

# Weber Woman's Wrevenge

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## CONTENTS

Cover Commentary (Richard Faulder)	1
Editorial	1
1980 Nth America Trip Report (Part 2)	3
Buttons & Badges (Chris Callahan)	12
Letters (Elizabeth Darling, Leanne Frahm, Warren Nicholls, Frank Macskasy Jr, Gerald Smith, Linda Taft)	13
Book Reviews (Islands, by Marta Randall; Juniper Time, by Kate Wilhelm; Gyn/Ecology, by Mary Daly; Toward a New Psychology of Women, by Jean Baker Miller)	21
The Adventures of Anti-Podes	20
Fanzines received/Recent reading	28
Credits & Addresses	29

## COVER STORY

Gentle readers, please note: Jean Weber had nothing to do with the cover illustration (except inasmuch as she accepted it - silly person). Actually, the illustration was originally conceived as something to send Marty Cantor for publication in Holier Than Thou. However, it then occurred to me that the editor of something called WeberWoman's Wrevenge might be interested.

Obviously the drawing depicts a victory by a woman over a man. However, it should not be interpreted as depicting the emasculating tendencies of feminists. I'd be the last to believe in such tendencies. No, rather it is intended to indicate that, in the face of strong-minded, self-realized women, the archaic social imperative for men to conform to the 'macho' (to use an American expression) image will break down. (Which is why the man is depicted as a sword-wielding barbarian, rather than in more modern and/or urbane manner.)

-- Richard Faulder

(Editor's note: an apology is due to Richard here, for mangling his drawing in printing. The stencil split and I did not notice until quite a few copies had been printed; but it did not seem to ruin the drawing, so I decided not to electrostencil a new copy and print it again.)

## EDITORIAL

You will note the use of two typers in this issue. Just after finishing typing the trip report, I bought a used IBM Executive typer and completed the zine using that. It's a D model with Documentary typeface and a long carriage to take stencils sideways. It has a few spacing problems and has had to go back to the shop once already, but is otherwise working quite nicely.

My new job (at CSIRO's Division of Computing Research) is going well, but keeping me very busy. I've now learned enough about the editing facility on the computer, to do necessary things for the job, and with luck will have my mailing list set up to do the mailing labels for this issue. The job's turned out to be a bit different from what I'd expected, but I'm not complaining. I am, in effect, the managing editor of the bimonthly newsletter published by the Division -- except that a couple of people higher in the hierarchy have

veto power, which is a bit of a nuisance at times. Then there is 'the machine' which obeys Murphy's Law brilliantly. For example, the camera that makes copy from the phototypesetting facility hasn't been cooperating for the past three weeks (until a few days ago), so we couldn't get decent prints to send to the printers. Well, it made a good excuse for why the newsletter was late -- even if we'd had it done on time, we couldn't have got it printed!

Looking over this issue, I'm fairly pleased with the mixture of articles in it. Naturally I now remember lots of little details that got left out of the trip report, like the vial of Mt St Helens' ash my mother gave me, which she'd personally collected on her travels west in the caravan...

I also notice an appalling lack of uniformity in my use of single or double-column formats. That's what comes of typing a few stencils here and there without paying attention to what you've done before. Maybe I'll do better next time... but I wouldn't count on it.

This issue has turned out to be considerably longer than originally planned. I decided I didn't want to wait any longer to publish Linda Taft's letters, and midway through the last page I realised I'd exceeded the pages that will fit into a 50-gram weight limit, so decided I might as well go nearly up to the next price break at 100 grams. This gave me plenty of room for letters and other odds and ends, and resulted in a much more interesting zine, I think. Since I already have enough sercon stuff for nextish, I may have to scratch a bit for lighter material to fill it out (hint, hint).

I've certainly been keeping busy with fannish gatherings since my return from America. There was Medvention in November (a relaxacon in the Blue Mountains west of Sydney), a Christmas party at Peter Toluzzi's in Sydney, an A '83 meeting in Sydney later in January, another Medvention in February (followed by a week in Sydney on business during which I had the opportunity to attend one of the traditional Thursday-night gatherings at Galaxy Bookshop which adjourns to a restaurant for dinner). Fortunately a new section of freeway has opened between here and Sydney (bypassing a particularly winding stretch of road), cutting the drive by about  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour to 'only' 4 hours. I don't recall anything more exotic than a few concom meetings for the first Canberra convention, CIRCULATION ONE, to be held in October, which I did in March (sorry about the syntax there). April brought the traditional Easter convention in Melbourne, but it was anything but traditional this year as it was a film and video convention (CINECON), at which we had the chance to see the first Australian screening of the US television film of Ursula Le Guin's 'The Lathe of Heaven'. That was, if anything, even more superb than I'd been led to believe.

Oh, the other big news is that my application for Australian citizenship has been approved, so it should not be too long before I am invited to front up for the naturalisation ceremony.

I've also recently acquired a Gestetner, named the Isopress. It was found weeping quietly in a corner of the Women's Centre, hidden under other junk under a desk, and presumed 'dead' by the human inhabitants. I offered to take it home and try to get it working, and it turned out to be in excellent condition and not 'dead' at all. I suppose the Centre may want it back eventually but meanwhile it's much happier doing a good job at my house and not being neglected anymore -- indeed, it's much loved and appreciated!

(continued on page 29)

1980 North America

## TRIP REPORT

Part 2

Wednesday, 22 Oct. Ken & Linda went to work, I went sightseeing. Downtown Minneapolis has something called the "Skyway", a series of covered walkways connecting the buildings above street level. You can walk around several square blocks without going outside - very handy in wet or cold weather.

Another thing to recommend Minnesota is its "Clean Indoor Air Act" which requires nonsmoking areas in public buildings, restaurants, etc. In fact, it's better than that - unless specifically posted as a Smoking area, indoor public spaces are non-smoking! I gather this is not always adhered to, but it was still very encouraging. The cold, damp weather discouraged me from doing as much sight-seeing as I might have. I stopped at Uncle Hugo's bookstore (around the corner from K&L's flat) and found most of the books still remaining on my to-buy list (many of them in secondhand editions - in very good condition, too). Fannish gathering in the evening at which I met quite a few Minneapolis fan, most of whose names I regret to say I cannot recall.

One of the highlights of my city tour was the IDS building, which included an interior "crystal court" or interior courtyard several stories high. Lots of glass & reflections, & indoor plants.

Thursday, 23 Oct. Got going late, partly because of many phone calls which interrupted my morning. Took the bus into St Paul to meet Linda, and arrived very late due to misjudging the time very badly. She works for the Historical Society and is a fountain of information. We went on a tour of old buildings and also stopped at the zoo to visit Woscar Wombat who is standing for President. My flash unit chose that time to refuse to function, of course. Stopped to visit Denny Lien for a mid-afternoon snack, and then at a camera store to see about buying a new flash unit. Too expensive! Shop man fixed mine.

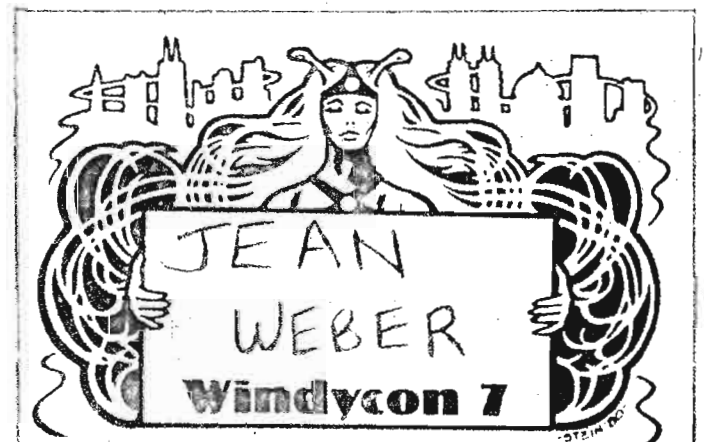


Found a copy of John Brunner's "The Sheep Look Up" on Ken's bookshelves and read 2/3 of it. Haven't been able to locate a copy to buy.

Friday, 24 Oct. Up at 5 am for a long uncomfortable ride to Chicago with Fred Haskell, who had not calculated the luggage space required by five people in a car. The company was not bad, however, and the car had two interesting features: cruise control, whereby one can set the car's speed at the speed limit (55 mph or 90 km/h) and not have to worry about one's foot getting heavy and going too fast. The other was a windscreen wiper than would wipe intermittently, like every five seconds or so - great for misty days when constant wiping is distracting and unnecessary. Arrived at the Hyatt Regency in mid-afternoon and had a very long wait to check in. This is the hotel where the 1982 WorldCon will be held and it was most impressive. Windycon had about 1200 members, taking up only part of one of the two towers; the entire place can handle 5 or 6 thousand, I think, and it would probably be really nice to take the entire place over and not have many if any mundanes around. We shared the place with at least one other convention, or maybe two. Lots of function rooms. Windycon 7 had a whole collection of rooms on a lower level as well as a few on a different level. Where to begin? It was the biggest Con I've ever attended, and I felt a bit overwhelmed. Also it was just a weekend con, and turned out in practice to be mostly Friday evening and all day Saturday plus Saturday night, with very little on Sunday. I was just getting started, and it ended! I'm used to 3- or 4-day Aussie conventions. Also, I was trying to organise a slide show and room party for A'83, which meant I had little time to attend program items. Everyone was very friendly and helpful but things coalesced slowly. In the midst of all this I was on a panel chaired by Joyce Scrivner on "Foreign Fandoms", with Bob Tucker, Mike Glicksohn and Ken Fletcher. At first the panel nearly outnumbered the audience (there was double-strand programming, and I forget what was going on in the other room). Nevertheless, we had an interesting discussion, and people began drifting in later. Mike brought up his usual comments about fan funds and the lack of "suitable" people standing for them, and we had quite a lively debate. Then Rusty Hevelin auctioned some stuff for DUFF & TAFF & whatall.

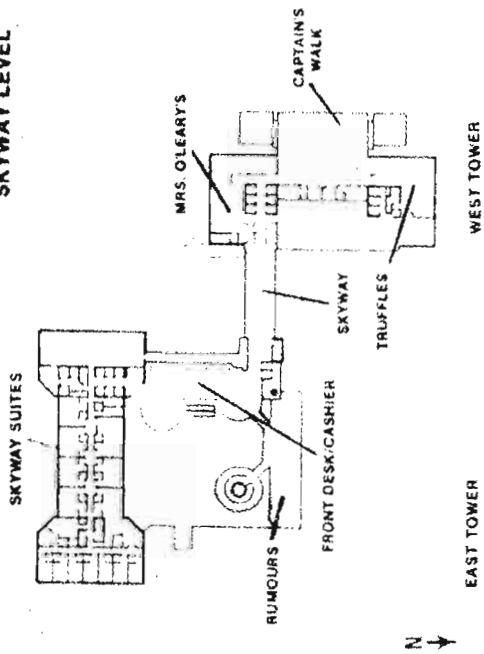
But I'm getting well ahead of myself. Let's see, on Friday night there was a masquerade, and some extremely good costumes. One highlight was a contestant (giving a long and boring presentation) being ~~escorted~~ escorted from the stage by two Darth Vaders. Another was a black Dr Who with a beautiful Afro hairstyle.

