

Weber Woman's Wrevenge

Volume 1, Number 6

May 1982

Registered by Australia Post, Publication No NBH4389



WEBERWOMAN'S WREVENGE SIX

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Jean Weber, 13 Myall Street, O'Connor ACT 2601, Australia

Available for trade, contribution, letter of comment, artwork, or \$A0.50, \$US0.75, or equivalent per issue. Electrostencils done by Ron L Clarke, Faulconbridge (plus a few left-over old ones from last year done by Richard Faulder, Yanco). An Isopress Publication.

Publication dates, beginning in July 1982, will be January, March, May, July, September, and November of each year.

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Including Tschaicon, holidays in Tasmania, Cycling for the
ERA, 1982 Anzac Day March, and possibly other items

Fanzines Received; Addresses of Contributors; COA's. 36

THE COVER

John Playford did the cover this time, and again my request was for an "heroic female figure". This cover, and all future covers (with any luck), was printed offset, a process which does much more justice to the artist's work than I can achieve on the Gestetner. Ron Clarke gets superb results on a duplicator; I don't.

ART CREDITS

- Sheryl Birkhead, 13
- Alison Cowling, 19, 22
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- John Playford, cover
- Julie Vaux, 4, 6, 9, 10, 26

The cartoon on page 23 is by Nicole Hollander, and is from either of two books (I'm not sure which): That Woman Must be On Drugs, or I'm in Training to be Tall. Published by St Martin's Press, New York, 1981 and 1979.

EDITORIAL

(Those of you who receive one of more of my apazines may find this section a bit repetitious.)

One of my cats, Milton went walkabout in late January and never came back. I checked around a bit, including the RSPCA, but no luck. The other one, Stuart, went around looking smug for a couple weeks (I'm sure he's always wanted to be an only cat), but then began acting lonely. I won't provide him with a new brother or sister, however, because my lifestyle has recently involved so many weekends away from home, that it's not fair on the cat, nor on my wallet when I have to put him in the kennels rather than prevailing upon some friend to come in and feed him. If things continue like this (and I surely hope they do), Stuart may be looking for a new home along about Christmas.

On one of my rare weekends at home, in February, I held a small patio-warming party and (wonder of wonders) the weather cooperated. Usually there is a violent thunderstorm on any evening when I plan an outdoor activity, and there was one forecast for that day, but it didn't occur. A hot day gave way to a very pleasant evening with few insects. One couple (asked to bring folding chairs) turned up with seven chairs and a large table -- good people to know! The party broke up rather abruptly about 10.00 when they decided to go home, taking all the furniture with them. Well timed, too, as I was about to start dropping hints.

Another event of February was a women's swim night at a local pool/spa. The Women's Centre had hired it for the evening. It was a financial disaster, as not enough people showed up to cover the cost, but those of us who attended had a magnificent time. One of the funniest bits was climbing into the hot tub and being instructed by those already there, how to position oneself to take best advantage of the water jets for stimulating the genitals. I tried a sauna for the first time and couldn't breathe in the hot air. It was very pleasant, all in all, being with a group of people (like nudist groups) who don't stare at you or make you feel uncomfortable, clothed or naked, if your body is not up to the prevailing beauty standard.

I finally finished painting the house, except for odd bits that don't really need it and therefore may never get done. It looks quite good, if you don't get up too close and see the drips and splotches. What a job that was! Now I'd better get the leaking roof fixed before the ceiling in the fanac room falls in. (I've only been saying that for a year...) Yesterday I did start cleaning out the garage, preparatory to tearing it down, and today I carted a carload of rubbish off to the tip. Useful stuff was placed in a shed, which is rapidly assuming the clutter and chaos of the garage, but in a smaller space. Also, a friend who recently lost her house in a divorce and had to move into a little flat has left some of her large furniture in the shed, which doesn't help the space problem. (She had about 1 day to shift, and it poured rain; four women slopped through the swamp in my backyard, shifting her gear into my shed. Of such could dramatic women's magazine stories be made... if I had the ambition.)

At work, the security measures mentioned last time have been eased; no more guard at the front door. The entire Division was reorganised, and my immediate boss was shifted into a new position, so superficially things are

somewhat different. The only major change in practice, so far, is that my new supervisor appears to be a lot more organised (or at least pays more attention to things) than the old one. So we should have fewer last-minute panics now. (I had taken upon myself the task of boss'-memory, just to avoid panics, and felt like I was a secretary again.) The Assistant Chief keeps saying nice things about me, which is very encouraging, and I wonder how many concessions I can wring out of him when the time comes that I want some. So far everyone's been fairly tolerant of my hours (taking alternate Monday mornings off, for instance), and since I sign the proper leave forms, there is no reason why they shouldn't be. It's actually a lot more convenient for me to take a day or a week off here and there, than for me to take all my holidays in a lump, as far as the work goes. At least if I time things around deadlines etc (the Asst. Chief said, "you're the editor, you set the deadlines so they're convenient for you," an attitude which I consider exceptionally enlightened).

February was a very busy month. As well as the things mentioned previously, I had an expense-paid trip to Sydney for a committee meeting connected with work. It was on Monday and Tuesday, so naturally I went up Friday night (weekend at my expense) to take full advantage of the plane fare. It turned out to be a dramatic week. Prior to my departure, there had been a 3-day train strike in Sydney, leading me to wonder whether I should not drive after all, followed by a petrol shortage at least partially resulting from everyone's driving their cars during the train strike. It began to look like the weekend would be a disaster, but all seemed nearly ended by the time we flew into the airport (late, having had to circle for awhile in heavy Friday-evening traffic). The flight attendant recited a list of what was not functioning in Sydney that weekend, and I was glad I had a government car waiting to take me to the train station. That trip (plane, taxi, train) confirmed what I'd suspected, that it takes longer to get from Canberra to Faulconbridge by "air" than by private car. More uncomfortable, too. Still, the weekend was fun. I don't remember much about Saturday, which probably means it was relaxing, but Sunday I lunched with Eric Lindsay, Bob & Margaret Riep, Keith and Laura Curtis, and Peter Simpson (at the local pizza parlour). It was a stinking hot day. Keith was making excuses about not getting his DUFF report done, saying that it was written and he was typing it, but he couldn't face duplicating, collating, etc. So I volunteered to do the printing etc if he supplied the paper and ink and did the typing. I sure hope he takes me up on the offer.

Earlier I had made the same offer to Eric, saying that he really must get his 1978 North American trip report out before he leaves on his 1982 trip (at the end of June). He has virtually all of the report on stencil anyway, and only needs it printed. The next time I showed up, Eric presented me with a mountain of paper and ink and initiated me into the joys of hand-cranking a Rex Rotary. A minor detail I'd forgotten when so blithely offering to play printer. In 3 weekends, though, I've done well over 50 pages, and only 16 remain, at least until Eric finishes typing the thing.

But I digress. Oh, the meeting? Not as boring as usual, but I decided to resign from the committee anyway. Monday night had dinner with Carole Cranwell, a fannish friend and co-member of the access writers' workshop; Tuesday I visited Peter Toluzzi's place and had a long talk. Usually we see each other only at cons or parties and have no time for a leisurely chat.

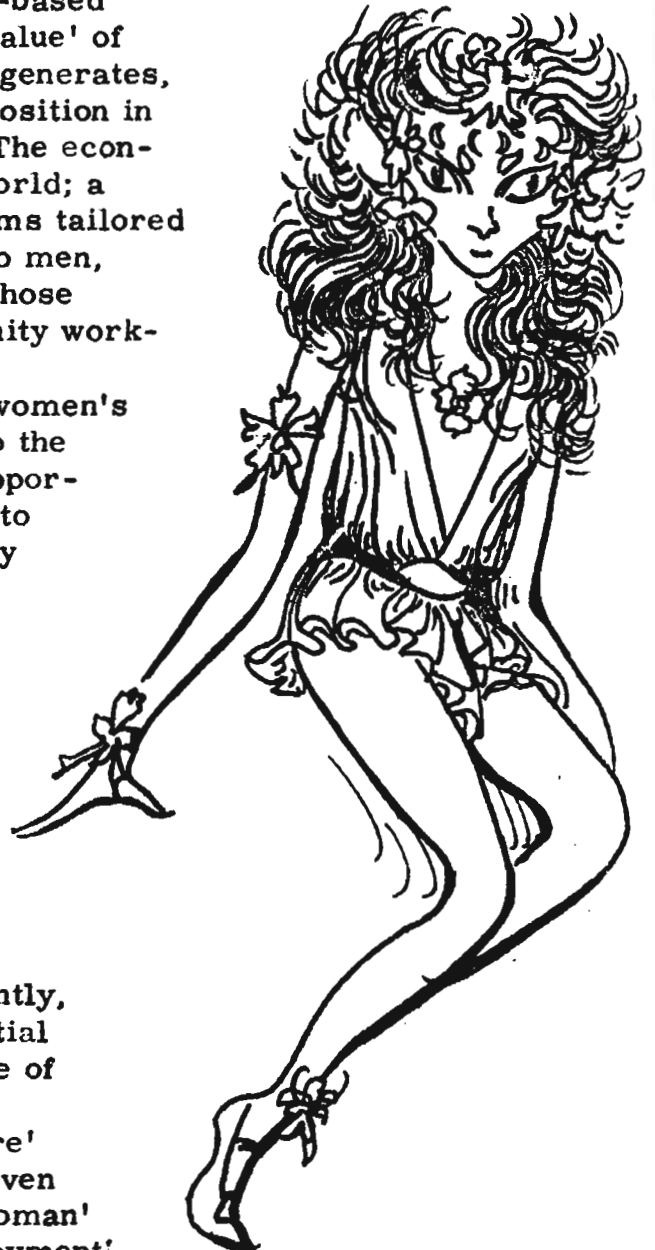
THE HOUSEWIFE'S ROLE

by Judith Hanna

((This "article" was originally part of a letter from Judith to John Newman --JHW))

With regard to the housewife's role, I disagree with you profoundly. We do agree that to be given no choice other than the role of housewife purely because one is female is no good at all. But you seem to go on from that basic feminist premise to assert that the work of house-keeping and child-rearing is trivial, menial and not worth doing -- and that view, it seems to me, profoundly insults all those women who have, often willingly and even happily, accepted it as their life's work. Who are you to say that their accepted lifestyle is worthless? Is a military career any more worthwhile? Is paking pots of money a higher purpose? When you say that the work of housekeeping is "not a job for anybody" are you perhaps not accepting unquestioningly masculist economic-based stereotypes which decree that the 'value' of work equals the amount of money it generates, which in turn dictates its assigned position in the prestige/authority hierarchy? The economic world is very much a man's world; a world which men have defined in terms tailored to the conventional roles available to men, terms which exclude or downgrade those roles (such as housewife or community worker) traditionally assigned to women.

For women, moving out of the 'women's world' of the home and suburbia into the workforce does not, as the Equal Opportunity statistics I've been employed to work with show, gain women equality of opportunity with men: they find themselves second-class citizens in a man's world. Overwhelmingly, women are employed in 'women's jobs' -- nurse, teacher, community worker, secretary, librarian, shop assistant, clerk, process worker -- over 90% of the female workforce is concentrated in these seven occupations. 'Women's jobs' are typically low-paid, low-status, and most importantly, have very limited promotional potential -- not so much because of the nature of the work performed, as because the organisation's 'promotional structure' defines itself to exclude them. So even the option of becoming a 'working woman' (note quotes; 'working' = 'paid employment')



--economic rather than ergonomic definition of work) does not allow a woman the same range of choices in regard to future career path as a man may expect. Feminist challenge, allowing slow penetration of exceptionally able and determined women into what are still male bastions of authority and policy-making, is slowly changing this situation, but for the majority of women, as indeed for most men, a job means menial, tedious, repetitive tasks whose products, apart from the pay packet, are totally irrelevant to the worker's personal existence.

By contrast with the paid occupations in which women may expect to be accepted, the role of housewife measures up pretty well -- it offers autonomy, opportunity for initiative and self-management, responsibility, variety, generally pleasant surroundings, and permits social contacts. The stigma of being a housewife is not due to the nature of the work involved: housework lacks prestige value mainly because it is unpaid, outside the 'marketplace' structure of our economics-dominated culture.

