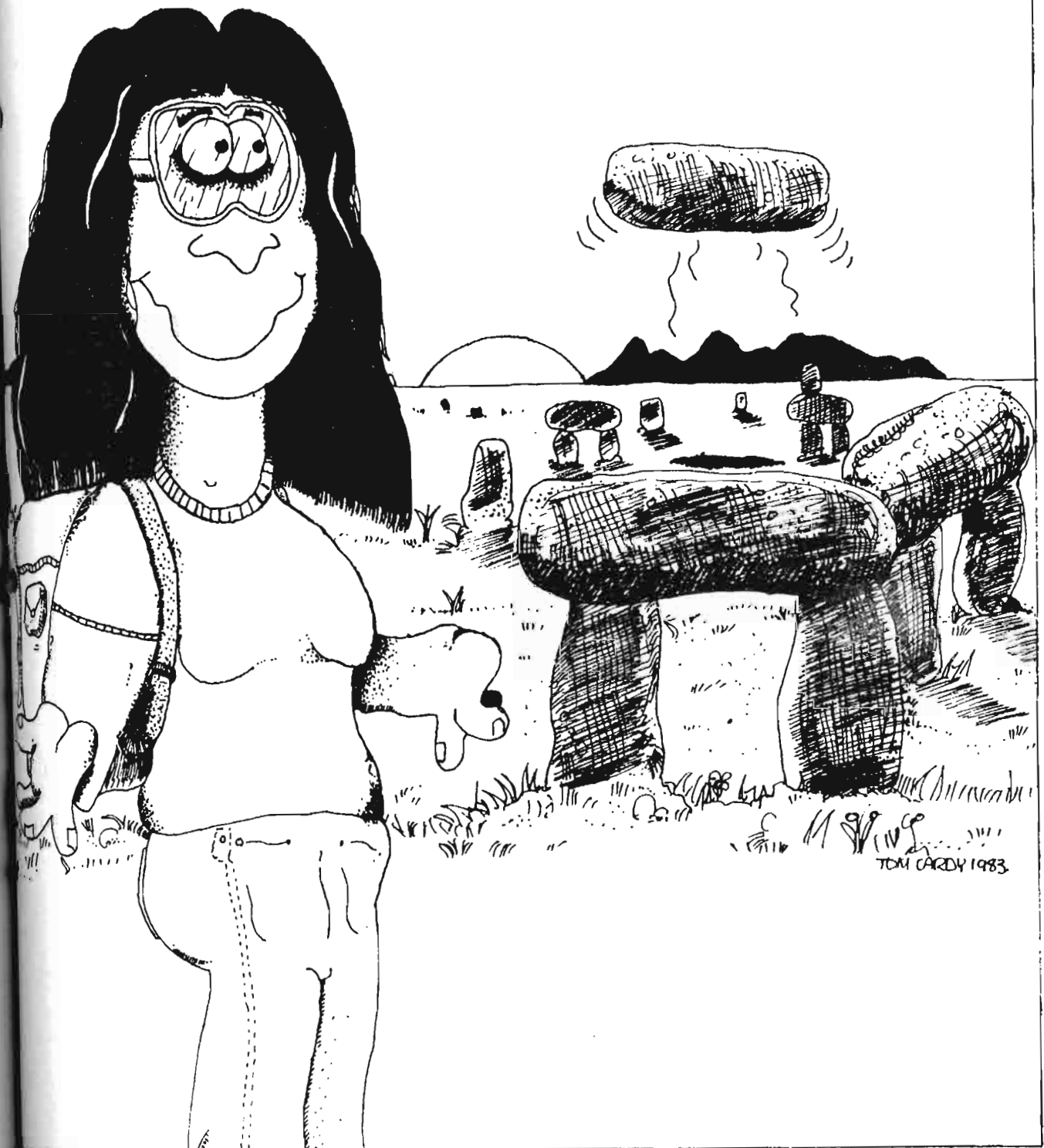


# Weber Woman's Wrevenge

Volume 2, Number 6

May 1983

Registered by Australia Post, Publication No NBH4389



# WEBERWOMAN'S WREVENGE TWELVE

(Volume 2, Number 6, May 1983)

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PLEASE NOTE this is a slight change from the previous address; the Post Office has changed its name and become a GPO, whatever that means.

