J.R. 'Maddog' Maddens: PO Box 13016-A, University Station, Baton Rouge LA 70803, USA // Susan Margaret: 76 Seventh Avenue, Maylands WA 6051, AUSTRALIA // Lyn McConchie: 15 Rauparaha Street, Waikanae Beach, NEW ZEALAND // Jeanne Mealy: 4157 Lyndale Avenue S, Minneapolis MN 55409, USA // Joseph Nicholas: 22 Donhigh Street, Pimlico, London SW1V 2ER, UK // Bruno Ogorelec: Kopernikova 10, 41020 Zagreb, YUGOSLAVIA // Jonathan Palfrey: Via Pavetti 4, 10015 Ivrea (To), ITALY // David Palter: 137 Howland Avenue, Toronto, Ontario M5R 3B4, CANADA // Anthony Peacey: 82 Milne Street, Baywater WA 6053, AUSTRALIA // Lloyd Penney: 412-22 Riverwood Parkway, Toronto, Ontario M8Y 4E1, CANADA // Sarah Prince: 4 Asabet Drive, Northborough MA 01532, USA // Tim Reddan: C/- Ballarat CAE, Ballarat VIC 3350, AUSTRALIA // Ben Schilling: 45605 Fox Lane East, Apt #206, Utica MI 48087-4229, USA // Skel: 25 Bowland Close, Offerton, Stockport, Cheshire SK2 5NW, UK // Garth Spencer: 1296 Richardson Street, Victoria, BC, V8V 3E1, CANADA // Nick Stathopolous: 17 Norfolk Street, Balcktown NSW 2148, AUSTRALIA // Mae Strelkov: 4501 Palma Sola, Jujuy, ARGENTINA // Jefferson P. Swycaffer: PO Box 15373, San Diego CA 92115, USA // Sue Thomason: 31 Barfield Road, York, North Yorkshire YO3 9AW, UK // Wolfgang Vogel: c/- PO Box 27-274, Wellington, NEW ZEALAND // Harry Warner: 423 Summit Avenue, Hagerstown Maryland 21740, USA // Pam Wells: 24A Beech Road, Bowes Park, London N11 2DA, UK // Ross White: 2 Danielle Street, Cleveland QLD 4163, AUSTRALIA // Walt Willie: 32 Warren Road, Donaghadee, Northern Ireland BT21 0PD, UK // Jean Young: Animal Fair, RR4 Box 447, Decora Iowa 52101, USA

## THE SPACE WESTREL: ISSN 0017-0100

This is Part B of The Space Westrel for January/March 1988 and is Volume Two Number 9B, Whole Number 14. TSW is edited by Mr Loney and Michelle and published by Mr Warner, Mr Loney and Michelle.

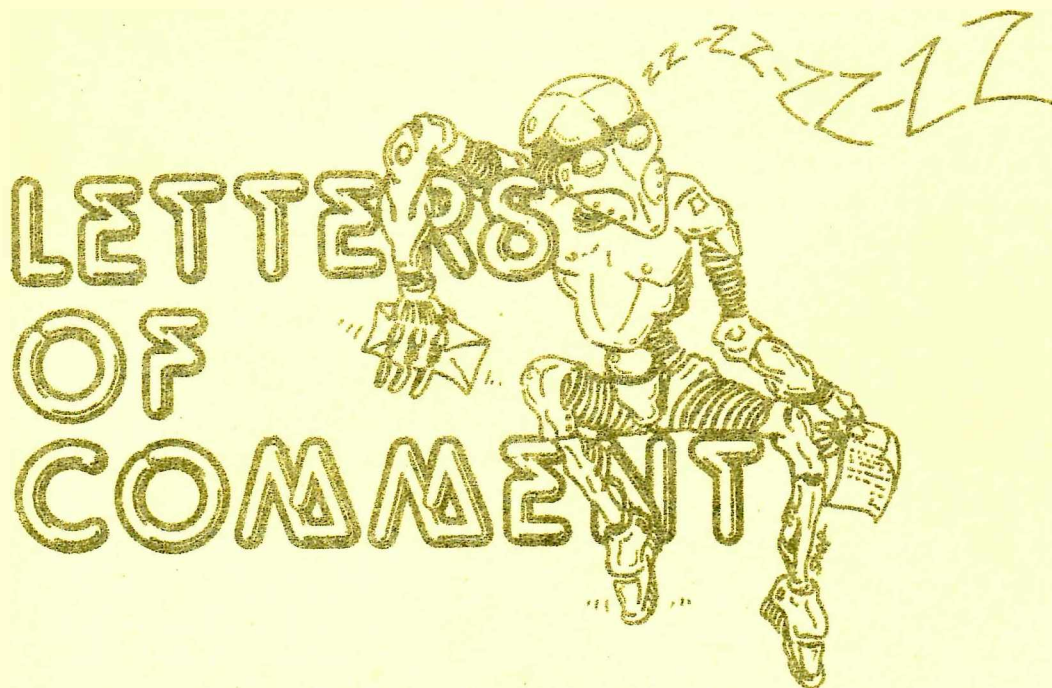
1988 Publishing Schedule was: January March May July September November

The last day of a leap year February seems to be a good time for the largest TSW to date to be rescheduled for release on April 1st at Kinkon. Overeas copies should be mailed out in the preceding weeks but those in attendance at the Victoria Hotel over Easter will be the first to see the last of the dinosaurs. A much smaller zine will be mailed in May.

EDITORIAL ADDRESS: PO Box 428, Richmond, Victoria, 3121, AUSTRALIA

MR WARNER: 129 Emeryfreed Road, Kensington, Western Australia, 6151, AUSTRALIA

Produced with the invaluable assistance of word processing equipment from O U NORMAN INTERNATIONAL:  
THE STAFFING CENTRE




---

\* \* STAR LETTER \* \*

---

CHUCK CONNORS - Goodness, this must be something of a newfound record for me, or a reversion to my old Larnish days, but two locs in as little time as it takes to neuter a cat? Well, blow me away with a 12-gauge pump-action sawn-off. Actually, TSW5 has been hanging around (somewhat akin to the smell of burnt kippers) for a while now, and when TSW6 burst through the intricacies of the Naval Mail system (you did know I was in the Royal Navy, didn't you?) I thought it was time to get me thumb from me bum and finger a keyboard in reply.

Firstly I should point out that I wasn't going to reply to anything in the FUCTINSPACE or LOCT IN SPACE from TSW5, mainly as I'd only come in on issue 4 and was likely to be out with what was being discussed. But, as is my usual wont, I let my eyes rove around the pages all the same. I now wish to make an apology to the whole Editorial Team of TSW. And I wish to apologise for Joey Nicholas' outburst.

Why should I apologise for him? Mainly because someone has not gone along and quietly put him out of our misery, and just put the old git to sleep.

I'm tired of hearing the same old Joey tirade - a tirade which was basically recycled (or should that be re-paddled?) from the pages of Rich Coad's SPACE JUNK either issue 3 or 4 (forget which)(Well I haven't got my condoms with me, let alone the bloody fanzine collection) - and I'm also very sick and tired of being placed in with his usually all-encompassing shit, such as "...Australian fanzines are derided by everyone as boring and uninteresting..." etcetera. What he means is that his little bunch of friends (and do you people over there remember the term ego-masturbation?) in and around London - the remains of what one could well call '70s' fandom, if one were feeling kind to the burnt out - who still believe in the one great god, and woe betide anyone who should fail to bow

down in front of it. For your information, even just by looking at the LoCcol itself, there are quite a few Britfans in there who like/enjoy/or feel moved enough to comment in a positive manner, so that "everyone" is not so much a crock of shit, but shit from a crooked mind.

*the Space Wastrel*  
*a continent-spanning sign of life*  
*in the fanzinish wasteland*  
*down under*

---



Why not name this "...one fan we knows who throws away unopened the Australian fanzines he receives". Or is it that the supposed Champion of the Cause just doesn't exist except in Joey's power-crazed mind? Note the wonderful, socialistically correct method of bringing in politics at the slightest chance? "High Tory" and "Like Tories..." Good old Joey ain't short of a bob or two in that department, even if he is short of his marbles every-fucking-where else. I suppose it's a case of 'political birds of a feather have to stick together'?

The other sad thing is that, barring some of the names and places, it is standard Joey Nicholas, be it from the pages of SPACE JUNK, or PULP, or MATRIX, or GROSS ENCOUNTERS. It's never changed all that much, if at all, mainly because, I suppose, in the long run, Joey's just an offensive little bugger who gets his excitement out of slinging around the shit and shot in paper format.

No, I'm sorry, but that 'everyone' and anonymous 'one fan' really pissed me off something chronic, and no mistake. It's people like Joey - keeping to the old routine of Kill The Fuckers - that have killed off a lot of fun in fanzine fandom. And after a mere 10 years of active involvement in Britfandom (a trifling piss in the Ocean of Life to some, I know) I think I should have some idea of what I'm talking about here.

Onto other things - just by turning the magazine over in fact.

IN ALL INNOCENCE... I have to admit that, being somewhat in bad taste, I could see a sticky end to the little furry white creatures. I don't have any mouse stories - the only really comparable thing was a rat trap an old boy who owned the farm next to us used to make for his old barns. Now, we are talking old here. Not cement and metal, but old slipboards and the split tree beams that still had the bark on them from decades ago (he also had one of the oldest tractors I've ever driven, an old 1930-something-or-other pre-war Ford, with no brakes - and I only found out about the lack of stopping equipment as we were coming to the field entrance, prior to going out onto the road, with a fully loaded trailer of bailed straw on the back). What? Oh, yes, the rat trap. Take one old wooden barrel, put two nails on the sides, right at the top, where the rim is. Make sure that the nails can rotate freely. Then place a piece of wood smaller than the diameter of the top of the barrel, across the top of the barrel, and hammer the nails into the ends - a plank of wood is what is really called for. Then, place some grain, or ideally some bran or flaked oats in the middle of the plank. Then leave it. Oh, forgot the most important thing. Fill the barrel half full with water. What happens is this. The rat comes along the rim of the barrel. The oats/food attract it onto the plank, but its weight will cause the plank to rotate (it doesn't have to be perfectly balanced either, though it should be fairly stable otherwise the rat will be shy of getting on the plank in the first place) and the rat falls into the water that is only half way up the inside of the barrel. Think of a barrel's shape, and you will realize that it slopes from the middle inwards to the top. Therefore, if the rat attempts to climb the sides it is pulled back into the water by the forces of gravity. The rat, naturally (especially in this case) drowns come the finish. Old man Hembling used to have four or five of these around his old barn, especially at harvest time. He must have been pushing 80-odd when I knew him when I was a child (Yes, my dears, Auntie Chuck was once a child - and some day, on a full moonlit night, he grows into an adult! BLX! The caps-shift button' just snapped off - hold on and I'll get some superglue. You can't beat a good couple of snorts of that stug te imptuvw tyr aime oh ta koybird).

That's better, now safely back in action. Sue Isle's comments and tips on rats and the keeping of I feel, now, a little bit suspicious of. The Vic Park Cuddly Pets Shop? Really?

Lyn McConchie's piece, on the other hand, mainly Part Two in fact, had me amused and smiling, and, dammit, a little homesick. I haven't had a summer at home (ie Chateau Sildan) for must be going on 2 or 3 years now (1983 was doing a course for my LRU's, 1984 was down the hole in Northwood (hole = place of work), 1985 was South Atlantic, 1986 was Pearl Harbour and the Far East, so that takes care of those periods in my life), and I miss the cats and dog. Mick, the tabby, is quite the hard case, been no worries for the bugger to bring in small stoats, and medium sized moles, rats and rabbits - voles, shrews, and mice he has the quaint habit of just playing with until they run under some piece of awkward to move furniture. Timmy (now look, I don't name them, mater does that) is a black and white skizzo that was rescued from a flat in London. For several weeks Tim was terrified of grass (no, dearhearts, not the stuff you smoke, but the stuff you walk on), and used to hide in the garage most of the time. Now the bastard's almost feral in comparison, stops out for days, rips around the place, chases birds on the shed roof, and has a curiosity that will no doubt get him killed one of these days. But there's no way you could coop him up.

Onto other things. Ian Nichols' GRAPESHOT was, for the first part, excellent. I have never really had a taste for the 'sweets' but a nice, dry Champagne is ideal, be it for that breakfast Buck's Fizz, or the little luncheon reception. Which, I suppose, is one way of summing up his response to Ms Chopin - nice and dry, and should be taken at luncheon. It seems that the male innuendo follows from one mind to another (though I doubt I'd've used choice lines as 'I won't even



speculate on the length of her dick.'), still, it was amusing, and it was - dare one say it? (Dare, dare!) cutting to the quick. But I have to ask about the comment and, naturally, its origins - 'eat shit and die'. The main reason for this is that it appears a lot in the script for PERFECT, which had John Travolta in it (remember him? I wish I couldn't). Will Mr Nichols own up to seeing this movie, or does it go further back in the annals of English?

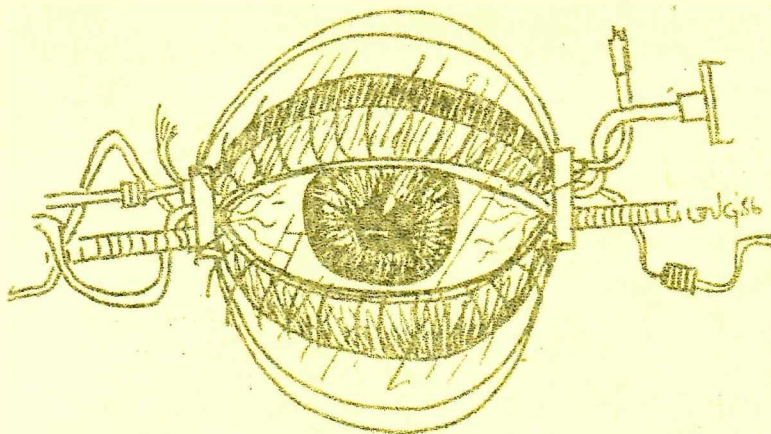
Anthony Peacey's piece on the Titanic says it all, really. The classic 'what if' kind of sensawunda which is normally called old fashioned romanticism. I, too, hope they raise it, and within my lifetime as well. Well, if I could see the first man walk on the moon, then I'm damn sure I could see the Titanic salvaged.

I WAS A TEENAGE MEDIA FREAK! Okay, and NEXT! (Loved the cartoon though, and have to admit that there are a few media fans I know that seem to act that way. Well, when I say 'I know', what I really mean is that some of my friends know mediafans that are like that. Well, when I say 'friends' they're not really friends, but 'friends', if you know what I mean? Well, to be honest with you, I don't really know them at all, in fact, I've NEVER known any mediafans at all. Honest. Really... Please believe me...)

Dave Lockett's title (MY ROOTS IN FANDOM) only really double-works if you're Oz-knowledgeable and know that a 'root' isn't just a piece of tree, or what pigs do for food. You might root around in the Summer sales, but in England you'd get arrested for it. Still, it held an interest if only to help build up the character mentally (that is from my side of it all, not from his - well, at least I hope not at any rate).

Skipping lightly (a-dumpty-dumpty-dum) on to REANIMATOR, it's odd to see that it was marked as coming out after NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET, mainly as I'm sure they came out the other way round here. The thing is, when I was in Sydney, I was able to see quite a few films that had not been released in England, and by the same token there were trailers of films I'd thought had finished their initial world-wide runs (apart from, say, the Tanjung Prisk Odeon, for example). REANIMATOR came out over here to a mix of reviews, and to two versions. The one that went on general release was cut - with the 'rape' scene mostly removed - while the uncut version was screened on a short-time basis at a couple of the more 'cultish' cinemas in London. The odd thing about it is that as far as I know/heard it has gone the reverse of most films, ie that it started out as a video only release, and then got reprocessed in to a cinema film. Personally, I loved the movie - not

only was it excellently tacky, but it was good comedy - the piece that finally wiped me out was when West finally goes for the decapitated Dr Hill (from behind) and the headless body (with back to camera) holds up the head, which is looking backwards, with a look of manic surprise on the face. And yes, the only way it becomes funny is through pushing the whole sha'bang to the limit. THE FLY, although a tender love story (which it was, don't be fooled by



all that 'Gore-spattered violence from Mr Cron.' white) makes its mark by the same style of overpushing the violence to a point where it ceases to be violence but farcical. Brundell is more 'horrific' mid-mutation than he is come the finale when the human shell is finally shucked off revealing the hybrid 'Brundellfly' - the fact that it is still (if only just) recognisable as 'human' is the worst part of it all. Bug Eyed Monsters are fine, but put in a recognisable form and all of a sudden you're going to the surreal, where everything is normal apart from something that is out of place, or unnatural.

Now, I'm going leave it there, mainly as I want to move onto TSW6. But... Where the Flying Phid did you get that leather bitch from that was fronting (if you'll pardon the expression) THE MAIL REVUE? I'm sorry, but I have to laugh at that - or are you going to tell me that one of the 'editorial team' posed for it? Can't say I knew most of the zines under review, though I will say that the reviews were curious, but informative.

Moving (rather quickly in view of that illustration mentioned above) to TSW6.

Ian Nichols' FRUIT OF THE TREE is one powerful, if subdued, piece. My father died of cancer about five years ago. I say 'about' because it never really registered - I didn't want it to register, so it never has. I came to realise that I never really knew him either as my father, or as a person. He was just there, if that makes any sense at all? It made me realise then that you



could be surrounded by friends, literally in the middle of a crowd, and still be alone. The loss of innocence isn't so much eroded, nor is it 'lost' but simply blasted away by realisation - the fact that things will not go on forever as they seemingly have done previously (even if that word 'previously' has been the sum and total of your life so far). This is getting too morbid and pseudo-philosophical for even my jaded tastes, so I shall move on.

To one Mr Warner's MUSICAL EPISTLE. And Mr Warner will get his legs well and truly slapped for calling it 'Listening With Mother' when, in fact, it was - and still is, for all I know, though I doubt it (another piece of childhood swept aside, no doubt replaced by something like Junior Computer Hacker's Corner, or somesuch) - 'LISTEN with Mother' - no 'ing' about it. It was also the start of The Woodentops (you remember, with the great, big, Spotty Dog - and more strings than a bondage magazine), because I think it was the same narrator. It wasn't the start of Andy Pandy or Bill & Ben, though both have gone down in history as being state of the art childhood material. Did you know, they had to re-film all the old stuff again, because all the originals were in black and white, which was no good for the then new toy of colour television? True. But onwards. Mention is made of Cortney Pine, who, although a fine saxophonist, is really no great shakes at blowing the horn of plenty. Before I left the UK he was doing a stint at Ronnie Scott's club in London (and ol' Whispering Bob Harris was plugging his stuff on BFBS tapes from London)(Sorry, BFBS = British Forces Broadcasting Service. They do video, and cassette tapes of music shows, and general interest programmes. Tapes are sent out to ships on long deployments to keep them vaguely in touch with the UK goings on)). If there is to be a fan's guide to gospel, then please do not forget the SWAN SILVER TONES (recorded on VeeJay in the USA, not sure who else they were licenced under elsewhere). Their cut, GET YOUR SOUL RIGHT, is one of those 'perfect' gospel songs that is accessible to both the believer and the pagan alike, with some of the finest dual harmonies that have ever graced vinyl. Thankfully, there was no mention of Simon's GRACELANDS - an album that has been praised to high heavens, and yet, when compared to the originals (one in particular, a compilation called VOICE OF SOWETO on the EARTHWORKS label) is a piss-poor commercial thing of little merit whatsoever.