((Judith also sent along the following 'advertisement', which sums up the situation pretty well, I think.))

Position Vacant: HOUSEWIFE

Applications are invited for the position of manager of a lively team of four demanding individuals of differing needs and personalities. The successful applicant will be required to perform and co-ordinate the following functions: companion, counsellor, financial manager, buying officer, teacher, nurse, chef, nutritionist, decorator, cleaner, driver, child care supervisor, social secretary and recreation officer.

Qualifications: Applicants must have unlimited drive and the strongest sense of responsibility if they are to succeed in this job. They must be independent and self-motivated, and be able to work in isolation and without supervision. They must be skilled in the management of people of all ages. They must be able to work under stress, for long periods of time if necessary. They must have flexibility to perform a number of conflicting tasks at the one time without tiring. They must have the adaptability to handle all new developments in the life of the team, including emergencies and serious crises. They must be able to communicate on a range of issues with people of all ages, including public servants, school teachers, doctors, dentists, tradespeople, businesspeople, teenagers and children. They must be competent in the practical skills listed above. They must be healthy, creative, active and outgoing, to encourage the physical and social development of the team members. They must have imagination, sensitivity, warmth, love and understanding, since they are responsible for the mental and emotional well-being of the team.

Hours of Work: All waking hours and a 24-hour shift when necessary.

Pay: No salary or wage. Allowances by arrangement, from time to time, with the income-earning member of the team. The successful applicant may be required to hold a second job, in addition to the one advertised here.

Benefits: No guaranteed holidays. No guaranteed sick leave, maternity leave or long service leave. No guaranteed life or accident insurance. No worker's compensation. No superannuation.

((Does anyone wonder why I don't want to be a mother? ? --JHW))

Moss Woman
Semi-Aquatic
Relaxing
in the Morning
Sun



Her ornaments
are tree orchids
and small pearls
with mother of pearl
buckles on her tunic

A SUMMER'S DAY AMIDST HIGH GOLD VILLAGE

by Julie Vaux

(Editor's note: the drawings illustrating this story do not necessarily depict the folk described therein; I just used whatever Julie Vaux artwork I had handy, and I'm hopeless at recognizing different Comorri races.)

DAWN... in the shadowy vastness of tree-cloak'd hills that is the Redleaf Forest, the dawn-song begins. At the edge of the eastern sky the Herald of our Lady Sun spreads his cape. To the west, mist falls from the mountains. Sleep flutters her wings to journey to the lands beyond, beyond. (The Forest Folk see Sleep as a giant jewelneck - a bird similar to our ring-necked doves.)

East of the River of Greengold and west of the Sea that drowns Mountains (the Great Inland Sea) beyond the ancient town of Carvod lies High Gold Hill, where the sounds of awakening are heard. The shaking out of woollen rugs and splendid furs breaks the cooing of jewelnecks and the kluck-ka-toos of black-crested lakas. There is the inevitable shriek of frill-back lizards being evicted from hearths, where they had been wallowing in the warm ashes of the night's fires. On the slopes below the tree-houses and cave-dens, the Elder Mothers gather, chanting the morning song, before they add fresh logs to the Sacred Hearth of the Central Grove. The morning mists begin to lift, as the Honored Fathers walk the village, lighting the fires of each hearth. Soon steam will rise, from iron-dark pots and kettles and cauldrons, to spread a spicy smell on the sharp wings of morning. Now young girls come running down to the slope, to fetch water from the rain basins, and hunters gather, checking leather straps and testing the keenness of spear and arrowheads. A great bronze gong rings out. Day has begun.

When the day is 2 hours old, small children may be seen meandering, in most unorderly file, down to the flats beyond the brook and up to a small rise where a shining white plastic dome rises. This, and two smaller domes, holds the village's school and media equipment, replacing an older timber building, burnt down some years ago. This creation of high tech still frightens and awes the younger children, with its glistening newness, so unlike the venerable trees that are their homes. Hunters and children having left, adolescents with their unbound manes and tails go racing down to the herds or the river flats, holding their tails high, as they leap from stone to stone of the fords. Back on the slopes as the sun breaks through leaves, weaving looms are unrolled and broodery frames moved into the clear morning light. Smoke rises from a rocky cleft on the west of the hill. Kharan the Honoured Father is casting arrowheads today. His wife Jarha Copper Crystal is baking enamel on bronze shapes. Now the softness of morning is broken by a piercing humming only cat-folks could hear, and by a flashing of metal. It is the travel carrier, stopping by the domes, carrying mail for the village and taking back students and shoppers for the Middle School and Markets of Carvod. It's one of the blessings of high tech,

being spared a 5-hour walk or an hour and a half ride into Carvod. The summer's day is now 4 hours old. A tinkling of wind chimes is heard as a little breeze moves amidst the trees. The day's heat begins to rise as folk depart for the deeper forest, to gather flowers and herbs, to trim paths or trees, or to check their scattered gardens. The flashing of Rassar's double blue-steel is seen, as he rises the shaft to his shoulder. He goes to cut and seal an infected branch of a bell flower tree.

As Our Lady Sun reaches the crown of the day, children race up from the school, eager for shade and cool fruit juice and warm floury dumplings. Keen are the shrillings of pet frill-backs greeting their owners.

Purrings are heard as keen-eyed tree-cats watch 3 young huntresses return with a fine brace of jumpers. They are greeted by Elder Mothers at the entrance of the Shrine of the Golden Cat, who chant the song of Return, then one takes the brace for cleaning and cutting, the other their weapons and traps for purification.

Now as the heat grows stronger and the river gains a dancing shimmer, sleep returns to the village. Those who remain waking retreat from the noon-glare into tree-shadows or sheltered caves, to turn pots of clay or carve branches into the curves of a fine hunter's bow.

In the valley below, only the 3 young humans who live in the domes stir. They dive into the cool waters of the brook where it widens into a clear bottom'd pool.

By the second hour after noon, children with pets have taken over the pool, splashing noisily. The ford-stones are covered by the glinting and glowing of frill-back lizards and wyverns. They are watch'd by Matriarch Ri'ar'ra, who finally throws off her gray and silver robes and joins them in the water.

As the 4th hour comes, hunting teams return. A young pair of mates returns from a 2-day journey with fine furs and feathers, perfect for winter furnishings. K narli the Rock-Stalker has a basket of rocks to be cut into files and panels and Zharhan the Lone Walker has returned from a 2 week's journey on foot to the City under the Purple Heath. As herbal teas are boiled, the Middle School students return at the 5th hour, carrying bags of books. By the 6th hour, the time of shifting shadows, all who will return have climbed into tree-houses, to hold their evening gathering, safe from the dangerous shades of sunset. This is the time between Sun and Moon, when the elders claim spirits roam.

Smoke rises into the growing darkness, as the shadow of one tree joins into that of many others, giving birth to night.

The silver chimes of the Moon are rung at the 8th hour, and the flame of the Sacred Hearth soars high, rising to the Song of the Elder Mothers who, forming a circle of power, twist and turn it into a strange dance, through the strength of the Blood of the Mothers, "Blood is the Water - Blood is the Fire - the rising spirit" is part of their chant,

The Elder Fathers watch from a distance. Only the Smiths dare stand closer. It is said in that in elder days the Mothers would lay a flame curse on any male who showed a discourteous interest in the High Magic.

This is the hour of the Mothers. The Goddess of Flame only they care call on. Rare is the male allowed to be a holder of the mysteries who is not an Elder, but that is the old way. Nowadays we are taught that "Magic is both a science and an art." Now we say "psionics", "espers", "telepaths", "mutants", but the old ways live on.

Redleaf Forest is far from Starbridge City, and

the Mothers are closer to the elements and old powers than the Dwellers in the High Tower with their written magic - or so they claim. The stars have risen and the Moon and the sky is clear of cloud. Hunters leave again and guards circle the village.

Down by the river a group of young females gather with cithars, lapboards and hand chimes, silver shapes in the moonlight. The males circle around them, in courtship dance. Time is forgotten. The song is a gate to the realm of Forever Day and First Night. The only note of discord is the noise from the Domes - World Media programmes being shown; probably it's the 9th hour Notable Events programme. Even that sound eventually comes into harmony with the night.

The dancing and singing last to midnight when all return to the village. Sleep is rising and with it a coolness. It is the first hour of Deep Night and dreamers walk unto the return of the Herald of Dawn. The day is ended.

* F I N I S *

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RESUME

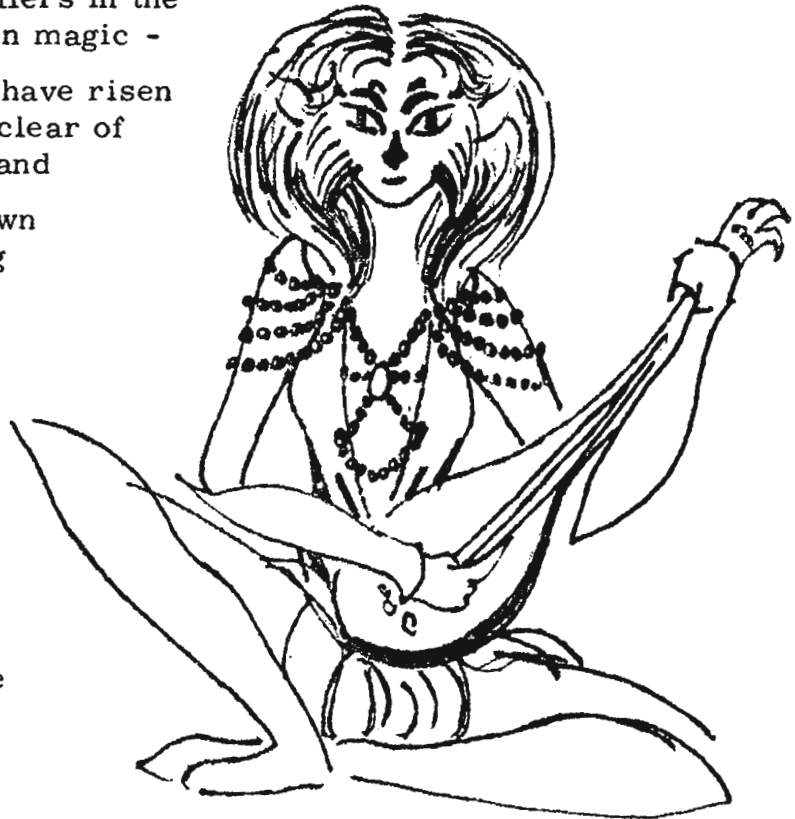
Razors pain you;
Rivers are damp;
Acids stain you;
And drugs cause cramp.
Guns aren't lawful;
Nooses give;
Gas smells awful;
You might as well live.

THE FLAW IN PAGANISM

Drink and dance and laugh and lie,
Love, the reeling midnight through,
For tomorrow we shall die!
(But, alas, we never do.)

SANCTUARY

My land is bare of chattering folk;
The clouds are low along the ridges;
And sweet's the air with curly smoke
From all my burning bridges.



((The above are some poems by Dorothy Parker, from a book titled "The Best of Dorothy Parker", 1979 (first published 1952), Duckworth, London. They are dedicated to Eric Lindsay, who loaned me the book. Other selections shall probably appear elsewhere in this zine. --JHW))

MORE ABOUT...

HYPATIA CLUSTER

Goals and Objectives of the Hypatia Cluster
(from a handout received from the group)

The Hypatia Cluster exists to promote public awareness of the importance of space exploration and of the specific contributions of women already involved in space sciences, and to encourage women's participation in space sciences and community space support groups. Our goal is to be a large, popularly supported organization which will serve as a focus for the many women, in both the scientific and non-scientific communities, who share our objectives. It is the intention of the Hypatia Cluster to explore women's entrance and joyful participation in the worlds of science and space as informed adventurers, sharing in the challenges and discoveries facing the human species. The objectives of The Hypatia Cluster are to:

- A. Enhance public awareness of space exploration, and the increasing role of women in its development.
- B. Distribute and communicate among members information, in the form of newsletters, about other space organizations, findings and discoveries about exploration by women in the field, and positions available in space sciences which may be of interest to qualified women who desire such information.
- C. Develop an educational program for our membership which will provide non-technical orientation in space exploration and basic scientific concepts.