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## THE COVER

This time I asked Tom Cardy, New Zealand fan and cartoonist, for a cover depicting Joy Window's trip report. The background is more representative of Part 1 (England) than of the part in this issue, but let's not quibble. You expect synchronisation of these things? Ha!

At the time this is being typed and printed, I do not know whether Tom has won FFANZ, the Fan Fund of Australia and New Zealand, but I hope he does. I am looking forward to meeting him. Though this is not one of his best cartcon, I rather like it; he does better on people he knows personally, rather than working from photos.

Last issue's cover was not printed offset, as most of you could probably tell, if you were paying attention. My apologies to Stu Shiffman, the artist. I was on a rather tight deadline, and Ron couldn't do the printing when I needed it, so I quickly had electrostencils made and printed it myself. I don't think the artwork suffered too much. (You, of course, probably got the bad copy.)

# THE RUBBISH BIN

An Editorial

by Jean Weber



This issue will finish out Volume 2 of Wrevenge, but I don't plan to change my hectic publishing schedule in Volume 3. You can look forward to six issues again next year, and some of you will be getting my diaryzine as well. I continue to have more material than I have room to publish, but not necessarily the mix I'd prefer. How about a few of you putting a "personal anecdote" down on paper for me, eh? The theme for the next volume is POWER (no, Eric, not the electrical stuff), particularly in one's personal life.

One of the things that most impresses me about my relationship with Eric is the lack of the sort of "power games" that I've noticed in almost every other relationship (at work, or in my private life or anywhere else) I can recall. I hadn't quite realised how pervasive such "power games" were until I found them missing. (Or are they really missing? Or just mutated into something far subtler? Hmmm, stay tuned in for analysis...)

Back in the lettercol you'll find a few comments from me to Joseph Nicholas, on the subject of the writing in this fanzine (specifically, my writing). Since replying to Joseph, I've been printing these pages and thinking about why I publish what I do. I've decided it's easy: I read stuff I enjoy and/or find interesting, and want to share it with others. So I publish it. The material often could be better written, true; or it could be massaged into a better package, true; but how many people would appreciate all that extra effort, and would the product truly be all that much better? Dunno.

Anyway, them's my priorities. Judging from your letters, you generally agree with, or at least aren't too distressed by, those priorities. This issue is one of those that just "grew". I think it has a certain coherence, and I rather like the mix. I hope you do too.

I was very pleased with the final installment of Joy Window's trip report. I'd felt something was lacking in the earlier installments: there didn't seem to be enough of Joy in them. This one seems to give me a much better idea of her reactions to things, rather than just a ch onicle of the things she did themselves.

The arrival of Marc Ortlieb's study of castration in English folklore came at a time when I wasn't planning to publish any more on the subject, but I just enjoyed the item so much, I couldn't pass it by. As Marc points out, it does look at the topic from a different angle, and Marc's usual biting wit is very suitable here. I hope you'll like it as much as I did.

While visiting here after my birthday party in February, Sally Beasley sold Eric a copy of Dave Luckett's filksong book, and told me Dave would be happy for me to reprint one of the songs in Wrevenge, as it seemed suitable. Suddenly I was compiling a poetry issue! If you enjoyed Dave's piece, I urge you to buy a copy of the book yourself. Address on page 13.

The usual lettercolumn has crowded out any book reviews I might have included, and I've got quite a few piled up -- despite the fact that I'm also writing reviews for Merv Binns' Australian SF News. Merv generally wants very short reviews, so lengthy analysis, and books not on his list, go here. Next time. But as for the letters, I've been surprised and delighted with the response from British female fans, who've sent long involved detailed letters and who evidently like my fanzine very much, for its difference from what they are used to. So much for Joseph Nicholas' theory that the contents will turn Britfans off; perhaps this may be true for the male fans, but the females are being very supportive.