Onto to LoCt in Space. I don't mean to sound impertinent, but I didn't call it a definition of SF. All I was saying, to cut the crap from the wordage, was that it would be better for all concerned if it were just labelled 'Fiction' as opposed to putting it in specific holes. Look at the works of Vonnegut (no, dear, not SIRENS OF TITAN, but the non-SFnal/less SFnal/fictional material - SLAPSTICK, OR LONESOME NO MORE - or DEAD EYE DICK, which I have just finished reading, and it is excellent, even if the ending seems a little headlong rushed for the style). And he is not the only one. They have been able to produce a blend of writing and style that fits only into the broad lines of 'fiction' as opposed to fitting neatly into specific and tight worn bands (such as SF, which splits into Hard SF, etcetera - out of interest, what the hell is 'Soft SF'?) Ditch your historicals - er, sorry, 'historicals' - and read WINTER'S TALE. You'll be thankful that you did.

On a more serious note (ah, there are so many silly comments that I could insert here that one is purely spoilt for choice) my comments about 'one day it will come to a point that you'll move off and do things by yourselves...' was not meant to imply a breaking of personal relationships, but that you may well find yourself doing special little one-editor zines and projects. It certainly wasn't meant to imply that any personal relationships formed were destined to fail - and I for one hope that they continue to flourish as they have done in the past. Again, there was no intention of 'flushing out hidden secrets', but I do know what Michelle means about the need for identity. To some I am known by one name, to fandom I am known by another, and both of them are not by given names. There are times when I just like to get away from everything, and find that different names help not only to add an air of informality, but also set up barriers that keep things separate and in their rightful places.

Right, I've got to be off and post this bloody thing. Once again, apologies for not being able to do something about Joey - but you, of all people, should know how annoying little joeys can be, eh? And I look forward to seeing the next TSW. Obviously I can't be British, because I like it. Oh, yes, and I also like TSW as well...

-----  
THE SPACE WASTREL SUPPORTS AND ENCOURAGES:

THE DOOR FOR DUFF

ROELOF GOUDRIAAN FOR GUFF

MELBOURNE FOR NATCON, SOMETIME?

PERTH IN 1994  
-----



ZINIC PHILOSOPHY

VINCE CLARKE - Zines with three editors? It seems logical, but we haven't found it all that easy: 22/2/1987 Pam put an article in PULP #1 to which she didn't put an editorial disclaimer ("these opinions are the contributors...") and raised quite a few heckles: in #3 Joe Nicholes tears into Aussie fanzines, but then, everyone knows Joe. Our backgrounds are very different - Pam was a Friend Of Someone Who Went To A Con and got fascinated by fans and fanzines: Rob is interested in the structure and history of fandom, Avedon is up-to-date New York in '87. Me, I fanned right through the Fannish Fifties before gaffeting for 20 years or so, so my fannish values have been shaped by that decade. It may sound easy, also, as we all live in London, but I'm south of the Thames and the other three North. If Rob and Avedon want to visit from all of six miles away, they have to take two buses to their bank of the Thames (half-hour), cross by ferry or tunnel (another fifteen mins, minimum) and get another bus (and another ten minutes walk) to me - they're lucky if they make it in less than 2 hours, with waiting around for buses, etc.

And now... now we have achieved a real first... PULP #4 has been stolen... Pam had 20-odd pages in a computer at her office, and, foolish fan, hadn't 'saved' any of it. It was all on disc. So when thieves broke in over night, they took two computers and all the discs... Pam is trying to retrieve the originals and go through the tedious business of re-typing, but I feel she thinks the project is unlucky for her and says that she won't be doing any more. Unless we get someone else in London (which seems very unlikely) to come with us, we'll still split PULP up but will be doing it quarterly, thereby keeping to two per year each. Sheer economics keeps us from doing more - I'm one of the 3,000,000 unemployed, and R&A are setting up a new home shortly, plus the fact that Avedon has only been employed at intervals.

Still, these are little local difficulties; we have to look at the overall situation. Which is a little grim for fanzines. Ok for you in the wide open wastes: there are now a dozen conventions within a few hours travel for any fan in this country, consequently although the fanzine producers, loccers and readers number about 200, convention fans who wouldn't know a fanzine if you hit them over the head with one, number about 400. So our old originals are still special cases - and becoming more special. And with the Worldcon coming up... you know that ancient Chinese curse - "May you live in interesting times"? That's us.

MARK: I suppose that if the editors of TSW were in the habit of holding editorial meetings, it would only take us about six hours door to door to get together. But the airfares would be more expensive than producing an issue of TSW (given the size of this issue, that's saying something!) and I've never felt the greatest after a trans-continental flight. So I suppose we'll have to manage with a photocopier, the Post Office and a large telephone bill.

It is difficult though, letters and telephone calls can't replace being able to sit down at a table and discuss what the next issue will look like... which is why Jules is currently listed as a Publisher rather than an Editor. He is planning an extended stay in Melbourne between Kinkon (Easter) and Conviction (Queens Birthday Weekend) which will total up to eight to ten weeks. This should allow time for the production of at least one jointly edited TSW.

Cost is also, unfortunately, becoming a prohibitive factor for us in the production of TSW. Picking up thirty tubes of ink, several boxes of stencils and a second gestetner for \$100 still doesn't get us past the expensive hurdles of paper and postage. And then there is the rumour, currently doing the rounds in the printing industry, about how production of duplicating paper is soon to cease in Australia - and we certainly can't afford to go to offset printing or photocopying.



Atton



LLOYD PENNEY - I would suggest the publishing of constructive criticism in future issues, which  
18/7/1987 would exclude abuse, such as the postcard from Pimlico. Who is he, anyway?

DAVE LUCKETT - And speaking of errors and insult, wasn't that a priceless postcard from J. Nicholas,  
1987 and weren't you inspired to reproduce it facsimile? Anyone who can use the word  
'pompous' about Mr Warner's piece is floundering pitifully and it doesn't need me to  
put the boots in further. 'Scabrous' was more the mark - but then, Mr Warner meant it to be.  
Joseph has had such a roasting from Australian 'zines lately that even he must be feeling somewhat  
tenderised by now, poor fellow. Still, those who live by the printed denunciation...

BRIAN EARL BROWN - I'd like Joseph to supply the name of the one fan he knows who throws away  
23/6/1987 Australian fanzines unopened. This sounds suspiciously like what Ed Woods (50s,  
US, Sercon fan) said at Suncon (Worldcon 1977) about throwing away issues of  
Hyphen, Walt Willis' inestimable fanzine, unopened. Does Joseph really know someone who throws away  
fanzines unopened, or is he just ripping off a good story? (Like Marc Ortlieb in TSW6, I don't know  
or understand where the bile comes from in Joseph's loce. By all personal appearances he appears to  
be a mild-mannered and likeable fellow. What causes such a Jekyll & Hyde transformation?)

RICHARD BRANDT - Only comment on the FIN locs is in response to Joseph Nicholas, oddly enough. What  
1987 he says about "most Australian fanzines" could in fact be applied to all fanzines,  
so isn't it a bit beside the point? (Your note on him trashing Oz zines and then  
citing half of those extant as worthwhile, is right on the dollar.) Joseph's story of the fan who  
throws away his zines unread reminds me of Victor Gonzales' syllogism that, in effect, "HOLIER THAN  
THOU can't be any good or else I'd bother reading it... "

MIKE GLICKSOHN - Good solid thinking by Skel but nothing here that's particularly new or  
21/7/1987 innovative. I share Paul's belief that the proper study of fankind is fan (and  
while I'm being Pope-ular I must point out to M<sup>2</sup> that the old saying deals with "a  
little learning" not "a little knowledge" as those with a little knowledge of Pope will attest) and  
he and I have similar philosophies about fanzine reviews. The main difference, though, is that he  
still writes them and I don't so I escape the considerable work and effort that bringing a coherent  
philosophy of fanzines to reviewing entails. Skel has put his time and effort where his mouth is,  
though, and he deserves a great deal more credit than he gets in today's fandom. If all the people  
who appreciate Paul's writing talents took the time to remember him when Hugo nomination time came  
round the very least we ought to be able to do is get the guy a long overdue nomination. Surely he  
deserves at least that much?

While I think it's bizarre that Joseph would waste his time sending you a postcard  
telling you he finds you too dull to read instead of asking him to be taken off the mailing list, I  
can't agree with Dave Collins that the recipient of a fanzine owes its editor some sort of  
response. I get dozens of unrequested fanzines in the mail and I try to respond to as many of them  
as I can but I lack the time, the money and the inclination to answer everything I get. When you  
mail out a fanzine you're taking a gamble that the person who receives it will find it worth  
replying to. As I see it, it's up to the person doing the mailing to decide when to stop sending  
out issues that aren't getting a response. If a fan is polite enough to write and tell you not to  
send any more fanzines that's a bonus, but the impetus must be on the sender, not the receiver. The  
fanned is essentially saying, "Here I am; would you like to communicate?" and silence is certainly an  
acceptable way of responding, "No."

While it would be invalid to say, "Australian fanzines are all bad because they  
come from Australia," it is not necessarily invalid to state, "I have never enjoyed an Australian  
fanzine." The former is improper logic; the latter is a personal opinion and may be disagreed with  
but it cannot be argued that it is false. I myself find that by and large I don't enjoy as many  
Australian fanzines as much as I enjoy British and American fanzines but I make this judgement on  
what the fanzines contain and how they deal with that material, not on where they're mailed from.  
It may upset some Australian fans to know that their fanzines (which they themselves may thoroughly  
enjoy) aren't too well received in other areas of the world but it's a fact that you're going to  
have to come to terms with. And if there's someone out there who deep sixes Australian fanzines  
unread, then don't send that person your fanzine. He's the jerk, not you. Hell, Ed Wood used to  
trash HYPHEN unopened and who would you rather have at your party, Ed Wood or Walt Willis?

Merck: Ed Who? And while we're on the subject of 'who is he anyway?', the turn of the page leads us  
inexorably to another postcard from our correspondent in Pimlico...



JOSEPH NICHOLAS - The April 1987 issue of ISK arrived yesterday. I notice that towards the bottom of the first page of his article, Paul Skelton claims that I annotate THYME's address labels with the remark, "Another boring Australian fanzine."

This, however, is a complete fabrication. I have never done any such thing. What's more, he knows it's a complete fabrication and that I have never done any such thing.

His motives for crediting this for concocting this lie are a mystery to me. (Malice? Hatred? Some sort of revenge?) Perhaps in his next letter he will provide us with an explanation - of both his reasons and of what he hoped to gain from the lie.

SKEL (TO JN) - Sherlock Holmes apparently I'm not. I had assumed the annotation were yours. You say they aren't. Fine, I will point this out in my next letter to Michelle and ask her to ensure that this information is published.

We all make assumptions. Sometimes, as in this instance, they appear to lead to an honest mistake, and when that appears to be the case I am perfectly willing to acknowledge the fact. I still feel that my assumption was perfectly reasonable and justifiable for the following reasons:-

1. The annotations were hand-written afterthoughts.
2. The zines were mailed from around your area.
3. You are credited as the UK agent.
4. The annotations expressed sentiments that you have publicly expressed (ie. Boring Australian Fanzines) on more than one occasion.
5. The handwriting, from memory, was very similar to yours.

That's my assumptions taken care of. Now for your assumptions. Frankly I find these offensive. For you to suggest that I am a deliberate liar, that I felt a need to construct a deliberate lie, to purvey a fabrication, knowingly, is nothing less than fucking shitty. I see no way you could make such a claim without the assumption that I was motivated by malice (or abject stupidity), neither of which assumptions could possibly be justified by anything I've ever said, done or written.

Your assumptions I accept were also an honest mistake. The difference is that mine do not reveal a base mistrust of my fellow man. There was no censure stated or implied in my remarks, only a comment without a value judgement.

I am frankly amazed that, as UK agent for THYME you should have failed to notice that the editors (presumably) are in the occasional habit of annotating copies of their zine or, that noticing this you should fail to credit the possibility of a misunderstanding on my part.

A copy of this letter, of your postcard to which it responds, and annotated THYME covers, goes also to Michelle (please make the appropriate announcement in the next ISW, Michelle). I trust that this will conclude matters, and that I won't have to hear from you again.

JOSEPH NICHOLAS - I have a copy of a letter from Paul Skelton in response to my recent postcard to him about THYME allegations, in which he explains his reasons for making them in the first place - before, as ever, losing his temper with me and laying counter-charges of his own. (For the past four or five years, it seems that the merest mention of my name drives him into paroxysms of rage, I have no idea why.) I am happy to accept his explanations but can't help noticing the contradictions within them - for example, if he makes allowance, as he says he does, for the fact that the editors themselves annotate the mailing labels, why then assume that the particular annotation at the centre of this exchange was mine? To say that because it expressed sentiments similar to mine, and that because the handwriting in question resembled his memory of what mine looked like, the annotation must therefore be mine really isn't good enough. Nevertheless - apart from sending him a postcard similar to this - I have heeded his desire never to hear from me again and deleted him from my address book.

MICHELLE: Well, Joseph, we can't understand why the mere mention of your name would drive Skel into paroxysms of rage either...





MARK LONEY (TO JN & SKEL) - As your letter and postcard arrived pretty much simultaneously, I  
18/6/1987 thought it would be best to write a simultaneous reply. Basically I think we owe you both an apology, so bear with me while I explain. When Skel's original letter arrived with its claim that Joseph annotated the UK copies of THYME, we showed it to Roger Weddall: at that stage a co-editor of THYME and co-resident here at 2 Rogers Street. A lot was said about this at the time but at no stage did Roger indicate in any way what was obvious as soon as we saw the photocopies Skel more recently provided: and that was that the annotations were obviously in his (Roger's) handwriting. As Roger no longer edits THYME and isn't exactly resident at 2 Rogers Street anymore (he pays rent and has a room but hasn't slept or lived here for two months or so) we haven't really had a chance to talk to him about it. He did leave a note though. It read:

Cough. Ahem. Yes, it were myself what wrote said remarks. (THYME) #32 came out, oh, January '84; I don't know when the other two copies were produced, along with annotations. Ho ho ho, well... it's probably about time that we started stirring the Brits up, rather than the other way around. Anyway, 'mea culpa' - alas!

So we're not very happy. If Roger's memory had been working a few months ago we would have deleted Skel's original comment or corrected it with an editorial interpolation. So, Joseph, our apologies for printing in good faith a comment about you that has turned out to be untrue. And Skel, our apologies for letting an honest mistake of yours go to print when, by all rights, it shouldn't have.

WALT WILLIS - Many thanks for ISW6. I am deputed to tell you that you have been inducted into a  
18/5/1987 secret international organisation, known to its members as cosa nostril. It is confined to those fans up whose nose Joe Nicholas has got. Further instructions will reach you in a mysterious way. Meanwhile, you are entitled to put CN after your names. Carry on sneezing.

The letter section was great, and I particularly liked John Berry's letter for its refreshing innocence, Heaven help him. I can just imagine him as the subject of one of those old Batman cartoons---THE FAN WHO SAID WOMEN WERE SEX OBJECTS IN A MODERN FANZINE.

---

#### "WEIRD" MEDIA FANS

---

BEV CLARK - Marilyn Pride is right about the way we "weird" media fans (some, anyway) believe  
13/9/1987 Deckard may be a replicant. I've probably read the same earlier version of the script she has. I didn't think that it was overt that Deckard was a replicant, but it was strongly implied. And the implication was responsible for the much stronger ending in that version, in which Deckard fulfills the instructions given him to destroy all the replicants from the batch that "went bad": he kills the Sean Young character -- and then himself. One reason I was so disappointed in the film on the screen was that this earlier version was so much stronger and more internally consistent than the final film. I believe the sappy ending of the actual film was tacked on by order of the distributing studio, not because the filmmakers couldn't accept the harsher earlier ending -- the studio thought the audience had to have a happy ending. I've also read that the final sequence is footage originally shot for the Kubrick film THE SHINING!

However, I agree with Tim Reddan's point that in the film the replicants are shown to be -- or at least come across as -- better than the humans. I'm not sure if this is because we're asked to empathise with the plight of replicant's or because Rutger Hauer has so much more screen presence than Harrison Ford that his replicant character (and by association the other replicants) become the focus of audience attention. In the scenes in which Hauer and Ford are together, it's certainly Hauer that draws the audience's attention.

JACK HERMAN - A recent LAN'S LANTERN had more on the theory that Deckard (in the film) was a  
1987 replicant. Evidence evinced included: Deckard's obsession with photos and pictures of the past parallel the replicants; Rachel's question to him, "Have you ever taken the (Voight-Kampff) test yourself?"; Deckard's self-questioning, "Replicants aren't supposed to have feelings - but neither are Bladerunners."; after retiring Zhora, he says, "There it is again. Feeling, for a replicant - for Rachel."; Deckard's reaction to shooting the replicant is identical to Rachel's after shooting Leon; the esse with which he goes off with Rachel at the end.

MARK: People interested in the Bladerunner 'experience' are invited to Move to Melbourne - Richmond, in fact - where daily helicopter surveillance in the name of crowd and traffic control has become a noisy reality. Anybody out there got a few surface to air missiles they can spare?

---



THAT COVER!

GLEN CRAWFORD - A little after 9am, the office doors are open, pity my eyes aren't as well. The computer sings its monotonous dirge behind my office wall, the telephones have already started their continual demands to be picked up and held closely, and I am still remembering the feelings of sleep, my skin enjoying the crisp clean sheets, my head still deep within the folds of my little pillow, my brain in neutral. All around me, the office and its staff are busily engaged in the duties of early morning, while my desk still hides beneath piles of yesterday's (and probably the day before's) paperwork, silently screaming at me to get my head into gear and do something. I just cannot seem to get started this morning, so I sit, vegetating, idly shuffling a pile of long overdue tasks into the senseless order of priority.

Suddenly a familiar sound interrupts my torpor. I gaze into the next office, half expecting to see my secretary, Lyn, busily employed, but I soon remember that Lyn left three days ago, and the Boss' wife has temporarily taken over her position. At this very moment, she is busily engaged disembowelling dozens of letters with a nasty looking metal opener, but my reverie is suddenly shattered as I pierce the fog surrounding my brain sufficiently to see what is next on the pile awaiting the knife... It's unmistakably a fanzine, and my very almighty, very conservative, Sunday School teaching Boss' wife is about to pierce its heart with a letter opener!

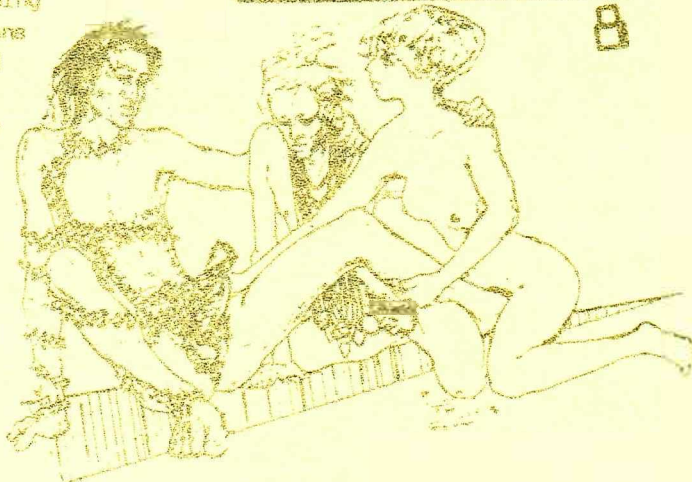
Shaking off my lethargy in an instant, I am on my feet and in the next office before anyone has a chance to even blink, and putting on a totally cool attitude which belies my pounding heart, I casually rescue the folded blue and yellow bundle from her clenched fingers and poised knife, just as it is about to descend upon the fragile wrapper of the zine. I shakily return to my desk, the prize tightly clutched in my chest and, sitting down, I gingerly remove the wrapper ... and expose the cover of IS&B to the harsh light of day.