Memberships are US\$10.00; send to Hypatia Cluster, 231 - 27th Street, San Francisco, CA 94131, USA. Copies of literature can be obtained from me (Jean Weber) for a self-addressed stamped envelop. I have here a copy, from another issue of Space Age Review, January 1982, of an article titled, "Space Culture, The foundation of evolution in a practical space age". This article asks, "What are we doing right now which could be influencing the course of our species' evolution?" and discusses the theory of "punctuated equilibrium", first published in 1977 by Stephen Jay Gould of Harvard University and Niles Eldridge of the American Museum of Natural History. This theory proposes that species "punctuate" the slow process of natural selection with periods of intensely rapid change. It (the article) also looks at William Durham's (a Stanford University anthropologist) idea that culture itself exerts a profound influence on human evolution. The article suggests that, "Taken together, the implications of these two ideas are staggering." "Can we make conscious cultural and sociological decisions based on what we know historically to determine the best possible course for our species?"



AUSTRALIAN F&SF

For some time now, I've been intending to write a brief overview of recent Australian science fiction and fantasy, mainly for the benefit of overseas readers of this zine. The following is not intended to be a full listing, even of recent works, but will serve as a start. I'd be delighted to receive reviews of other works, from readers, and expect to publish further installments from time to time. For those wanting to keep up with new publications, a subscription to Australian Science Fiction News (Merv Finns, c/o Space Age Books, 305-307 Swanston St, Melbourne, Vic 3000, Australia, is probably the best source of information. (Please send all payments in the USA to LOCUS: \$6.85 US surface mail and \$11.45 US airmail. British agent is Gerald Bishop, 2 Cowper Rd, Cambridge, CB1 3SN, England. £3.75 surface or £6.20 airmail.)(Oops, sorry, left out address for Locus: Box 3938, San Francisco, CA 94119, USA).

1981 releases. A Bertram Chandler, The Anarch Lords, Daw. Another delightful book in the Crimes series. Would you believe I only read my first Chandler book a few months ago? I though I wouldn't like his sort of adventure yarns. Was I ever wrong! His works may lack the depth and, er, social value of the stuff I think I prefer, but that's only a matter of preference -- and he more than makes up for it with witty style and good fun. This book contains some really barbed comments on the Australian political scene, many of which I suspect will be lost on North American readers, but I kept shrieking with laughter as I read. Well, even if you miss some of the subtle bits, it's still a well-written story and many cuts above much "space opera" I've had the misfortune of leafing through.

Patricia Wrightson, Behind the Wind. The third in a trilogy, following The Ice is Coming and The Dark Bright Water. Fantasy set in Australia, revolving around a young Aboriginal man who is called by the land to save it and his People from various evils. I've written a lengthy review for Australian SF News, so won't repeat it here, except to urge readers to sample Wrightson's works. Again, an author whom I only discovered a few months ago (in her case, I hadn't even heard of her, which shows the depths of my ignorance). Wrightson's previous works have won awards for children's fantasy, but I would consider this volume more in the realm of adult fantasy. Whatever you want to call it, it's good, and it's a real joy to find fantasy that does not depend on the standard creatures of Celtic or other European myth.

George Turner, Vaneglory. This actually hasn't been released in Australia yet, though a few copies are available. It takes place in the same place as Beloved Son; some before and some after the events in that book. Again, I've written a lengthy review elsewhere (in Neville Angove's Cygnus Chronicler) so won't repeat it here. Excellent book, and much more readable than its predecessor. From Faber in UK, Penguin in Australia. (Forgot to mention, Wrightson is from Hutchinson, only in hard-cover so far, though the first two volumes are out in paperback I'm told) (You can tell I'm composing on stencil, can't you?)

Other '81 releases, none of which I've had the opportunity to read: David Ireland, City of Women (from Allen Lane), David Lake's The Man Who Loved Moorlocks (from Hyland House), and Keith Taylor's Bard (Ace). There was also a short story collection, titled Distant Worlds, from Cory & Collins, from which came two

contenders for the Best Short Australasian Science Fiction or Fantasy award.

1980 releases: three from Void Publications (now trading as Cory & Collins): Jack Wodhams, Looking for Blucher, which I haven't read; Wynne Whiteford's Breathing Space Only, which I thoroughly enjoyed (more about it in a moment); and David Lake's The Fourth Hemisphere, which disappointed me. Breathing Space gave me a bit of a shock when I read it, as it is set in the same place (the Snowy Mountains) and not terribly different circumstances than a novel I was researching at the time. It involves a group of people who have escaped the terrible pollution of the lowlands and survive precariously in the mountains, discouraging anyone from wandering in on them. They are contacted by returning spacefarers, and debate ensues over whether the returnees should be permitted to land.

I can't recall just why I didn't like Fourth Hemisphere, but I think it wandered around a lot getting nowhere in a rather simplistic manner.

A far better book is Damien Broderick's The Dreaming Dragons (Norstilia Press), which combine out-of-body experiences with alien artifacts to present, as the dust jacket says, "the most outrageous and stimulating explanation for human history since Bon Daniken" (that's praise???) I did find the Ayers Rock-as-spaceship motif a bit hackneyed, but that's just nitpicking. (An aside: I just noticed some autographs on the front page of my copy; when I bought it from Carey Handfield, he inscribed it as publisher; since I'd read the book, I haven't looked at it -- and Damien Broderick evidently did during a party here last year, because written below Carey's scrawl is "You rat, Handfield. Hi Jean, Damien Broderick".)

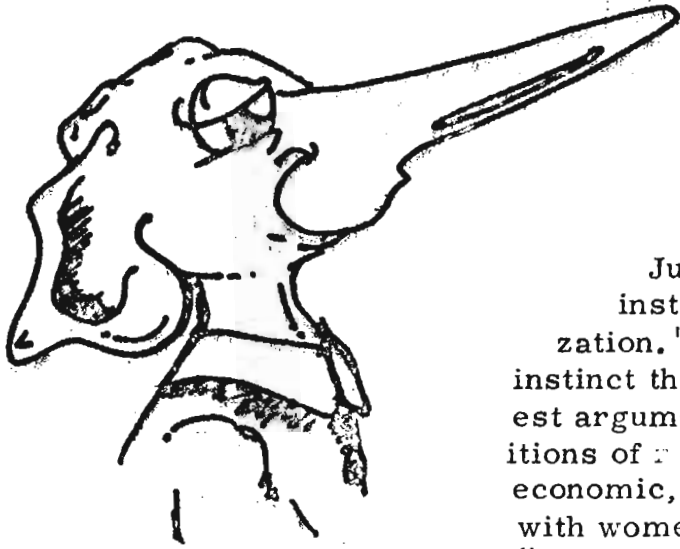
Creeping further back into the past, we look at 1979: here we find Alien Worlds, another Void short story collection; Cherry Wilder's The Luck of Brin's Five (Angus & Robertson), Lee Harding's Displaced Person, and Keith Antill's Moon in the Ground (Norstilia). Luck is a delightful book, featuring marsupial humanoids with a group marriage system, who take in a human spacer crashed on the planet. Told from the point of view of a child, the story examines many cultural perceptions. I believe it's the first of a series. Displaced Person is a mix of psychology and sf; a teenage boy slowly becomes invisible to his family and friends and enters a mysterious grey world (in another dimension?). Moon is a rather tedious rendition of what I feel could have been a fascinating story of an alien artifact near Alice Springs (no, not another Ayers Rock story). Wups, almost forgot David Ireland's Woman of The Future (Penguin), a marvelous fantasy in diary format. Lots of social commentary in an easy-to-read, mildly suspenseful format. The press played up the more bizarre elements and I was somewhat surprised to find how little of the book they actually represented. Told from the point of view of a teenage girl, and very well handled. This book was not promoted as sf or fantasy, and is a good example of how poorly defined are the distinctions between the genre and so-called "mainstream" fiction.

Just a quick mention of a few more titles, none of which I have the space or inclination to review just now: Lee Harding, Rooms of Paradise (editor), Penguin, 1978; Lee Harding, Future Sanctuary, Laser Books, 1976; David Lake, Walkers on the Sky, Daw, 1977; Lee Harding, The Weeping Sky, Cassell Australia, 1977.

Some 1982 releases from Cory & Collins (which I will review another time, somewhere): Ryn, by Jack Wodhams; Lances of Nengesdul, by Keith Taylor; Sapphire Road, by Wynne Whiteford. I repeat, this article was a sampler and not intended to be a full listing. Mostly a ramble through my bookshelves, and incomplete even at that.

letters... Letters... LETTERS...

LETTERS



Chris Callahan
6101 Seminole Street
Berwyn Heights, MD 20740
USA
13 January 1982

Judith (Hanna)... says, "Men's instincts are demonstrably anti-civilization." Assuming that we do accept the instinct theory, this is undoubtedly the clearest argument yet for removing men from positions of responsibility -- social, political, economic, whatever -- and replacing them with women. Those delightfully-named "anthropologists" Tiger and Fox, along with their colleagues Ardrey, Morris, and more

lately, George Gilder, all have insisted that instinct is part of the basis for male supremacy and its evolutionary inevitability and rightness, as well as all the aggressiveness and selfishness that's caused so much misery and is now likely to end up destroying the planet. Basically I could argue all day with Judith, but her statement about instinct and civilization really could be used to devastating effect. I'm frankly surprised that none of the opposition to those writers has picked up what the idiots are really saying and loudly publicized just how stupid they actually are. It would really be fun to watch the reaction!

//Thanks for adding to my statement on personal change your comments on the why of change. I hadn't really considered that particular side of the question, and I agree that societal pressure is about the worst reason. As I said in my letter, input from outside sources should be filed away and treated as peripheral data -- it's what the individual feels personally about her/himself and possible change that matters. //There is a new fanzine called STORMS, one issue out so far -- it's a feminist zine with media orientation (SW, Trek, any other TV and film subjects), and if the first issue is any indication, it'll be varied enough in subject matter and attitudes to appeal to a fairly wide range of readers who are basically at least sympathetic to feminism. Write to Charlie Terry Textor, 521 Oakview, Dayton, Ohio 45429 USA, for information.

Frank Macskasy Jnr
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Wellington 1, New Zealand

24 January 1982

Jean, your fanzine is in great danger of becoming socially Relevant! But we'd better keep this to ourselves -- if your readers found out this kernel of truth, then they might be shocked comatose by it. Imagine an sf fan reading anything relevant to Reality! Ye Ghods; next thing you know, the Russians will be releasing their political prisoners and saying, "Sorry"!!

Your 'medical miracles' column raised the interesting subject of technology challenging previous "facts of life". E.g a Fact of Life about extremely malformed babies was (some years ago) that they died. Pure and simple;

they had no chance of living. But these days, medical science not only saves diseased and injured people, but also babies who would otherwise not have lived.

The 'crunch' point being that while the baby is saved (questionable), its condition is usually pretty terrible -- and it's left up to the parents to cope. So much for medical 'miracles'!

Is it any wonder that some young married couples are opting out, and adopting child-free (I prefer that term, to child-less) life-styles?

The Right to Life group's expression of horror at scientists experimenting with foetal tissue from dead fetuses is pathetic. I gather from their concern for the rights for dead fetuses, that there are no more social problems in existence concerning living children? Have child-beating, youth gangs, and 'parentless' children disappeared from Western society?

Regarding women and violence: I heard (about ten years ago) that women in war could be potentially more violent than their male counterparts. (I'm speaking of soldiers.) The reason I heard is that women's motives were more personalised than males. While men looked upon war as a fact of life, and something to get over and done with, women looked upon it as a threat to their homes and, more important, as a threat to their children. And, because an 'enemy' threatened the young, they tended to fight back with all the energy they had to protect them. Or something like that. No doubt you've probably heard their theory yourself.