I shall close this time with a bit of doggerel from a co-worker in Canberra. On my last visit there, I purchased some Edam cheese for lunches, and neglected to take the leftovers with me. Rather than have it go to waste, sitting there till it spoilt and someone threw it out, I sent a note to a friend, suggesting that she eat it herself. Here's her reply:

Your little note about the cheese	(by Carol
Our spirits did uplift	Marshall)
For usually our work's confined	
To Fiche without the chip(s).	

Such pure delight! We scampered on  
Noses twitching, hair a-quiver  
Our greatest fear: would it be lost  
Before the prize deliver?

For missing out would be too much!  
Frustration... blast and damn.  
But no! For there atop the wine  
Lay treasure - Jean's Edam.

So now with bellies feeling full  
(One rather more than t'other)  
We give you thanks, but next time please  
Cracker biscuits, too, we'd 'druther!

(Evidently shared with the other assistant; the bit about one belly being more full refers to the fact that one of them is pregnant.)



# ONCE AROUND THE WORLD

by Joy Window

## PART THREE: AMERICA



Day 1. New York City is exactly not the place to go after 18 days in the Irish countryside. I was exhausted from the 8-hour flight, but luckily Jerri was there with her brother-in-law Jerry (this similarity of names caused some confusion) to meet me. I hadn't seen Jerri since February 1979 when I ended 4 months in Japan as an English-as-a-second-language teacher. Jerri stayed her year, despite all the hassles, and I will forever admire her toughness and determination to stick with it. She loves New York, and it is certainly a place to inspire extremes of emotions.

Day 2 was bookstore day. They are wonderful! I went first to the "Magical Child", which had just about everything you could want in occult studies. After consulting my list of what to buy for friends back home, I splurged on all the neopagan literature I could get my grubby paws on. Besides books, they have robes, amulets, equipment, herbs, skulls..... not to forget tapes on many subjects. Sigh. With reluctance, I headed round the corner to Doubleday's, and spent a glorious couple of hours browsing - the place is huge, on many floors, and one must check one's bags in at the lockers before going in. Other publishers have almost-as-big premises, and practically every book in print. Wonderful. After that, I walked down to Greenwich Village, and poked around, then met Jerri at her work place.



Day 3. I rode the subway, but managed to miss a connection, so had to walk through Central Park to get to "Womanbooks", the feminist bookshop. I was pretty nervous, with all the stories of muggings, but survived. Then walked a few blocks down to the American Museum of Natural History, which is unspeakably fantabulous if you like museums of natural history. I spent several hours absorbing, and walked across the park again to the Metropolitan Museum of Art, but felt I couldn't possibly take any more in, so decided to leave it for another day. If one "did" every

museum in New York with such thoroughness, one could spend weeks.

Day 4. Went looking for a set of Tibetan chimes. I had seen a pair in Ireland, brought along by one of the expedition members, and had fallen in love with them. Saw some sets going for outrageous prices in Indian antique stores, and decided to think it over. That night, I had dinner with Jerri and Lori, who works with Ballantine Books, in their science fiction (Del Rey) section. This was somewhat of a surprise to both of us. I was familiar with them, having run the science fiction section in a bookshop at one stage, and she was surprised that I was familiar with them. We supped at a Brazilian restaurant, but I was not over impressed with Brazilian food - too many beans and oxtails, and their equivalent of margaritas were too sour and salty and alcoholic - yes, I know they're supposed to be like that, but they don't appeal to my taste at all. Anyway, the company was good, so the food was forgiven.