My room turned out to be just across the hall from the con suite, great for parties but not so good for sleeping. Fortunately,

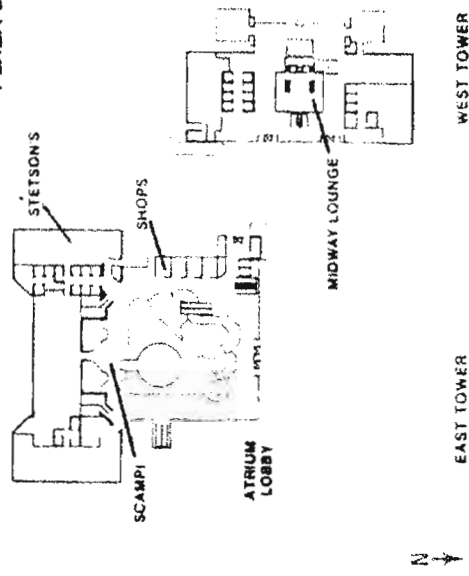


my earplugs were adequate for the occasion. One very nice touch was the provision of beer & soft drinks by the concom. Also copious quantities of fresh-popped popcorn. I really should have organised the A'83 party for Friday night, as there were no other parties (that I knew of) except in the consuite. But I was too tired. Saturday night there was a lot of competition and we got few visitors, but I enjoyed the conversations we did have - except for an involved argument on whether WorldCons should limit their attendance. Actually I felt more like an outpost of the

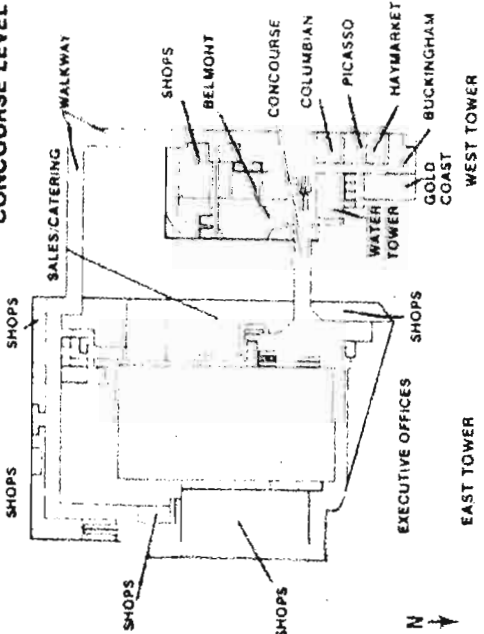
SKYWAY LEVEL



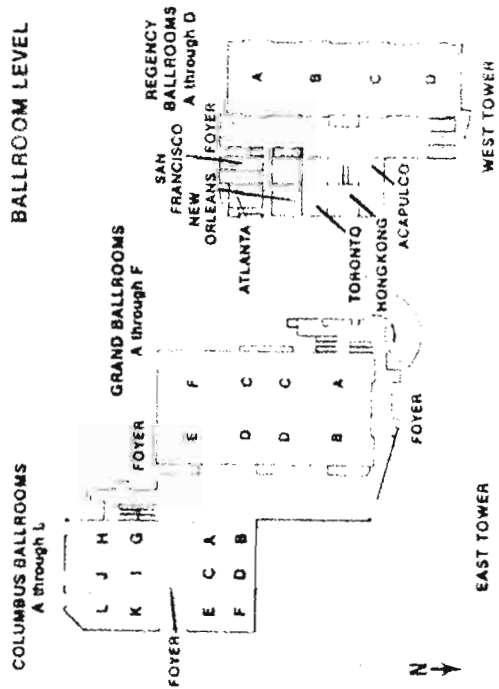
PLAZA LEVEL



CONCOURSE LEVEL



BALLROOM LEVEL



Australian embassy, because some of the keenest visitors were more interested in information about immigrating to Australia, and living conditions there, than in travel and the WorldCon. I had with me a tape of Australian songs, including such gems as "The Pub with No Beer", but it was well after midnight before I located a cassette player. About 2 am I closed the party and wandered off to find the Baltimore bidding party, which I entered with the recorder blaring "Waltzing Matilda". We shared a taste of Bundaberg (and a violent Baltimore concoction known as green slime), sang a few songs, and went out separate ways. I must say I found the Baltimore people quite friendly, although one of their supporters (not an official bidcom person, I think) was rude and obnoxious. Jan Finder had written several times to remind me that bidding should be friendly, and that Australia and Baltimore Bidders generally were. My experiences confirmed this.

I had my first chance to see "Antifan Strikes Back" at Windycon, and the audience seemed to enjoy it thoroughly. After the con I ended up with the copy and carried it with me to Maryland and back to California, before returning it to the Los Angeles A'83 supporters. Prior to the party, I'd managed to arrange a room and projector to show some Australian slides, but the time (dinner) and place (away from the main events) meant a very small audience - despite distributing many copies of Ken Fletcher's lovely notice. Nevertheless, those who attended seemed to enjoy themselves, and I always enjoy showing slides and waffling on.

Sunday, 26 Oct. (somehow Saturday got mixed up with Friday in that last lot, but never mind.) Fortunately I'd had a brief look at the art show on Saturday, because it was closed today. I allowed myself to wander through the hucksters' room and bought a few back issues of Algol/S. arship and things like that. The con suite was showing videotapes of Dr Who, all of which I'd seen more times that I care to recall, but which were new to most of the American audience. They also had copies of some episodes of Blakes Seven, including one I'd missed, but I was outvoted on what to show. Grump. Most people began leaving about mid-day though a few stayed on overnight. I got to bed early to catch up on sleep. There had been some talk about an ABC party as a dead-dog, but it didn't eventuate.

Monday, 27 Oct. I was not sure how much time it would take to check out of the hotel and get to the airport on the bus, so I started early and ended up with more than an hour to spare at the airport. The flight was uneventful, and I picked up a hire car at the airport and drove to my parents' place in Virginia (about 3½ hours). Overcast but no rain.

Tuesday, 28 Oct. Visited my Grandfather who is 80 this year. He seems in good health but his time sense is quite distorted. (There ought to be a story in there somewhere.) Phoned a lot of people.

Wednesday, 28 Oct. Visiting parents. They have a large pseudo-colonial house on a river, with a twin-engine yacht at the pier outside. A bit out of my class, but nice.

Thursday, 30 Oct. Drove up to Maryland, to visit a friend in Frederick, Linda. She has lost 40 lb and had her hair curled -- she looks terrific! Her children have of course grown a

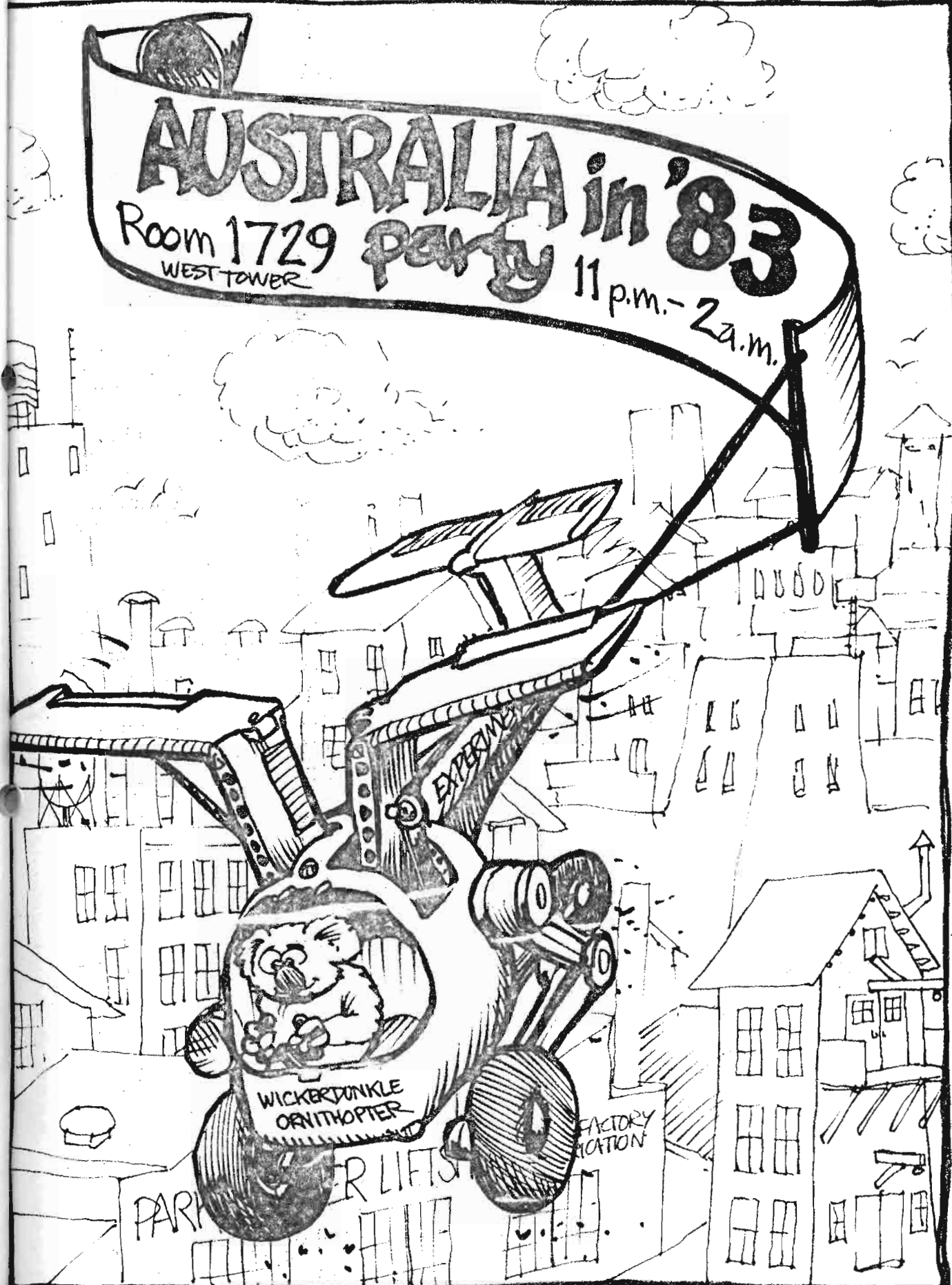


# AUSTRALIA in '83

Room 1729  
WEST TOWER

party

11 p.m. - 2 a.m.



Ken Fletcher WINDYCON Oct. '80

lot since I last saw them (4 years ago). The whole family has taken the EST (Ehrhard Seminar Training - probably misspelt) course and it particularly seems to have done wonders for Linda. However, she is still in the missionary phase of telling everybody it would do equal wonders for them, and how much better the whole world would be if everyone got similarly in touch with themselves. Well, I've heard that before, for a dozen different fads (including TM which is my personal favourite, though I hardly think it will save the world as some of its proponents claim). Sorry, I'm digressing. I really was genuinely pleased to see Linda so happy and "together" - I've known her nearly 20 years, you see...

Friday, 31 Oct. Linda took the day off and we did some sight-seeing and shopping plus lunch in town. Then I drove down to College Park to the home of Dick Roepke and Chris Callahan. As I was leaving Linda's, she was carrying some of my luggage out and managed to drop the famous bottle of Bundaberg Overproof, which still contained about 1/3 its quota of grog and was destined to be a 20th anniversary present for Dick Roepke. (Our 20th -- we met in Munich Germany in October 1960, you see.) It smashed on the brick walkway and shattered. I wept, briefly. Then I recovered and found it rather amusing, in an ironic sort of way. After carrying that bottle thousands of miles, and braving several airlines searches, to lose it in such a mundane way--! And about this point Linda's children arrived home from school and said, "Ugh! What's that smell?"