Christine Ashby
P O Box 175
South Melbourne, Vic 3205
Australia
4 January 1982

...When I got on my high horse about Family Law proceedings...you jumped on me... I am still puzzled. That rare beast the childless, propertyless young couple really have nothing to do with the case. As to the woman who

ups and leaves both husband and children...I think it is too simplistic to assume that she has or retains the upper hand in what follows. I think that I may have somehow confused you by lumping together property and custody, but I tend to see them wholistically in any case, as do a great many of the parties to litigation. "He's two months behind with the maintenance so I'm going to deny him access till I get it" may not be legal but it's awfully common.

((I "jumped on you" because I tend to jump on anyone who says "all" women do this or that, or "all" couples, or "all" men, or whatever. I did, after all, preface my remarks with the statement that I agreed with you. I also get rather annoyed with the assumption that "all" divorces are unfriendly -- no you didn't say that, but the sorts of things you did say tend to bolster that assumption. I recently talked with a friend who has had an amicable divorce in which she and her ex-husband have been able to work out the tedious details of property etc to their mutual satisfaction...but -- in order for her to buy out his share of the house without paying stamp duty (a form of tax, for North American readers), she had to get a court order for him to sell. If they merely settled it themselves, she would have had to pay the tax! The "system" assumes -- and reinforces -- litigation even when there's no need. --JHW))

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Indecision is the basis of flexibility

((Neville Angove's comments lastish have prompted some response, as follows. --JHW))

Gary Mason, B.Com., LL.B.
Barrister and Solicitor
P O Box 258
Unley, S.A. 5061
Australia
28 February 1982

Neville Angove, with an arrogance not uncommon in the professions (mine as well as his), has paraded remarkable ignorance of the ways of legal practitioners. It is not the function of a lawyer to "discredit . . . both arguments and people,

for a fee"; it is the lawyer's function to test the arguments and the evidence of people (not the people themselves, as a rule), which may, but may not, result in their discrediting. The distinction is important; if the arguments and evidence can withstand testing, it is the function of the legal system to act accordingly, and the legal practitioner has an over-riding duty to the courts, regardless of the client, not to overstep the limits of testing by seeking to discredit regardless. This duty is, your readers will be surprised to hear, taken seriously by the bulk of lawyers -- their continuing relationship with the court is, after all, of greater long-term significance to them than obtaining an unwarranted result for a one-off client who may never be seen again.

If all this sounds a bit starry-eyed, let me acknowledge that crooked lawyers can be found without too much trouble -- like crooked doctors and any other kind of crook. But the point I am making is that the image Neville has presented is in fact crook, and recognised as such by the law itself.

To accuse Christine Ashby of that kind of unethical behaviour would unquestionably be defamatory, and would expose you, Jean, as publisher, to considerable risk. Fortunately, the history of fan-publishing in this country suggests a great tolerance by fans of defamatory remarks; I only mention this to balance Neville's own absurd version of the law of libel. (To say that the word "cretin" is a "technical term with a well-defined meaning in law in both Australia and New Zealand" and is inherently libellous, and that "fuck-witted" is safer is in my view both cretinous and fuckwitted (take that, Alex Buzo!), and I would like to see any authority Neville can produce to support such assertions.)

Neville's logic seems a bit tortuous, too. What on earth does a doctor not liking disease (which it is after all his function to eradicate) got to do with a psychologist not liking people generally (whom it is presumably his function to help)? Ah well, I suppose someone who implies that he considers himself morally superior because he makes his living by treating people as some sort of machines has problems enough. . .

Judith Hanna
c/o Joseph Nicholas
Room 9, 94 St George's Square
Pimlico, London SW1Y 3QY
United Kingdom

((This was a phone call of comment from Judith, just before she went overseas, and I take responsibility for any errors in transcription and paraphrasing--JHW))

23 February 1982

Regarding Neville Angove's comments about cretin as a legal term; "cretin" applies to mental handicap (IQ below 45), not mental illness. The NSW Anti-discrimination Board just released a study titled "Discrimination and Mental Handicap" pwhich points out the distinction and suggests that many psychologists seem woefully ignorant of the difference.

Christine Ashby
(address above)

8 February 1982

... It is true that I am qualified as a solicitor, but I practise exclusively as a legal costing consultant. What I actually do for a living is analyse the output of practitioners and interpret it so as to ensure that they receive a proper remuneration (in words of one syllable, I tell them what to charge). I have never claimed a fee for accusing anybody of being a psychologist. As to Nev's notion of what solicitors in general do, I will be charitable and limit myself to the observation that Nev sometimes suffers from terminological inexactitude -- I have a letter from him somewhere in which he claims that he once "instructed" Counsel (I think he meant that he once acted as an expert witness) so I know that it's best not to take him too literally.

((I'll now continue with comments on other articles/letters/etc. Continuing with excerpts from Christine's letter....--JHW))

Roger Weddall has a point. I should have said "almost all of those Melbourne fans known to me", and accordingly I say it now. However, Roger has raised the interesting question of "When is a fan?" I know that I am a fully-paid-up old fogie in the fannish sense, and so is Roger by now; however, my fannish acquaintances are by no means limited to the pre-1975 crowd. When I think of "Melbourne fandom" I think of a group of about 40 people, including both Roger and the sometime Melbourne Uni mob, and Tiny Darryl and the sometime Monash Uni mob. Of course I know some of the 40 better than others, for a number of reasons. I am well aware that there is a wider group of more than a hundred people whose only contact with fandom proper is their annual attendance at a convention. Some of these people I know by sight, some even by name (Derrick and I have kept the membership records of a number of conventions). With due respect to Roger, I query whether these people, who may well only know each other "vaguely", can truly be called "fans". They are totally passive consumers, and I don't mean that as a criticism. Maybe some of them have their own common interests such as comics or D&D -- for those people the word "fringe-fan" seems appropriate -- but they don't actively participate in activities which those who regards themselves as fans would think of as fannish.

... I really should not have to point out that I never at any time seek to speak for all of Melbourne fandom. At all times my opinions are my own -- if they sometimes sound as though they carry the authoritative backing of thousands the effect is quite unintentioned (and perhaps an indication that I ought to go into politics).

Gary Mason
(address above)

((another excerpt from the same letter, this time on Gerald Smith's remarks about whether women who choose to stay in the home have really had an opportunity to question the traditional role--JHW))

Gerald Smith has not appeared to appreciate the fundamental difficulty of his line of reasoning, and it is this: how do you convince a person who is quite sure that he/she is perfectly happy in what he/she is doing, of your view that he/she is wrong and in fact not happy at all? A secondary problem is to justify doing so, even if it is possible -- a fool's paradise, one might think, is better than no paradise at all, and people who think (wrongly?) that they are happy are often in fact far more contented than those of us who have thought things through and *know* the truth about the world.

This is no semantic quibble, but a fundamental dilemma of most people who consider themselves more enlightened in some way than other members of society. I don't have the answers, but I find the questions themselves somewhat chastening.

((Judith Hanna's article, earlier in this, addresses another aspect of the situation -- that women who choose to stay at home may very well have decided that the alternatives are worse, whatever they may feel about home-making. -JHW))

Marilyn Pride
194 Corunna Rd
Petersham, NSW 2049
Australia

...I was pleased to see Judith Hanna's review of The Tall One. . . I wouldn't agree with Judith that Mary is likely to be accused of witchcraft; her brother gives her the house to all appearances out of generosity, but he has a better place to go

to, and the book's most striking feature is the general departure from the stereotype of medieval behaviour -- many of the characters venture outside the pale of conventional behaviour without harm or comment. Fear of witches also seems to be at a low ebb in that time or place -- the local cunning-woman is known to have stolen wax from the church for spells and comes to no harm.

Buck Coulson
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Hartford City, IN 47348
USA

14 February 1982

Interesting that girls wouldn't go out with Alderson because of his beard. I grew mine specifically because Juanita wanted me to -- and actually started it during a time when Kay Anderson was visiting and I had two women telling me I'd look better with a beard. (Kay's

way of putting it was, of course, that the more of my face I covered up the better off I'd be.) I'd started beards before, but was never enough interested to hold out through the period when the damned thing itches like crazy; without female support I'd still be beardless. Of course, when I was an adolescent, nobody wore beards and I was considered a little odd for growing a mustache (it didn't itch). Then when beards became popular I didn't particularly want one because they were popular; I didn't get mine until social pressure dropped off a bit. (I automatically go opposite to the norm on subjects that I'm basically indifferent to. Otherwi e I do it my way and the hell with society.)

I'm fascinated by all these people who are fond of travel. I enjoy being in different places, but I hate traveling to get there. I'd be a devoted user of matter transmitters if there were any such things.

((A local fan, Leigh Hyde, has pointed out that the motor car is a matter transmitter; unfortunately it isn't instantaneous. -JHW))

R Laurraine Tutihasi
1217 Majestic Way
Webster, NY 14580
USA

82.03.22

...I agree with most of the things that are said within the pages of your fanzine... I have just one tidbit to contribute; I'll leave it to you to decide whether it's of any interest.

For years, I have fantasised or daydreamed about myself and various men. Physicists, and possibly scientists in related fields, have been known to perform what are called gedanken experiments, from the German word "to think". I thought I'd use my imagination to do a

gedanken experiment about myself. About ten years ago, I decided that I never wanted to bear children. There are several reasons. One is that I don't want to undergo the pains and inconveniences of carrying and giving birth to a child. Secondly, I hate infants. Lastly, as a student of psychology, I would probably treat the child like a guinea pig. Anyway, I wanted to find out how I'd react if I were to let myself be talked into having a child. The results of the thought experiment showed me that I would hate my lover/husband and be totally indifferent toward the baby. And I can hear the chorus of "Just wait till you have a baby of your own." However, knowing what I know about myself, I would think it rather cruel to subject an infant to such an experiment.

((The final factor in my decision not to have children is similar; I realised that my main interest in raising a child was to "do it right" -- apply my theories of childraising on a live subject -- and by implication to mould the child into what I wanted. This horrified me, and still does as I watch other people doing exactly that with their children, and thinking it's the proper thing to do!!--JHW))

Alethea Raspa
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Australia

23 February 1982

I have a distinct aversion to the use of "Ms" due to the fact that it is not really accepted as an alternative to both "Miss" and "Mrs" and sometimes it's used to mean "Unmarried female (probably available)". I'm probably newly sensitive to it 'coz I'm just getting used to being addressed as "Signora", but I have

noticed that when "Ms" is used it's often pronounced Missus whether or no. The one that really bugs me is the word "person" added, as in "chairperson" and then it's invariably used to mean chairwoman. ((This comment came in response to a letter from me to Alethea telling her I preferred to be addressed on an envelope as "Jean Weber" or, possibly, "Ms J Weber" but definitely not "Miss J Weber". I agree that Ms is not fully accepted yet, but I figure the more women like myself who prefer to use Ms, and insist on it, the sooner it will be accepted. Incidentally, I have noticed that Ms tended to be regarded amongst my acquaintances (non-feminist) as meaning "Married but doesn't want to admit it". Funny how connotations vary! I agree about chairperson being used only for women, and consider that worse than using chairman for all, but my solution is that in most cases the simple term "chair" will do, without -man, -woman, -person, or -thing being attached. -JHW))

Susan Crites
210 Division
Lamar, CO 81052
USA
April 1, 1982

... I've heard a lot about Blake's Seven; it does sound fascinating, but hasn't caught on here, even with the video traders. Dr Who is the greatest thing since hot sliced bread, according to a very vocal new segment of fandom in our

area. I think it's okay -- I'll watch it if it gets turned on by someone else. But I'm not gung-ho for it. I believe we are rather alike in our inability to sit still through most TV shows or movies. I can do it if I'm doodling, and Caro also does most of her art while listening to the programs. In fact, a good percentage of the artists I know do. This either says something about artists or the state of television, I'm not sure which...

I'm going to be starting a Women's Self-Defense class here in Lamar. Don't know a thing yet about how the attendance will be, but everyone I've

mentioned it to has been more than helpful and supportive, from our NOW chapter, which I expected, to the local head of the City Recreation, which I must confess I didn't. But this nice man has offered me free space in the Community Building, until we find out whether the class is going to succeed or not, at which point I'll how if I need a small room (which I've been offered at several other places) or one of the school gyms, which I can have at a pro-rated cost. I'm very excited about the whole thing, though also apprehensive -- I have the full moral support (and teaching materials) from my school in Denver, but I'm the only one actually down here, so in another sense I'm doing this strictly on my own.