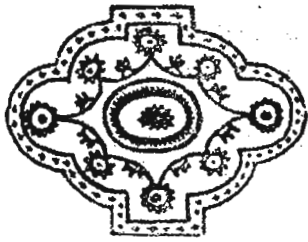
Day 5. I dropped in at Del Rey publishing, and was shown around by Lori. I was even able to pick up a few free books and posters for friends back home. After wandering around the city, I met Jerri and her colleague Annabelle, who lives in Greenwich Villlge in one of the many apartment complexes with heavy security, which is something we in Australia do not have on a large scale - in fact, I have not seen any at all, but there may be some some-where. We visited the Museum of Holography, where I noticed a lot of the exhibits which were on display at the Light Fantastic show in Sydney last year. One the way, we were distracted by a place called "Star Magic", which really grabbed me. The place sells "gifts of science and spirit". Besides the usual astronomical globes, charts and telescopes, there was spacy music ranging from Pink Floyd to Tibetan bells, and crystals and holographic items, and 3 sets of Tibetan chimes, going for 1/2 the price of the Indian antique shops! Deciding between the three sets was very difficult, but the assistant didn't mind at all as we stood around ding-ing them one after another for several minutes, and listening to the sound going off... somewhere... into distant spheres... aah. Annabelle showed us around a bit, then we had dinner, and I tasted the delights of bagels. They are kind of donuts, but denser and not sweet, and meant to be eaten with cream cheese.

Day 6. Did nothing whatsoever, but rest.



Day 7. After braving the post office with some boxes of books and souvenirs, Jerri took me to the Statue of Liberty, where we decided not to wait 45 minutes for the lift to the top, and not to climb the 25 stories, either. In the Museum of Immigration, I couldn't help thinking how impressive it must have been to come in from a homeland to a new land, and a new life, and pass through that giantess of freedom, seeking the American Dream. That night we rode the lifts to the top of the Empire State. Oh, forgot to mention we finally got to the Met (Museum of Art) which is again wonderful with all its ancient treasures - paintings, sculpture, architecture. We also saw a film, "The New York Experience", which was a capsule history of the place, and captured pretty well the feeling as I experienced it in one week - the smoking manhole covers, the

canyon sky scrapers, the fra tic pace -- you think Sydney is bad, ha! -- the accents, the cops directing honking, huge American cars against the lights, the cultural diversity, the fumes, the energy (!), the constant stimulation, the freëndliness, the love of the city by those who live there, despite the high crime rate and the undercurrent of violence that pervades the whole city. The commercialism, the ambition, the rush to get-rich-quick, the good living, the slums, the dirt -- you name it, it's there. There is no place like it, and you either love it or hate it. I liked it to visit, but as the cliché says, I sure wouldn't want to live there. Thanks, Jerri, for allowing me to see this marvellous place. I sure wouldn't have had the guts to go there, and keep going back, if I didn't have you there.



Day 8. Jerri saw me off at the airport, and in Nashville, via Detroit, I was picked up by Alan Sandercock. It was great to see Alan again. I first met him way back in '71 when we were both members of the Adelaide University Science Fiction Association. Since then, he has acquired a few degrees in chemistry, lived in England and Germany and Canada and several places in the U.S.A., and married Sue, whom I liked a lot. There is not much to do in Nashville, and I did just that -- not much. Sue worked part time, and would come home in the afternoons and drag me off somewhere, for which I am grateful. I experienced some of the fast food which Alan so well describes -- the outskirts of most American towns are filled with these joints, and they virtually line the interstate highways, too, as I noticed on the way to Atlanta. But I jump ahead. This day I saw the wonders of a drug store for the first time. They have the most amazing range of cosmetic items all in one place, plus a dispensing chemist. They are like our 'chemists', but with more and more and more.

Day 9. Sue took me to the Cumberland Museum, which is the local kiddies' museum, where we fooled around with the hands-on exhibits, slid down the slippery dip, crawled about in a fox den and had the fox talk to us, and generally had a kiddy time. I am impressed by Sue's approach to what is normally called unemployment. Instead of moping around the house all day as I would, she does volunteer work for local institutions, and this sometimes turns into payment. She also is addicted to the Wheel, so has time for creating pottery.