Thus I arrived at Dick and Chris' without bottle. Chris is writing Star Wars space opera, not bad for fanfic, and Dick is seriously studying pottery (in their mundane lives, both work at the Library of Congress). They are some of my very favourite people. I showed the Antifan film (Chris had seen it at Noreascon but Dick had missed it). We ate a huge delicious meal of weisswurst and salad and tried Dick's home-made mead. Chris mentioned wistfully that she wished she'd bought herself a digger hat while in Australia (they were here in '75) and I ceremoniously presented her with mine, the one that had trekked across America with me. She was stunned. It was Halloween so we greeted the trick-or-treaters with appropriate fannish remarks (all of which were wasted on the kids, of course).

Saturday, 1 Nov. Got up late. I went to the Air & Space Museum and exhausted myself enjoying the place. I have been there once before so did not need to stand in the long queues for some of the more popular exhibits, but I did purchase tickets for the two film shows, "To Fly" and "Living Planet", both of which were superb. The screen is curved and huge, and from where I was sitting, I felt like I was part of the action. Much of the action was filmed from an airplane or a glider and one dipped and swooped like a bird. I nearly got airsick! (I'm told that was not an uncommon reaction.) Recovering from the programs, I visited the "Space Art" gallery which featured aerial or satellite photographs in which natural or human-made features created an artistic pattern. Things like river deltas, sand dunes, or villages of African round huts. Dramatic and inspirational.

I had parked the car at a suburban station and ridden the Metro into Washington DC, for the experience. On weekends and at off-peak hours it is quite cheap, only 50¢. At peak hours it is expensive, which seems to me to be the wrong

approach to getting people out of their private vehicles and reducing traffic congestion. When I returned, Dick & Chris took me to Ledo's for pizza - a nostalgic trip for old Uni Maryland students. We had to wait forever (that is traditional at Ledo's) but we weren't in a hurry and had a lot to talk about, so we drank beer. After the meal I jokingly said, "Now what we need is a hot-fudge sundae" - another reference to old times, and they would not hear of anything but going to Swenson's for ice cream. Burp!

Sunday, 2 Nov. Up late again. To Charlie & Marcia Sloger's in afternoon. They are visiting Australia in a few weeks, and wanted some pointers on where to go & what to take. After dinner, I showed my Australian slides to an assembly of old friends.

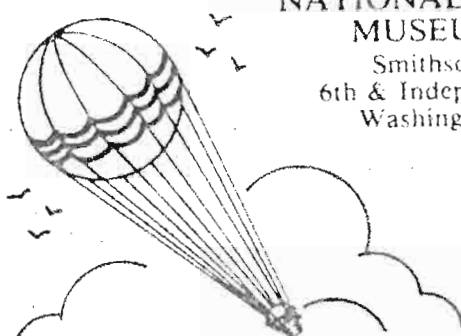
Monday, 3 Nov. Lunched with some other old friends, Ed & Joan Rich, and talked too briefly with Jan Finder on the phone. To San Francisco on United Airlines later in the day; few people on board so had a chance to sleep across a whole row of seats. Picked up another rental car and drove to my sister's. The car was making funny noises but seemed to be going okay.

Tuesday, 4 Nov. Discovered the rental car had a big chunk of rubber flapping loose on one of the rear tires - It's a wonder it didn't blow out on the long drive from the airport. Took it down to the nearest agency and turned it in for another car. Mailed the last of the Aussiecon zines and did some miscellaneous shopping. It is Election Day, so all the evening news was very depressing. Lots of good people were defeated.

Wednesday, 5 Nov. Drove up to Sacramento and visited Helen Graham, the lobbyist for Zero Population Growth (California). As one of the founding members of ZPG-Cal, and its first Treasurer (for 3 years), I have retained a great interest in its activities. Helen & I greatly enjoyed meeting each other. In the evening I visited Louis and Donna Bookbinder. Louis and I once lived together and it is wonderful to remain friends with one's ex-lovers - and also be friends with their wives! We went to a rather bizarre place called TGI Friday's, full of amazing junk and strangely-dressed waiters. It even had what I am convinced is a glass Tardis.

Thursday, 6 Nov. Did a bit more touring about Sacramento, then drove back to Walnut Creek and into Berkeley to look for second-hand bookstores. Berkeley looks about the same, grubby and full of freaks and charming old houses. I found several bookstores but few books that I didn't already have. I finally bought a hardcover copy of Joan Vinge's Snow Queen (only \$10.95 US), although fitting it into my luggage will be a problem.

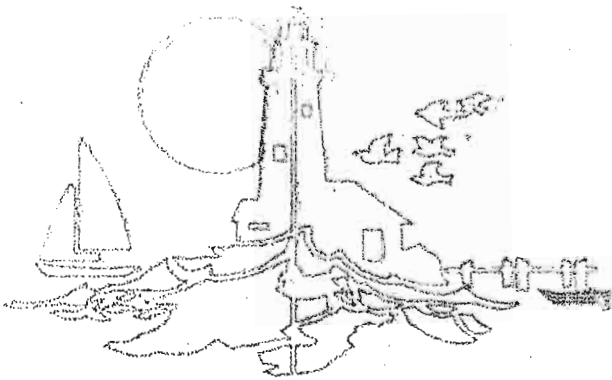
Friday, 7 Nov. A foggy, rainy day. Rode BART into San Francisco. Market Street streetcars (trams) are now underground though the old tracks are still aboveground. The planned land-



**NATIONAL AIR AND SPACE  
MUSEUM THEATER**  
Smithsonian Institution  
6th & Independence Ave., S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20560

**To Fly**

Showtime 3:35



## Ocean To Ocean Service

*For generations, crossing this continent was an adventure. A memorable experience. It's still an exciting prospect.*

*Far removed from the dusty plains and covered wagons of generations past, your trip today will be a mere five-hour flight. Whether this is your first flight or one of many, we are pleased to offer a service which has been specially designed for your journey in the Friendly Skies.*

*It is in this spirit, and expressly for today's jet age traveler, that United Airlines proudly presents Ocean to Ocean Service . . .*

called another friend, Robin Daniels, and arranged to stay at her place overnight, and then the Grahams took me for a picnic to a very nice "restricted" park in the area (only residents and their guests allowed in).

Actually it was quite nice to have to stay another night. I had seen Robin at the Grahams' party on Saturday but it was not nearly enough time to catch up on everything. We ended up eating left-over hors d'oeuvres, polishing off a flagon of wine, and lounging in Robin's hot-tub - what a perfect way to end a great holiday, in superb California decadence!

Monday, 10 Nov. Having been told to get to the airport by 7 am, I got up early and drove up, turned in the car, had a long wait for the courtesy bus, and arrived at Qantas to find no one, and almost panicked. Finally I crawled through the counter area and found a open door, behind which I located a staff member who sent me to Northwest Orient. We were to fly on NW to Honolulu where we would meet the Qantas flight from Sydney and fly back to Australia on it. We were also informed of the refuelers' strike in Australia, which would necessitate an extra stop in Fiji. Wow, thought I, with luck we might have to stay in Fiji a day. Unfortunately, we didn't. In fact, about half way to Fiji we were informed that the strike was over and we could fly straight through. Shucks! We arrived about 9.30 pm or so and somehow I managed to be among the last 3 people to clear customs, about 10.45. The long wait was enlivened by a small man being

scaping hasn't been begun. Visited my old stomping grounds at the Steinhart Aquarium and saw the Roundabout which is now in use. Showed slides to the gang at lunchtime. In the evening Ted & Barb & I went to see "The Empire Strikes Back". Ho hum. It was rather nostalgic riding the bus through the Haight Ashbury but city living doesn't attract me anymore.

Saturday, 8 Nov. A sunny day. Drove into San Francisco and visited the Fisherman's Wharf area, especially Pier 39 which was not open on my last trip. It is a renovated wharf full of specialty shops. Another pleasant addition to that part of the City. Later I drove on down to Palo Alto where I had dinner with my old friends Doug and Verna Graham, and showed slides to them and other friends.

Sunday, 9 Nov. Called Qantas to verify my flight and learned it would be at least 12 hours late due to some unspecified problem which had required the plane to return to Sydney for repairs. I

<b>QANTAS</b>		CARTE D'EMBARQUEMENT BORDKARTE CARTA D'IMBARCO ΑΕΤΙΟΝ ΕΠΙΒΙΒΑΣΙΕΩΣ KUPON ZA ULAZ U AVION КУПОН ЗА ВЛЕТЪ ВЪ АВИОН	
BOARDING PASS		HONOLULU	
NAME WEBER		SEAT NO. 45H	
FLIGHT QF4		DEST. SYD	

escorted through the customs area by about 6 large imposing police and 1 or 2 briefcase-carrying suit-and-tie types. One wit behind me in the queue said loudly, "That's what happens when you don't stay in your seat while they are spraying the plane," but otherwise we hadn't a clue what was going on. The next day I read in the paper that the man, "Mr Brown", who had perpetrated a bomb hoax against Qantas in 1971 was deported to England about 10.30 the night before. So that must have been who we saw. Once finally through customs I had to phone another friend to find a place to sleep that night, as no planes would be flying until the next day (after they could be refueled). Luckily I know people in a lot of cities!

Tuesday, 11 Nov. Oh, I forgot to mention on Monday about the woman sitting next to me on the Qantas flight. She was watching the people getting on, and spotted some man she hadn't seen in something like ten years. There was quite a carry-on as they recognised each other, then I changed seats with someone so he could sit next to her, and they got quite cozy by the end of the flight. Now, I wonder if that was just a coincidence or if she had actually been expecting him? Anyway, I had arrived in Australia and only had to wait about 3 hours at the airport the next day before I got my flight to Canberra. By then I had finished reading "Snow Queen" and was almost needing to find something else to read (with 2 suitcases full of books where I couldn't get to them - shriek!). Got home and collapsed in exhaustion.