Pete Presford
'Ty Gwyn', Maxwell Close
Bwcle, Clwyd,
North Wales, United Kingdom
19 January 1982

In the U. K. the role of the man as the breadwinner has changed to such an amount that it is not the norm it once was. Three million unemployed have been the major cause of this over the last couple of years. I now have several male friends

who have been on the dole for some time; but their wives are all holding down good jobs. The biggest drawback here is ... all tax benefits go to the man. There is no choice; which isn't too bad if you're both working. But if it's the wife that's the breadwinner, she does not get a single damn tax-relief that the man would get. And that is a great deal if there are children in the family. To me it's the biggest government con of all time. I must agree with you... there are still too many things that need balancing a great deal more than they are at the present time. ((In Australia, if the wife is employed, the husband is not eligible for the dole, and vice versa. --JHW))



Chris Callahan
(address p. 13)

February 17, 1982

After Judith Hanna's article a couple of issues back, Debi Kean's depressing "Upbringings" is a good dose of reality. The same social/psychological mental set that idealizes homemaking as the proper role/fulfillment for women is responsible for the pernicious influences on little Jed. Reading about him, I think about my nephews, aged 8 and 5, raised by a homemaker-mother who last fall finally got a BA in education (having dropped out of college at 20 to get married, she went part-time on and off for about 7 of the nearly 10 years she's been married) and a father who goes against his own upbringing to share housework and childcare, two boys who can comfortably ask for, and get, toy dishes and cooking utensils and a toy sewing machine for Christmas along with the usual cap guns, games, etc., and I pray the family influence will be strong enough to override the outside influences of small mining town, parochial school, TV, and all the rest. I agree wholeheartedly with Gerald Smith that the crux of the matter is choice, and it's still damnably hard for most people to make choices freely because of family and societal influences favoring limited roles. And it could get worse. There's a Family Protection Bill or some such thing in Congress which would, among other things, bar federal funding for schools using textbooks that do not show the traditional sex roles as right and proper (regardless of the reality the kids live with every day...)and barring federal funding for shelters for battered spouses (over 90% of whom are women...). Whether this nonsense has any chance of actually becoming law is a question, but the New Right has shown that it has a hell of a lot of clout, and the New Righteous are supporting the bill. There are also a few people around the country who examine textbooks used in elementary and secondary public schools for unAmerican ideas of all kinds, including the idea that the sex roles the examiners grew up with are fixed by God and absolutely must not be questioned... These examiners had a lot of textbook publishers and school boards running scared. Choice? From the way things look here, in spite of many successes by the feminist movement, all I can say is, good luck, folks! ... As for homemaking as woman's role, I highly recommend THE FALL OF A DOLL'S HOUSE: Three Generations of Women and The Houses They Lived In, by Jane Davison (Avon, c 1980; hardcover, Holt, Rinehart & Winston). The three women are the author, her mother, and her grandmother. It's fascinating reading in the sociology and psychology of women in relation to their houses. Granted, it's American, but I'm sure a lot of it will sound familiar to Australians also.

Leslie David
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USA
3 April 1982

I'm afraid John Alderson's letter didn't really bother me one way or another. I think he's a bit of a fool to believe this and take it so personally, but it didn't outrage me. Perhaps that's due to my present state of mind. As a female in a predominantly male world and profession, I dislike sexual slurs that I'm not able to do my job. I dislike harassment of any kind, and trying to back it up based on some primitive society is a bunch of bullshit. Well, maybe I did get upset after all. I really have to disagree with Eric's comment that the only thing more obscene than the eternal violence of law and order is the unprovoked violence of those who are into violence as a habit. I guess being in the military, I resent his lumping soldiers in with muggers

and violent thieves. I prefer to think of my role as that of a peacekeeper, more along the lines of policemen and firemen. The only soldiers which qualify under Eric's standards, as far as I'm concerned, are mercenaries. Soldiers don't get rich on the salaries their governments pay them.

I don't think of myself as a typical woman -- I function in a man's world and do just as good a job. However, I've noticed the injustices on the social side -- a man or married couple get more room as far as quarters are concerned. Duty rosters are far more likely to stick it to single officers on holidays. Your commander's wife wants to treat you like one of them. These are things I just have to try and overcome. As far as stereotyping goes, what I really need is a wife or 'househusband', to do the shopping, cooking, cleaning, etc. which I have to cope with on top of work. He/she should be charming, sociable and be willing to drag along to the numerous social functions I have to attend. Sounds ridiculous, doesn't it?

I found your column to be very interesting. I am originally from New York and was very pleased with the Supreme Court decision of 1973 making abortion legal during the first 3 months. I've always felt that abortion should be a woman's choice, though I deplore it as the only method of birth control in many instances. I see no reason why the foetal material should not be used in research if it may give answers to current health problems. I also am appalled that the courts force seriously deformed children to be operated on. By saving the child they may foster a lifetime of guilt on the parents. If they want this surgery performed, the court should arrange for the child to become a ward of the state and provide the lifetime care needed to maintain it. I guess the US is concerned that if they allow severely handicapped children to die, people may not want to keep mildly handicapped children. Consider this country's policy on euthanasia and the right to die with dignity, and it all follows. Personally, I've always felt the "right to lifers" and similar groups who can't bear to see any child destroyed, should have to bear the responsibility for all of them. ((I wouldn't want to cause such suffering to the poor children, though -- JHW))

I agree for the most part with Mr Clifford's article on women terrorists. I know women are just as capable of violence as men, but it seems to take more and usually something in direct relationship to her to push her into violence, but once achieved women tend to be more committed and personally involved. When I think of terrorists I always think of Patty Hearst. Why do you think she did what she did, do you think she identified with her captors or was really brainwashed? ((I never was sufficiently interested to form an opinion about Patty Hearst; it depends on what you mean by "brainwashed" -- I suppose as a rich woman she had a lot of the guilt that is trendy in that class these days and thus was susceptible to suggestion -- but that's just an off-the-cuff remark -- HW))

Sorry to hear your relationship didn't work out. It is better for a person to show both sides of themselves just so the other person knows exactly what they'll have to cope with. I also have a bad side, but it's violent anger, usually stemming from depression, so I can give warning to the other person to clear out if they want.

Mervyn Barrett
P O Box 19-047
Wellington
New Zealand

Thanks for WWW 5. Congratulations to Shayne McCormack for her cover; the interpretation of her assignment as well as the execution.

A survey I recently conducted shows that nine women artists out of ten, if asked to depict an "heroic female", would come up with a drawing of a solo mother.

Peter Graham
c/o P O Box 264
Papakura
New Zealand

17 March 1982

I've been reading overmuch "Penthouse" -- and horrors, I abruptly realised I'd been brain-soiled by it with the result "Janyl" had gone sour on me and I was starting to think and write anti-women junk! Mainly, I'd read it coz it was cheap to get as throwouts from a book exchange I help at now and then. Well, I once gave its woman owner, Heather, a character reference for a court appearance, and she's kept it in mind for years. Apparently not everyone would, back then. I'd hesitated coz I wasn't sure my views would help anyone, actually, but I'd done it. It's a bit ironic to find a by-effect warped my own outlook like this! Anyway, I'm now slowly reading myself normal via antidotes like WWW, which I enjoy a lot. It does keep forcing me to rewrite "Janyl" and other items, sigh. Odd, but the type of character change stories you reviewed were once forecast for an alien being of alternative sexuality in a "Galaxy" (I think) item on the other psychologies of modified Freudian sequences (it was by Tom Furdon, I seem to recall) -- must locate it and pass it on to you as a comment. Oh, yes, the "Penguin Book of Women Poets" -- the translation of Juana de la Cruz of Mexico is one that emasculates/devaginates? /her verse in my view, and I've done a translation of her verse too. The original Spanish is more pungent. Also, I think the Stevie Smith (and I like Stevie Smith verse) items are not all among her best. More than this it's hard to glean standing reading a bookshop copy... I have been planning to locate the works of Kathleen Paine and review them for BTH... I heard a musical choral version recently, but I preferred the original verse... Her autobiography,



"Out of the Lion's Mouth", deals with her relation to Gavin Maxwell, very discreetly, so only on rereading can one see how horridly he used her.... I wanted to couple this with a survey of "Spellcraft", by Robin Skelton, a magic-maker's manual on verse that refers to her; the 2 books being complimentary for certain curse-related reasons. Not that I'd call "Let him suffer here as he made me suffer" a curse. More of a cry for justice in a relationship of exploitation.

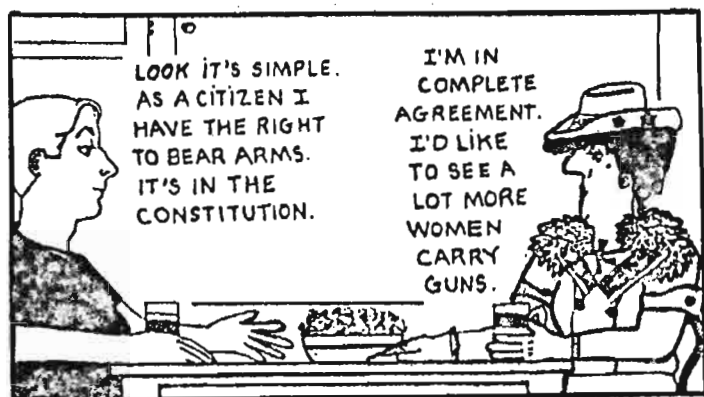
And now, there's an sf novel 'The Godmothers' due out in June from the British feminists, The Women's Press. It's by Sandi Hall, a New Zealand feminist-cum-TV-researcher. She's Canadian-born. Ghods, she's got stamina. Five novels rejected and she still kept going with this new one! She says the things has 5 interwoven time-streams. This data, courtesy NZ Listener, March 13, 1982, and also an interview last year with the Women's Press visiting representative. From all accounts, it's a prospectively good novel. Thought you might like to know. ((Thank you--JHW))

On martial arts/dance, I assume you mean the kata ("A Rose of Ecclesiastes" Zelazny made the same observation) aspect. Well, I have no martial arts skills, not having practised any sparring for years, but I still dance through the hsing-i set now and then. Or walk in circles like a lunatic (pa-kua set). It may be functional for mayhem, it's true that static holding of tai-chi or hsing-i poses has health repercussions but the light dance-style practice alone is of doubtful use as combat preparation. And aikido may look dance-like, but I can assure you, no dancing partner who inflicted pain like that on my wrists would be asked for a further dance! ((Why should dancing need a partner? -JHW)) Even when you can do push-ups on the backs of your wrists, the senkyo or kote-nage moves are off-putting experiences. I don't doubt female skills, ...but I think the idea that it's an easily-acquired talent is dangerous to the user. ((I agree, having done a bit of it myself, I quickly learned how much dedicated practice would be required to become even moderately proficient -- either at dance or martial arts-JHW))

Julie Vaux
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Willoughby, NSW 2068
Australia

7 March 1982

...I find myself disagreeing with Judith again over her definitions and opinions on myths and legends. Myths, legends and history tend to be all tangled together. The matter of Arthur being the classic case in European culture. Myth is considerably more than propaganda. It affects reality because it is part of eternity. Further, Judith appears not to clearly understand the differences between



myth and history and legend. A myth is to me a statement about the culture's cosmogony. A legend is an account of what the peoples and poets believe about their past. History is literally story -- the histories of Herodotus being one man's account of Greece. History is often bare bones, recorded and buried by bureaucrats, salvaged and transferred to dry paper by folklorists and anthropologists. All three are attempts to describe reality and eternity. ((By your definition, Julie, I would not consider any part of the accounts of Arthur as "myth" - HW))

I was most amused to read Neville Angove's remarks. I suspect that what Neville means is that fan-com, being a small group of imperfect humans, our vices are more obvious. I don't mean our physical vices but rather our tendency towards cliquishness for example... We fancy ourselves as friendly, but infrequent visitors are disregarded or ignored. Fan artists tend to be treated as fringe fans, especially if they're so foolish as to complain when they realise that most fans, like most people, only want their art to fill empty spaces... I also owe Jon Noble an apology for generalising. When I said there may have been a few surviving Druids/celtic pagans, I was thinking of numbers you could count on one hand as skilled adepts. There were certainly celtic traditions surviving and I suspect that some of the Scottish witchcraft covens were practicing celtic rites as sorcerers were regarded and believed to consort with the sidhe, the elfin descendents of the old gods. As for being overtly complex, man makes simplifications to deal with the complexities of life, quite frequently. If witchcraft is truly an ancient or rather one of the oldest religions, I wonder if it has any connection with Shamanism, and other tribal cults?