"Oh shit, that was close!" I whisper to myself, and carefully hide the bloody thing until I can get it out into my car and safely home.

Thanks for waking me up that morning folks!

One other interesting aside regarding that cover... Up until now I have met very few fans indeed, so all I have are some fleeting images and a lot of 'mental' pictures of the people I correspond with. I am, of course, totally unaware whether these 'interesting' drawings are in any way accurate impressions of yourselves or not, but until I find out in reality what you all look like, I have some unusual 'mental' pictures of you three to say the least!

the Space Wastrel



MARK: Truth be known, the cover for IS&B is, in fact, the illustration of a scene from DHALGREN. Joan Henke-Woods tells us that Samuel Delany has his own personal copy. The female, however, does bear a slight resemblance to Michelle. As for myself - well, modesty prevents...

BRUCE GRENVILLE - I was quite stunned by the vivid cover of IS&B; wow! What a graphic turnon that is! Despite my predilection for radical publishing, I doubt that in your position

I would have opted to use it as a cover illu and I admire your courage in doing so. I am busy trying to get my zine closed down by the regime in other ways than that, but I will be glad to contribute to your Defence Fund when the Victoria Government busts you for obscene art or whatever that "crime" is in your island!

ERIC LINDSAY - I'm sure Alicia Austin did a more imaginative cover for Mike Glicksohn once, with seemingly innumerable people intertwined. And he didn't even have a publishing collective (probably meant to depict a typical convention, rather than editorial activities).

I have to admit I was highly bemused by reading backwards through the zine. Maybe I'll simply restaple it. Enjoyed the con report, but I'm rather glad I didn't try to get to the UK. Of course, being bemused is my own fault, since I read it from back to front. It still hung together remarkably well. Page numbers, page numbers would be a good idea. I once used page numbers. Didn't make anything clearer, but it helps make things look more organised. Unless you simply add them at random.



JENNY BLACKFORD - The Space Wastrel is getting better and better: keep it up, people. (Is that the  
20/12/1987 secret significance of the amazing cover illo on the last issue? Pornography as sympathetic magic?)

Lucy Sussex's trip report contains a cryptic "most unusual introduction award".  
"Bill Gibson, this is the person you called a four-eyed wimp. Luckily he didn't seem to mind much."  
A little amplification seems in order for those not present at this auspicious event. Lucy had  
walked past Russell, Janine and me in our famous "almost horizontal" interview with Bill Gibson. I  
introduced her thus: "Bill, this is Lucy. She's the one who called you a four-eyed wimp."  
(Referring to Lucy's as yet unpublished Gibson review in The Metaphysical Review). Far from not  
minding, Bill was, to all outward appearances, charmed.

CATHY KERRIGAN - Now that you've become R-rated, I shall have to stop reading you on the tram. I  
14/12/1987 find myself confused by Mr Loney's, Mr Nichols' and Ms Susan Margaret's definition  
of "structural analysis". They appear to have taken the "deep" and "surface  
structure" of semiotics and linguistics and applied it (inaccurately I feel) to a discussion of the  
deep and surface philosophies of the text. Such inaccuracies are confusing to the reader who is not  
familiar with the fine distinctions of literary terminology and obscure what is being said.

MARK: I don't really know where to start when confronted by a postcard of comment that claims  
'inaccurate' use of terminology in an article and then admits that it is all too 'confusing'  
anyway. I might as well begin by asking you where the terms 'deep and surface philosophies'  
come from? Unaware of their use in semiotic and structurally based literary analysis, I think  
it is best to say that I thought Susan Margaret's article was crystal clear and consistent  
throughout in its use of terminology. If you still think that we're all sinners on the verge  
of heresy, a more detailed letter or short article would be considered for the next ISW.

IAN GUNN - Congratulations on ISW8. I was particularly impressed by the standard of illustration  
12/1987 and, in particular, Tom Candy's ROOM PARTY cartoon on Page 10. It only serves to confirm  
a theory I've had for some time - if you introduce a pair of underpants to a group of  
people at a party, eventually someone will place them on their head. Perhaps it's something to do  
with a subconscious desire to return to the womb? I don't know, but I'm sure more qualified people  
than I could develop some sort of thesis around this phenomenon. Try it next time you're at a  
party. Hurl a pair of knickers into the room and see what happens.

MARK: Perhaps we could experiment at Kinkon?

DRAIG HILTON - As for ISW6, I found Sue Thomason's feedback on the "Sercon" cover most welcome. Now  
7/4/1987 I have a gripe, and this is neither the first time nor the last time it will be  
voiced, but the sort of critical comment that Sue offered, even as a one-liner, is  
exceedingly sparse in fanzines. Whereas folks will write in enthusiastically for or against  
someones written contribution, with views regarding the content, ideas or style of the work, very  
few will pay a corresponding interest in an illustration or cartoon. I feel very strongly about  
this, because artwork can convey as sophisticated a statement as can prose. (On the other hand I  
have seen abundant examples from both camps each as vacuous as the other.) But apart from the  
"liked that" brigade, it's a rare sight to come across evidence that even a few people are deriving  
from the work the stimulus of the content, ideas and style that I and so many other artists labour  
to put into it.

And that's why I appreciated Sue's comments. It's nice to have one's panel drawing  
experiment acknowledged. I was rather pleased with it, myself. (For an example of mastery in the  
field, chase up the Valerian Spatiotemporal Agent series by J.C. Mezières and P. Christin (Hodder  
Dargaud)). There's as much mileage in artwork criticism as... well just see Dave Luckett's piece  
on page 13 (of ISW6). Case in point, if a touch morbid.

---

#### A PUBLIC APOLOGY

---

TIM REDDAN - Just a short note before nicking off over the waves for Conspiracy. Please publish a  
9/1987 public apology for my rude and tasteless behaviour towards Lucy Huntzinger at Capcon.  
I don't wish to recount my drunken statement to her when she innocently asked me for an  
autograph but suffice it to say that I was out of line (and not sober enough to rectify my blunder  
there and then). I am truly sorry that I may have made an otherwise pleasant trip to Australia less  
so.

---



## OF POLITICS &amp; OTHER NEWS

JONATHAN PALFREY - It's certainly true that some Americans show an irritating (and not obviously justified) complacency about the merits of their own political and economic system, and I think this is mainly what Michelle is reacting against in her reply to Ed Ron (TSW7 Page 34). The evidence, such as it is, suggests that socialism and capitalism can both be made to work after a fashion. That is, governments supposedly representing those ideologies have remained in power in their respective countries for decades, and the countries have not disintegrated. However, neither system, as practised, seems to work very well.

Surely, everyone who argues politics believes that his own pet system has never been properly tried, while the main rival systems have been tried many times and have obviously failed. "Just put me in charge," he pleads, "and I'll show you how to make my system work. Utopia shall come at last!" The only obvious conclusion to draw from the world's experience is that every political system tried so far has turned in a pretty dismal performance, if you compare the state of its citizens with that with which they might enjoy in a hypothetical ideal world.

I presently regard myself as a libertarian; and I'm fairly confident that my pet system has never been tried at all. One shouldn't place very much trust in an untried system; but at least it hasn't been sullied by failure. To me, one aspect of liberty is political liberty. I have no interest in forcing socialists to abandon socialism, indeed I'd be happy to see them give it a more thorough trial than it's had so far. But I do think that political systems, like other dangerous experiments, should be tried out on volunteers.

The way to do this is by decentralism. If Britain, for example, were to be split in half, the northern half would vote socialist and the southern half would vote capitalist. So why not let them? Split the country, let the two halves go their own preferred routes, and surely people will be much happier, and the two systems will each get a more thorough trial. What's more, southern socialists can migrate north and northern capitalists can migrate south; without having to go very far, and without having to learn a new language. And yet, in the real world, people obstinately continue trying to impose their respective ideologies on each other. No wonder there is war.

Michelle: "Any system where few gain at the expense of many doesn't work AS FAR AS I AM CONCERNED." To me, this is an accurate description of socialism. My interpretation of the available evidence is that the economic effects of socialism significantly depress the living standards of the great majority of people in order to deliver fairly modest benefits to a small minority at the bottom of the economic pile. Sure, the latter is a worthy enough achievement; but it's bought at excessive cost - in terms of material living standards, and in terms of liberty. The people who might benefit from socialism could be given the equivalent benefits at far less cost in a free society, if the other people in that society had the will to do it. If they don't have the will to do it, they won't vote socialist either.

(The above paragraph, in particular, represents my opinion only, which I'm not trying to pass off as fact. I could preface each sentence with, "In my humble opinion...", but it becomes excessively wordy to do this sort of thing. Dogmatic statements of opinion are wrong in principle, but the language seems better adapted to them. In this, as in many other ways, we're ill served by language.)

As for Italian politics, I've been here a year and a third and haven't got very interested so far. The politicians are uninspiring, and the electoral system tends not to





produce dramatic swings in power. Nor did the previous government seem to do anything very interesting, although the general trend is away from socialism. The Socialist Party seems to be quite popular because it's not really very socialist - and because it had quite a successful alliance with the Christian Democrats, the leading capitalist party.

I don't describe myself as a capitalist. It strikes me as a rather unattractive word, which seems to describe someone preoccupied with money. If I am a capitalist, I'm not very successful at it. In practice, socialists seem to be as preoccupied with money as capitalists, though their preferred methods of getting hold of it differ. As David Friedman would say, capitalists want to earn it, socialists want to steal it. However, socialists have at least had the sense to find themselves an innocuous and even pleasant-sounding label - socialist looks as though it should be related to sociable, and could mean almost anything. In fact, these days it often seems that it does mean almost anything.

MICHELLE: OK, children, time for you all to tell me what you think socialism is. A major premise of most forms of socialism is not only that all should earn but all should work equally, irrespective of background or ability.

Your interpretation of the available economic evidence suggests to me that you are talking about the Eastern Bloc and that you haven't checked out economic realities as they were under the Czars or as they are in other economically depressed parts of the world (natural resources do play a part in these things).

DAVID PALTER - A disagreement arises on Page 34 (TSW7) between Ed Rom and Michelle concerning the 18/8/1987 relative merits of capitalism versus socialism. It might be worthwhile to consider that every purely capitalist society has found it necessary to introduce elements of socialism, and every purely socialist system has found it necessary to introduce elements of capitalism. A much more complex question is, what proportion these elements should be mixed in for optimum results. That one I cannot dispose of so quickly.

Brian Earl Brown makes a very interesting observation, that the chief weakness of STARSHIP TROOPERS is that it assumes a constant wartime footing. It's quite true that Heinlein has built up an elaborate social structure which just would not be functional in times of peace. However, in an SF novel one can hypothesize any future one wishes to hypothesize. Humanity may be engaged in vast interstellar wars in the future, either with hostile aliens or with opposed human factions. There may be a point in devising a society specially adapted to wartime conditions. Perhaps in the event of peace, such a society would undertake suitable reorganization. To me, this is the legitimate field for SFnal speculation.

On the whole I am not offended by Heinlein's politics, but in his later novels some of his dialogue is unendurably cute. This is his true failing as a writer. And even that can be forgiven. He is still a great writer.

SUSAN MARGARET - It's easy to regard Robert Heinlein as "superbly exciting" if you can identify 1987 personally with the Elite - the active men who do the shooting (and everything else). But if you identify with the ones who get to stand on the sidelines having sex when the men want it and not much of anything else, or if you're strange enough to believe that the world is not a better place when everyone (the men) can arbitrarily gun down those not of the Elite, then a glitch develops in the mechanism that carries you along with the action.

Similarly, it's easy to feel nostalgia for the fandom of twenty years ago if you were part of it or can identify with those who were. But if you're part of a group which was practically unrepresented in the fandom of twenty years ago, and which was actively discouraged from being part of that group by its members, then it's pretty easy to see nostalgia for those days as an invitation to disappear. The remark about there being "so much feminism" in fanzines (and oh, if one could read about feminism in the newspapers!) is only icing on the cake - and is there anyone so naive they don't realise the difference between being sexually desirable and being a sex object?

I note with interest Nature's concern that a man shouldn't have a nose bleed or a headache every time he has sexual intercourse. How thoughtful of Nature to "create women as sexually desirable" so as to ensure that sex is "physically and emotionally exciting for both parties" - or did I miss something somewhere? So far, it seems to me, we have the heterosexual men and the lesbians well taken care of, and the rest of us get to look at the ceiling and think of England.



As for fandom's collective science background now as opposed to twenty years ago, I would say that:

1. More of us have actually studied science as opposed to reading about it in popular journals
2. We collectively have a grounding in more kinds of science than formerly, and
3. Many of us have a greater awareness of the formidable resources and manpower already spent on devising ways to utterly destroy the planet, so that we feel less need to expend our leisure time on another idiot scheme to do the same.

This all sounds fairly fierce, I realize. Try imagining the reaction you would have to blatantly racist remarks, applied to you or to a close friend. Also, the above-mentioned invitation to disappear: as noted elsewhere in the loc column, the next generation of fandom is taking that invitation. Can science fiction fans keep their self-respect if they become stuck in the past?

JEANNE MEALY - John Berry brings up an interesting point -- "Women are sex objects"

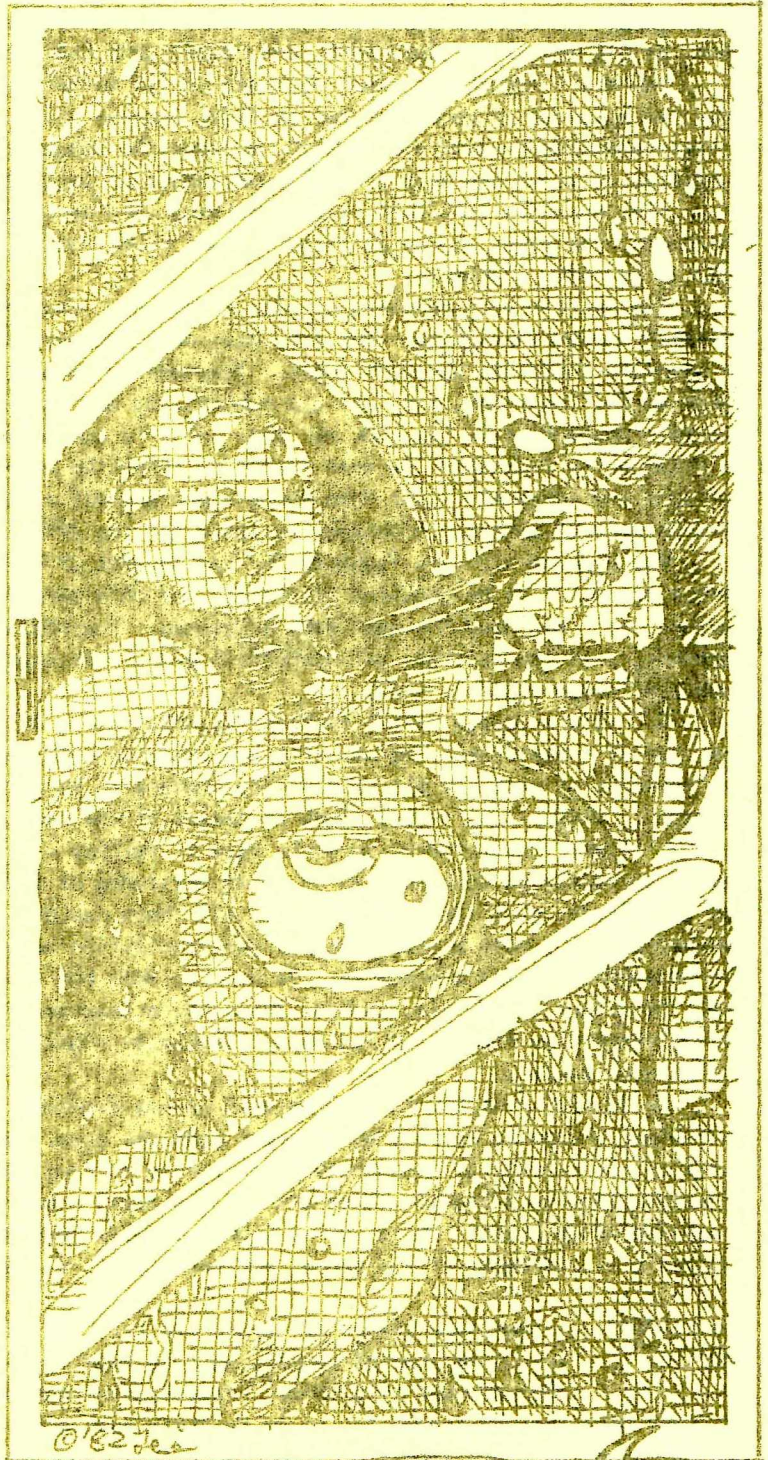
-- but forgets that not all people are decent-minded enough to include, "and have choices about who they consort with." Some folks think "women = sex", and that's it. Forget the feelings, the intellect -- go for the body, the object. I am not just an object, just as men aren't. (People watching is a gray area -- mere appreciation of physical appearance doesn't hurt anyone until someone assumes availability on that basis alone.)

JOY HIBBERT - Is Ed Rom really stupid enough to believe that Heinlein is about

freedom and individualism? Hasn't he read THE CAT WHO WALKS THROUGH WALLS, in which it is more clear than it ever was before that Heinlein defines "freedom" as "the freedom to agree with Heinlein", in his interaction with the boy he picks up in the protagonist's wife's apartment? But then, to the right wing, which Rom obviously belongs to, there is no freedom except to think alike. And to be persecuted if you won't.

Interesting bit about the voters being retired military men, but Rom is assuming that voting is something that makes a difference. It would be very Heinleinish for people to be able to vote but the military running things really, because the voters don't make the right decisions.

Indoctrination works if it's done properly, and on people who are willing to give it a chance.



©'82 Jea

IT'LL DO YOU NO GOOD AT ALL, MY DEAR, TO BE STUBBORN ABOUT THIS-- NO ONE CAN HEAR US WITH THE SHOWER RUNNING -- NOW WHERE IS THE SHOWER MASSAGER??!!



Since there are no socialist countries, how can Rom know how repressive or inferior they are? If he means that poor state capitalist countries are not the best place to be (and that's what his sort usually mean when they rant about socialism/communism), then I would have to agree with him.

Male bonding works because society works at it; or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that female bonding doesn't work because society tells women from infancy that other women are enemies and never to be trusted. Thus in a whole-heartedly military society (as opposed to ours, where women are used as an excuse for warfare but not generally expected to participate) women would bond, or men and women would bond, and could fight together.

You can't expect men whose business is war to behave like university intellectuals, but surely they are supposed to bond together to fight someone else? Thus, why shouldn't they behave in a civilised manner towards each other? Because the dehumanisation process soldiers (etc) are subjected to makes any sort of civilised behaviour impossible.

Yes, when the left don't like something they have to decide whether it is racist, sexist, or whatever. The right, being in favour of all these things, merely chants that anything they don't like is Marxist. Pathetic.

The problem with Heinlein's women is not that they are in any objective way inferior to Heinlein's male characters. But they have no existence independent of their man (or men), they have no opinions their men wouldn't share. They see no possible lifestyle except as a walking uterus and punchbag for their man, they are all masochists, and they all talk with Heinlein's voice (most of his male characters do too, but not all, and it's not so obvious with a male character). Why can't he write a few lesbians? Or even frigid or infertile women? Women are diverse in their intellect, opinions and sexuality - but Heinlein's women are all interchangeable except for age, and he invents various bits of medical technology to stave off the effects of menopause for ever.