Day 10. Sue took me to the Parthenon. Yes, folks, one of the bastions of Southern Baptism has a full scale, complete model in one of their parks, with casts of the original Greek dieties in all their glory. Inside there is a small statue of the Goddess Athena, and the good citizens are causing a 30-foot high copy to be made and placed upon a 20-foot pedestal within the edifice.

Day 11. Sue's parents live in Atlanta, Georgia, a 4-hour car ride from Nashville, and we spent the weekend there. By happy coincidence, a couple of people on the Ireland trip live there, and I was able to see them again, for which I was grateful.

Day 12. Alan and I wandered downtown and checked out a most amazing, futuristic hotel. It has an outside elevator up to the revolving restaurant,

and the most terrific hanging gardens and almost an indoor lake, which is very pleasant, and must be extremely expensive to maintain. The atmosphere is very relaxed and elegant. Atlanta impressed me with its tree-lined streets, almost as if they forgot to cut the forest down before building the city, and its large alternative community. I saw Judy Chicago's "Dinner Party", which I had long admired from books, but never thought to see in the real. It's wonderful, but as a friend said, you wouldn't want to eat your dinner off it. Met Maya and went with some friends of hers to a hill top where we could watch the rising full moon, and sing to it. Stayed over at Maya's, and had breakfast -- of fried tofu and grits, very Southern! -- with Franklin, who was the other Ireland co-survivor besides Maya.



Day 13. Maya took me to the First Existentialist Church for their Sunday service. The name intrigued me. As I walked in, they were singing happy birthday individually to appropriate people. It was my birthday, too, but I was too shy to stand up and be sung to. A lot of 'fringies' were there: the gay population, some pagans, some unorthodox Christians and Jews. I admired their community spirit, but the Christian overtones were too much for me.

Day 14. Flew from Nashville to Minneapolis, where I was picked up by Joyce Scrivner. I hadn't seen Joyce for 2 years, since she stayed at the Marrickville Mansion for a couple of days. The weather was a bit drastic. The following day was 43°F outside, a bit of a difference from the 90°F in Nashville. (I went back to 93°F in Tucson after this.) Minneapolis is farther north than Toronto and some other places in Canada, and feels it -- although the weather was relatively mild for most of the time I was up there, so the natives tell me.

Day 15 was a day of much walking. Joyce dropped me off at the Amazon (feminist bookstore), which was closed till noon, so I walked 20 minutes to the Minneapolis Museum of Art, which has quite a lot of anthropological artifacts in it, including something I had not seen in Australia (except in the film "The Last Wave") -- an Aboriginal churinga. After visiting the bookstore, I walked into the city, a fair hike, and wandered slowly back to Joyce's. The houses are built so that the inhabitants can survive the winters, which are severe by most standards, and deadly by mine. All houses have a basement with a central heating system, a ground floor and a first floor. I didn't check if the first floor has a door to the outside, but it wouldn't surprise me. There are many trees, and they were changing colours prior to the leaves falling off. Consequently, the city was very pretty, all greens and golds and reds. It was a strange phenomenon for one used to evergreens.



Day 16. I wanted to see some Native American culture, and thought Minneapolis would be a good place, since it has the largest urban population of Native Americans in the States, according to Joyce. They certainly were in evidence where Joyce lived. I wandered over to the Native American Centre near Joyce's and checked out the small exhibit. While waiting for a



bus afterwards, I was unfortunately hassled by a middle-aged, very drunk Indian. I don't know why I just didn't tell him to piss off; I suppose I felt sorry for him, he was pretty paralytic and wouldn't take "no" for an answer. I kept talking till the bus came, and lept on it with great relief. An Eskimo store came next, but there weren't any drunk Eskimos about, so I went in. They seem to specialize in a kind of Primitive Art, which I find attractive, but it costs, so I satisfied myself by buying a calendar whose prints I could chop out and frame. Back at Joyce's, a woman from Melbourne named Adrienne rang -- it turned out we had mutual friends there, so decided to get together. A friend of hers (a local called Jeff) came to pick me up, and we all went to a silly movie, "Jeckyll and Hyde, Together Again". We arranged to meet the next day and see St Paul, the other half of the Twin Cities.