Kim Huett
GPO Box 429
Sydney, NSW 2001
Australia

22 February 1982

Your editorial (in WWW4) was like getting a nice chatty letter instead of a scrawled note; too many faneds go in for the latter these days, which is a pity as it makes it so much harder for the reader to get to know the fan-

ed which is so important if the two of you are going to communicate meaningfully. At least this is what I have found so far in my loc writing... I am afraid that between my last loc and this one I have grown a trifle tired of John Alderson. However, I will say that though I thought the arguments of people like Jonathan Scott and Josef Hurtubise were good, it seemed to me that they were being too hard on John. Well, I thought, here's a good chance to show John that I'm not totally against him (I felt that he might feel this way since I had criticised all his writings I had run into previously). However, this benevolent attitude quickly crumbled away as I read the letter from John himself. As you said, "I don't believe I'm reading this", a sentiment I echo most strongly. As far as I'm concerned, John has put himself in a corner and he can damn well get out of it himself; I for one am not interested in helping him out... On to WWW5... the first thing that struck me... was the cover art which I am sorry to say I didn't like one little bit. The actual drawing was not to my taste at all being far too angular and sharp for the subject. This was made worse by the way there was no definite edge to it. It looks wrong without a proper border, well to me anyway. ((You should like this issue's cover, then, Kim JHW)) ... Equating civilisation with happiness is a perfectly satisfactory view, well it's one I've subscribed to for quite awhile. I suppose that many people don't see it

because happiness is achieved through so many different ways, some of which are not so pleasant to others, that they look as though they have difference bases. Funny but Denys Howard is willing to complain about Eric Lindsay saying you have a feminist bias but feels it is alright to use terms like "boy-drivel". Sounds like double standards to me. What's this!! Don't let this Roger Weddall character sway you, Jean, because the WAHF column is vital to the ego of your average letterhack. I mean even if we don't get a letter in the lettercol proper it still gives us a lift to see our favourite name mentioned in our favourite zines. ((This letter from Kim was drastically cut down from a long interesting missive; don't let my pruning for space discourage you from writing long letters in future, Kim -- or anyone else for that matter --JHW))

Harry J.N. Andruschak
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La Canada-Flintridge
CA 91011, USA

Received WWW#4. I couldn't help noticing a lot of nonsense as usual in the lettercol about circumcision. I am uncircumcised, or "uncut" as slang sometimes has it.

I have never in my life has the slightest problems. If you are wondering how I beat the standard USA average of 95% cut, it is because I was born in 1944 in England. As for hygiene... ever hear of taking baths? Or showers?... As for "not differing markedly" ... bullshit. I was ten years in the US Navy... took nightly showers with men mostly cut, and thought nothing of it. Can't remember anybody saying a thing about my being uncut. So "to be one of the crowd" is yet another rationalization for an irrational act.

I must disagree that some men to not mind being cut. I am not an active bi-sexual, but at some cons I have been propositioned by male fans and have accepted. And most do wish two things... (1) they were uncut; (2) they don't mind being cut but resent that it was done when they had no say in the matter. Admittedly, this is a small group to sample. I would definitely mind, by the way. I like that piece of skin. Mother Nature must have had some reason to evolve it over millions of years of evolution. ((Not necessarily; it may simply have been one of those things that there was no reason to remove from the human body-JHW))

However, being overwhelmingly heteresexual, I will note that most of my female partners don't seem to really care one way or another. About the only exception was one fan who was very curious as to whether having a foreskin made it more difficult to put on a dondom(it doesn't)... By the way, I can't help noticing an obsession with pinups and so forth of women and men. Real bunch of silly ass cartoons you have there.

Alethea Raspa
(address on page 18)

9 February 1982

((This letter actuals preceeds the one typed eariler; I thought I'd finished the letters when I discovered another pile of them under some junk... so the lettercol, as usual, goes on & on))

Although it is absolute ages since I had access to a well-stocked children's library (about three years to be exact), I would respectfully suggest to both Judith Hanna and anybody else addicted in one degree or another to science fiction or fantasy that they sneak into the children's section and borrow some of the books from there. I have to admit that the thought that Susan Cooper's

work has only just been 'discovered' by fans is an awful one when one considers the pap that is labelled s-f in some adult sections of the library system! The same applies to Sylvia L'EngHahls' work; although some of it is definitely written with a "child's" vocabulary and a child's interest level, the ideas behind the stories make good thinking points for those quiet hours when in a state of repletion after a quiet meal with friends (and a good bottle of wine).

As to Elfquest, Ray and I recently acquired a copy of the four-colour book Julie Vaux was talking about. I am sitting at home fighting (the typer) to work out my frustrations.. while Ray has it, the book that is, at work.

...Debi Kean has been going on about the custody battle for her children, and the article in this last issue has me up in arms. Now don't get me wrong, I'm totally on Debi's "side", ...being myself a subject of a grandmother resenting my mother. At the time though I was lucky in that (a) my parents belonged to a religious group that believes in divorce only after everything else has failed, (b) Mam and Dad, even now after 26 years, are madly in love with each other (ain't I lucky), (c) the social pressure against divorce in Britain at the time was incredibly strong, and (d) my mother was determined that she wasn't going to "lose" me to anyone else, least of all a smothering grandmother! As a result it has been a long uphill battle for my mother to keep me in the family, and it is really only in the last few years that we've been able to talk to each other and I've been able to understand the strife that the pair of us have had. One of the biggest problems that struck me that Debi might have to face is the typical antagonism shown by Australian country towns to ideas from 'the big smoke', so women standing up for themselves for what is fair and equitable is, of course, suspect. You never know, it might even be some devilish plot by the inhabitants of the Kremlin (read Hades!!). I can only wish Debi every success and blessing in trying to keep in contact with her sons, because sure as hell, they'll have to finish clearing up the mess we're trying to sort out now!

Al Fitzpatrick (1243 Bay Area Blvd #1601, Houston TX 77058, USA) writes that he didn't like much of anything in WWWW#3.

Nic Howard (11 Downs Park, Downley, High Wycombe, Bucks, England) didn't like Julie Vaux's flippant comment about the UK in WWWW #4. "We're a long way from sinking into the North Sea."

Alison Cowling (9/14 Liddiard St, Glenferrie Vic 3122, Australia) liked WWWW#5 and sent artwork, some of which appears this.



John Alderson
Havelock, Vic. 3465
Australia

10 January 1982

Re comments on my article "Myths and Mutilation"... Well, I'll thank Jonathan Scott not to try and rewrite my English for me. My sentence is perfectly correct without the needless "even when" substituted for my "when". All the reasons he advances for circumcision continuing are probably correct, but they are not reasons, they are excuses. I dealt with underlying reasons and these I stick by until proved wrong. As for beards, his qualitative analysis of social history may be correct, it differs from mine. As for the "castration complex" being Freudian drivel, I can only comment that any male not afraid of castration is either a fool or a psychological eunuch. ((It is my understating from psychology that "castration complex" referred, not to a fear of actual castration -- a most unlikely occurrence in Western society -- but to a fear of loss of power over oneself, expressed as an irrational fear centred about the genitals; perhaps Sally Beasley or someone could clarify this-- JHW))

The purport of Josef Hurtubise's letter is that I am psychologically "insecure", that is that I am not really responsible. Coming from a psychological eunuch, that's great! Why do they have eunuch guards for harems? Because they can be relied to spring immediately to the defence of the women therein, as Hurtubise does. ((Rubbish; they have eunuchs because the eunuchs cannot have intercourse with the "property" -- women -- as fully-equipped male guards might. -- JHW)) His point about history is drivel. I am an historian and work through anthropology and mythology to get to the roots of history, but projecting present "political inanities" into the past is a prostitution of history. Now for many years I edited an historical journal and became a very much feared reviewer, but I was never once accused of prejudice in politics or race. I don't claim to be always right and obviously people did agree with me but my opinions were held to be honest and a reasonable assessment of the facts. The research and learning that went into my article for Jean was as high as for that journal. My social observations are drawn from what I have seen and heard, and secondly from what I have read. As I have a fair range of women acquaintances who talk freely in front of me, I have gained information most men don't get... there is all the world of difference between what a woman tells a man and what a woman tells a woman. ((That is a gross overgeneralisation. Many of the younger women I know, and older women who have been "liberated" by feminism, talk just as freely and honestly to men and women. Perhaps your statement is true for women you listen to, but it's hardly a universal truth in our society. -JHW))

Hurtubise seems to have misread my article. The commonist "mutilation" to a woman's genitals is the "deflowering" of the hymen, and the removal of the hood covering the clitoris, both of which are said to result in earlier and more frequent orgasm. Now the idea that "any anthropologist worthy of the name recognises that women are trans-culturally suppressed" is an outright lie. Some at least are honest enough to know that the statement itself is wrong. Further, I cannot understand what Hurtubise is on about in his last paragraph; all that which he says about clitoridectomies has nothing to do with what I said. Can't the man read! Thank goodness for some sense from Diane Fox who at least knows what I am trying to say. However, I am not convinced by Harris' ("Cows, Pigs, Wars and Witches") arguments about the witchcraft scares being used to distract, finally to crush, the Messianic Communist peasant uprisings. The worst of the

witchcraft persecution occurred long after these movements. In many respects, Harris is not too reliable.

Yeah, you really show your slip when you dismiss my "everything else" as "the daily shitwork that keeps society going -- absolutely vital but hardly in the same category as power." You make the same mistake as the rooster who thought that by crowing he made the sun rise. ((I do not follow this analogy at all; would you mind explaining what you mean? -JHW)) Of course politicians make that mistake, but then, they are utterly unimportant in history, they crow because history has happened. Green ("Short History of the English People" is said to have been the first historian to realize that history and historical movements concern people, not kings, and I assure you that history is more changed in the kitchen than from the throne. ((Okay, I think I see what you mean, but I am not talking about history, I am talking about control over one's life. Religions and laws, enforced mainly by men -- not entirely, I know, and there is a vast amount of theorizing as to why women get sucked in and why they are often chief enforcers but virtually never the instigators -- have had great control over people's choices in the past, and still do in many parts of the world and even our own society. -JHW)) You yourself have made some history, however small and negative. You're the first woman fanned to ever have censored me. ((I'm glad I have some integrity, but it's very interesting that some people consider "editing" to be "censoring". -JHW))

Diane Fox
P O Box 129
Lakemba, NSW 2195
Australia

17 Feb 1982

"Hypatia" sounds great! Incidentally, there's a novel by Charles Kingsley about the original Hypatia -- haven't read it yet but am now strongly motivated to do so... Debi Kean's article was fascinating. The basic situation (visiting only once a month) is pretty grim but obviously better than it might have been. Ted sounds like a brave sensible child, coping fairly well. The biggest problem I suspect would not be his father but his grandmother -- she sounds like the typical man-using cold-hearted spiteful bitchy type, more antifeminist than men out of resentment and envy. Debi -- I think this woman would have the knife out for you whether you were a feminist or whatever; what you are isn't so much the cause of her hostility, as the fact you "stole" her son, and then later were embarrassing enough to reject him publicly (by divorce)... Gerald Smith's comment on Judith Hanna's article while true in itself, is somewhat beside the point. The fact is that shitwork has to be done... Eating's a pleasure, cooking often is too, but cleaning up afterwards is boring. The point is, who gets to do it?, And how shall society induce its members to perform such tasks?... An afterthought -- most people seem to be stuck with repetitive boring detestable jobs... There is one virtue to a housewife's otherwise miserable task... she can choose her own working pace. Which of course you can't in, say, a factory or even most offices... ((These remarks were excerpted from a long interesting letter, unfortunately handwritten. Diane, you would have more chance to be quoted at length if you typed your letters... JHW))

I ALSO HEARD FROM: Roelof Goudriaan ("WWW... is one of the few fanzines which touches 'real' life, and I'm not surprised the response is so overwhelming. It's one of the things which dazed fandom fans like I need to keep a foot on everyday earth -- thanks!), and numerous others, most of whom I've written a personal reply to as they concerned things other than WWW.