The problem with men fighting for the benefit of women is (a) they never ask us first (b) they always expect us to be grateful afterwards (c) this involves terrorising other countries' women because their men have the same sick attitudes. And they never admit it. It's in Australia, as I remember, that the military get hysterical every year when a group of women try to lay a wreath "in memory of women raped in war".

Ok, it's a fairly normal reaction to drool etc., at people you fancy. But while to me it's just one of those things, to men it's something to talk about, to brag about. I often think that men never fancy women at all, but merely pretend to as part of male bonding, to prove that they're straight. While I can feel a flash of desire at the sight of a good looking (my definition) woman or man, it would never occur to me to take it further - because I know damned well that I would almost certainly be disappointed by their attitudes or intellect when I got to know them. But to men like Bruno, this flash of desire is all there can be, deeper relationships are either boring or non-existent. Surely his motives for differentiation between girls and women are obvious? Women are characters, girls are bodies. To have to face the fact that females have character, opinions, etc., is offputting to him, thus he describes attractive ones as girls. Females, to him, should be merely attractive bodies for his use or fantasies - girls would giggle and submit, women might say no, or even resist.

It is true that Heinlein is careful in his construction of the grosser elements of some of his societies, though in general they appear much the same. What he doesn't do is examine the basic mores of our society as he perceives it, before putting them in his stories. Where is the story where marriage is illegal? Where sex is considered a bad thing? Where homosexuality is the norm? Where socialism works? Where war is unknown? Pick your own examples. Heinlein shows up well against the true hacks of our genre, but not well at all against the real society-builders.

JOY HIBBERT - I sometimes wonder if anyone has read THE FEMALE MAN. Brian Earl Brown is the latest 7/5/1987 in a long line of people, usually male, who seem to have looked at the title and decided what it's about. "Aggressive, domineering and hate men", well, when I read it, they were ordinary women trying to do their best after all their men were wiped out in a plague, and learning, as women inevitably would in that situation, that they're better off without. Perhaps there are two versions of the book, and I've only read the realistic one? Or more likely, to the likes of Brown, any women having the temerity to survive in that situation must be aggressive etc because they're woman-humans, not the mindless tarts that pass for the epitome of womanhood in our society.

Having said that, it's true that there's a book of Vance's, name forgotten, with a very interesting look at sex roles. The males of the society have a religion that hates women and is based on drugs which relieve the need for sexual contact, the females are supposed to raise the money to keep the society going by prostitution with passing travellers, the children of such unions being the society's next generation.





John Berry's got things the wrong way around. Women are not sex objects, women were designed by nature or whatever, to have and feed children. Because this design caused a few minor differences between men and women (breasts, a defective walk caused by the necessarily larger pelvic girdle) men learned to fetishise these differences and to see them as necessarily attractive. If it was in the interests of female fecundity that women be cubic blobs of protoplasm, that's what they'd be, and men would have learned to find it attractive. Also bear in mind that our species is the only one in which the male has a potentially higher sex drive and thus determines what sexual activity should take place. In other species, with their oestrus cycle, fertile females wear out the males of their choice, who spend the non-fertile part of the cycle either with other females or recovering. Men are a brief and easily manipulated part of the reproductive process. The important part of the process is the child, not the sperm donor.

Also, we are at a stage in our development where female fecundity is a menace rather than a

blessing. If we can put men on the moon etc., surely our males could get over this instinctive response to the female body, and learn that women have minds and everything else men have (though only a small, sensitive, wobbly bit).

MARK: The "book of Vance's" is in fact the Durdane trilogy comprising of THE ANOME, THE ASUTRA and THE BRAVE FREE MEN. Not only does the main character snugly fit the pattern for Vance heroes as outlined by Dave Lockett in the pages of TSW a few issues ago, but the societies that the hero becomes involved with show the characteristic richness of Jack Vance creations. I can recommend the books as interesting and thoughtful.

SUE THOMASON - Comment on a comment on a comment: Larry Dunning (TSW6 p.27) seeks virgins, and so (in the mythology) do vast numbers of red-blooded males. Why? If you are simply seeking a pleasurable physical experience, surely a confident and competent partner is preferable to someone likely as not to be scared, embarrassed, clumsy, over/under sensitive to your own feelings, and so on... I feel myself that it's good to take responsibility for one's own sexuality, but to seek out inexperienced partners suggests a desire to hold power over them, based on an underlying lack of confidence (an experienced partner won't have any standard to compare you to...)

BRUNO OSORELEC - "The hierarchies of ritualistic priests that have torn our society apart in war from time to time" were deeply rooted churches. The religions they dealt in were well entrenched and permeated virtually every aspect of people's everyday lives.

Herbert's evil hags just don't qualify for that kind of league. They are a colorful invention, a paper tiger put into the book to make it sound more mysterious. Herbert often used such funny hats in place of thought-out constructions. Even his vaunted ecology of DUNE is pitiful, consisting of approximately one animal -- the worm in its various stages and guises. Compare it to Brian Aldiss' HELLICONIA.

Make a simple test: submit Herbert's various societies -- secret or otherwise -- to the questions you would ask about an unusual and secretive neighbour. Where does the money come from? What makes them tick socially, psychologically, etc? Where do they come from? What does the law say? Do they pay taxes and on what grounds? With Heinlein's societies you know such things. Herbert's hags, in contrast, exist in vacuum.

Believe it or not, yes, there are intelligent arguments possible on behalf of even the worst Heinlein novels (with the possible exception of NUMBER OF THE BEAST which even Heinlein's mother would hate). His attitude to his writing is such that even at his worst (and that worst is worst indeed) he has some good moments and interesting ideas. I have often despaired over the fact that such a gifted writer, a person so eminently suitable for writing science fiction, should be so enamored of sticky cloying schmaltzy sentimentality.

Anyway, you mention I WILL FEAR NO EVIL. I found its courtroom drama quite entertaining. The question of mind transplants is a legitimate and interesting SF question. Some of the settings -- particularly the condemned but thriving parts of the city -- are nicely done. The rest is shit, of course.

In TIME ENOUGH FOR LOVE the embedded flashback vignettes are great, near-vintage Heinlein. The Notebooks of Lazarus Long are entertaining, if outrageous and often facile. Even the most distasteful thing about TEFL, the incestuous and paedophile ramblings, are a logical result of Heinlein's solipsist thinking. I find solipsism an exercise in futility, but Heinlein certainly pushes it as far as it will go and does it quite rigorously. When you're faced with a pointless everlasting life and suspect you're the author of it all, what are you to do but turn inward at some point and finally face your solipsist self? Not being incestuous and autoerotic would be illogical. Unfortunately hardly anyone but Heinlein finds such obsessions interesting.

I've caught you at ageism, Michelle! Why is it pitiful to watch an old man fantasizing about little girls wanting to have his children? Would it be better if he were young? Studies have shown that the only barriers to sex in advanced age are psychological. Oldsters do it quite merrily when not hampered by prejudice. Why shouldn't they fantasize as well? Younger people put their sexual fantasies on paper and weave them into fiction often enough -- why deny that questionable pleasure to senior citizens?

I am willing to let you off lightly, however. Buy me a beer at Conspiracy and we can settle our differences easily enough. Mr Loney should throw in a pint or so himself, for even considering removing me from the mailing list, much more for actually doing it a while ago, before reams and reams of paper started coming to you from far off Yugoslavia.

MARK: I'm afraid you'll have to wait until 1990 for the beer as, unlike the rest of Australian fandom (or so it seems), Michelle and I didn't make it to the Metropole for Conspiracy. Although, considering the reports that have come back, maybe we were better off here anyway...

RICHARD FAULDER - Looking at STARSHIP TROOPERS in isolation from the rest of Heinlein's work is 14/6/1987 surely a less than valid exercise. I am inclined to agree with Bruno Ugorelec that what Heinlein was doing in his early work (but excluding the likes of I WILL FEAR NO EVIL) was constructing thought experiments. Garth Spencer is correct in citing "an obsession with personal and political independence" as the most frequently recurring theme of Heinlein's work. Personal independence: FARNHAM'S FREEHOLD, STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND, and ORPHANS OF THE SKY, for instance. Political independence: THE MOON IS A HARSH MISTRESS, RED PLANET, and BETWEEN PLANETS, for instance. Today libertarianism, which is basically what Heinlein was, although his philosophy predated the term, tends to be regarded as a right wing philosophy, since it takes no account of the randomness in the universe (left wing philosophers do take this into account, and from this follows their belief that society needs to protect its members from this randomness), but at the time Heinlein's philosophy would have appeared to be a form of anarchism.

MARK: If I hadn't seen the original letter with my own eyes, I'd find it hard to credit that someone seriously wrote that comment. Looking at an individual work of an author 'in isolation from the rest' 'is surely a less than valid exercise'? You have got to be joking! The corollary of that piece of foolishness is, of course, that no reader can decide whether they like any book until they have read all of that particular author's output. An even bigger problem if, as in the case of Heinlein, the author is still writing...

Of course there are insights to be gained by examining the canon of a particular author. It is a useful critical approach. But the examination of a single work is also a useful critical approach and Ian chose that approach in his essay. I don't think there can be any argument with that.

---



ACK HERMAN - Your correspondents are still getting it wrong: you don't have to have been a soldier  
987 to get the vote in the universe of STARSHIP TROOPERS. You need to have served in the Federal Service. The Military was just one branch of the FS.

Ed Rom shows the fine face of thin-skinned over-reaction when he sees Nico's article as Marxist non-thought. To find problems with Heinlein is not to attempt to undermine the rights and privileges of the American Constitution.

GARTH SPENCER - I live in a country and an economy which is neither free enterprise, capitalist or  
987 Marxist. So I have no brief or loyalty to any of these things. It's curious to see how people behave who do have such loyalty. All the sound and fury in your letter column make it sound mightily like Nichols reasoned badly, largely from what he thought he saw in Heinlein -- and also like other people reacted to Nichols the same way and wouldn't care to let him get away with it.

I have to respond to an offhand comment of Gilliland's. "Rico's father refused to make any payment of dues to the political process, and has chosen to make himself rich, instead." I suppose it's sort of fair, in STARSHIP TROOPERS, for people to have to earn their franchise by participation -- but, like me and THE MAPLE LEAF RAG, that might presuppose that participation is important to other people; rather a large assumption.

I recently realized that I do not believe any state, any political gang, is worth devoting your life to. Your family and friends may deserve that loyalty, but in this day and age how many national governments deserve it?

And unless a government deserves what it demands of us, is it fair of it to dictate conditions of life -- be the conditions blood or taxes?

Distinguishing as I do between nations and their governments, I don't think I would brew my political sentiments from STARSHIP TROOPERS... not in my right mind. Nor would I like to allow a pre-teen without critical faculties to read the book... not in this day and age, not until he or she is over 19.

MICHELLE: Now, Garth, what have you done to deserve to dictate some of life's conditions to a poor little pre-19 year old? Hmm... something you're not telling us?

MIRIAM EARL BROWN - Since I've come to regard the right wing and left wing as largely identical  
8/8/1987 totalitarian mentalities (does it matter that a strong man rules for his own personal power in the one and that a strong man rules, "in the name of the people on the other"?), I'm not exactly convinced that Michelle has any better knowledge of socialism versus capitalism than Ed Rom. Since there are no "pure" socialist or capitalist states on this planet it is a bit hard to compare them.

What one can tell about the capitalist system is that the masses demand a minimum of public health, retirement pensions and unemployment insurance. Without these, social unrest remains high. Adam Smith's "invisible hand" does little to relieve the suffering of the low. At the same time the communists of Eastern Europe are discovering that without the incentive of private enrichment, people basically don't work. Across the broad range of the eastern bloc countries capitalist incentives have been introduced to revitalise chronically sluggish economies. To that extent collectivism has been a washout but unlike Mr Rom I don't call capitalism a success because it, too, has problems.

It's a shame that economic theory is largely polarized between Adam Smith and Karl Marx because both describe extreme philosophies that don't work in practice.

Mark Loney's comments to my letter on the American political system is a good example of the dangers of generalising from a few examples. American politics is not characterized by the dabbling of high ranking retired military officers. Mark offers two examples which cover seventy years. Considering all the generals and elective public offices around, that's not many. And one of Mark's examples, Alexander Haig, never had a serious chance as the Republican Party's nominee. Since Mark's premise is so much bologna, his conclusion that America "rewards" its military heroes with high political office is just so much fairysake.

MICHELLE: I did say left wing oriented and right wing oriented, not socialist and capitalist. Sorry darling, but I do have life experience of both attitudes.

# the Space Wastrel

BEN SCHILLING - Regarding Brian Earl Brown's letter concerning political offices being held by  
20/10/1987 military men, only four high ranking military officers have been President of the  
US: George Washington, Andrew Jackson, U S Grant, and Dwight Eisenhower. The  
alternatives given to letting Washington be President were either making him King or making the Duke  
of Clarence (aka William IV) King. We just barely avoided the sort of military dictatorship that  
the French Revolution ended up having under Napoleon, because Washington would not become King.

MARK: The misunderstanding here seems to be over the meaning of 'high political office'. I  
certainly didn't use that phrase to mean, exclusively, the Presidency of the United States of  
America. I consider the position of Secretary of State to qualify as 'high political office'  
and Alexander Haig was very definitely in that position at the beginning of the Reagan  
Presidency (remember the famous, "I am in charge" statement?). I cannot think of one  
Australian politician, backbencher or otherwise, that rose to prominence as a result of a  
military career. Australian political life has never had the equivalent of Secretary of State  
Alexander Haig, or Senator John Glenn, or...

SHERYL BIRKHEAD - please pardon the innovative typing, but my right hand was brunch for a labrador  
1987 retriever and i doubt i ll be writing or doodling for a while. on top of that,  
when i go back on campus for my leaf rotation, i may not be able to do it - it is  
a surgery block and that is rather difficult to do one-handed. i have a few doodlings that were  
already done or partly done - but none were made up for specific zines. after the stitching, i  
didn't mind the blue and then purple - but the black worries me. i called the dr. again and all he  
said was keep taking the pain drugs, ice, and try to make sure it doesn't get infected. i m not a  
lot of help on farm calls - or even in the office for that matter - and i still have two weeks left  
to go on this block. unfortunately the school - as far as i know - does not have any insurance  
coverage if we are hurt on any off-campus rotations so i am substantially farther in the hole than i  
thought. i hope the hospital will take plastic money... sigh. crech, crech, that's all i ever do  
- and this hunting and pecking left handed is for the birds. i sorta get most of the day off - the  
boss man said that after one call he needed to be sequestered in his office for paperwork for the  
rest of the day and did i want to ride with scott... sorry no question marks without more work for  
me - but i said no thanks - took more drugs for pain and called the doctor - so here i sit with an  
ice bag on my very swollen hand - i have never seen a bruise on the palm before and i have a beaut -  
all the swelling and bruises - some from kicks earlier in the week - are now joined so the whole  
hand is eventually going to be black - it's gonna be impressive.

well, i haven't had a lot to say - other than to feel sorry for myself. i have  
one week to finish up my rotation and get the hand functioning enough to perform surgery - and i m  
not too optimistic on that part. if things don't work out, i should be allowed to go through the  
graduation ceremony, but not get a diploma until i can do the required block - yeah, and for this  
i've beaten myself to a pulp for four years. whee. oh yeah - surprise of surprises - got notified  
i made the national professional honor society - and i m sure they looked at the wrong grades, but i  
accepted and paid the annual fee before they found their mistake.

now i have a headache too - just can't win - think i ll call it quits for now -  
hope you accept my inventive excuse - some fans will go to great lengths... gotta go find some  
disprin.

JEFFERSON P SWYCAFFER - America: Nice place to live but I wouldn't want to get sick here. In  
1987 exchanges of letters with Craig Hilton I've learned a lot about your very  
sensible Medicare program. I've been writing to my Senators and  
Representatives for nigh on a decade now, trying to get something like that here, but if I get any  
response at all it's usually some very genteel response that translates (approximately) to,  
"Giddaddahere, ye damn comie". Count your blessings, I guess: you might have an odd apprehension  
that June comes in the middle of Winter, but at least you have a civilised way of dealing with  
illnesses.

What Americans think of Australians: we don't. It hasn't yet penetrated the  
rather blunt social mentality of the common Yank that life exists outside the Hew Hess Hay.  
Insipid? You've got people who can't point to the USSR on a blank world map. Bad enough we can't  
point to Chicago; bad enough we can't name the capital of Honduras; we can't find the Soviet Union.  
(This from a study taken at the University of Miami. Fun: many of the students couldn't point to  
Miami, either. I wonder how they got to school. (Chorus: rich parents.)) CROCODILE DUNDEE helped  
a bit. So did THE MAN FROM SNOWY RIVER. (I recently got a tape of Slim Dusty singing the ballad.  
Good stuff. I'll trade tapes with whoever would like: Slim Dusty for whatever you'd like.  
Springsteen? Fanica Luca? I dunno. Tell me what you've got.) The typical American, if aware of



Australia at all, thinks it's all decent. Mind you, things could be worse: we think that Bulgaria is either empty or inhabited solely by colorful Bulgars in native dress, polka-ing and dancing in silly rings and the men wear dresses.

I think Americans stopped thinking in 1967. Maybe 1963. The Viet Nam "experience" cost us pretty much all we had.

Karl Johanson is half right about the Strategic Defense Initiative: it's a farce assuredly, but it isn't a promotion of the weapons manufacturers. It's rather a construct of the American fear of the real world. It's a Maginot thing: shut the world out behind a wall. Sure, the aerospace industries are gonna make their pile on this thing, but they aren't the ones telling the Big Lie. It's demagogues and other right-wing stinkards. We're being lied to, in short, not by greed, but by something sort of like fear. Aggressive fear. Fear-mongering. Disgusting.

Lesser: what else. Oh, yes, American fanzines. Nah. Everyone's talking on computer nets. Bleah. Numerous conspiracy theories are in right now in S. California. Like the International Penguin Conspiracy. Y'see the Nuclear Winter effect would make the whole world into Antarctica, and the Penguins (diabolical little schemers that they be) are manipulating us all into a headlong rush toward refrigeration. But the dolphins, heroic allies of mankind for years untold, are working to oppose this plan. (San Diego has a fairly famous "Penguin Encounter" exhibit at Sea World amusement and aquatic park. A large refrigerated building with something like 1500 penguins. Good news for naturalists, but bad news for opponents of the International Penguin Conspiracy.) You have been warned.

MARK: As for the activities of Bulgars, I can only refer you to the authoritative account to be found in the Jules editorial. I have brought your comments about the International Penguin Conspiracy to the attention of the Kinkon committee here in Melbourne (their symbol is a top-hatted penguin). I think it may have been a mistake though, so I don't recommend opening the front door to any penguins you don't know..

DAVID PALTER - Feminism is not without its hazards. The original impulse to remedy existing 2/6/1987 anti-female social bias has been overtaken by the impulse to introduce new anti-male bias. However, I can still be moved to make a feminist speech by such things as John Berry's loc. He must not have taken Feminism 100 in college. When a feminist complains that a given work of fiction depicts women as sexual objects, the point of this complaint is not that women are shown as biological entities capable of assuming a sexual role. That fact is understood by feminists. The complaint is that women are depicted as being suited only for a sexual role, and unsuited for any other role. In other words, women are depicted in sexist literature as being exclusively sexual objects, which is a lot different than depicting them as human beings whose rich and varied capabilities include that of sexual participation. Of course, this accusation is often raised inaccurately. For example, I agree with John that sexism is not a problem in the writing of Robert Heinlein (who has consistently portrayed strong and fully developed female characters). However, if we were to pick a serious offender such as John Norman, we could see that there can indeed be cases where the characterisation of women as sexual objects is offensive and demeaning.