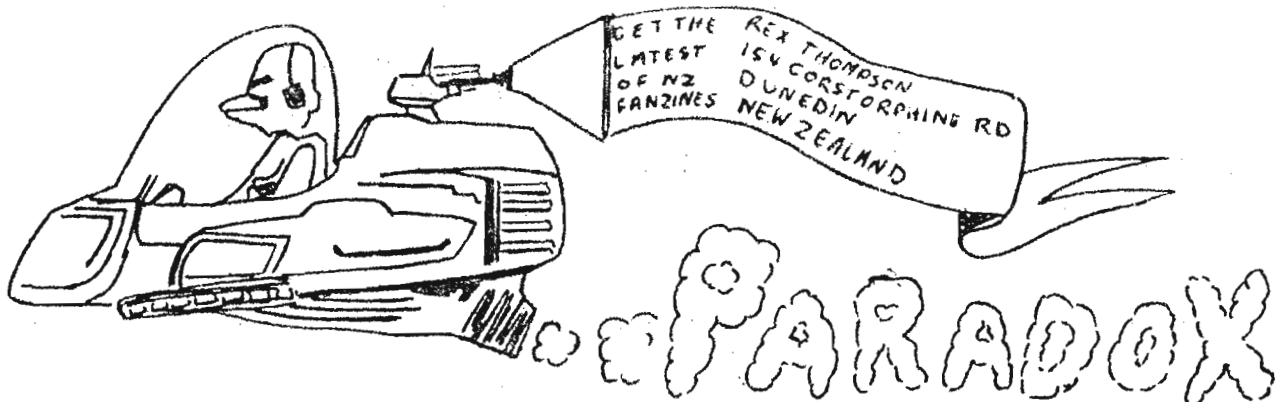
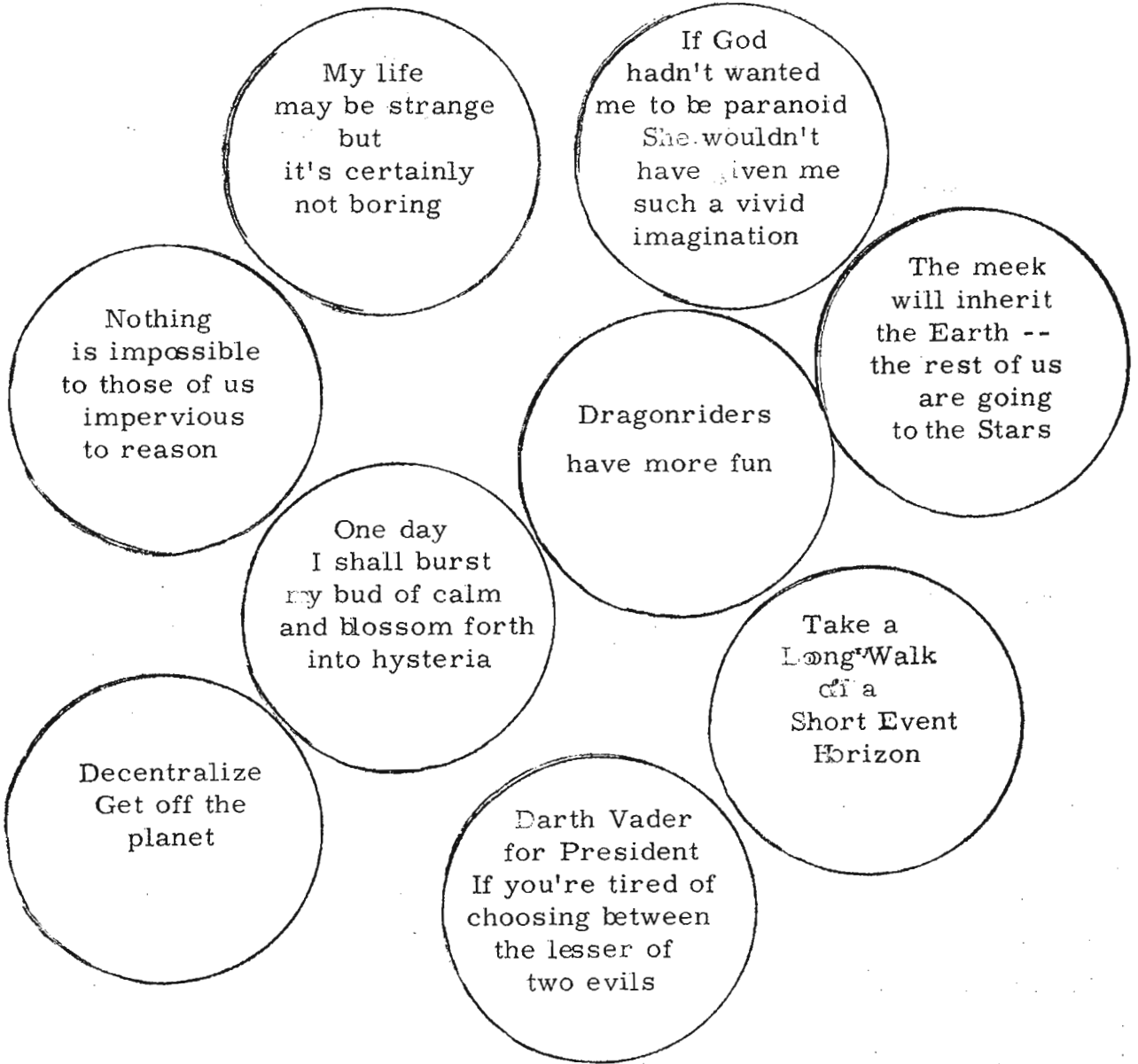
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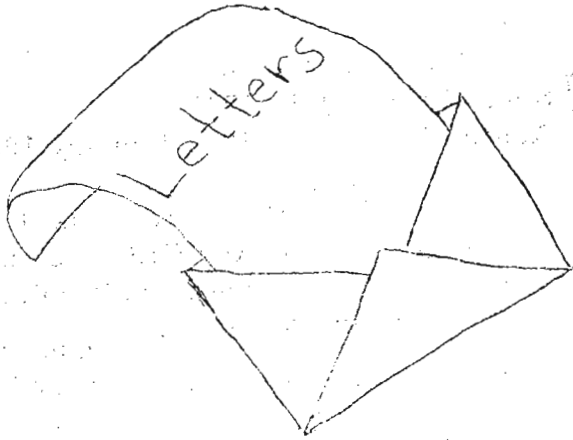
I am sure there are many things I've forgotten to mention, including the names of lots of wonderful people I met. As I said at the beginning, I had a superb time but I was really glad to get back to Australia. I think my taste for travel has diminished in the last few years. (With the costs of airfares going up the way they are, it's probably just as well.)

BUTTONS & BADGES

by Chris Callahan

Being a selection of slogans from Chris' vast collection of buttons bought at American conventions.





Elizabeth Darling  
6 Clowes Street  
South Yarra, Vic. 3141  
Australia December 1980

This letter is to wish you Happy New Year and to thank you for sending me your fanzines which both Peter & I enjoy.

I don't (never have) publish a personal fanzine - began by doing the drawings for John & I write bits of Peter's... but as my daily job demands that I publish an 'organizational bulletin' I find it difficult to write in the proper (appropriate) tone for fanzines. Besides - as you've probably gathered, I'm really much more bourgeoisie & conventional & 'establishment' than most of our friends & when I write it becomes offensively obvious -- I'm not repentant you understand, 'cos I'm quite successful & affluence is not something I'd be prepared to do without -- but I find I get on better with SF people if I keep quiet!

I hope you meant what you said about still being friends with people when you disagree with them. ((This refers to an apazine article -- and yes I did mean that; I'm friends with lots of people I disagree with strongly - but certainly not friends with everybody I disagree with!)) I read your article about the experiences of women with interest. My own life has been very sheltered. I've not experienced much prejudice against women, either in my career or in my own life because it's so 'middle class'. My Mother & her sisters were encouraged to follow University -

academic - careers & my generation simply assumed that we would do the same. Some of my cousins have married & have children, but we all still have 'professional' occupations.

((I dispute your implication that 'middle class' women are less discriminated against. Certainly the expectations of one's family play a large part in whether one pursues a career, and in whether one is in fact able to go to University, for instance, but within the professions, women are generally discriminated against as compared to men. Statistics show that, the higher the educational level, the greater is the discrepancy between salaries of men and women, for instance.))

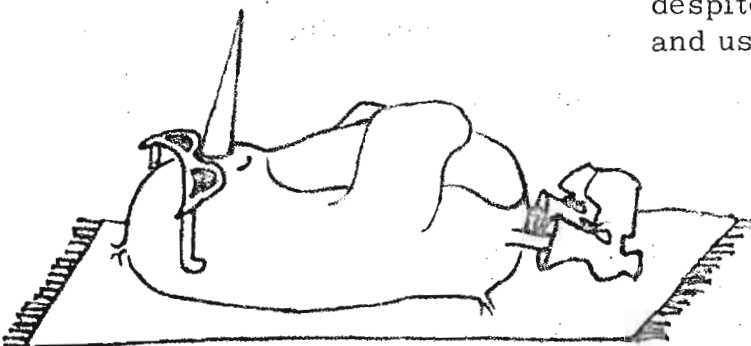
At home we never were belittled because we were female - stupidity was the sin in our family... that's a discrimination of a different sort.

When I worked in Inner Suburbia I saw that things were quite different for women of immigrant families - but I was still protected by my 'professional shell'. Where my daughter is at school, her companions too share that shell created by affluence - I know that it's a fragile shelter & covers a very small part of the community but from inside it, it's difficult to make any sensible comments on the state of people outside it - so I don't - but that doesn't mean I'm not interested. So thank you for the fanzines.

I've been reading Helen Garner's *Monkey Grip* - people who worked with her when she was teaching say that they find it difficult to reconcile the young lady she was with the attitudes which are clearly implied in the novel. I'm looking forward to reading her new book when I can get a copy. I'm looking forward to school next year - we will have a new Headmaster & I will be able to go back into the classroom. Teaching children is more rewarding & exciting than substituting for the Head & I will be pleased to get on with the classroom

work. We've been very quiet this year, partly because being Headmaster was, for me, an exhausting experience, especially in the last 2 months when the 'real' Head was 'there' but not there - so I did all the work, but he kept on popping back in to change what we'd decided, or to begin something, & then he'd go off again... he was a lovely man but very frustrating to work in this half-there, but half not way!

(( My background is similar to yours, Elizabeth, only less affluent. There is a difference between conditioning and discrimination, though both work together to limit the options of women -- the former by training the woman to limit her own choices. For example, I remember very well that my middle-class girlfriends were expected to go to University, but their primary reason was to prepare themselves to be an appropriately-educated wife to some successful man on the way up. They were not necessarily discouraged from a career, if it were a 'suitable' career -- eg, engineering was out, but teaching was in. After all, the 'right' man wouldn't want to marry you if you were in competition with him, and everybody knew that marriage was the most important thing to a woman. I exaggerate slightly, but not much. Did you find this sort of thing in your youth? I do not want to imply anything against teaching as a profession, just that some people are shunted into it who would rather be doing other things. ))((Elizabeth sent with her letter some delightful drawings of the Darling family on their summer holidays.))



Leanne Frahm  
272 Slade Point Road  
Slade Point, Qld. 4741  
Australia 17th January 1981

Already again?

It's marvellous that you're getting the AUSSIECONS out so quickly, but please, don't collapse from overwork too soon. ((August to December is quickly?? Probably I posted yours after I returned from North America.))

The piece by Susan Wood was beautiful. I'm sure that a successful Australian bid for '83 will be marred only by her absence. I regret very much never having met her.

I didn't feel that John Aderson's article was particularly controversial. What he says about markets, postal rates, publishers is incontrovertible. And that SF should be judged on literary criteria is also true. That it's not is only because the majority of readers today -- and not just in SF -- haven't a clue what constitutes literary criteria, and continue blithely reading the trash and the mediocre that is published for just this market.

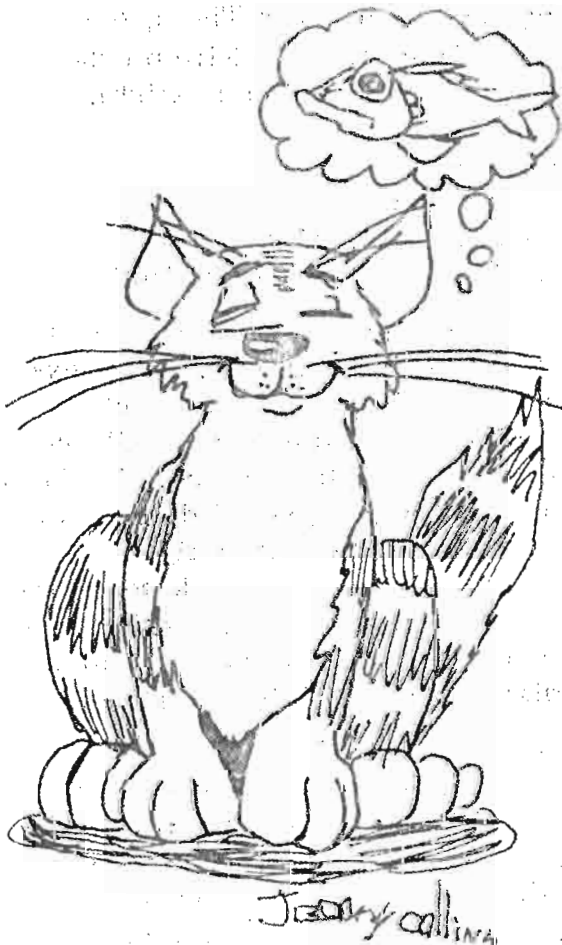
In the Golden Age he mentions, avid readers were brought up on literate works. Now a reader can slip through life from picture books to 'abridged versions' to Readers' Digest condensations without touching the older works, and still consider himself a well-read person. And to my shame, I do not exclude myself from this criticism.