SHIFT/CLEAR

by Jean Weber

(Being a column in which Jean clears her ~~brain~~ desk of accumulated odd fascinating bits of news & views...) (Actually, it's just a sneaky way of continuing the editorial without offending those people who hate articles that are "continued" at the back of the fanzine.)

82 April 16. This section is being typed from notes written on the dates indicated. My parents arrived from New Zealand on Monday 5 April, and by Friday, when I escaped to Melbourne for a few days, they had created a knot of tension in me that took 2 days to dispell. I'd forgotten some of their irritating habits, and since I only see them for a fortnight about every two years or so, I figure I can put up with anything, rather than just walking away as I'd do if it were anyone else. Before I go on, I should point out that I do not consider my parents' habits, and the 'games' they play, any worse than anyone else's, including my own. I'm sure that many of my habits, and the 'games' I play with my friends, would irritate them just as much. (By 'games' I mean the (usually) verbal interaction that is habitual, almost ritualistic, or non-serious joking, that may seem quite serious, and dis-tessing, to others.) My Dad's most annoying characteristic on this trip was anger or distress at any criticism, or any statement that could possibly be (mis)interpreted as a criticism. This meant that I couldn't even make a mild joke without examining it carefully for possible misinterpretations, and even then I was likely to guess wrong. My Mom's most irritating characteristic was her habit of saying "I think so" or "I don't think so" in situations where "Yes, please," or "No, thank you" would have been more appropriate (as when asked, "Do you want a cup of tea?"). Now there are plenty of questions to which an indecisive answer is appropriate, but she says that to virtually all questions. I read somewhere that this is part of a type of subservent speech pattern common to women of certain cultural backgrounds, and if I can find the reference I will write up the subject for you (pause for groans all around). My parents' most irritating 'game' was to discuss, in detail, why they should not be eating every morsel of food they put in their mouths (for reasons of health, weight, blood pressure, whatever). Other little specific episodes brought home to me how much my lifestyle has changed in the last few years -- how much more casual I've become. My Dad kept asking me questions about the car, insurance, etc, to which I did not know the answer, nor did I much care. This exasperated him greatly; he thought I should care. Once upon a time I did care about the mundane trivia of life, but far less so now. Maybe I should, but I reckon that if anything can go wrong it will, so why worry? I'll cope if/when it's necessary, but until then, she'll be right mate. Besides, I enjoy seeing my Dad get upset about things of no consequence, in situations when I do not cause the distress, but rather it is clear that his reaction to me causes the distress. Most emphatically his problem. (If he hadn't asked, I wouldn't have brought up any of these things that distressed him, would I?) An example of the trivia

I'm discussing: Dad asked me what pressure to put in the car's tyres. I said, "30". He asked "30 what?" "How should I know?" I replied. "30 on the air pressure gauge, what difference does it make what the units are?" He seemed to think it was important to know the units. Now I ask you, is that relevant?

Fortunately I had to go to work on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday after they arrived, so we only had to interact in the evenings. We were trying to work out an itinerary for their visit; we'd already decided to go to Tasmania for 10 days, and I'd made the ferry bookings for them and the car, and the plane bookings for me. My Dad said I should be Tour Director, but after their last visit (a few years ago), I didn't want any of that. He won't say what he wants to do, and then complains when what I choose is not to his liking. So I tried to pass the buck back to him to decide where to go. Finally, Friday arrived and they dropped me off at Canberra airport and I flew to Melbourne for Tschaicon, the Easter science fiction convention. They were driving to Melbourne, staying in a different hotel, and doing some sightseeing, then taking the ferry on Monday night and meeting me at the Devonport airport on Tuesday morning.

TSCHAICON. I enjoy it. A fannish con, with some serious programming which I didn't attend, some films I didn't see, lots of old friends and some interesting new people to be met, and the best banquet of any con I've ever attended (they booked most of an excellent Chinese restaurant). The (Ditmar) awards were wisely separate from the banquet, a practise I hope other committees follow. Transfinite Audiovisual's show included some laser work, a new feature. The GoH, Jack Vance, was evidently as boring a speaker as he is reputed to be (I skipped his talks). I won a Golden Caterpillar Award from Paul Stevens for my article, "How to Handle a Woman", and Paul had to do several reruns of the presentation ceremony to cater for the photographers (he was on his knees). The Townhouse (hotel) has a stairway by which one can actually go from the lobby up all 5 floors, so the slow elevator (note the singular) wasn't such a problem as it might have been. I hadn't realised there was a pool and hadn't brought togs. It was warm in Melbourne and didn't rain -- amazing! Leanne Frahm's GoH interview was most interesting and enjoyable -- her facial expressions, when she didn't like one of John Foyster's long involved questions, were a delight. Eric Lindsay's Fan GoH talk was also interesting, particularly if one didn't know much of his fannish history, but the humour was a bit strained at times. He does better in a small group than set up on a stage. The Faulconbridge cheering section in the front row pelted him with acorns throughout the speech. They were also in evidence at the Australian Fandom panel which they concluded by leading a "Smooth" ceremony with a bottle of Jim Beam (or was it Beam's Choice as it's supposed to be?) (Ken Ozanne later refilled the bottle with Southern Comfort and surprised a few people who took a drink.) At one party there were at least 3 versions of Inner Circle Rum around -- none of them the kind I like best (dark overproof). Friday night, between the banquet and the parties, I was up quite late (for me), but was still dragged out early on Saturday to go shopping for party and lunch supplies. On the way I stopped at Space Age Books and bought only seven. Saturday and Sunday I quit early (about midnight I think), so was in better shape the following days. Monday there was virtually nothing on the program, so I slouched around the large huckster room talking to everyone who wandered in. Only one real complaint about the con -- there was no tea/coffee/milo bar in any of the function rooms.

One noticed that especially on Monday when no longer in possession of a room of one's own. Monday night was a party at John Bangsund's, at which I nearly fell asleep -- no reflection on John and Sally; I'd been doing that all weekend. John Foyster drove me home (actually, Jenny drove) to Ashby's where I was staying that night. We set out from Bangsund's in a VW Beetle: the Foyster s in front, with Leanne Frahm, Zebee Johnstone and I in back, and Roman Orzanski on our laps. Left Leanne and Zebee at the hotel and Roman at Flinders Street Station, then on to Ashby's. There I headed for the back door, as instructed, and promptly tripped over the rubbish bin in the dark. ****Crash**** Put out a hand to steady myself, and half the downpipe fell over too ****Crash****. Stood up, tripped on pipe, fell again. ****Crash****. Enough noise to wake the entire neighbourhood. Tuesday I made it to Tasmania without further incident. I have decided that my enthusiasm for sight-seeing came to a screeching halt about two years ago. Boring, boring, boring. (This is no reflection on Tasmania.) Expensive too. I don't mind spending money on something I want to do, like attending a con, but travelling around with my folks... ***Sigh*** Cheaper than my going to visit them, of course. But I'd rather be hope typing this up and working on WWW.

82 April 18. We've been having generally good weather and no major incidents, and my back's been holding up well. The scenery's fairly dramatic, though some stretches are an ecologist's nightmare. I can see why the Tassie conservationists are working so hard for what's left. Last night we had a counter tea in the Bush Inn, New Norfolk, which claims to be the oldest continuously licensed hotel in Australia. Mom had cheesecake and proclaimed it the best she'd eaten in years. Dad and I don't like cheesecake, so we sat there making rude remarks about its texture, colour, etc, while Mom favourably compared it in sensual terms. I felt much more "at home" -- that's the sort of teasing I indulge in with fannish friends! I suspect if it had been me and Mom teasing Dad, he would have got upset, though.

82 April 22. Came home a few days early and have been spending today typing and duplicating WWW and now working on this contribution. My back started bothering me a few days ago and by yesterday was not reacting well to travelling any further in the car than the corner store. So I flew home from Launceston and left the folks to drive back. They'll arrive on Sunday, giving me several days to get caught up a bit, and recover. I did manage to get most of the books read that I'd bought in Melbourne, and avoided any major arguments with my parents. Mostly I enjoyed the trip, but I would have been just as happy (or more so) not going. Last night I stayed again at Ashby's (this time managing to not trip over the rubbish bin or destroy the house) and learnt that Paul Stokes had been injured, and another fan whom I don't know, died in an automobile accident while driving back to Adelaide on Monday night after Tschaicon. Distressing business, that.

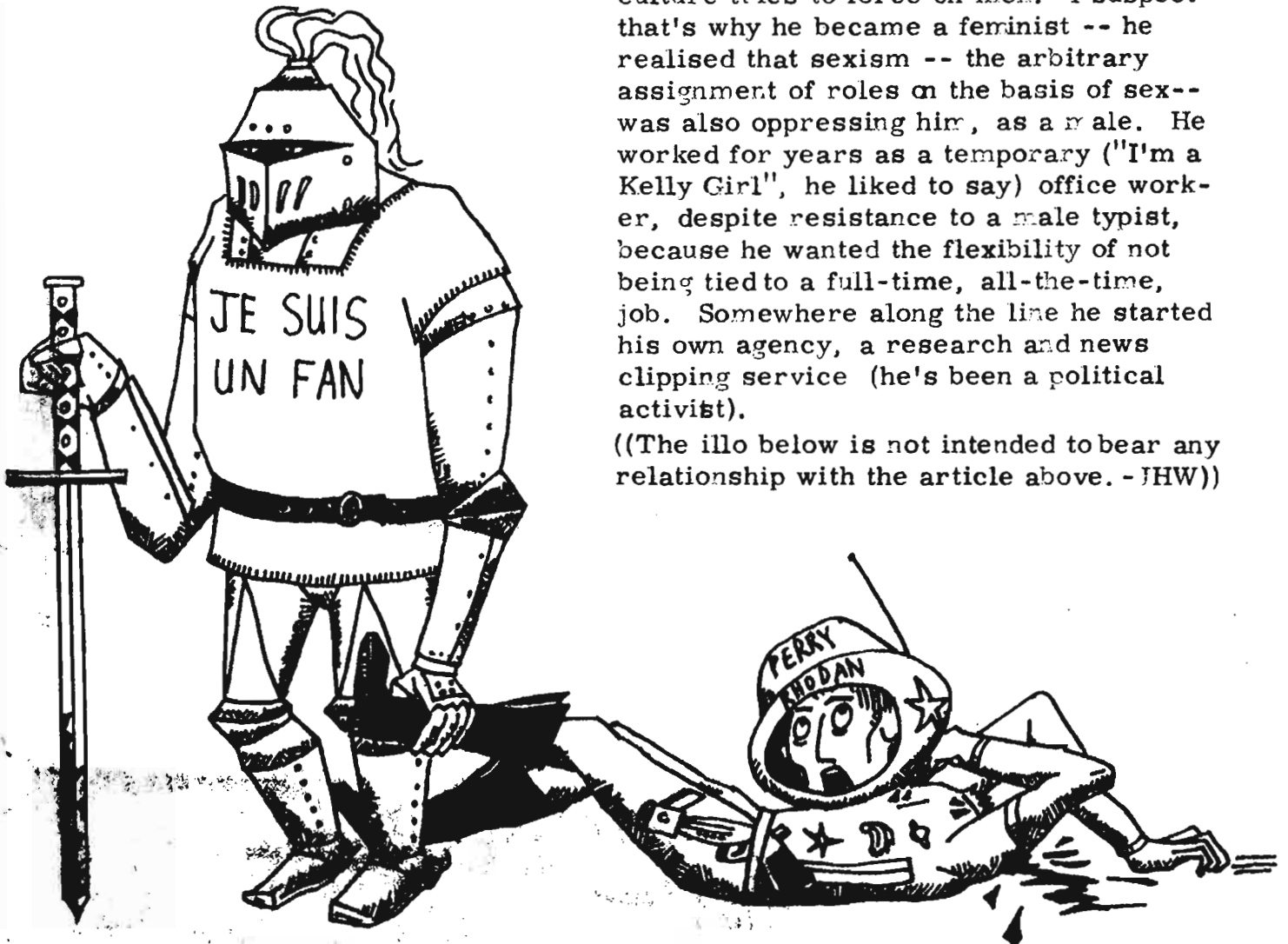
One thing about riding around in the car for many hours a day, at least when someone else is driving, it gives one lots of time to think. I made several major decisions regarding the house, including that I am going to try to find someone to share with again. Mostly because I am away so much these days, I need someone to help feed the cat and water the garden. Also with a rented room, I can take a perfectly legitimate tax loss on depreciation and interest payments, etc. What I'll do with all the junk here in the fanac room is complicated and tiring to think about.