Karl Johanson's objections to the SDI are all true, to an extent, but he also oversimplifies the issue. Yes, at present the cost/benefit ratio is not good enough. But this is a new technology, certainly capable of new development. Yes, chemical and biological warfare could be used to obliterate an enemy without recourse to nuclear weapons. But nuclear weapons are easier to target. CBW tends to be rather indiscriminate in its effect, and has often proven to be more dangerous to the user than to the intended target (in WWI, for example, when a change of wind could blow the phosgene back on its deployer). Furthermore, the subject of the SDI has many other ramifications which Karl did not touch upon. Space as a defense opportunity, can function synergistically as an industrial resource and an arena of scientific research - the three go perfectly hand in hand, claw in laser, and they add up to a lot more than just another attempt to defraud the American taxpayer. The future lies in space.

MARK: A question the size of the US budget deficit remains though... just what sort of research and resources will come from the militarisation of space? But then again, your attitude is exactly what I outlined in ISW2:1 - the growing realisation and acceptance that the military imperative can fund a move into space... with little thought about the implications.

RICHARD J FAULDER - Well, Paul Skelton correctly identified my initial premise, and even deduced its 14/6/1987 first corollary. SDI will have a destabilising effect because it has the potential of allowing a first strike. This destabilising effect is bad, and must be combatted by pointing out the system's unworkability. At this point Paul gets himself off

the track. Whether SDI is unworkable is irrelevant only inasmuch as its proponents believe it to be workable. Should they ever decide to launch a first strike on the assumption that SDI will protect them from retaliation, they will very shortly thereafter find themselves devastated by an attack that they thought couldn't reach them. The result: devastation that was unlikely while both sides regarded Destruction as Mutually Assured. It is true that SDI is an initiative that allows for disarmament, but only before deployment or after deployment of a totally reliable system (which can never be, of course). During deployment the effect is one of destabilisation, since the side with the most advanced state of deployment has the greatest ability to successfully carry out a first strike. While it can be argued, even successfully, that SDI has brought both sides to the conference table, it can be equally argued that it has prevented any progress being made once there, since each side appears to have adopted a fairly inflexible position with regard to SDI.

JACK HERMAN - I am sorry that Skel has trouble understanding a logical argument about SDI. The problem with SDI - apart from its demand for secrecy in respect of discoveries: a contradiction of the openness that MUST mark science - is that it must work first time from a computer program much more complex than any previously run but which cannot be tested using technology that, at the moment, we cannot even produce theoretically. BUT the people to worry about are the rulers of the USSR. These are the rulers of a paranoid oligarchy which has spent millions trying to find technical applications of psychic power to nuclear warfare. THEY are the people likely to fear the possibility that SDI MIGHT work and do something before it can be put together just in case it does. That is why it is destabilising while still being infeasible.

MARK: Just in case there's anybody out there who thinks that the recently signed INF treaty somehow makes SDI less relevant, consider the following two points:

1. The INF treaty says nothing about nuclear warheads, it only mandates the destruction of INF delivery systems. Both the USA and the USSR can redeploy INF warheads with other systems.
2. The immediate reaction to the INF treaty, at least in the American defence sector, seems to be that battlefield forces, conventional and nuclear, need to be upgraded to 'fill the gap'. So... more nuclear artillery, an emphasis on research into precision guided munitions and the development of very destructive conventional weapons.

---

SPACE THE KID AND... ?

---

SUSAN MARGARET - I'm grateful that Julian acknowledged the contribution made by KIDS School to 7/1987 Microcan in lending premises, but I note with disapproval that he refers to it as a school for "children with learning difficulties". I realise that there's a community feeling that it's only OK for kids to have a good time at school if there's something wrong with them, and that you can measure the quality of an educational practice by how much it hurts, but I always hope that fans will help debunk these crazy notions.

KIDS is an alternative school. That means non-government and non-church, but it also means that we're offering an educational alternative to traditional systemic schooling. Our particular alternative is based on the idea that kids want and need to learn, and will do so without coercion if provided with a stimulating and encouraging environment. The educational jargon for this is "open learning", hence KIDS Open Learning School.

In practical terms, this means that our kids have a large amount of say in their own education, though the degree of choice offered varies. In some sessions, the choice might be the book they will work from - time and place chosen. At other times, the subject and type of work might be left to them, with only a self-set deadline.

This kind of education attracts a variety of kids for a variety of reasons. Many families are simply seeking a different kind of educational experience; many have a commitment to an alternative lifestyle; some feel that the existing educational systems have important built-in faults which may or may not impinge on their kids. In addition, about ten percent have sought professional help for kids with educational or behavioural difficulties, and been referred to us.

---

AMERICAN EGOTISM

---

BEN SCHILLING - The World Series: Everyone claims that this is American egotism. Sorry, not true. 25/7/1987 In 1905 (when these things started) the New York World donated a trophy for the winner of the series, which made it "The New York World Cup Series". The New York World has long since ceased publication, and some of the words disappeared from the title.

---



## MOVING TO MELBOURNE

HARRY WARNER, JR - I enjoyed the Move to Melbourne Newsletter edition of ISW. Unfortunately, when I  
16/7/1987

enquired at the local Greyhound Terminal, I was told that no Melbourne-bound buses are scheduled to stop in Hagerstown during the next few days. The clerk on duty used this as an excuse for his inability to give me information on the cost of a bus ticket from Hagerstown to Melbourne. I tried to calculate the approximate cost on the basis of the fares you list on your cover, but then I remembered that the United States dollar and the Australian dollar are different things and I can never remember which is the more valuable and even if I could the situation would probably change tomorrow, owing to the way the United States currency is collapsing all over the world. All things considered, even though you've interested me in Melbourne as a nice place to visit or live, I don't think you should take up sentry duty at the Melbourne bus terminal to meet me until further notice. Greyhound has just purchased Trailways though, the other big intercity bus line in the United States, and Trailways probably offers a service to Melbourne.

The only thing I think I would miss in Melbourne if I lived there would be the Sydney Opera House. I suppose there's a Melbourne Opera House somewhere but it couldn't possibly look like the Sydney Opera House which I hold dear for a personal reason. It looks so much like the Christmas presents I give to friends after I've finished wrapping the boxes in gift paper. On the other hand, I have quite a few records made by Nellie Helba, whose stage name came from Melbourne, and I don't have any records at all by any singer whose name was Sydne.

Those 'adult cinema's in Melbourne might be among the last survivors of a threatened species. Their closest equivalent in the Hagerstown area had been outdoor theaters that showed nothing but X-rated films. The last of these went out of business recently. People find it easier and cheaper to get their kicks out of video cassettes nowadays and the more timid souls have the additional advantage of privacy while watching.

I hope your propaganda campaign has success but not quite complete success. Fandom wouldn't be the same if Los Angeles became a fannish desert because everyone had migrated to Melbourne. If New York City emptied of fans, lots of potential fanzine articles about the feuds among that city's fans would be lost to posterity. I'm on the waiting list for the Southern Fandom Press Alliance and I don't know if I'd be eligible for admission if all the other members went that far south to reside in Melbourne.

PAM WELLS - Well hush my mouth and glory be, I'll be on my way to Melbourne as quick as can be!!!  
17/7/1987 Loved the zine---felt honoured to receive two copies - assume the spare is for the displays at Worldcon?? Will find a good home for it, you can be sure. If you're coming to Brighton, do look me up - I'll be in the fan room most of the time. Er - I'm not really moving to Melbourne, but only 'cuz it would take too long to commute to my job in London. And can you imagine how much a season ticket would cost?? \*faint\* Thanks for a really entertaining read. A real beaut!!

MICHELLE HALLETT - While I have to admit that your arguments for a Move to Melbourne are very  
18/6/1987 convincing, I find that I can't quite get up the energy, at this point, to pack. I also find myself a little worried, if all of fandom moved to Melbourne, would it sink into the ground with a shudder? Would the entire state of Victoria begin to crumble into the ocean and Australian schoolchildren be forced to redraw their geography maps? Would we be forced to build dykes around our southeastern perimeter to hold back the ocean and incidentally create new stories about courageous little boys holding back masses of water by putting their little fingers into holes? (Hmm... I've often wondered about the real meaning of that children's story). As you can see these are valid excuses, though they originate in a simple conflict between my congenital laziness and your tempting suggestions.

Water swirling down a plug-hole, just the image I was looking for. Would future Fanzines from Melbourne need to be printed on waterproof paper? Or would they just soak the rest of my mail so I couldn't read it and ended up paying Bankcard too much? Really, I'm very tempted by your arguments, I always did wonder what was on the other side of the plug hole, as a child I was often heard asking why I couldn't go down with the water. Probably one of the reasons why my mother tells people I was an exasperating child. As I grow older though, I'm discovering that curiosity takes too much out of me, I believe I was born to conserve energy, in case of failure of the famous law of conservation. Laziness is my gift, and I use it wisely. Though resistance is hard in this case, especially as I'm not used to using energy.

Why don't you all move to Sydney? You could help me conserve all that energy. And you could bring the plughole, you'll probably agree that the world would be a much better place if Sydney disappeared.

MICHELLE: Michelle, how perspicacious and concise!! But surely Sydney doesn't need a plughole... I was under the impression that it was already holding costume rehearsals for the day it disappears up into the Darling Harbour Project... Happy 200th birthday, by the way.

DAVID PALTER - The idea of actively encouraging people to move to Melbourne, in order to develop further the Finnish community there, is intriguing (although I myself will not go so far as to actually do it; the difficulties I would face are clearly prohibitive). I am reminded of the fact that when I was living in Hollywood, a number of my own correspondents (Wayne Brenner, Lisa Wahl, Chris Eastey, Chris Mills) were eventually inspired to move to Hollywood, largely or entirely because of improved opportunities for Finnish socializing. Of these, two (Lisa Wahl and Chris Mills) still live in Los Angeles (the larger city of which Hollywood is a part) even though I myself have now left, and am living in Toronto where I face a different set of Finnish opportunities. This sort of thing really shows how important fandom is, to the lives of many of us fans. Compare this to other hobbies; lots of people (in North America) like baseball, but rarely would someone move to a different city just because he preferred the baseball team affiliated with that city, or preferred the stadium, or the local fanclub, little league, or whatever. (Though doubtlessly there are some such cases.)

Anyway, I'm am impressed with the level of Finnish activity in Melbourne, and would doubtlessly find it interesting to live there, although I'm not going to do so. For fans who already live in Australia, it is a more reasonable proposition.

MICHELLE: It's OKAY! REALLY! It was a JOKE! You're welcome to stay where you are - we might get to come and visit you some day and a trip across the world would be much more exciting than a trip across town.

HARRY ANDRUSCHAK - I have received the MOVE TO MELBOURNE NEWSLETTER #1, which arrived a couple of weeks ago. As a matter of fact, since I have been unemployed for nine months, and still am unemployed, and have little hope of finding a job soon, I DID look into the possibilities of moving to Australia or New Zealand. In fact, I stopped by both consulates in Los Angeles. Alas, being over age 40, and with no college degree, I could not enter either country without a solid job guaranteed me. And I see little hope of that...

MARK: We did offer employment assistance to Harry in order to smooth his relocation to Melbourne, but the last we heard was that he had taken a job with the US Post Office instead... his COA heads the Correspondents' Addresses list.

MAE STRELKOV - Okay, you've got yourself a seventy year old grandmother, if you wish. Want to keep on my shoulder at long distance? In a recent fanzine from Australia, there was a very well done piece about a train ride to Sydney, (Glen Crawford's KOBREBS ON THE KEYBOARDS), and he bemoaned the lack of the place as compared to the fresher country he makes his home. Is it the same with Melbourne indeed?

Okay, so Melbourne has "splendid Botanical Gardens and an Art Gallery"? And there's a "Native Flora & Fauna Preserve that is really unique"? And what, a Melbourne Zoo! Takes in the whole city does it? All the weird and sleazy types also mentioned, the poor girls at the porno-theatre having to makes ends meet, both literally and financially? It's kinda sad, hearing of this from long distance! Well, "mythic disembowelling of basketballs" might be all right. Our kids are forever disembowelling actual cesta balls each afternoon with the local yokels' progeny at a dirt playground outside the grammar school nearby. After all day cutting old trees, so as to plant new ones on the hillside across the dirt highway from our place, you'd think our Tony might want to put his feet up and take it easy. Not he. If there's a ball game going on, he's there. Sylvia too. Or do you disembowel balls some other way? Here, they're always borrowing the car's tire pump to restore life to disenflated cesta balls!

MICHELLE: Should we explain that Andrew is 6'8" tall and mentally 'mytically disembowels basketballs' every time someone asks him if he plays basketball... ? Maybe not, sounds rather too mundane.

LOYD PENNEY - Someone has obviously slipped silly powder into your gin and tonics... is there something in the air (chemical fumes, perhaps?) that brings the Finnish beastie to Melbourne? Does the city absorb 27 times its weight in excess stomach acid for fast, FAST relief?

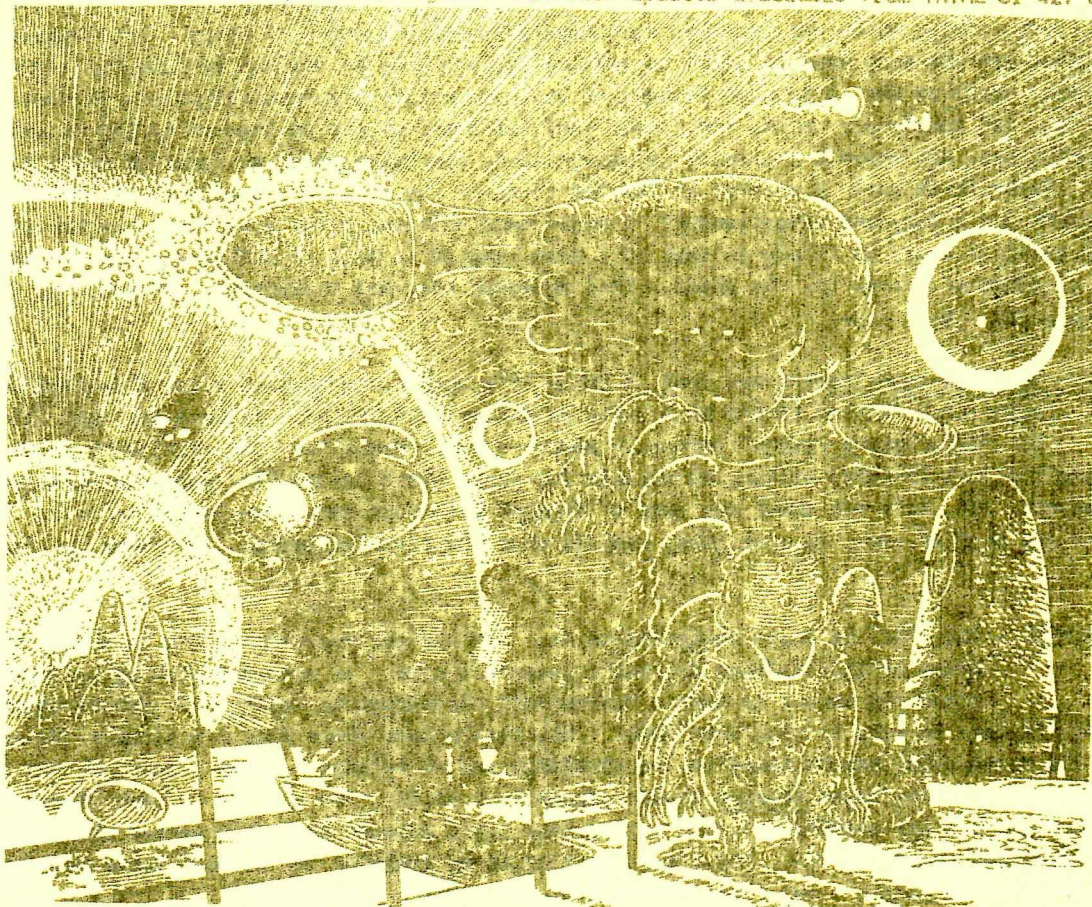


By chance, the very same thing has been happening to Toronto. In the past three years, Torfandom has enlarged greatly, mostly because of the influx of fans from across Canada to Toronto. (A good number of neofans getting in there and pushing has helped, too.) In the past three years, Sharon Anderson and Ian Wilson (Montreal), Heather Bruton, Bev Boss and Bobbi Slater (Halifax), Eric Chu (Victoria, BC), Kevin Duane (New York City... we attract Americans, too), Paul Delaney and Lynne Fonseca (Victoria), Albert Frank (Edmonton), David Huret (Calgary and Ottawa), Kim Kofmel (Ottawa), Sheila and David Kopaeka-Merkel (New Orleans), Serge Mailloux and Sue Krinard (Quebec City), Randall and Joan McDaugail (Fredericton), John Kahane (Ottawa), Ron Miles and Allen Roulston (Halifax), Keith Seitya, Michael Street and Lorna Toulis (Edmonton), Paul Stockton (Regina) and July Zoltai (Winnipeg) have all migrated to the Big Little Apple that is Toronto, in search of decent jobs, and (most of them, anyway) a resumption of fannish activities here in Toronto. With their help fandom has become much more friendly, much more involved, and it is much easier to get people to fill the vital positions on our local convention's concert. It's been great.

Toronto is in the middle of a propaperous time... unlike most of the rest of the country. I wish I could say that they have moved to join Canada's most active and vital fandom (this part is true), but I can't... we must be mercenary and go where the good (and prosperous) times are.

MICHAEL MAILSTONE - I picked up THE MOVE TO MELBOURNE NEWSLETTER at Syncon but for sundry reasons  
19/8/1987  
been forgotten I didn't get around to writing to you until just now. Of the three ones I've been this year, Easterncon was definitely the best and the frierkiest, Capcon and Syncon, I guess, reflecting my feelings about these two cities. I have no wish to ever move back to Sydney (or at least I'd need a BLOODY good reason to), and Canberra is now washed up for me. Everyone here has gone to the Moon. I've been thinking on and off of moving to Melbourne since 1978, but now that seems to be about to become a reality, and I'm seriously thinking about getting my arse into gear and my act together to make moves towards that move. (Most importantly, I need somewhere to live). I only hope that this news doesn't cause a mass fannish exodus from your fair city...

MARK: A fannish exodus from Melbourne is most unlikely... and all are welcome at Friday night dinners wherever we may be holding them when you arrive. Years of stability and awful food at the Tavern Coffee Lounge near the GPO have given way to a migration in search of an eating place with edible food - indications so far are that it could be a little while before we settle down somewhere permanent again. Location updates available from THYME or 427 0691.





BERT DURGLAR - I've been doing my bit for the MIM cause. Since returning from Melbourne I have been  
14/7/1987 telling all my Brisbane friends all about such Melbourne delights as the Dan O'Connell Hotel, the Swann Hotel, the Sydney Hotel and the avocado vinaigrette at the Italian Waiters Club.

Describing these experiences to the type of Brisbanite I mix with tends to make them drool a lot. Not that Brisbane doesn't have anything to offer. It's come of age quite a bit during the last three years. It's just that you can't get everything you want here. The range is narrower.