That's one reason why I very seldom read fannish book reviews. I'm astounded and occasionally dismayed by the acclaim some books receive, despite walloping great faults in plot and use of language, and pace. I enjoy SF, but more and more often I find I can't finish a book because it makes little sense, the language is childish, the conversations artificial. Maybe it's just part of growing older.



Anyway, AUSSIECON was beaut.  
Can it keep going? Can you?

((Volume 2, as I think I've said somewhere before, was the last of that series. As for literary value of SF, John's article stirred little response, more's the pity. I tend to agree with you, except that I think there really is a place for all the junk. A really poorly written book is not usually one I can read, either, but some I quite like have many faults which I can recognise. If the ideas or the characters or whatever 'grab' me, I may thoroughly enjoy the book whether it has any literary merit at all. The same way for films. And, in contrast, some excellent books or films bore me to tears, although I recognise their merit. Why should the things we enjoy necessarily be 'good' for us? Sort of like eating chocolate bikkies - cookies to you North Americans.))



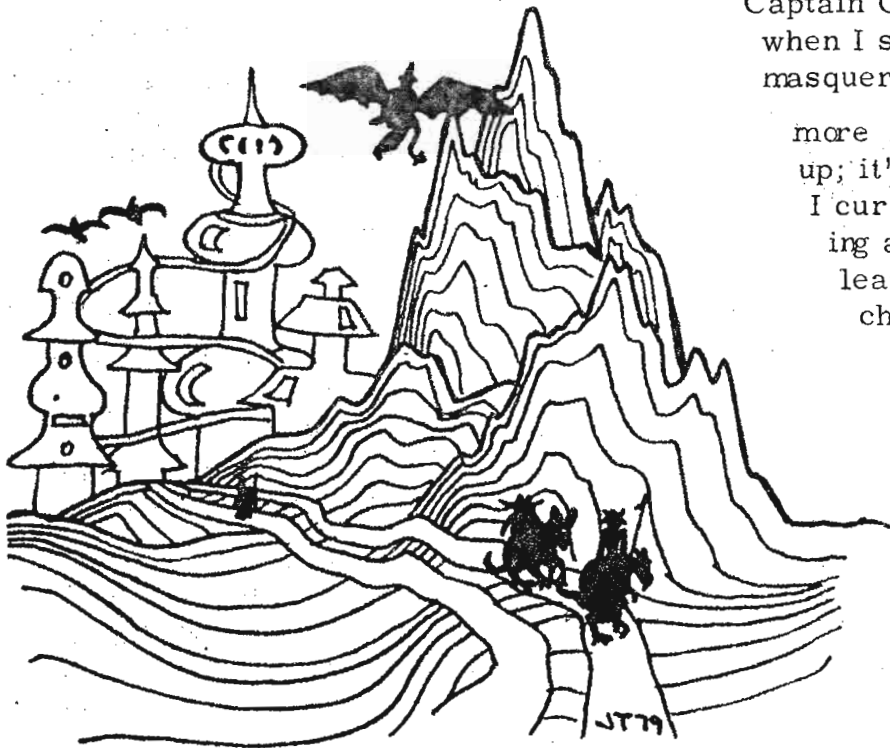
Warren Nicholls  
P. O. Box 146  
Burwood, NSW 2134  
Australia 7 February 1981

At this distance, Aussiecon is mostly a series of discontinuous events. Like walking into a lift, realising the only other inhabitant was Bob Silverberg and freezing solid in the doorway so the lift doors couldn't close. The poor man was very patient.

Bailing Bob Tucker up at 2.30 am in a corridor to get him to autograph a copy of *The Eighth Stage of Random*, and have him take time out to explain why he was forging Bob Bloch's signature. After the banquet, wandering off to the hospitality suite with some of my table partners, and sitting down to watch and criticise the cricket; about two years later, realising that one of the people concerned was Cherry Wilder. (Who dat? I don't know; I didn't even know who Bob Tucker was.) Talking to a rather attractive woman in the art exhibition, the two of us deciding which of the painting would make good magazine covers and which wouldn't; and never quite having the nerve to ask her if she was any relation of Ben Bova.

What else? Not meeting my future partner, who assures me she was there. Getting to know several Sydney fens, which decided me to turn up at a few SSFF meetings. Suffering through that bloody awful opening speech by a politician (Race Matthews?). Trying John Alderson's wine for the first, but not the last, time. Meeting Eric Lindsay who was going round drumming up support for Ain 83. Attending all the programme items. What's a room party? Spending too much at the auction. Meeting Jack Chalker when checking out and blaming it all on him (he very kindly took the blame too, with a very large smile).

Margaret has her own memories which I shall try to get her to put down on paper, but



my favourite concerns the newspaper reporter who grabbed the first (female) person he saw, asked where are the flying saucer people and tried to seduce her with the offer of a hamburger.

Margaret says I've just stolen her thunder, so you'll have to be content with that one. Sunday morning, early, sitting in the anteroom drinking the excellent free coffee, and trying to do the Sun-Herald cryptic crossword and being interrupted; first by Frank Bryning, who seemed for some reason to want to talk to me, and then by Blair Ramage who wanted to take a photograph of myself and Frank. (I've still got the photo).

Being introduced to Bob Tucker my Peter Mackay. (Who WAS Bob Tucker?)

Having 4EJ hypnotise me (it's the only explanation I can offer) into paying \$35 for a piece of electronic junk jewellery at the auction.

Having a rare flash of intuition and realising that the some-

what older gentleman with the pipe in his mouth MUST be Captain Chandler; confirmed when I saw him at the masquerade.

There must be more memories I can dredge up; it's times like these that I curse myself for not keeping a diary. There I shall leave it, but Aussiecon changed a lot in my life, for which, all in all, I am rather grateful.

((That seems to be the last of the Aussiecon reminiscences, though if more come in, and I have room, I may print them.))

IAHF: Eric Lindsay,  
Marilyn Pride, 'Andy'  
Andruschak, Mike Schaper,

Mark Loney, Helen Swift,  
Christine Ashby, Diane Southgate Fox,  
Frank Macskasy Nnr, Nigel Rowe,  
Terry Collister, Rex Thompson,  
Mervyn Barrett, Debi Killop (who sent a contribution for nextish).

Gerald Smith  
8 Frawley Street  
Frankston, Vic. 3199  
Australia 15 April 1981

... One specific thing I would like to comment on in your biog. What exactly is a militant non-smoker? According to my dictionary militant means "engaged in warfare, fighting". Being a smoker myself I do hope you do not take this too literally. I am always prepared to concede to a non-smoker's wishes so long as that person asks politely and does not attempt to foist their principles upon me.

((I use the word 'militant' to mean fighting for my rights; not necessarily 'fighting' in the sense of striking violent blows, but definitely in the sense of being assertive and making my wishes known. For many years I,

(continued on page 19)

Now for some of the heavy sercon stuff. . . About a year ago I received a letter from my old friend Linda Taft; she's given me permission to publish it. This is start of a series of thoughts on 'relationships'. The ideas expressed are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent those of the editor. Comments in (( )) are editorial interjections. Here's Linda:

. . . I was interested in your comments about not being able to legislate ethics & morality & on what you felt was needed to change things. I have long held that no major changes will occur in the world until some basic changes occur in the very nature of human being themselves. The more I work with people -- counseling/therapy etc -- the more I become convinced that the basic key to any healthy human consideration of self and others is a complete acceptance of your self - a complete & total sense of being all right - ok - just the way you are - without any changes -- the basic you is perfect. What I believe happens to people is that they erect all kinds of barriers in the way of their being themselves -- these barriers are there to protect them from others and from themselves -- "God forbid anyone should see me exactly as I am because then nobody will like/love me"! So what happens is that a great deal of energy is invested in protecting oneself -- which has just the opposite effect from the desired one -- that is the "front" or barriers we put up tend to drive people off instead of allowing them to become closer. What is also very interesting about this is the tendency of human beings to pick up only negative feedback or interpret everything as they grow up to mean they are unlovable, unfit, un-ok, etc. For example, persons may spend their entire lives convinced their mothers never like them because one time when they were children their mother looked like she was

squinting angrily at them (when really she only had a piece of fuzz in her eye and could not see clearly!) - however (this is an oversimplification, but this is the kind of thing that happens time after time) they take it to mean something is wrong with them, and they spend the rest of their lives reading everything from that position of not being ok - they become victims and victimizers - and God help anyone who tries to love them, or say they are ok, or even compliment them! How many times have you said in answer to a compliment, "Yes, but. . . etc etc" - a real put down of yourself - it finally becomes not ok to be ok.

I used to think that if we could know and understand it would be enough - that would make everything ok - now I know that understanding isn't enough - in fact sometimes it's not even necessary - in fact knowing why sometimes gets in the way of any growth happening. . . Because what occurs is the knowledge of why I do such & such, or why I always feel this way, becomes another crutch or excuse for continuing to be a shit. I get so tired of having parents - particularly mothers (next to Jews the proverbial American & universal enemy No. 1) - blamed for all the wrongs that are still going on in a person's life. There comes a point in a person's life - if they are going to grow up and become a mature healthy functioning human being - where that person has to take full responsibility for their own existence and its quality. I mean complete & total responsibility for the way of his own life - not only in the existential sense of being, aloneness, & responsibility -- but in reality only you are responsible for what happens in your life - whether you like it or not you choose your existence & continue to choose it. For me, one of the neat highs of therapy is that moment when a client makes that flip to responsibility and with it a basic sense of self-worth -- FANTASTIC! Anyway, back to knowing -- in loving your self and in loving others what is really involved is that

acceptance - not only of self, but of the other's self. It means accepting the other person (that hidden person) for what he is, just the way he is, and allowing him to be - give him space, etc etc (whatever psychological piece of jargon you prefer - it all comes down to complete acceptance!) Now this doesn't mean you become a doormat or you allow yourself to be victimized by some asshole -- being open and accepting requires a great deal of strength - a person is really stronger in a 'vulnerable' open position than in a defended, closed position because when it's all there & ok, there is not much anyone can do to really hurt you (other than physically).

((I must send you, Linda, copies of some of the recent debates in the Australian apa Applesauce, on the subject of 'selfishness', because your letter fits into that debate very well. Maybe some Apples members will comment on your article - hint))

Linda continues...

Some time ago you asked me about why get married again -- and it really stopped me -- one excuse for not writing has been that I was looking for an answer to that question -- I still am looking for an answer -- I even asked around, and I am still asking -- obviously, for me, there are no moral/religious reasons to get married. The logical old reasons of children, financial security (HA!), aren't logical or applicable to me anymore -- I don't need to get married - I thought perhaps it was out of habit (hoho!), but I don't believe that is so. The commitment I bring to this relationship is the same whether or not I am married to him. Marriage for me would not make this commitment any more binding than I have already chosen to make it for myself. Marriage will not keep either me or him from changing our minds - only our mutual choice to continue together will keep us together. So I am still searching for a

satisfactory answer to your question.