Day 17. Adrienne and I visited various museums, and saw the film "Hail Columbia", about the space shuttle, at the Omni Theatre in the Science Museum. It's billed as having the world's largest movie screen, and it's circular. One lays back in the reclining seats to save one's neck from aching. Adrienne and I agreed on the one thing that struck us. The shuttle was put over as a glorious achievement for the States, which it undoubtedly was -- but what about the rest of humankind? America is very self-centred, in the literal sense, and I suppose it does not need to look out of itself. It is a huge country, with a huge population, and an incredible amount of diversity within it -- no need to go beyond the continental borders, even the political borders, to find enough to absorb you for many life times. Every place I visited had its own distinct aura and lifestyle, and was blissfully ignorant of any other way to live. It was interesting that every person or household I stayed with were not locals to that area -- they had all migrated from other countries or states. They were able to notice some of the things I did, purely from having had to cope with them when they first arrived.

Day 18-23 are hazy, as I met a nice young man, and spent most of my time with him. I do remember seeing a couple of bookstores, trying in vain to see "Fantasia", and seeing the local zoo, which was interesting for its Northern animals which I hadn't seen before -- beavers, beluga whales, mooses, red pandas (which don't look a thing like the black-and-white variety, but are closely related), various kinds of deer, and birds--fascinating.

Day 24-26. I was met by Peter Hey in Tucson, Arizona. There were a couple of uneasy moments in the airport. Would we recognise each other again, after 4 years, especially only having met for 3 days at the Youth Hostel in Kuala Lumpur? I certainly didn't recognise anyone offhand, and I had a photo of him, but he didn't have one of me. Finally I glimpsed someone on the elevator, which just might be him, and sure enough, it was.

I only had 2 days in Tucson, and Peter and Yuki did their best to show me everything there was to see. I was taken to the Sonora Desert Museum, via the desert itself. The strange, slow-growing Saguaro cactuses grow everywhere, and they are whole ecologies unto themselves. Birds and lizards live in them. The museum is part zoo, and has road-runners, gila monsters (one of the only two venomous lizards in the world), vultures,

coyotes, rattlesnakes, prairie dogs (super-cute and phtogenic). We went to a party with some Arab friends of Peter's, and ate great food and listened to traditional Arab music -- very entertaining. Bob Dylan songs sung in the traditional Arab fashion sounded rather strange! There is a superb art and craft store where I spent many \$\$, but some of the best stuff -- pottery -- I didn't dare buy, being impossible to transport safely. The San Xavier Mission is on a Native American reservation, and was caused to be built by the same Jesuit who tried to convert the Japanese to Christianity. Some of these people must have been masochists! They certainly chose the roughest conditions they could. I have to admire their determination. The Indians basically want nothing to do with the whites, and who can blame them? They sell a particular kind of unattractive silver and turquoise jewellery. I wanted to buy some pieces, but didn't like anything I saw.

Peter is active with the University hiking and caving club, as is Yuki, and we went for a small hike in the nearby mountain ranges. Arizona is famous for strange rock formations, and there were a few in this area. Up north of the state is the Grand Canyon, and strange desert mesas and the Painted Desert of coloured sands. I'd like to see all of it some day.



Day 27. Flew from Tucson, via Las Vegas (they really do have one-armed-bandits in the airport lounges, and probably in the toilets!), and was met in San Francisco by a weak-looking Valerie. She'd been through a run of illness and bad luck -- car crashes and peeping toms. All this shouldn't happen to one person, at least not all at once. During the next couple of weeks, I went to such diverse places as the Rosicrucian Museum in San Jose, the California Academy of Sciences and the Steinhart Aquarium, a quickie tour of San Francisco book stores, 2 days in Yosemite (rhymes not with Vegemite) National Park -- absolutely superb -- a Halloween party, the Spiral Dance (Celtic New Year celebration), and caught up with 4 more people I had met on the Ireland trip, plus Starhawk.