MARK: Bert recently returned to the MIM Chambers for his annual New Year holidays in Melbourne, and once again the Swan Hotel, the Dan O'Connell Hotel and the other attractions of Melbourne featured large in the itinerary. Bert next returns to Australia's fannish capital in April...

LYNETTE HORNE - It is nice to see some concentration on Melbourne. After all it is one of  
10/7/1987 Australia's oldest cities, full of history and culture. I see the committee has mentioned some of the many restaurants covering every taste. But what of the historic side of Melbourne? There must be some of the Gold Rush days left, both in the city and suburbs. There is also the cultural side, the theatres and art galleries. Much can also be made of the fact that Melbourne has an English atmosphere. This is shown in part by the big wide streets which, while busy like Sydney, have a charm about them that makes them totally different. This charm is added to by the many street stalls and flower sellers that line the footpaths.

So when you add all this to the meeting of all those interesting people in fandom it isn't surprising that Melbourne is the place to be.

MICHELLE: Thanks, Lynette, for mentioning the cultural side of Melbourne. We're normally too busy hanging out in smoky blues bars, alan checks and porno theatres to notice it. But we 100% believe you that it's all out there SOMEWHERE.

CRAIG HILTON - I found the Move to Melbourne Newsletter refreshingly entertaining to begin with, an  
19/7/1987 unashamed expression of joie de vivre in the heady excitement of the fannish capital of Australia. Good luck to you, and all the best. After two or three pages, though, the advertisement started to drag on, to become self-congratulatory and self-indulgent, or just plain tedious. Only the piece on "Melbourne's Classic Movie Houses" was brilliantly gross enough to break the monotony. As for the rest, may I make special mention of the "Interesting People" segments? This is a tawdry device which has seen too much daylight recently for my liking. The simulated fannish commentary has been done to death in various publications by various people, but since I can't remember where or who, I'll have to pick on you. In brief, pseudo-descriptions of fans which are almost but not completely unlike the people they are based on are so obscure to the uninitiated as to be pointless, and where a character is recognisable the description so fanciful as to be worthless. Maybe it is worth a snicker or two for those in the know, but surely isn't that the wrong approach for a supposed advertisement? I would have welcomed a far more light-hearted look at the actual people I would be likely to meet if I were tempted to Move to Melbourne, and not the fantasy I could never travel to. Go ahead. Tell me about the real characters. Persuade me to come and seek them out. Risk libel.

DY CHAUVIN - The Move to Melbourne was fun! I think it's been quite a while since I've read an  
27/7/1987 Australian fanzine that's been quite so determinedly silly. Perhaps the best bits were the "Interesting People" series by Andrew Brown. Maybe the zine tickled my fancy so much because I'd just finished writing an article for Irwin Hirsch called "The Ones Who Walk Away From Melbourne". No, it's not about any sort of fannish migration away from Australia's fan capital, or any sort of reply to your zine, despite what the title suggests. But maybe it should have been.

SHERYL BIRKHEAD - The MIM:1 is sorta confusing to me. I'm certain everyone in the know must be  
16/7/1987 aware of What's Going On, but I haven't a clue. Is everyone picking up lock, stock and barrel to make a "permanent" pilgrimage to Melbourne? One of these days (RSN - HA!) I'd love to make it back Down Under - but that's many years away I'm afraid. My new job (now that I'm a graduate) has no benefits, no vacations and no holidays - hmpf - some job you say - yeah - but obviously they found someone stupid enough to take it. The plan is to work 19 days straight then get a 3 day weekend. That's a long haul but I suppose that it's better than the current - maybe-part-a-Sunday-off. And I'm in heck up to my eyeballs for student loans over the next 10 years. Can't resist - no, I will too - everyone hates a complainer!



The list of those who've moved to Melbourne is quite extensive and impressive. It must have something going for it (or else an awfully good ad campaign). The list of zines exiting Melbourne makes me realise how a small a percentage of fandom's output I actually get - only 2 out of the 12 mentioned.

MARK: As everyone else is moving to Melbourne, obviously the place to be to find out What's Going On is the capital of the south (and fannish centre of the Great South Land), Marvellous Melbourne. We can also guarantee better working conditions than those described above.

MICHELLE: Actually, Sheryl, he's just kidding about finding out What's Going On. The truth is Nobody Knows. It's a more interesting world that way.

MIKE GLICKSOHN - MFM reminded me of two things. The first was what Dr Johnson once said: "But, Sir, 21/7/1987 let me tell you, the noblest prospect which a Scotchman ever sees, is the high road that leads him to England!" The second was a joke that's told here in Canada: "How do you get nine Newfoundlanders into a Volkswagen? Tell them you're going to Toronto." I guess every country has its own variations on this theme and undoubtedly people who don't live in the local version of Mecca don't find this as amusing as those who do. I'll be interested to see what sort of reaction you get from fellow Australians.

DAVE LUCKETT - I have received the Move to Melbourne Newsletter. Now, I know this is not common 1987 knowledge - it's not the sort of thing I like having bruiated about - but I resided (not lived) in Melbourne, once. Once. True, it was when I was five years old, and memory is kind to very young children - their most horrible experiences are mercifully lost to them. Thus it was in my case, and accordingly I remember little of Melbourne now. That period comes back, revenant, undead, only in foul flashes from the pits of my most loathsome nightmares, when, desperately groping for wakefulness, I sense again the miry roads, the open drains, the grisly weather, the cheerless, squalid suburbs, their epe gutters lined with vomiting drunks, of Melbourne. I recall, sweating and moaning, the grim scabrous city blocks, seen through a haze of despair and eternally drifting rain - the grey shops, the greyer offices, the greyest people, a vast mouldy blancmange of putative humanity, unable to do itself in, and inventing the Victorian Road Code and trams, instead.

## Hook turns



Hook turn signs are found at a number of intersections in Central Melbourne. They can be at the side of the road or hung from tram wires. If you want to turn right at one of these intersections you must make a hook turn.

## Trams

### Yellow lines



There are roads that are known as fairways. Yellow lines and tram signs along these roads give trams special privileges at certain times. You need to look for the signs to see if you may cross the yellow line and drive in the tram lane.

And what people! I remember my mother arguing about being short-changed in a shop, with each successive minion shrugging careless shoulders and saying, "It's nothin' ter moi, loidy," with exactly the same machine-made inflection, the same robotic, lobotomised indifference. I remember the autoanton which acted as the local doctor, treating me for the inevitable chilblains with rough briskness and something agonising, not changing expression even slightly at my screams of pain, and merely signalling for someone to hold me down. I remember the Hungarian landlord of the primitive coldwater hotel we rented, with his moist hands and his post-nasal drip, collecting his grossly exorbitant dues with a ritual oration on the benefits of voting D.L.P.

I recall the summer - a stinking cauldron of suffocating misery, an ever-increasing pressured heat, like being trapped in the cylinder of some unthinkable ponderous steam engine during the compression stroke. I recall the winter, that shrieking insanity of Antarctic gales, their clean fury rendered foul by their passage over Geelong; the bitter, sodden, muddy chill; the filthy streets with their ugly cinder-black pavements glutinous with the detritus of other people's eternal Victorian catarrh.

Ah, yes, I remember Melbourne.

In 1985, it hadn't changed much. The Fans keep a welcome, bless them; they are shining jewels in the cesspool that is Victoria. But fandom doesn't make an environment of itself. Outside its cheery walls, muttering obscenities and thrusting its nose-aching fingers through the cracks, lies Melbourne.

Nice try, Amelia. I really do hope that your brush grows back someday.

MARK: Now, Dave, we all know how relieved you are to be back in the Bunker (Perth's world renowned tank trap, fannish residence and war games command post) after your trip to Britain (described elsewhere in this issue) but are you sure that you haven't got things a little confused? I'm the first to admit that the roads in Melbourne aren't up to the standard enjoyed by my home city of Perth, or that the wind from Werribee (and associated sewage farm) can be a little pungent at times, but there is little correspondence between your childhood memories and the Marvellous Melbourne of the 1980s. Why, they're even buying new trolleys and fixing up some of the roads. The consensus opinion here at the MtM Chambers is that your letter is proof of the existence of alternate universes... or at least an alternate Melbourne.

SUE THOMASON - DearDear WaatrelaWaatrela -- diddid youyou knowknew you'dyou'd sentent mome two(2) 18/7/1987 copiestopies ofof TMTM1? One (she observes keenly) postmarked in Melbourne, and the other in oh shit I've lost the wrapper, but I DO remember that they had different stamps on them, and one was pink and the other wasn't. (The wrappers, you fool, not the stamps). I don't suppose that's any help to you at all, but I guess on the whole you'd rather not pay 2 sets of transcontinental postage to allow one person to read your zine once (at least, if I want to read it twice I can read the same one twice, if you see what I mean).

Actually, I think (huh? I do, do I?) I'm unlikely to move to Melbourne in the near future -- not even to the English one.

Please help an ignorant furriner -- is Aotearoa official for New Zealand to the extent that the GPO will understand if I don't use the colonial imposition on the envelope? I speak as someone who has witnessed mail addressed to CYMRU arrive via CYPRUS. I'm asking various Antipodeans for help on this point, but don't mind if you all answer at once.

MARK: AA fewfew peoplepeople wrotewrote andand toldtold usus thatthat theythey had had receivedreceived two(2) copiestopies ofof thethe MtM1M. We're not sure how it happened but a few names were doubled up on the mailing list - I'm sure the extra copies have found good homes though. We have, however, managed to end up without any copies of TSW7 and would appreciate the return of any extra copies we may have inadvertently sent out.

I wouldn't risk Aotearoa as a substitute for New Zealand just yet... You might get away with it in Australasia but I doubt that the British Post Office would have the faintest notion where the 'Land of The Long White Cloud' was. Michelle thinks that the official change to Aotearoa is coming, but still a few years down the track.

MICHELLE: Huh, my official estimate is 25 to 30 years, so don't hold your breath. In fact, I guess, it's worth a sigh of relief not to have to worry about how to PRONOUNCE Aotearoa... now that we can all spell it (?).

---

#### HAIR STYLES FOR GEESE

---

BRUNO OGORELEC - Sue Thomason's remarks reminded me of a hotel office door recently in the Zagreb 25/5/1987 Intercontinental, from which a nice brass L had fallen off, making it into a PUBIC RELATIONS office. I suggested they put a red lantern over the door but they were not amused. In Zagreb it is a local sport to alter public signs and notices in this way, to give them new -- and often rude -- meanings. Too bad that they are by and large untranslatable into English; I've made quite a collection of them. Croatian must be particularly suitable for this. Altering just one or two letters you can transform a warning not to lean on the bus door into a warning on the dangers of pushing one's tits into it. An announcement that tram tickets are sold in the front car and that you had better buy them or face an expensive fine is easily turned into something like RIDE WITHOUT THE PRICK IS VERY EXPENSIVE -- PLEASE PURCHASE A HORRIBLE PRICK IN THE FRONT CAR. The French Cultural Centre in Zagreb recently found out that their reading room was closed because of foul smells, instead of repairs as originally written. Two out of three barber shops display a HAIR STYLES FOR GEESE announcement, instead of the original HAIR STYLES FOR MEN, due to teenagers spray paint cans. I could list dozens. My personal favorite, however, is rather more involved and probably doesn't belong in the same category. To a 1945 vintage slogan painted on the wall in one of the busier streets, PROLETARIANS OF THE WORLD UNITE, one irreverent soul had soon after added a double hyphen and a qualification: WITH THE PROLETARIAN GIRLS.

---

There once was a land of singing trees... Anti-woodchipping graffiti, Perth circa 1980

---



\* \* STAR LETTER \* \*

JEAN YOUNG - I was quite astonished to find THE SPACE WASTREL in my mailbox yesterday - and quite 27/8/1987 intrigued too. I had never seen an Australian fanzine, although I've seen reference to them and to Australian fandom in the very few fanzines I get these days. I've been out of fandom for nearly 25 years now, and it really is startling to have a fanzine appear in my battered old rural mailbox quite out of the blue, as it were. You checked the box, "We like small furry animals", (in fact, in all seriousness, so do I), but I am, alas, large, and not really very furry, unlike my dog herd. Where did you get my address?

My days in fandom were long, long pre-Herpes scare; and though there was a certain amount of hustling and mate-swapping, especially at cons, I don't remember it as a time when disease roadmaps were anywhere near a necessity. Of course we (Andy Young, Larry Stark & I), however bizarre, wretched or untenable our personal interactions, had almost no other fannish contacts in the Boston area where we lived; and we were of a great naivetè and ignorance about relationships elsewhere. Later, in my hippie days in The Valley of Quendahl (about fifteen miles from here), a bunch of us tried the group sex, one big family, commune thing (most unsuccessfully, of course); and there, fear of disease was not as great as it should have been, and difficulties were rampant. But it is not the point to talk about those folks in print, since some of them are still around and could be hurt by idle talk.

I have no sentimental yearnings towards those days at all; I remember them as tense and nightmarish, and even my present disgustingly celibate state (of disgustingly long duration) is better than that. Different tastes, different nostalgias. I was old for a hippie, anyway (36), and probably had more thorough pre-conditioning.

I was amused by "Strafed by the Stork" - it's always interesting to see yet another wild young gent (or woman) coping with the shock of ancestry and trying to keep fannish activities going at the same time. Both my young 'uns were taken to cons at tender ages, with adventures in screaming, sour milk bottles (nature's own containers were on the wane and insufficient to satisfy the greedy belly), a waitress providing some nice linen napkins to replace a hopelessly shitty diaper at a mini-banquet given by Bob Tucker; my daughter, at about 1 year, sucking and gulping a Nuclear Fizz and remaining awake ALL NIGHT... a pleasant, memory triggering piece, Mr Luckett. I was also quite fascinated with Ian Nichols piece on champagne. I don't care a whole lot for the drink myself, but the background was interesting.

Because I'm so out of touch, the fanzine reviews and a lot of the personal interaction stuff: responses, con reports, activities, etc., is only marginally comprehensible to me - even in US and Brit fandom, let alone Australian, NZ, Continental or other. I do very much like the way you separate your lettercol by subjects; it allows a new reader to make most sense of what is going on, and surely benefits even your faithful regular following. The Heinlein controversy was most excellently put together. I haven't read much Heinlein in some years, because I'd gotten tired of the militarism-and-macho-figure-and-horny-lady-dying-to-fuck-macho-hero syndrome; but that's my taste. He's struck me more as a man with a bee in his bonnet than a clear, rational thinker - but he's not there for me to quibble over his fundamental assumptions or argue with the straw men he sets up and knocks down, so rather than seethe, I just don't read him. I never did finish STARSHIP TROOPERS; I disliked everyone in it so much right from the start that I didn't care what happened to them, beyond a vague hope that some star would nova and swallow the lot of them.



Alas, I no longer read af for the great new challenging exciting ideas, though I sort of used to, at least in part. I read it for escape; life's hard enough, without I should have to cope with an excess of bloody (literally) realism. And my tastes have veered, over the last twenty years or so, much more into the heroic fantasy, swords and wizards (I do like books that deal with the problems of magic and the realities of cultures that incorporate it). I still reread Hal Clement with pleasure, and Simak, and for times when I'm really, really down, old Andre Norton teen hero (& occasional teen heroine) stuff. I like Barbara Hambly's work, and Elizabeth Lynn's.

Well - anyone can babble about what they like and don't like, and my tastes are not of burning interest to anyone else.

What I do myself (other than haul mail 6 nights a week from here to La Crosse, Wisconsin and back) is various sorts of visual patterning/designing (I find myself intensely embarrassed when I have to speak of my, uh... Art ...kind of dirty word, you know), mostly geometric, some imagic, some totally abstract. I work totally (these days) with (in some sense) someone else - on the repeating nets of Ensor Holliday's ALTAIR DESIGNS (which I've done for twelve years now), Ruth Heller's abstract, regular, vertical and horizontal line geometric bases, and with the line drawings of my good friend Paul Buks. I haven't drawn anything myself in years, nor painted - I only shade and color; but I still make one thing into another, and spend a lot of time while I'm doing it thinking about things like "Same & Different", "Figure & Ground", "Form & Content", "Theme & Variations", "Originality & Cooperation", the nature of patterning and transforms. Oh yes, I really do think about this stuff while I'm actually colouring, blocking or dotty-ing away, cutting and pasting and all that deady mechanical shit that goes into transforming an empty net or a line drawing into a notecard or calender sheet. (I hate to cut and paste.)

I also like a variety of music, from the more instrumental sorts of straight rock (includes, say, Alan Parsons, Pink Floyd & Blue Oyster Cult - how's that for cozy company?) into New Age and Euro-techno-pop (Tangerine Dream, Robert Schroeder, Eberhard Schoener) into the "Windham Hill-ish", with leftovers from my "classical" upbringing. What I do (besides listen), is make sequence-tapes, on the order of the "Hearts of Space" programmes (are they of world-wide distribution now, I wonder?), 45 minute or 1½ hour these sequences, generally from a variety of artists - themes like, "Dragonflight", "Under the Volcano", "Almost Dark/Open Sky", "The Ghost in the Machine", "Revolt of the Trees"/"At that Planet", "Desert Dream", "Flight & Consequences", "Limelight (The Singer/ The Dancer)"... well kind of artey, again, except that my tastes are considered pretty "pop" by most Real Music Lovers. Well .... them.

Thank you for sending The Space Westrel.

MARK: Thank you for your letter. I'm just sorry we couldn't reproduce the beautiful letterhead - a shaded and coloured version of a Paul Buks piece. As to where we got your address from, your letter was a complete surprise to us as we couldn't remember sending you a TSW and even a search through the card index couldn't find anything with your name or address on it...

---

#### THE DOG-SHIFT

---

J.R. "MADDOG" MADDEN - My nickname was awarded me during my first few days of work at Ethyl Corporation thirteen years ago though the exact source of that appellation is in the fog of lost history. One story was that fellow graduate students who were already employed at Ethyl, in describing my collegiate antics to the older employees, decided "Mad Dog" was an apt term in my case. The second is that, having to work the C-shift (10pm to 6am), also known as the Dog-shift, my third day at work was connected with my last name to yield my nickname.

In one of our local papers' Sunday edition, there appears a column called "Know Your Name" where a geneologist relates facts about various family names. In the 20 February 1983 column, there was the following information about the name of Madden: 'The Irish Gaelic name O Madadhain meant "heir, descendant of Dog." Mada was the Gaelic word for dog, and it became a nickname for a man who had some real or fancied resemblance to this animal. It was not a derisive nickname as early men had a great affection for his dogs. The name was modernized to O Madain and then shortened to Madden. The chiefs of the O Madains were recognised as lords of their area in County Galway. The Madigans of Counties Clair and Limerick are really Maddens.' My grandmother had been interested in our family tree and her research revealed that the Maddens of my name came from County Galway in Ireland.

---

Those whom the Gods wish to destroy they first call promising - Cyril Connolly

---



FANS ARE SAFE



RICHARD J FAULDER - I presume that the front cover (of TSW7) was used because it related to the Page three editorial (or did it inspire it?). This I read with no more reaction than that it seemed to be a fairly innocuous stroll down memory lane, until I arrived at the statement that the "bad old days of sexual tension" led us to the Heart of Fandom. This is clearly nonsense. Fandom existed before those days, in times when fandom was almost exclusively male (not a good thing, but only in the sense that when the membership of the group has a gender bias, there is a danger that certain ideas may be mistaken for the norm), and surely it could not be suggested that fandom was any less fannish. Indeed, in absolute terms having to deal with the fact that there are two genders is a relatively recent phenomena for fandom - as with most things fannish, fandom caught up with trends in the mundane world at least five years after their original occurrence. Even putting all that aside, what of all the fans who didn't participate in that public astonialia because they were already happily married, too old for what was essentially something that happened among young fan, or whatever other reason? Were they any less fannish because of that? Of course not.