CYCLING FOR THE EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT

In the last issue I published a letter from Dave Dismore, and mentioned in passing that he was cycling across the USA on behalf of the ERA. Dave has been sending me some of his press clippings which I shall share with you. But first a few personal comments. I've known Dave for about ten years, most of them since I've been in Australia so I haven't seen much of him. We correspond fairly regularly, though. Dave is one of those people who seems to have got a good grip on himself, learned to accept what he once saw as personal problems, and use his "weaknesses" as "strengths". I'd like to persuade him to write an article someday, because I would feel it to be a breach on confidence to elaborate much on that theme. However, I'm sure he wouldn't mind if I say that when I knew him, Dave was a "typical" Los Angeleno who hardly went to the corner store without taking his automobile. I lived in San Francisco at the time, and when he came to visit he'd be huffing and puffing at the slightest hill (I lived on one). And here he is, ten years later, cycling across the USA! He bought a bicycle 2 or 3 years ago, to ride to work (to save petrol costs) and after conquering a legitimate fear of Los Angeles traffic, rode it regularly. I think somewhere along the line he gave up the car, but I'm not sure. Dave's always (since I've known him) been interested in arranging his life to suit what he wanted to

do -- the things he considered important -- rather than pursuing a "career" as our culture tries to force on men. I suspect that's why he became a feminist -- he realised that sexism -- the arbitrary assignment of roles on the basis of sex -- was also oppressing him, as a male. He worked for years as a temporary ("I'm a Kelly Girl", he liked to say) office worker, despite resistance to a male typist, because he wanted the flexibility of not being tied to a full-time, all-the-time, job. Somewhere along the line he started his own agency, a research and news clipping service (he's been a political activist).

((The illo below is not intended to bear any relationship with the article above. - JHW))



A MAN OF QUALITY IS NOT THREATENED BY A WOMAN OF EQUALITY

That's what Dave Dismore's T-shirt says; I like it, don't you? 35-year-old Dave began his bicycle trip in January, and reached Florida in March. The trip has been sponsored by the National Organization for Women, who have arranged accommodation for Dave along the way. He asked pledges of 1c a mile, and raised between \$8,000 and \$9,000, all of which has gone into efforts supporting the ERA. He's paying the expenses of his trip from his savings. The ERA must be ratified by three more states (Florida, Illinois and North Carolina are the only ones with legislatures in session this year that haven't already ratified) before June 30 if it is to become part of the Constitution.

A feminist, says Dave, "is anyone who believes in human dignity and is willing to fight for it". "You don't have to be born female to realize there is a discrimination problem in this country. This is really a human liberation movement."

The ERA was proposed in 1923 but took until 1972 (nearly 50 years) to get through Congress to the stage where it needed to be ratified by the States. Not enough States ratified before the original deadline several years ago, and it was extended. By the time most North American and European readers receive this fanzine, you'll know whether women in America have to start at square one again, or whether some sense of human justice has prevailed.

DETERMINING CITIZENSHIP

In May 1981 I was naturalised as an Australian citizen. Nearly a year later (11 months to the day), a letter was sent to me from the Consulate General of the United States of America, in Sydney, which begins... "We have been told that you were naturalized... It is possible that by that act you lost United States citizenship..." It's a form letter, so obviously this sort of thing goes on all the time. I was amused at the swiftness of their response. Did the Australian government only now get around to telling the US govt, or did it only now filter down to the Sydney consulate, or has it been sitting around waiting for someone to get to it??? Who knows (who cares?). There was a massive questionnaire with the letter, with all sorts of mealy-mouthed questions, and liberally sprinkled with reminders that I might like to consult an attorney before filling it out and signing it. (I didn't).

TIPTOEING TOWARD MARIJUANA ACCEPTANCE

The legal use of marijuana was proposed in a discussion paper issued in early March by the Australian Foundation on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, though members of the discussion group quickly emphasised that it was not a "recommendation" but a "proposal for discussion". The paper presents the views of a working group of 13 Australians including academics, lawyers, churchmen and trade unionists, and is intended to stimulate serious study of chemical dependency in the community. The proposals outlined are the usual ones suggested by people with a rational, practical approach to the "problem"... I suppose that community discussion will continue to waste time for another decade or so while people continue to be arrested for something similar to legal drug-taking such as alcohol consumption. "Oh, when will they ever learn?..."

1982 ANZAC DAY MARCH

Many of you will recall my item in WWW#2 about last year's attempt by the Women Against Rape to join the Anzac Day march in Canberra. Well, today (25 April), about 500 women managed to march and lay a wreath at the War Memorial, without incident. They had a banner labelled "In Memory of All Women of All Countries Raped in All Wars". This year they did not attempt to join the "official" march (more about that later) but staged a separate walk starting at 9 am and ending before the official ceremonies were to begin. The women then stood in the public areas at the War Memorial, where their banner was clearly visible to the crowd, and watched the official ceremonies.

A bit of background. Last year a special amendment to the Traffic Ordinance was gazetted, only a few days before Anzac Day, specifically to prevent the women from joining the march. When some attempted to do so anyway, 64 people were arrested. The press persisted in referring to "disruptions" to the march, but in fact the confrontations and arrests all took place on a side street where they would have been neither visible nor audible to anyone participating or watching the parade. A fairly large group of women, with many male supporters, had gathered last year when it became a "civil rights" issue over who was allowed to join a parade on a public holiday. This year, after months of haggling, a special "assemblies ordinance" was drawn up, again at the last minute (it was passed by the Senate on April 23), which made provisions for a group to apply for a "limited participation" march and assembly, and for other groups to apply to join such an assembly; Anzac Day and Canberra Day were specifically mentioned, but the provisions could be applied to any other day. Appeal provisions were lacking or inadequate.

Lots of letters to the editor appeared in the newspaper, supporting both sides of the issue, and several groups (Civil Liberties Union among them) applied to join the march after the War Memorial had applied for a limited assembly. The Women Against Rape declined to apply for permission to join, but rather decided to hold their own march outside the times provided in the limited assembly application. This followed a statement by one of the opposers of WAR, that they could march at any other time on the day, so why did they have to try to cause trouble at the official times? I am vastly relieved that the women of WAR chose to not confront officialdom -- an action that would have hurt their cause and further detracted attention from the peaceful nature of their intent to honour war victims. I think the publicity I've seen so far, despite the fact that it continues to suggest that their purpose was to disrupt, has been generally favourable. They attracted lots of people and were entirely peaceful. You note that I keep referring to "them". I wasn't there this year. I fully support their right to march, and lay a wreath, but I think the whole thing is in vaguely poor taste so I'm not inclined to join. Incidentally, nine women in Melbourne attempted to lay a wreath (not during official ceremonies) commemorating rape victims, and were refused. I don't know yet if anyone was arrested during that attempt.

Some of the letters in the paper were priceless. Several swore that no Australian soldier ever raped a women in war (a ridiculous claim), but the one I liked best added, because they'd had no opportunity! I wonder if the writer appreciated the irony in that statement -- presumably if they had had the opportunity, they would have raped women?

RECENT READING

John Christopher, The White Mountains, The City of Gold and Lead, and The Pool of Fire (all 1967-68), Fireball (1981), children's sf.

Juanita Coulson, Tomorrow's Heritage (1981), first in a "family saga" series that I quite enjoyed though I usually don't like that sort of thing overly much; descriptive material really made me feel "part of" the story.

Marion Zimmer Bradley, Sharra's Exile (1981), a Darkover novel and excellent as usual; and Survey Ship (1980), which I would have thought was a juvenile except for the explicit sex and the illustrations -- too simplistic for my taste though the points she was making I thoroughly agree with.

C J Cherryh, The Pride of Chanur (1981), another spaceship and station story told from the point of view of aliens, with an incomprehensible (to them) human thrown in; I enjoyed it.

Doris Lessing, The Marriages Between Zones Three, Four, and Five (1980), the second volume in her Canopus in Argos: Archives series. This one as far as I can tell is totally unrelated to the first one, and is certainly written in a very different style. It has a certain charm but I'm not overly impressed with people who accept without question the dictates of a superior being/presence/force...

I'm sure there are others but I can't recall the titles at the moment. Lately I've been catching up on magazines have been reading fewer books, anyway.

ABORIGINAL ARRANGED MARRIAGES

There was earlier in the year a flap in the newspapers about young female (13 years old in one case) Aborigines who had run away to avoid or escape an arranged marriage to older men (up to their 60's in some cases). Supporters of the girls claimed that, if they were returned to their tribe, they would be beaten and raped; others claimed that white society and white law had no business getting involved. The general police approach appears to be that if the girls ask for help, they'll get help; if not, it's nobody's business but the tribes'. The issue highlights the problem of where traditional Aboriginal cultural rules, including marriage rules, stand in the broader Australian system. It also presents another dilemma for white feminists: should we work to change a system that we see as violating a woman's control over her own body and life, or should we accept another culture's decisions? My opinion, and I think that of most feminists, is to support those Aboriginal women who are trying to change things, by providing whatever help they ask us for, but not to get directly involved. And if young women run away and need shelter, we should help provide it. It's much the same as the problem of genital mutilation; it's basically the responsibility of dissenting women in the specific culture involved, to make the changes; but we whites should give them moral and financial support.

HOMOSEXUALITY BILL DEFEATED

Legislation to decriminalise homosexual behaviour between consenting adults in private was defeated in the New South Wales Legislative Assembly in late March after the Country Party's tactic in abstaining from voting in the committee stages blocked an amendment which would have removed a clause relating to the age of consent.

25 April 1982

FANZINES RECEIVED

History of SF Fandom in New Zealand (Nigel Rowe), Yandro 253-254 (Buck & Juanita Coulson), The Ravin' 3/2 (Stephen Dedman), The Mentor 36, 37 (Ron L Clarke), Fith 1/5(W.A. Clubzine), Ibid 36, 37 (Ben Indick), Forerunner 4/8-9-10 (Sydney SF Foundation), Thyme 10-11, 12 (Irwin Hirsh & Andrew Brown), Rhubarb 1981/4 (John & Diane Fox), Tappen 3 (Malcolm Edwards), Back to the Bay (Dick Lynch), Hard Knox (Knoxville SF Fed'n), Chat 38, 39, 40 (Dick & Nikki Lynch), Q36#1 (Marc Ortlieb), Norseman Revue (Mark Loney), Crux #4 (James Styles), Sharana Lioness 14 (Anne Laurie Logan), Erg 77 (Terry Reeves), Tango Macabro (Arietti Maurizio, in Italian), Science Fiction 9 (Van Ikin), Aerial 4(Graham Ferner), Diagonal Relationship 17-20 (Arthur Hlavaty), Neology 6/6 (ESFCAS), A Foreign Fanzine 5-6 (Roelof Goudriaan), New Canadian Fandom 4 (Robert Runte & Michael Hall), Cygnus Chronicler 12 (Neville Angove), Sing Me A Song 5 (Pete Presford), Bardoni 4 (Pete Presford), Wing Window 1 (John D Berry), SF Review 41 (Richard Ceis), Wahf-full 8 (Jack Herman).

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 Zebee Johnston & Dave Luckett join Sally Beasley at address above
 ((As W.A. fans seem to shift around a lot, some or all of these COAs
 are likely to be out-of-date by the time overseas fans read this, but we try))

THIS FANZINE SUPPORTS

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