Sometimes all there is, is my word about the way things are for me (yes, there are some absolutes in the world) and my word, my keeping my commitments to myself and others is all I really have to go on - my life is as good or works to the extent I keep my commitments - anyway - ENOUGH preaching!

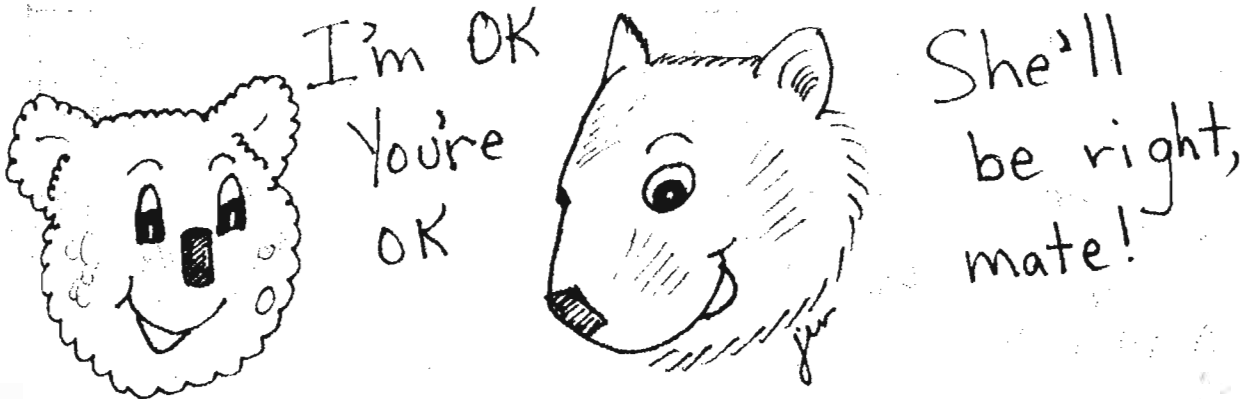
((The above letter was written in the early stages of a relationship... the next letter (June last year) shows some changes...))

Relationship is on the ins & outs -- more outs than in -- seems I am coming up against a male double standard -- it's ok for me (the man) to do what I need to do when I need to do it -- it's not alright for you (the woman) to do it (it being whatever you need to do) for yourself when you need to -- seems he doesn't really like independent women -- only verbally so. See what happens in relationships is basically this -- the two people come together and it's terrific & really intense! & they start spending a lot of time together -- then he needs to start getting things done (run errands, wash car, do laundry etc) so she ends up going over to his place & helping him & not doing her things -- & if she says I can't see you tonight because I have to do laundry & wash my hair -- he tells her that's ridiculous, he should be more important than her laundry, she feels guilty, does what he wants -- or she says not so & does what she wants & he never calls her again! ((not much loss, I'd say --jhw)) however if he had to wash his hair & do his laundry -- of course it's important & perfectly ok that she should understand & wait -- of course he loves her, how could she think not! He just needs to do these few little things -- this crap actually happened to some female clients of mine! What's been interesting is in coming up against it in (my) relationship -- he's more subtle about

it -- but it's still there... It becomes part of the power struggle in an unhealthy relationship -- the threat becomes either play the game my way or I will take my ball & go home. Have decided I'm not getting hooked into this game anymore, so I may very well be moving soon.

((Have you read Mary Daly's Gyn/ Ecology? If I have space I shall do

a book review later this. Amongst other things, she talks about the various ways men (collectively and individually) keep women from self-acceptance and self-growth. Or perhaps more accurately, how society's conditioning does this. There's a lot in the book that I don't agree with, but that doesn't detract from its being a thought-provoking and valuable analysis.))



Letters, continued from page 16

like many non-smokers, did not question the 'right' of smokers to smoke, even in our own homes. Why I, and others, were that way is a mystery to me now that I have learnt to be assertive. I am always polite in asking people not to smoke, unless they become abusive in which case I retaliate in kind. My 'militancy' includes a flat refusal to allow anyone to smoke inside my home, support of efforts to ban smoking in public places, and requests to people not to smoke in my vicinity in public (I am quite allergic to cigarette smoke and suffer eye discomfort and sometimes breathing difficulties). ))

Enjoyed the first installment of the trip report very much. Such reports are always of great interest

in the way they allow you to imagine yourself on the spot, in places you have never been and may never visit. The only fault I could pick with it is that it reads a little like a transcription of notes jotted down at the time without enough elaboration. (( Just what it was, Gerald!)) But then I have probably been spoiled by reading the reports of John Foyster, Eric Lindsay, Leigh Edmonds and the like. Bit of an unfortunate comparison really. ((Yes-- their long reports are interesting, mine would probably be boring.))

Frank Macskasy Jnr  
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Upper Willis St PO  
Wellington 1, New Zealand

14 April 1981

... A militant non-smoker, I read on page 2! Well, well, well. It's good to see that we aren't a dying breed.

(continued on page 27)

THE ADVENTURES  
of  
**ANTI-PODES**  
(Episode 1:  
First Convention)  
by Jean Weber 3/80

Hmm, a lot  
of unusual  
people going into  
that hotel

A party!!

Hi, you don't know me  
but I give backrubs —

Oooh —  
oooh —

Me  
Next!

Me!

More,  
more!

Now that they're  
under me spell —

Aaaah ----

Oooh....

What's happening  
here?

I give backrubs...

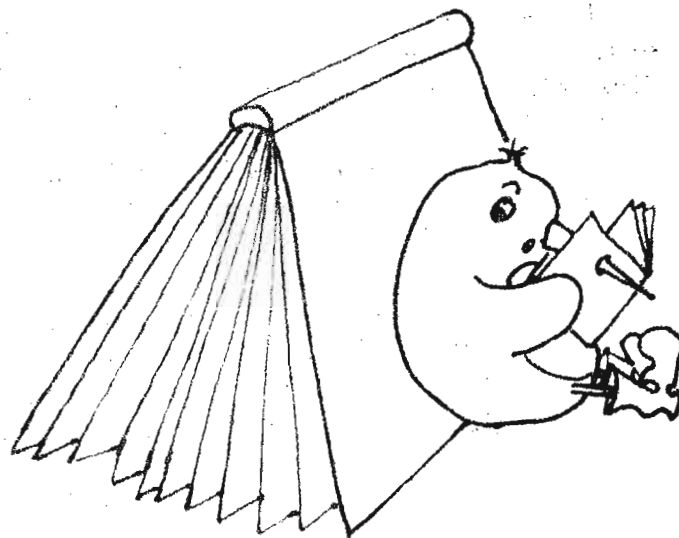
Have some Beam's  
Choice

Smoooooth!!

jr

# Book Reviews

My intention in this book review column is to discuss books with strong female lead characters, and/or books which address social, environmental, or political issues of interest to women in general and myself in particular. I would welcome reviews on fiction and non-fiction works in these categories, from readers of WWW (sorry about the syntax in that sentence; ouch!)



ISLANDS, by Marta Randall (1975, 1980)

((This review first appeared in Jeanzine 4, in the 79th mailing of ANZAPA, April 1981.))

This book centres around an aging woman in a society of 'Immortals'. The standard Immortality Treatments have failed, and she could expect a lifetime of at most about 200 years. Her body was aging slowly but visibly, while the bodies of much older people looked perpetually young. People thought her a freak and were rather afraid of her, as a reminder of their mortal origins. Immortals were never in any hurry, nor were they often serious about anything, because they could look forward to hundreds of years in which to try new careers, to become expert in a subject and then discard it, and learn something new. Of course Immortals could die accidentally, and some do in this book. (They can also suicide.)

Tia has accepted her fate, but not the reactions of other people. She is suspicious of those who want to make love to her: are they getting a perverse thrill from sex with someone wrinkled and old-looking? (In at least one instance this is quite true, so she's not being entirely paranoid.) The lover of her youth, Paul, left her when it was obvious they would not be able to spend eternity together. She doesn't blame him for this, but is suspicious when he wants to renew their sexual relationship 50 years later.

Not surprisingly, Tia's thoughts dwell frequently on her unique situation. Even when her work would occupy her mind, other people won't let her forget she's different. She is involved in archaeological research on some drowned cities, once part of Hawaii. An accomplished diver, she is part of the crew of the Ilium, a fancifully decorated research ship crewed by a variety of antisocial oddities.

The story alternates between Tia's present (she is 67) and her past. Fleeing from her destiny, the young Tia travels: first around the world (including the colony of freaks, rejects and social misfits in Australia), then to the moon (where she meets a group of people who were building a starship and invited her to join them; she declines, knowing that she won't survive the trip, while they will), years alone on a station orbiting the sun (during which she studies everything available on Immortality Treatments), then more years travelling about the solar system. Finally she returns to Earth,

buys an old house and some land, lets the medical system study her, and turns to archaeology.

Tia's most unique ability is that of shifting her consciousness inside herself, to monitor her body's functions, to isolate and interpret pain or disease. First discovered under the influence of a hallucinogenic drug, this ability eventually plays an important and unexpected role in her life. During some research diving, she gets in a tight spot with someone who wants to kill her; how she escapes surprises both her and the reader, but the groundwork was laid for the 'trick' far earlier in the book.

Randall's style is a combination of long descriptive images and terse, brief phrases sketching in the details. I found it very effective. And while I was a bit disappointed in the ending, it did fit the story and was - while not unique - not an overworked idea either. The feeling of alienation, suspicion, and distrust was well portrayed. I also got a message that living forever can be rather boring, that death isn't necessarily the worst thing that can happen to you, but that one might well prefer to have some choice in the matter. That happens to be my own opinion on the subject, so I hope I wasn't reading too much into the story that perhaps wasn't there!

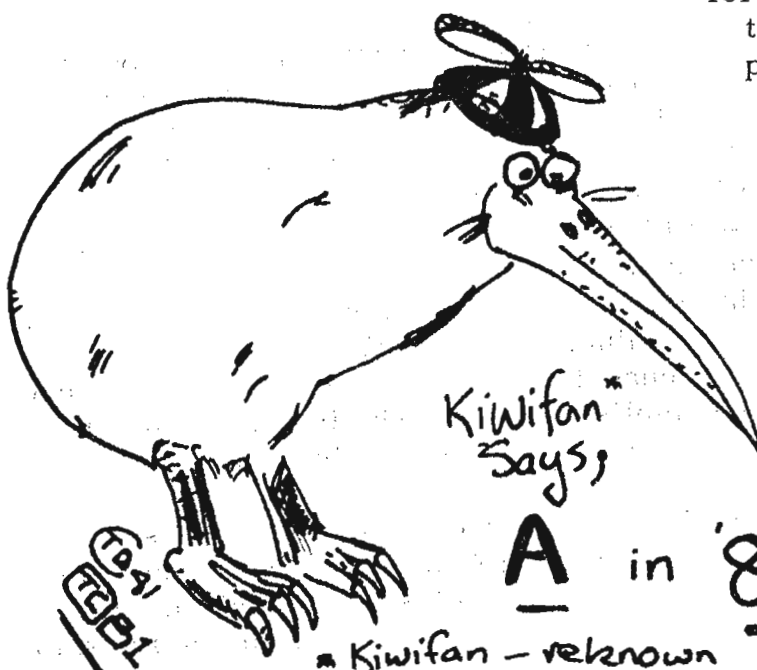
Another theme, underlying particularly the chapters on the moon and the starship builders, is the dichotomy between those for whom earth (or in this case, perhaps the solar system) is enough, and those who believe human destiny lies in the stars. Or rather, more generally speaking, the theme was the dichotomy between those with a vision, a purpose, and those for whom living, surviving, having fun, are enough. The starship people "seemed alive in ways I had never experienced, as though they had effected a blending of cultures, using immortality not as an endpoint, a goal, but as a springboard for change. They shared much of my own growing discomfort with the Immortal was of life, ... the decline of invention over the past five centuries, the decline in art and music, in exploration and curiosity, in science and mathematics. The Immortals... had taken the most important advance in

history and used it to stop advancement forever; the Immortals accepted their static world, but these people did not." They wanted to find some other planet, out among the stars, to build an Immortal world with purpose; they knew they could not overcome the apathy of the Immortals on Earth.