MICHAEL SKEET - Michelle's editorial was by far the most interesting piece in this. I think you're right about AIDS having relatively little impact on fandom (though of course there are obvious

exceptions). According to our GP, white hetero fans with no history of drug addiction are at the absolute bottom of the risk profile. Things may be different in New York or San Francisco, but in Canada at least, fans are safe.

Part of that may be that the younger fans here are all so boring when it comes to sex. It's not just the older fans settling down into steady relationships; the younger ones are doing it too, and with a bare minimum of experimentation. And whatever experimenting they are doing, they sure as hell don't talk about it. As opposed to my fannish generation, which finds sex a fascinating subject both for discussion and practical experimentation - even when it's monogamous (monogamy is highly under-rated).

It may simply be my perception; I don't know. I got into fandom just as one generation of fans was settling down from what Lorne's mother once referred to as the "puppies in a basket" phase. The next generation (in Edmonton, at least) seems far less interested in That Sort of Thing. In Toronto, where we now reside, there's no question about it. Things here are positively from-the-neck-down dead. Those familiar with Toronto fannish history say a strong streak of puritanism has always run through this city's fans (not unlike the rest of its citizens). That the current generation of Toronto fans is as repressed as all previous ones is inexplicable. We cope as best we can, simply by searching out and sticking close to those of like mind.

I wouldn't write off the chances of the Old Days returning, though. As you say, this seems to be less a medical than a socio-political thing. It may take a while, but one generation's sexual repression will probably be anathema to the next. So I'll light no candles. I will, however, hoist a homebrew to all those who remember, and who do what they can to keep the spirit alive.

There is nothing more demoralizing than a small but adequate income

MIKE GLICKSOHN - Michelle is correct in observing that there seems to be less casual sex in fandom  
21/7/1987 in the last few years. (At least I have observed the same thing happening in my own section of fandom so obviously the phenomenon isn't isolated to Australia.)  
Several years ago when Herpes was, so to speak, on everybody's lips there was a sizeable segment of what was jestingly referred to as Promiscuous Midwestern Fandom which spent most conventions fucking like crazed weasels (to use the vernacular). This doesn't seem to happen to the same degree nowadays but I don't think the AIDS scare has all that much to do with it since the trend was evident some time before AIDS became the issue it is today. Nor do I think that "facile" is the word to use in discussing the extent of Permanent Relationships as a contributing factor to the changing nature of "our" fandom. As I see it, fans are essentially ultra-conservative and as they've gotten older they've become more attracted to the idea of monogamy which, after all, appears to be the prevalent mode of our society. No doubt the nervousness about AIDS has helped make this sort of behaviour even more attractive but I'm still inclined to believe that most of us really aren't the rebels we once used to think we were. (On the other hand, perhaps we've all become Boring Old Farts?)

Good writing by Dave Lockett on a subject I have little or no interest in. As long as Dave manages to resist the temptation to start thinking that every little example of brainless stupidity his infant indulges in is just the Cutest Thing Ever ("Did you see the way little Geoffrey mashed his vegetables and potatoes together before he threw them at the wall? Isn't he adorable!" sort of thing) then I'll applaud his willingness to raise children. I'll even force myself to read the occasional fanzine article about it. I guess those of us who are teachers owe something to those who provide us with the raw materials to earn a living.

JOY HIBBERT - The amazing about babies as far as I'm concerned is their strength. They can scream  
10/10/1987 louder than an adult, with much smaller lungs and larynx, but the most impressive thing is projectile vomit. When I was 18 I worked with a woman whose sister and mother were nurses. One of them mentioned this to me, and I caused offence by suggesting that they were exaggerating, OK, the sister was skinny, about 8 stone, but it still struck me as unlikely that a tiny baby could produce projectile anything that could knock her off her feet. I was wrong. Imagine what humans would be like if that sort of strength lasted into adulthood!

LLOYD PENNEY - We hear stories of conventioners (kinda sounds like Mouseketeers) going to cons  
18/7/1987 expressly to get laid, and they party and sex all weekend. I suspect this is more brag than fact; I really do wonder how much free-for-all sex goes on at a convention. Hell, I've had a few interesting ladies slip me a room number at a Worldcon (I'm happily married), but I wonder how many actually go through with a room number-style pass? The tales are legion and mind-boggling; I suspect the facts would be ridiculous and embarrassing. The free sex decreased with the herpes crisis, and probably has gone down to zero or close with the AIDS crisis.

We have gotten older, and fewer new fan can afford to travel great distances to get to cons, so the incidence of uninhibited sex at cons, or anywhere else, for that matter, has decreased greatly. AIDS and herpes, and the resurgence of syphilis will kill what others may call promiscuity. Alas for the days when one concluded an evening's partying at a con with an encounter with a new friend...

Toronto is being Strafed by the Stork itself at the moment... At Ad Astra 7, our local convention in June, we had to organise daycare for the first time, and that was just for the concom! We couldn't provide it for the entire population of the con; we'd have needed a second hotel! The concom provided four babies to the daycare, staff another two, and another staff member was rushed to the hospital the Sunday of the con to have her baby. As you trudged your way to the video and displays, the whiff of dirty didies hit you square in the nostrils.

SUE THOMASON - Interesting to read Michelle's comments on the Trackles Waste -- the "lifeless,  
5/8/1987 trackless, feckless, fuckless waste strewn with the bones of luckless wayfarers" if you want to quote LeGuin on the subject (from THE DISPOSSESSED). Interesting, because the lush and exotic jungle that presumably exists (existed?) in counterpoint to the Sterile Desert is unknown country to me, a blank space on the map, overwritten "HERE BE DRAGONS". I can't honestly see that AIDS is going to make us all monogamous, though. Syphilis certainly didn't when it first hit the civilised west. Though it will certainly change our patterns of sexual behaviour (but who said they were fixed in the first place? There are plenty of societies that never invented the kiss, the missionary position and so on; this stuff is all culture relative). What seems to me likely to happen is that among thinking people sexual activities involving contact with semen and/or blood will become much rarer, sexual activities that don't involve contact with semen or blood will

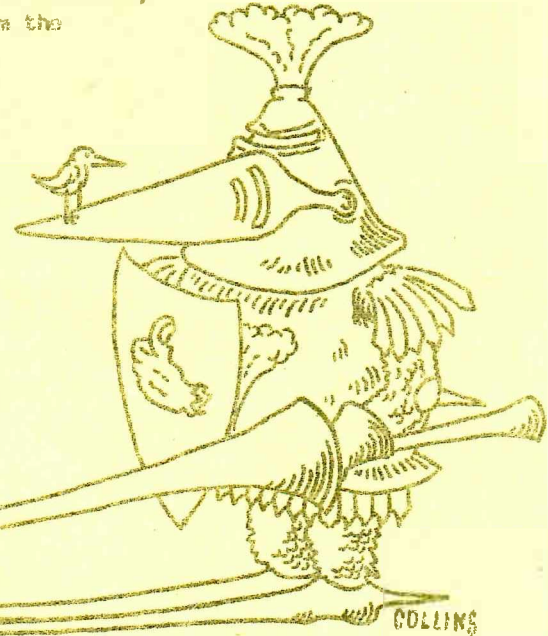
---



become more common. At the moment the sexually active group LEAST likely to get AIDS are lesbian separatists (and if you think you had problems working out who is/was/will be sleeping with whom in London, let me tell you, that's probably NOTHING on the networks some separatist colonies build up). High risk groups at the moment seem to be people who need/prefer penile penetration (any orifice), particularly the penetratee, and also presumably practitioners of S&M activities that include the drawing of blood. Solutions: use sex toys for penetration (or possibly fingers, bearing in mind the greater scratch risk; surgical gloves?), don't draw blood, use condoms to prevent contact with semen. Restrict "standard heterosexual" penetration/ejaculation to baby-making, and develop (at both personal and cultural level) sexual full body responsiveness, erotic massage, non-genital organ techniques, etc. etc.

It occurs to me to wonder, though, how much of what's currently seen as preference for a particular gender or sexual activity, is actually preference for a particular style of sexual activity. The pattern described above is easily recognisable as a lesbian stereotype (nb. As with all stereotypes, lots of lesbians have nothing to do with it). It's therefore fine for people who have a "lesbian head" but happen to like doing sex with men. What I'm not sure about is how men with a "patriarchal head" will feel about having their brand of sexuality outlawed. Is it really possible to unhook male sexuality from the penetration = dominance neurosis? Can men be unhooked from performance anxiety enough to enjoy goal-less sex, without having to "achieve" the "target" of orgasm -- his or hers? Can you imagine a culture in which the standard question is not "did you come?" but "would you like to come?" (not expecting the answer yes). Good Goddess, for one glorious moment I had a vision of AIDS dismantling the patriarchy! But what a shitty way to do it, with millions of innocent people dying...

But this is all by the wayside. What I think Michelle is lamenting is not lack of physical opportunity, but lack of intense emotional interaction. That's different, and doesn't depend solely on sex...



NOT DEFINITIVE AT ALL!!!!

BOB LEE - There are vicious rumours rolling around like tumbleweeds that I can't draw men. Ignore 4/1987 them. The truth is ~~I can't draw periods~~ that guys as subject matter bore me. I'm sure if I were a girl I'd feel differently. A sex change, however, is not on my personal horizon.

Sorry, the only time I draw guys, naked or otherwise, is when I get paid bucks for doing it. If I do a freebie, I think I should be allowed to draw whatever I feel like drawing, and currently I have no trembling, uncontrollable urge to draw the competition, i.e., hairy and overmuscled brutes. The prizes are another matter. I'm not sexist, I'm just hormonally unbalanced. ~~So sorry so.~~ However, all is not lost. You have my written authorisation to print tight male behinds all over your zine. Just don't expect me to handle it with bare fingers.

I explained to Brad Foster once why I seldom do naked couples carrying one the guy just blocks the view. If you still need orgy scenes, why don't you ask him to illustrate them? He seems to have a  ~~fetish~~ penchant for them.

You think you like my "gratuitous-and-proud-of-it" collected works in HTT 24? Actually they were just a bunch of miscellaneous filices Marty had managed to accumulate over the years I'd been contributing to his zine. Not the definitive collection, Marty, NOT DEFINITIVE AT ALL!!!! Back to you, was your reaction on the order of, say, a woman thinking she's a "little" pregnant? And what's with this "gratuitous" business? Gratuitous WHAT? You are causing me agonies of self-doubt, you little twerp, tht I might have been gratuitously nice, sensitive, non-sexist, inoffensive, and otherwise boring. I TRY SO HARD TO BE BAD, I REALLY, REALLY DO, PLEASE DON'T SEND ME AWAY, I'LL EAT GNAS WITH JELL-O, I'LL EVEN LICK...



WONDERFUL PEOPLE...

LLOYD PENNEY - Media fans can be wonderful people... I count many media fans as good friends and fond acquaintances. It is what we see or think we see of media fans' behaviour (running around with Spock ears or phasers... toy guns and the like, K/S fanzines, etc.) that lead us to make damning speeches about media fans, while, if it could be observed by the majority of sf fans in general, media fans form clubs, pub fanzines and newsletters, attend club functions, discuss topics, and do what very many sf fans do... discuss something that they like and socialize with each other because they have something in common. Any club that deals with Trek alone is similar to one club that is for fans of one particular author or series of books... there is a specific interest that grabs their fancy, and they set upon it. Perhaps the only thing that makes us truly cringe when it comes to mediafans is the fact that their apparent age is, on the average, years lower than ours. Ain't necessarily so, though. In the local Trek club there are many members who are 25 or over. We're not the screaming Trekkies you think we are. Also, sf fandom can take consolation in the fact that while some mediafans, when they age somewhat, leave fandom altogether, most stick around either in mediafandom, or, as their incomes increase, discover the world of sf cons, zines and fandom in general. I have to agree with David... some media fans merit our sneers. So do some sf fans. Between the (perceived) two fandoms, there aren't any real differences.

LLOYD PENNEY - Our experience here is that media fans have gotten into fandom through one door, others through another door. Many of those media fans lose interest in a limited field (say, Trek, or Star Wars, or Battlestar, or Dr Who), and embrace fandom as a whole, where the interests are much larger in scope. If we continue to snipe at media fandom, they'll leave altogether, or go underground, or make sure that their gatherings and conventions do not connect with ours, and our own numbers will dwindle. Some time ago, when New York fandom tried to stage a New York in '89 Worldcon bid, I saw a list of the concon members... about half of them were or once part of New York Trek fandom. Goes to show you that today, many media fans become general fans. We've been fortunate here in Toronto... for some years there was a lot of bad feelings between the media fans and the general sf fans but now that there has been a lot of mixing, there's a lot more tolerance and working together.

We recently had Alexis and Dolly Gilliland at Ad Astra 7 in Toronto in June. Alexis came prepared to throw a party for the Washington in '92 Worldcon bid. He and Dolly were very easy to talk to (I'd first met them in Atlanta, so I had a head start), and their party was relaxing. I certainly recognise his point about cliquish fans... my first couple of Worldcons consisted of good times with friends, but I found WKF's and BNFs unapproachable, or even unrecognisable... with the Canadian dollar worth about 1/2 of an American dollar, it's difficult to go to American conventions and meet the people you might feel you need to know, or at least recognise at a distance. It all comes with time... After a few Worldcons, though, I am now recognising these people, getting to know them personally, and partying with them at various cons. I still find that there are groups who just don't want to get to know you, or even see you. We're our own little group, and that's all we want. You're a trespasser, you weren't invited, get out. I have met few Boring Old Farts; people like Alexis, Yukari Shibano and Georges Galet have been gracious, friendly people, and sometimes in fandom, that air of welcome and friendliness is like a breath of fresh air. I'm sure that the more Worldcons I go to, the more people I'll meet, the more people will want to meet me, and the more enjoyable time I'll have.

WOLFGANG VOGEL - I especially enjoyed Amelia's article on Skiffy Little Trekkers but can honestly say that Trek has never really struck me as her forte, she has always given me the impression that a Tru-Fannish way of life (FIAMOL) was where her aspirations

lay... and good on her too. "NUKE THEM DAMN TREK/SKIFFIES TILL THEY GLOW", I always say, but then death is too good for them, there's always the possibility of reincarnation.





## DITMAR DEMOCRACY

RICHARD BRANDT - Thanks for sending along TSW6, a pleasant little issue with much worthy of 1987 comment. Not least of which is Michelle's "Isn't It Time We Got Democracy?" In fact, many of the same thoughts she brings up have been circulating through US fandom as the cost of Worldcon membership escalates, even a supporting membership (with voting rights and publications but nothing else) costing \$15 or more. Why not offer just a Hugo-voting membership for \$5 or so, many ask? Well, many reasons possibly. One is that the Hugo Awards originated with the World Science Fiction Conventions, and are by definition an award presented by the World Science Fiction Convention, so limiting the voting to Worldcon members simply makes sense; they constitute the body that has traditionally comprised the electorate. As for making it more affordable for people to vote... This brings up the whole issue of how politicized the Hugos have become, to the point where they are in danger of actually becoming as meaningless an award as some contend they already are. It's been no secret that the Church of Scientology and Bridge Publications have been campaigning since BATTLEFIELD EARTH to get one of Hubbard's books on the Hugo ballot, distributing ballots to Hubbardites with the suggestion that they mail it in with their check for an attending membership at the Worldcon. This year they actually managed to get BLACK GENESIS, the second installment in L. Ron's decalogy, into the Best Novel category. Only last year, a coalition of mediafen formed a 'campaign' to get a mediazine on the ballot; one of them as much as admitted that they didn't think their candidate was much of a zine, but it was the only one that enough mediafen were familiar with to be a viable contender. Of course, they only needed 13 votes to get a nominee on the ballot last year, but their favourite son did respectably enough on the final ballot. If Hugo voting rights were available for five bucks or some such sum, how much easier would it be for a publisher or a bloc of fans or a club or the Church of Scientology to manipulate the results by stuffing the ballot box? Sad to say, this is no longer a subject for idle conjecture.

Now, of course, some years ago a committee put together something called the FAAN Awards, which were open to anyone who could demonstrate some kind of activity in fandom during the prior year, who paid an extremely nominal fee of, I think it was, \$2. It seems to have left a bad taste in the mouths of those who were involved with it, though, for reasons of which I'm not aware. Other US fen may be filling you in on details as I speak... Paul Skelton was discussing some problems in FILE 770 that I think are relevant: How many people are familiar with all of what's being done each year? (And how do you motivate them to get involved in the awards process?) And, with the increasing politicization of fan affairs, what does one do about fans who produce good work but are unpopular with a clique of vocal and influential fans? Should one bother trying to give awards on the basis of 'quality' under those circumstances?

What a can of worms.

HARRY WARNER, JR - The editorial discussion of the Ditmar problem isn't different in basics from the 2/7/1987 Hugo problems that have been receiving fanzine attention in the United States.

People who should vote don't vote, some people with dubious qualifications to vote do so, and there is no reason other than custom to have the awards tied in with a major convention. I doubt that the Hugo situation will ever improve substantially because the Hugo Awards are the one distinctive attribute of Worldcons, the only feature that isn't duplicated by other large cons, and Worldcon authorities aren't going to rock the boat. For a few years, the United States had the Faan awards which came closest to a satisfactory balloting that fandom has yet experienced. Participation was limited to fanzine fandom, those who could prove they'd published or contributed to a fanzine within the past year. Unfortunately the awards vanished, probably because by definition they didn't permit large voter turnouts and didn't interest the fans who do nothing but attend local club meetings or run around to conventions.

JACK HERMAN - Who should vote for the Ditmars? you ask. Personally, I favour a FAAN type award, 1987 given by those who are involved in fanzine fandom for work in fanzine fandom. To

nominate and vote, one must have contributed to a fanzine during the year under consideration, either by editing, writing, art or loc. Awards can then cover a wider field of fanactivity in zines: Best zine, best writer serious, best writer humorous, best reviewer, best letterhack, best cover artist, best cartoonist, best filloist etc. The problem with the traditional awards (Hugos and Ditmars) is that they mix people who know the professional field with those who know the fan field and ask them to vote in both. Many who should refrain from voting through ignorance still vote for any nominee they have heard of. Or the one zine they might have seen - hence the advantage enjoyed by newszines and other large circulation zines. When you get the awards given by conventions as well you mix in a further group of fen who might be ignorant of both fan and pro ranks but like cons and want to have a say in the awards. While the awards are given by the

Natcon (a reasonable compromise since Natcons have the money to build the things and the forum to present them), I agree that a category of 'Voting Member' may be necessary. Remember the Constitution (by which concerns are bound), abbreviated though it is, stipulates that only Members of the Australian Natcon can vote.

SHERYL BIRKHEAD - for several years now i have mentioned that the high cost of hugo voting kept me  
1987 from it for several years - and for the recent few that i have joined, i have felt very guilty that money was spent in a non-essential manner. a lot of people have commented and felt the supporting membership was not too much to pay for the privilege or felt a low voting fee might lead to ballot stuffing and so forth. from what responses i read, not too many people appeared to favour the voting only category. my other thought - i have several every now and then - is that i d like to see someone come up with a way to makes the pieces on the final ballot available to all voters - such as someone publishing a composite - expensive in its own right - but i refuse to vote blindly and can rarely find the final slate to read. but i ve said all this before and elsewhere...

CY CHAUVIN - The question about Democracy for the Ditmars reminds me of a very similar discussion I  
27/7/1987 was in years ago about the Hugo awards, for much the same reasons. I agree totally: a voting fee separate from the convention membership fee should be sufficient. Possibly the only objection might be the danger of "ballot stuffing" by unknown and hoax fans and relatives. I admit though that since I now am financially able to go to many Worldcons, I don't always vote for the Hugos as regularly as I should. Yes, Michelle, it's true: I've become complacent about my rights as a fan! It's only the fear of the Scientologists sweeping the novel award, or a comic book winning for best non-fiction book about sf that gets my blood boiling! It's no different in real life, of course: in Australia, you have a law that says you must vote in elections, while in America more people sit home and don't vote than do. And at the same time some younger people agitate for the right to vote. None of this takes in who is really qualified. That's the problem with the fiction awards, at least with the Hugos, because most of the fiction nominated is so bad I don't want to read it at all (this year, however, the standard of short fiction seems improved -- I give credit to all the British fans who nominated). So many fans have less interest in the awards, which often only seem depressing and embarrassing, and often like a horse which should be put out of its misery.

BRIAN EARL BROWN - The real problem with the Ditmars and the Hugos is that the people best qualified  
23/6/1987 to vote in it are the people least interested in them. (It doesn't help that it costs a minimum of \$20 to vote on the Hugos. I don't know about you, but I've got better things to do with \$20 than buy my right to vote for one award.) I don't know about the Ditmars, but the Hugos were organised within the context of the World SF Association and are awards granted by the WSFA - presumably a similar arrangement exists for the Ditmars - so that I consider it entirely proper that the Hugo voters be restricted to WSFA members (Worldcon members). This is NOT an award given by fandom as a whole, but merely by the members of one convention.

A non-convention linked award is possible along the lines of the old FAAN awards but the FAAN awards petered out because there was no chain of responsibility. There was no one to take over running it when Moshe tired of doing it. I think this will happen to any awards program not tied and bound to some other ongoing organisation - Natcon or Worldcon. I'd like to see the FAAN awards revived because the Hugo voting audience is so unrelated to the fanzine world that the ballot is often a joke. An award voted on by active fans would give interesting results.

HARRY ANDRUSCHAK - All attempts to set up an award separate to the Hugos have failed. The last  
9/6/1987 last was the FAAN awards of the late 1970's... which just ran out of steam. So what fannish recognition would be the Hugos. But apathy is the main problem with the Hugos. I do not know if you have followed the uproar over a bunch of fanzine fans urging other fanzines fans to vote "No Award" for the Best Fanzine Category. The joke was that most of those who signed the advertisement to vote "No Award" did not bother to nominate and vote for the fanzine award! Apathy indeed.

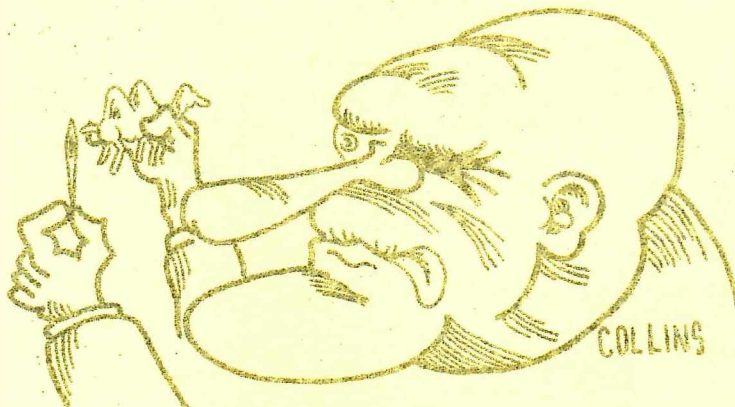
DAVID PALTER - The democratizing reform of the Ditmars proposed by Michelle sounds very good in  
2/6/1987 principle. In practice it will run into only one notable difficulty, which is that it creates a lot more work for the administrators of the award. This is an unpaid position to begin with. Does anybody really want to take on that much additional work? Well, it could be. Fans have been known to do stranger things.

---



J.R. MADDEN - While I am just a Yank and not qualified totally to enter into the discussion of the Dittmar voting procedure, I feel compelled (a fannish trait) to stick my nose into your business. Over the years I have read various comments out of Australia concerning the apparent lack of participation in the Dittmar voting process. Michelle feels that having to purchase a membership in the NatCon is a prohibitive barrier to such participation suggesting a different system but still requiring a minimal voting fee cost of administration. Sorry, Michelle, it might help some but there are going to be a lot of folks who feel like the voting process should be entirely free with someone (?) else paying the postage both ways. You are really hitting on the basic problem in all organisations of hobby interest: apathy in regards to voting. Professional organisations, where one's livelihood is involved, generally have a slightly higher voter participation but not much. To expect science fiction fans to participate in Dittmar voting procedures they are actually concerned about the awards themselves; this can be considered true for only the most die-hard, serious fans in Australia which, you might admit, are not that many to begin with. Your suggestions are good but do not expect too much.

MICHAEL SKEET - The Casper Awards, Canada's national SF thingies, are handled in pretty much the same way as the Dittmars, and with similar results. (I believe 37 people voted for the '87 awards.) The amusing thing is that, on a percentage basis, about the same



number of people vote for the Caspers as vote for the Hugos (when taken as a percentage of people attending the convention in question, that is). A fairly thorough scouring of the woods came up with an initial mailing list of 1,500 names for the Casper mailing. I think I can state without fear of contradiction that 1,500 is a very high figure for the number of active Canadian fans. I'd be willing to set the number at about the 250. Your proposed amendment to the voting system would certainly make a lot more people potentially eligible to vote - but the voting/administration fee will have an

effect rather like that of requiring con membership. Either way, I think it makes sense to put some sort of financial control on voting to prevent block-voting from seriously running amok (a major problem when the number of votes cast is as small as it is). I don't anticipate much change in the Caspers in the near future.

LLOYD PENNEY - I should tell you about Canada's Casper Awards, our equivalent of the Dittmars...  
 25/6/1987 When we were preparing our convention (our national convention is hosted by another convention every year, which means it is not held at a fixed time every year), we tried to put together a list of Canadian fans, period. We came up with a database of 1400 names and addressees, and we sent out nomination forms to all of them. To those who nominated, we sent out final ballots, and they could vote if they were members of the convention on an attending or supporting basis. We had 800 people attending, and only 18 supporting, and out of the 1400 people we mailed to, only 38 ballots came back. About 60 nominated, but only 38 voted on the final ballot. Sad figures, true, but it was democracy in action. Our aim this year was to give everyone the opportunity to vote. There is no national sf club in Canada, so we had to rely on sf clubs giving us membership lists (many of whom didn't), fanzines giving us mailing lists (many of whom didn't), and actifans across the country sending us what addresses they had (many of whom didn't). What I'm trying to say is the Convention, the Canadian national convention, is organized in the way you talk about in the article. We charged C\$5 for a supporting membership, which got you all the publications from the convention, such as the programs book, and the three daily newsletters that appeared. We have had to do it this way because it is unfair to expect attendance of people from say, Nova Scotia, when the year's Convention is held in Vancouver, on the opposite coast. It is financially impossible for most Canadian fans to make such a trip just to go to a convention. Supporting memberships have been the way for these distanced fans to exercise their opportunity and right to vote. Australia is smaller, but it is still a severe financial outlay to travel from one coast to another (unless the national convention is held in Alice Springs, I guess). I hope the Oz Natcon will look at your article and the way we do it, as well as the way other countries run their national conventions.

WHAT FANS READ BESIDE SF

---

JOHN DECHANCIE - I'd be interested to find out what fans read beside SF. I've been having trouble  
22/6/1987 with fiction in general; tempting to think that it's because I've written over half  
a million words of fiction already in my short career. You begin to see the  
backdrops, the scaffolding, begin reading to find out how the author did his tricks. Nothing like  
literary success (such as it is) to destroy the joy of reading fiction. As you pointed out, my  
having stopped reading SF hasn't prevented me from writing it. But as I derive much of my income  
from writing, this isn't surprising. I have to write to live, and SF is popular stuff. I've  
discovered, though, that it's more fun to write than read.

Amused to see Harry Warner still trying, after all these years, to define the field  
that has absorbed most of his spare time throughout his life. Sometimes I've half a mind to say,  
yes, SF should be separated from the rest of literature and not critiqued as such. It's special,  
and deserves special treatment. But then another interesting movie starts running on the TV, the  
air conditioner turns on, and I just don't give a damn any more.

Maybe I read more SF than I realise. I just bought the latest Heinlein, TO SAIL  
BEYOND THE SUNSET. I've been collecting Heinlein in hardback for the last few years. I didn't  
finish THE CAT WHO WALKS THROUGH WALLS, his last one, because it just quit in the middle. But I'd  
still rather read a good mystery than the best SF has to offer these days. Really good mysteries  
are rare, though.

RICHARD BRANDT - As far as my reading goes: This summer I've been reading John Sayle's first novel,  
1987 PRIDE OF THE BIMBOS; Sidney Kirkpatrick's fascinating A CAST OF KILLERS, about how  
King Vidor cracked the William Desmond Taylor murder; FOOL'S RUN by Patricia  
McKillop; MISERY by Stephen King; FILM FLAM, Larry McMurtry's essays on Hollywood; A SUMMONS TO  
MEMPHIS, Peter Taylor's Pulitzer winning first novel; Geoff Ryman's THE UNCONQUERED COUNTRY; THE  
GREY HORSE by R.A. McAvoy and PYRAMIDS by Fred Saberhagen. I got all of them from the library.  
I've also been reading tons of fanzines and prozines. I think my taste in books is like my taste in  
music, which means I disagree strongly with those who try to tell me that an eclectic taste amounts  
to no taste at all. This may mean no meaningful generalizations can be made from my case, but what  
the heck.

BRIAN EARL BROWN - What do I read when I'm not reading SF - first off, let me say that I still read  
23/6/1987 a good deal of SF. In fact I'm in the middle of SECOND GENESIS by Donald Moffett  
and recommend it highly. This is the sort of SF that Larry Niven should be  
writing. Outside SF I read mysteries, mostly British mysteries at that. Ellis Peters, Simon Brett,  
Martha Grimes (who's really a Yank though you wouldn't know it), Josephine Tey, Dorothy Sayers, P D  
James, plus Chandler, Hammett, Elizabeth Peters, Warren Murphy and Sara Peretsky.

"Why is SF so frowned upon," asks Mr Loney. Two answers come to mind. First, it  
came up from a "pulp" origin, this is seen as vulgar; a cheap read for people who move their lips.  
(Real people read books!) Secondly, and this is sort of the first point restated, SF is seen as a  
branch of children's literature. Norman Spinrad first presented this argument and I find it  
convincing. SF's preoccupations are defined as "juvenile" hence beneath notice, just as romance  
novels deal with "juvenile" situations and responses and ditto for mystery novels.

LLOYD PENNEY - I unabashedly state that I read almost nothing but science fiction. Little else can  
25/6/1987 hold my interest these days. However, I do have a fair selection of books about  
newspaper editing, some classics that I have read, some Canadian literature, and a  
few decrepit editions of old masterpieces. I read a lot of old sf these days because I simply  
cannot afford to buy and read the latest science fiction (the price is about C\$4 to C\$6 for a  
paperback), so I regularly raid our local sf bookstore and other used bookstores and read sf  
classics from the past.

HARRY WARNER, JR - My reading in the past few years has been mainly devoted to mystery fiction,  
2/7/1987 non-fiction about music (the old fuddy-duddy 'classical' kind) and books about  
movies that seem to be delicately balanced between fiction and non-fiction. I  
confess that when I read a few science fiction novels, one after the other, I decide after the  
fourth or fifth that now I've done my duty and I have the right to return to the mystery novels that  
I really want to be reading. (I didn't read mystery fiction to any great extent until about ten  
years ago, so I have a lot of catching up to do.) I also read the yard sale advertisements in the  
newspapers and very little else.

---



LAND OF SIXTY MILLION SHEEP

LYN MCCONCHIE - NZ is a wonderful country if you don't count the people who come in two types.

9/12/1987

First there is the farmer, he tends to come as a family unit, one male/one female/and several replicas.

The Farmer admits NZ is a wonderful country but ...

he's just planted the turnips and it won't rain - they'll all die on him and he's gonna go bankrupt, he just knows it!

...of course, if it rains on the turnips, then he's outside looking up and complaining that the sheep were to be sheared this afternoon and now they can't and the shearing gang will leave without doing them and not come back and without the money for the woolclip he's gonna go bankrupt!

Even supposing the rain falls at the proper time for the turnips and holds off for the shearing, SOMETHING is gonna go wrong. If the cows don't get mastitis, the pigs will come down with swine fever, the sheep with footrot, the horse with strangles, and the dogs will develop mange!

So occupied with his wess is the farmer that should his wife inform him one night that she is running off with the vet, the main reaction will be bitter complaints over the difficulty of obtaining another vet who understands the stock!

There is one thing about being a farmer ... there is never any shortage of things to complain about, all genuine, which tends to make him a pessimist. The only optimists in farming are hobby farmers who don't care if the sheep aren't shorn on time, the pig has erysipelas, and the house cow has dried off prematurely. Their farming is supported by other activities and they can enjoy, untrammelled by financial worries, the joy of owning the land.

The other type is the city dweller. This type tends to come in a bewildering variety of sub-divisions. Little is gained by enumerating them.

City dwellers as a general rule also have complaints (some catching), there are the commuter trains - either too early, too late, or too full and why didn't they add another carriage? One of the most fascinating things to hear on a day of heavy rain as you stand unprotected on the station waiting for the 7.15 is the nasal voice of the announcer informing all and sundry that, "owing to a points failure, the 7.20 will be half an hour late". This is the city dwellers announcement that Winter has now officially arrived! Then, should you not choose to go by train, there are instead the joys of the motorway! Here you may be caught in traffic jams which have gathered as a result of an accident up ahead. Not to worry though, you won't be more than half an hour late for work... ah, all right then - an hour.

Of course some wise people neither take the train or drive to work. These happy travellers walk leisurely to the nearest bus stop and catch the bus to work - quick, cheap, and so so easy!

It is unfortunate in the extreme that such do not always appreciate their good fortune. Admittedly being sicked up on by the toddler in the next seat can be a bit irritating. So can being trodden heavily on by someone in stiletto heels just as you rise to leave. Then there are the bus drivers who play games with the passengers - games like, "I can leave just before you can quite leave the door" and, "if I accelerate just as you stand in an empty aisle you'll fall flat on your face, I bet". But these are only their whimsical little ways and the wise traveller knows they don't really MEAN it.

After work it is back to the suburbs and the happiness of discussing some of the interesting things in life... such as where the hell the three milk bottles you put out before you left have gone to? Why your garage now announces in vivid red spray paint that "Mr X fucks pigs". You wonder in passing if your neighbour really DOES practise porcine intercourse.

And if so, how does he feel about having his proclivities announced in foot high letters. You discover how he feels when you open the door a little later in the acinillating evening and find yourself informed at the top of very efficient lungs that, "if you don't get that ~~\*\*\*\*~~ load of ~~\*\*\*\*~~ lies off the garage at once you are going to be sued for libel".

But then, some people can't take a joke can they?

NZ is a wonderful country, everyone living here will tell you that. The reason it is quite so unanimous is that the dissenters are all living Surfere Paradise, Kings Cross, or have gone further afield to study yoga in India, meditation in Tibet, or western decadence in America.

But then they were the ones who just couldn't take it ... as REAL Kiwis would never leave our wonderful country:

"Excuse me Madam, are you Lyn McConchie?"

"Yes, why?"

"Well I'm here to tell you that you have won a beautiful home in Melbourne and a new car. Unfortunately you must move there in order to claim your prize."

"Here's my pasaport, the cars can follow, when's the next plans?!"



THE PICTURES

THE PLEA!

Shep Kirkbride.....	Cover, Page B3
Sarah Prince	Pages B3 & B19 (logos)
Betty de Gabrielle.....	Page B5
ATom	Page B7
David Collins.....	Pages B9, B33 & B37
Joan Hanke-Woods	Page B11
Ian Gunn.....	Pages B13 & B17
Bob Lee	Page B15
Steven Fox.....	Page B25
Phil Ched	Page B27
Anatoly Paseka.....	Page B29 & B40
Brad Foster	Page B31
Larry Dunning.....	Page B34

The last few months have seen an increasing amount of mail addressed to Roger Weddall arriving at PO Box 428 in Richmond - the address for TSW, Michelle and I. We don't mind passing this mail on - we do, after all, share a house with Roger - but he does have an address of his own and both he and we would prefer that his permanent address be the one that is in use. So, with thanks in advance, please address all mail for Roger to: Roger Weddall, PO Box 273, Fitzroy, VIC 3065, AUSTRALIA



WE ALSO HEARD FROM

Harry Andruschak: PO Box 5309, Torrance CA 90510-5309, USA // ATom: 17 Brockham House, Brockham Drive, London SW2 3RU, UK // Vladimir Borisov: 662616 Abakan, UL. Krylova 90 KV 72, USSR // Tom Cardy: PO Box 27-274, Wellington, NEW ZEALAND // Dave Collins: 21 Exlelgh Cloae, Bitterne, Southampton SO2 5FB, UK // Chuck Connors: Sildan House, Chediston Road, Wissett near Halesworth, Suffolk IP19 0NF, UK // David Cropp: 277 Adelaide Road, Wellington 2, NEW ZEALAND // Larry Dunning: PO Box 1300, Albany WA 6330, AUSTRALIA // Delson: 2 Behan Street, Bentley WA 6102, AUSTRALIA // Tommy Ferguson: TASH, 60 Melrose St, Lisburn Rd, Belfast BT9 7DN, Northern Ireland, UK // Brad W. Foster: 4109 Pleasant Run, Irving TX 75038, USA // Bruce Grenville: PO Box 876, Auckland, NEW ZEALAND // Michael Hailstone: 204 Station Street, Box Hill VIC 3128, AUSTRALIA // Joan Hanke-Woods: 1543 Fargo Avenue Apt #21, Chicago IL 60626, USA // Alex Heatley: PO Box 11-708, Manners Street, Wellington, NEW ZEALAND // Craig Hilton: 28 Success Crescent, Manning WA 6152, AUSTRALIA // Dave Lockett: 69 Federal Street, Tuart Hill WA 6060, AUSTRALIA // Frank Macakasy Jnr: PO Box 27-274, Wellington, NEW ZEALAND // Lyn McConchie: 15 Rauparaha Street, Waikanae Beach, NEW ZEALAND // Jeanne Mealy: 4157 Lyndale Avenue S. Minneapolis MN 55409, USA // Anatoly Paseka: PO Box 69, 620141 Sverdloek, UL. Pehotincev, USSR // Anthony Peacey: 82 Milne Street, Baywater WA 6053, AUSTRALIA // Leland Sapiro: 2809 Cueter #264, Richardson TX 75080, USA // Ben Schilling: 45605 Fox Lane E. Apt #206, Utica MI 48087-4228, USA // Garth Spencer: 1296 Richardson Street, Victoria, BC, V8V 3E1, CANADA // Nick Stathopoulos: 17 Norfolk Street, Blacktown NSW 2148, AUSTRALIA // Igor Tolokonnikov: CPO Post Restante, Volgograd 66, USSR // R Lorraine Tutihasi: 5876 Bowcroft Street #4, Los Angeles CA 90016, USA // Pam Wells: 24A Beech Road, Bowes Park, London N11 2DA, UK