Although I've given quite a long space to that aspect of the book, it wasn't presented in an overbearing, preachy, or didactic manner. Generally, the book

is a pleasant combination of dramatic action and character study.

Recommended.



Kiwifan\* Says,

A in '83

\* Kiwifan - renowned Fandom Bird  
Symbol of Wellcon '80 etc,  
Friend of the 'Mighty Wombo'

© 1983  
WELCON



JUNIPER TIME, by Kate Wilhelm (1979)

Jean Brighton is a young woman coming to terms with herself within the context of a United States gripped by drought, where millions of people are displaced and unemployed. She is the daughter of a famous astronaut, one of two men largely responsible for the building of an orbiting space station (Alpha). Construction of the station was stopped years before, soon after Brighton Senior died in a space accident (or was it an accident?). Jean's mother was already an alcoholic, and now further deteriorates. Jean has nursed a fear and resentment of the (now largely defunct) space program and of the military, since then. She is doing PhD research in linguistics; when the program is classified, she leaves (refusing to work for the military). Now unemployed, she cannot keep her flat; so she goes to live awhile in a Newtown, a refugee centre for people displaced from the western US by the drought. Later she learns of her grandfather's death and her inheritance of his (abandoned) home in Oregon; she finds her way there.

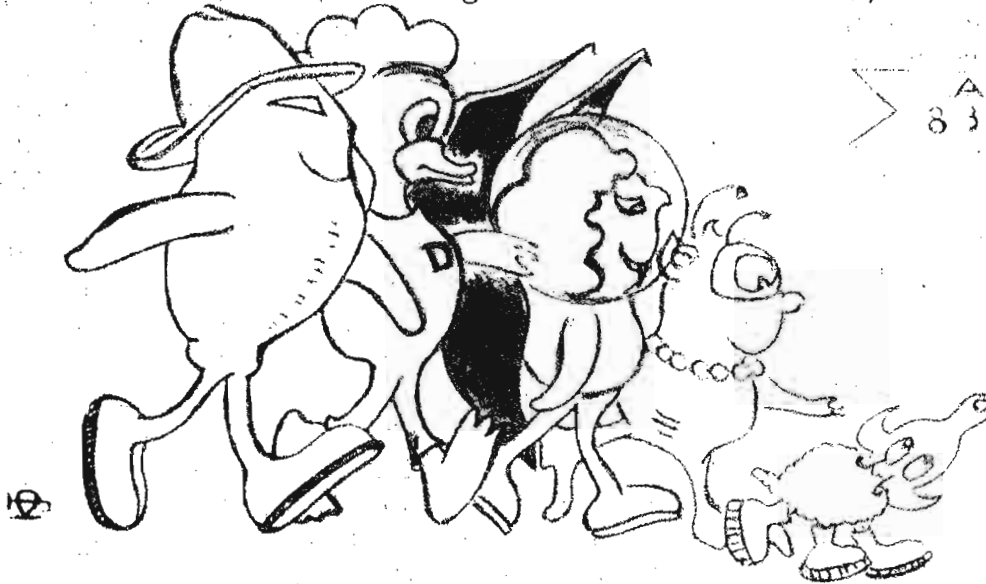
Meanwhile, Arthur Cluny, son of the other man involved in space station Alpha, has completed his PhD in astrophysics with no prospects of suitable employment. He is contacted by two old friends who want his help convincing the Government to complete construction of the space station. He reluctantly agrees, and they are eventually successful. Some time later an artifact is discovered amongst orbiting debris; only a few people know of its existence. Is it of alien origin? The enscription must be deciphered. Searching for a linguist to do the job, Cluny is led finally to Jean -- and he in turn is followed by agents from both sides of the US-USSR power struggle. The intrigues and unpleasantnesses of the 'real world', which Jean had sought to escape, have caught up with her.

She, however, has meanwhile grown strong emotionally during her stay in Oregon. Befriended by a tribe of Indians (Native Americans), she has learnt to establish her own priorities and not to be intimidated by others; she has also learnt self-defence in the physical sense. She's learnt how to survive, both physically (coping with desert conditions) and mentally. She's finally met people who love her in a giving, accepting way, and are not trying to manipulate or control her. By the time Cluny finds her, she is able to resist his efforts to force her to decipher the artifact's 'writings'. She knows she has something he desperately wants (her knowledge and abilities) so she makes it clear she'll help if and when it suits her. He shakes with rage and frustration.

I won't spoil the ending by telling you what she finally discovers about the artifact and its origins, but I quite like the book's resolution. It ended on an upbeat note, but not that tone of 'they lived happily ever after' that I detry. The world's still in a mess, and politics is still not coping -- our 'hero' did not save the world! -- but she has saved herself.

The book is full of messages about ecology, human behaviour, and political priorities regarding space, but the focus is on one woman's development from a fearful, distressed and angry person (who felt incapable of controlling her own life or of bucking the system) to one who does feel she can cope, can buck the system, can control her life. At this level the story is about feminist development, on the personal level. The whole essence of feminism, to me, is to increase women's opportunities for meaningful choice. This includes, of course, changes in society's institutions, values and attitudes, but also -- and perhaps more importantly -- changes in women's own perceptions of themselves and the choices they have. In particular, changes in the feelings of helplessness before outside authority.

These changes, within oneself, are of course equally desirable for men as for women, and I'd like to see more books about men's development beyond the male stereotypes; but as a woman, I rejoice to read of strong women. This woman, Jean, is very realistic in that she develops as a person through the book, rather than being strong and competent throughout. (The latter type of character is valid, too, of course -- I also like stories about female 'heroes' and will be reviewing some in future issues.)



GYN/ECOLOGY by Mary Daly (1978). Beacon Press, Boston; my copy is from The Women's Press, London. 485 pp (including 60 pages of notes) Subtitled: 'The Metaethics of Radical Feminism'.

When I first tried to read this book (about six months ago), I found it very slow going and couldn't get past the first twenty pages or so. This time I stuck it out through the introduction and into the main part of the book, and was totally absorbed for a week, until I'd finished reading it. I recommend to anyone who finds the introduction difficult to read, to skip it -- you'll probably want to come back to it later after you've been hooked by the really interesting parts.

The introduction is very much an extended play on words. Daly shows how words have been used to 'keep women in their place', to silence women, to deny women's perceptions of reality. She examines the roots of words in Latin (or wherever) and brings 'archaic' meanings to our attention; she shows us the positive side of these words and re-defines them in the ways she'll be using them in the book. It's a bit slow going but fascinating, and it does set the stage for later chapters. As a writer and editor, I find the uses of words very interesting; I am frequently involved in arguments about the 'meaning' - or connotation, which is not the same thing - of words. I have become aware of the sorts of misunderstandings that can occur when people use the same words to mean different things, and how people can use words to 'put down' other people, when the words themselves may be quite positive when used in another context. Classic examples, of which most feminists would be aware, are the uses of character traits supposedly belonging to the other sex; that is, a 'feminine' trait is often an insult when applied to men, and vice versa.

In the first Passage (section) of the book, Daly examines patriarchal myths and religions, and their effects on women. The Second Passage discusses cases: Indian suttee (widow-burning), Chinese footbinding, African

genital mutilation, European witchburnings, and modern American gynaecology. She draws the parallels between each of these practices and their effects in perpetrating patriarchy, including how women are coned into doing the deeds themselves in many cases. This participation by women has led to the conclusion by (mostly male, but also some female) researchers that women 'choose' mutilation or death. Daly demonstrates that choice, in a situation where women and girls have been conditioned to believe certain things about themselves and society, and given certain realities in society, may not be much of a choice at all. For example, in India, a widow was often literally cast out on the streets to starve or beg and quite probably to be raped; knowing this reality, she may well 'choose' suttee - death with honour in her society - as an alternative to a lifetime of unspeakable suffering (suffering due entirely to the prejudices of her society) - but that does not make the practice of suttee any less a custom based on woman-hate. Similarly, if marriage is seen as the only way for a woman to survive (unmarried women often being slaves in their father's or brother's household in many societies, or starved or beaten), and men have decreed that certain characteristics are required in a marriageable female, women might find footbinding or genital mutilation to be acceptable alternatives - because positive choices simply do not exist. Witches, as we all know, were often little more than women who were well versed in herbal medicine and pop psychology - quite a threat to the male power structures of the times, not to mention threats to the prevailing Christian religion of the Middle Ages.

Reading this book is enough to make one scream in outrage at the murders and mutilations of women over the centuries, particularly when one sees these atrocities as part of a pattern of ways to keep women subservient. Of course there are some parallels in ways of keeping men subservient or obedient to authority, too - heretics were mostly men; witches were mostly women. But I know of no parallels to footbinding or genital mutilation. The latter, by the way, is often euphemistically and incorrectly called 'circumcision', but circumcision in men does not remove the centre of sexually pleasurable sensations, while clitoridectomy does. (Clitoridectomy, incidentally, was prescribed for American women in the 19th century as a 'cure' for lust - a clear-cut value judgement stemming from the fear of women as sexual creatures.) Genital mutilation in Africa often includes (as well as clitoridectomy) the sewing up of the labia, or vaginal lips; these are then cut open when the girl marries and are sometimes sewn up again during pregnancy or at other times - a sort of chastity belt arrangement. Given the lack of any sort of antiseptics in most of these cultures, is it any wonder so many women die of infections? What is really frightening is the continuation of these practices amongst educated, middle-class African women today, although in modern hospitals. The reason? Basically, that their daughters are not marriageable otherwise.

The chapter on American gynaecology is especially enraging. I'm sure most of the practices mentioned occurred or are occurring in Australia as well. Starting with clitoridectomy and 'rest cures' in the 19th century, there are quotes from gynaecologists of the time about the 'more interesting' medical problems to be found amongst middle-class and wealthy patients. Working-class women, who often had severe health problems, were on the other hand convenient patients upon which to practice surgery. These two facts do lead the reader to a certain cynicism regarding the motives of some of the doctors - a cynicism which is also appropriate today. 'Rest cures', by the way, were a good method of reducing women to a helpless

state and keeping them dependent upon others - particularly male doctors - for long periods of time. Rest cures were especially prescribed for 'hysterical' (read: dissatisfied; unwilling to accept the prevailing situation) women who found women's lot in those days oppressive. Nowadays tranquilisers fill the same function.

The last part of the book is a discussion of what women can do to counteract all these ways patriarchy has devised for keeping women subservient. Again Daly launches into an involved, but delightful, semantic discussion. But she makes valid points about women learning their own strengths, working together to build something better rather than merely gaining access to the male world.

Overall, I enjoyed this book immensely, even though much of the material infuriated me - as it was intended to do. I already knew most of the facts presented, but having them organised and analysed in one book was good - it's easy to be blasé about atrocities when you know of them 'academically' but do not see them as touching you, as part of your own life. This book helped very much for me to see how these things do touch me, even if mostly indirectly.

Much of Daly's analysis of her material I do not agree with - her 'radical feminist' approach is too simplistic in many respects for my taste - but much of it is, in my opinion, spot on. Readers should not accept Daly as the last word in feminist analysis or feminist 'dogma' - even she would argue that she isn't, that feminist analysis is an ongoing process, not answers carved in stone. The book is valuable even if one rejects some or many of her conclusions. Highly recommended.

♀ ♀ ♀ ♀ ♀

TOWARD A NEW PSYCHOLOGY OF WOMEN, by Jean Baker Miller, 1976, Beacon Press. (My copy is from Penguin Books). 147 pp.

Reading this book directly after the preceding one was quite an experience. Miller approaches much of the same material from quite a different point of view - that of the clinical psychologist. This book is not, however, written in the typical difficult 'academic' style of many psychology books, nor is it in the chatty popular psychology mould either. It's a very readable, well-presented theory, written mostly in easily-understood language, but presented in very logical form an analysis of why women's psychology is the way it is or seems to be, and what women can/should do about it. I found the book particularly good because Miller summed up (much better than I can) many of the ideas I've been expressing for years.

Miller begins by examining dominant-subservient groups in various cultures (e.g. race, class, caste, sex divisions), and some of the techniques used by dominant groups to ensure that subservients stay that way. She then states that many strengths and needs are present in all people, and shows that our culture (like others) has divided these strengths and needs into groups and has assigned one group of characteristics to men and another group of characteristics to women. People are then conditioned to exhibit only those traits assigned to members of their sex (how many times have we heard, big boys don't cry, for example?). In this way everyone, male and female, is shortchanged. Everyone has parts of his/her personality which cannot be expressed without the individual's feeling guilty or wrong in some way.

Miller then moves on to specifics. She examines in some detail, characteristics such as the expression of emotions, cooperation with others

and participation in the development of others, which have either been seen in our culture as weaknesses, or as abilities of lesser importance. She shows how these characteristics are actually the basis for strengths, and for a better way of doing things. Like Daly, Miller believes women can build better ways, not just gain access to the male world. For example, everyone has the need for companionship. Women can admit this need, but it can become a real weakness if used as an excuse not to develop one's own self-awareness. That is, many women become emotionally dependent on one or several other people (husband, children); this is negative. On the other hand, men often deny their need for companionship (or sublimate it into merely a need for sex); this can lead to anger in inappropriate circumstances, and other problems. Miller shows that this need can be very positive if neither denied nor allowed to overcome all else, and suggests that everyone - male and female - would be better off if they could learn to accept their needs and use them constructively. She also suggests that women have a better chance to do this than men at present, because women at least have been allowed to admit they have these needs - that's the first big step. (She makes similar analyses and conclusions about several other characteristics as well.)

This short book could easily be read in one or two sittings, unless you - like me - tend to read a chapter and then sit there thinking about all the parallels in your own life and the lives of people you know. It has much in it that bears that sort of introspection. Also highly recommended.

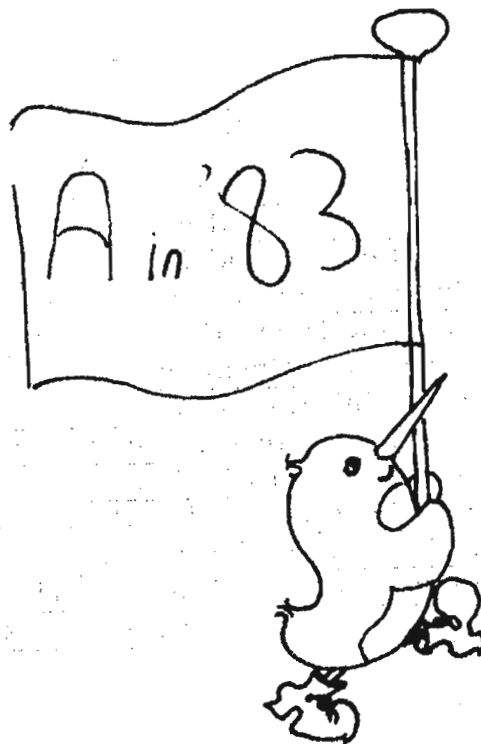
♀ ♀ ♀ ♀ ♀ ♀ ♀

(Letters, cont. from page 19)

I share your feelings exactly - cigarette smoke absolutely nauseates me. I have made my home a Clean Air Zone, and ask all smokers to have a puff on the outside veranda. (Relatives & Friends) They understand and respect my wishes, which lets them have a smoke and lets me have my untainted nitrogen/oxygen atmosphere.

((I'm going to interject here some comments I meant to make to Gerald Smith (previous letter) but forgot to type in, namely regarding the issue of not trying to press my preferences on others. This is something I rarely do, but now and then there are some special occasions where I feel

it is not inappropriate to express my views about the health hazards of smoking. One is when talking with pregnant women who smoke. I often ask them politely whether they are aware of the possible dangers to the foetus. Similarly, people with young children in the home who must breathe smoke-filled air. I figure an adult has the right to abuse his/her body by the method of his/her choice (I abuse mine with alcohol & overeating), but forcing the situation on the unborn or children too young to do anything about it,



is really not on. Some years ago I became a convert to the opinion that children should not be regarded as the 'possessions' of their parents like household pets are. This does not deny the responsibility of parents to care for their children, but does deny them the privilege of abusing the children in any way (physically, emotionally, mentally, etc). What do you think, Gerald?

End of digression. Sorry, Frank, back to your letter...))

I see that you printed a letter from Debi Killop (Hi! Debi!). I met her only once in Auckland and we had a great discussion on what constitutes

Left and Right wing politics. A very involved lady, and I'd like to see more fans become involved. Mainly in the environmental and human rights issues - which sf deals with frequently. Why? Because I think that we do have a special interest in our home planet, and because we have visions of what other worlds could be. We should use these visions to influence our own planet, and, maybe create a better place for ourselves.

End of lecture.

((Well I agree with you that people should become more involved, but not necessarily for the reasons you state.))

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### FANZINES RECEIVED

Holier Than Thou 8, 9 (Marty Cantor), DNQ 32 (Taral Wayne & Victoria Wayne), Ausfletter 1 (Roy Ferguson), Gryffin 3 (Michael Schaper), Chat 35, 36, 37, 38 (Dick & Nicki Lynch), Forbidden Worlds 3 (Robert Mapson), The Space Wastrel 4 (Loney & Warner), Neology 5/6 (Edmonton SF Soc.), Rhubarb 1981/1 (John & Diane Fox), Forerunner 3/4 (Sydney SF Foundn), Crabapple 18 (Ken Ozanne), Chunder 5/1 (John Foyster), Sikander 4 (Irwin Hirsh), Ornithopter 7 (Leigh Edmonds), Napalm in the Morning 3 (Joseph Nicholas), The Mentor 3/31 (Ron Clarke), Yandro 252 (Coulsons), The Diagonal Relationship 1 (Arthur Hlavaty), Fission Chips (Tom Cardy), Lamarckian Giraffes' Own Bimonthly Fanzine (Adrian Bedford), Xenophilia 2 (Richard Faulder), Small Friendly Dog 19 (Skel & Cas), The Ravin' 2/2 (Stephen Dedman), The Cygnus Chronicler 8 (Neville Angove), The Black Duck's Tale (W.A. SF Assoc.), Aerial 2 (Graham Ferner), Paradox 1 (Rex Thompson).

### RECENT READING

Gate of Ivrel (1976), Well of Shiuan (1978), Fires of Azeroth (1979), C.J. Cherryh; The Dreaming Dragons (1980), Damien Broderick; Moon in The Ground (1979), Keith Antill; The Fourth Hemisphere (1980), David Lake; Breathing Space Only (1980), Wynne Whiteford; Displaced Person (1979), Lee Harding; Downbelow Station (1981), C.J. Cherryh; various issues of Analog, Fantasy & Science Fiction.

ART CREDITS

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 Terry Collister, p. 22  
 Kevin Dillon, p. 24, 30  
 Richard Faulder, cover  
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Editorial (continued from page 2)

Last weekend (saturday 25 April, to be exact) was ANZAC Day. To North Americans unfamiliar with the day, it commemorates the Australia-New Zealand forces' landing at Gallipoli in WWI. Nowadays servicemen and women who served in various overseas conflicts are honoured on the same day, and marches and wreath-laying ceremonies are organised in each capital city (and other places) by the RSL (Returned Services League). Several years ago a group of feminists calling themselves Women Against Rape (WAR) decided to lay wreaths in commemoration of women raped in war. Needless to say, the RSL was not too happy about this 'invasion' of 'their' day. I think the women may have managed to lay their wreaths the first year without too much hassle, but the next year the RSL were ready and tried to have them arrested for disrupting the ceremonies. I'm not too sure of the past details, but last year in Canberra 14 women were arrested and convicted but later appeals were upheld. It seems they'd been arrested because their presence was likely to cause a riot, or something like that. The appeals court judge threw that out, saying that under that reasoning, a politician who was pelted with tomatoes in a demonstration should be arrested because his presence had provoked the demonstrators! This year we were all wondering what excuse the police would use to stop the women from marching, and the WAR organisers decided to do their best to ensure that any women marching did absolutely nothing 'disruptive' (like chanting) and would march at the end of the 'official' march.

That way if they were arrested it would clearly be their very presence, their existence as it were, that was 'offensive'. The Thursday before the 25th a special amendment to the ACT traffic ordinance was brought into effect, which specifically made it an offense to 'disrupt' an ANZAC Day march. We still felt the reasoning that only our presence would be an offense, was still valid. We were determined to do nothing disruptive. At this point I rather got cold feet, not wanting any hassles to disrupt my citizenship application (which had not been approved at that point, or I hadn't received the letter). So I didn't go to the march until later in the morning when the official ceremonies were over. When I arrived I learnt that the police had informed the 300 or so women that they were forbidden to join the march. About 60 women decided to try to march anyway (at the rear of the official procession, and in an orderly and dignified manner, as planned). They were arrested, on a side street and well out of sight of the official happenings. (The TV coverage that evening made it look like the arrests occurred almost on the steps of the War Memorial.) The other 250-odd women sat down and waited until the official march was over, then marched up the parade area and 3 women laid the wreath as planned. I participated in the march and it was very emotional. Many non-radical women, and a lot of male supporters, had turned out when the thing turned into a civil rights issue, even people who had not been convinced that Anzac Day was an appropriate time and place to make this sort of political statement. The RSL did wonders for feminist publicity, let me tell you! The cases of the 60 women arrested won't come up until August, and so most of the details can't be publically discussed, which is a bit of a nuisance. It was very reminiscent of the civil rights marches of the early 1960's, even to the singing of countless verses of 'We Shall Overcome'.

Great debates now rage in the local press and on radio, about whether the ordinance was wrong, whether the RSL is denying the very freedoms the 'brave lads' allegedly died for, whether the information the Minister says he received (of planned disruptions) was false or true, etc etc. A nice change of topic from the usual abortion debates, and as well as the civil rights aspects, some letters have addressed the issue of whether our 'brave lads' did any raping overseas (shock! horror!). And on that note I will leave you, mentioning that next issue (by odd coincidence) will have a special sercom section on the politics of rape.

Jean Weber, 1 May 1981.