In general I felt my attempts to look around San Francisco were feeble, due to feeling burnt out, and wanting to stop taking in so much stimulation. I definitely want to go back to California and follow up on people and places that I didn't give justice to last time. I liked America, to my surprise. People in their own countries are much nicer than out of them -- I am sure this goes for Aussies too. Thanks to all the people who made my trip so pleasant and interesting. I'll be back again.

# # # # # # # # # # # # # # # #

#### U. S Equal Rights Amendment (now defeated)--complete text

Section 1: Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any state on account of sex.

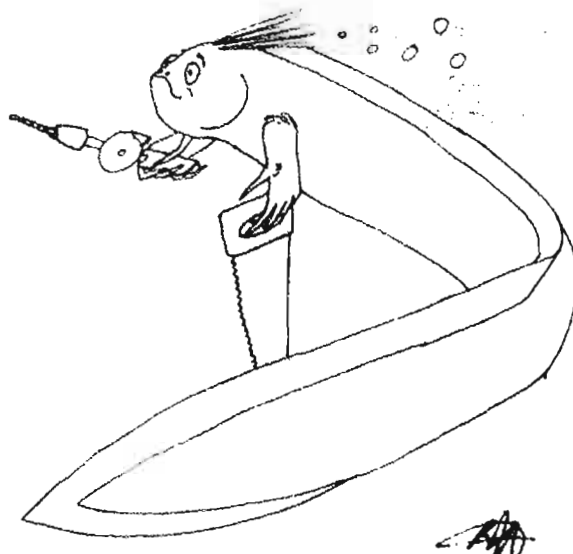
Section 2: The Congress shall have the power to enforce, by appropriate legislation, the provisions of this article.

Section 3: The Amendment shall take effect two years after the date of ratification.

((Kinda makes you wonder what all the fuss was about, by those who opposed it, eh? I believe this has now, or soon will be, re-introduced.))

# CASTRATION IN ENGLISH FOLKLORE

by Marc Ortlieb



((Just when you (and I!) thought I'd finally cleared my files of material on castration, and we could get on to ~~arguing~~ talking about other topics, Marc Ortlieb sends me an article which I simply couldn't ~~refuse~~ resist. It's a somewhat different approach, and I think you'll like it too. -- JHW))

It strikes me as strange that, in the examination of castration that has taken place in Weberwoman's Wrevenge, neither John Alderson nor Judith Hanna has chosen to delve into that most germane of sources of knowledge, folklore -- as represented by the folksong tradition. Being an afficianado of the folk tradition, and particularly of those songs which, due to our rather puritanical censorship laws, never see print, I feel that I can shed a little light on this topic.

Without a doubt, castration in the folksong is used as a mechanism by which the singer can express a critical opinion of people, or of institutions. Thus, we have the most famous of the folk songs dealing with castration, Colonel Bogey, a crude piece of propaganda, designed to cut the German high command down to size. For the benefit of those who have not encountered the verse -- both of you -- it runs

Hitler has only got one ball  
Goering has two but very small  
Himmler is somewhat similar  
But poor old Goebels  
Has no balls  
At all.

That British propagandists should choose to hit below the belt in this fashion is clear evidence of how close to a man's heart are his genitals. The allegations in the verse above, be they true or false, have little relevance to the fact that the people mentioned in it ruled a particularly powerful empire for ten years.

It seems that, when castration is brought up, scientific fact gets swept aside in a wave of emotive reasoning. This has been evidenced in the confusion over the exact sexual potential of a man who has been castrated, which we have seen in the pages of Wrevenge recently. Indeed, the folklore does have something to say with regard to the potency of castratees:

A policeman from Tottenham Junction  
 Lost the use of his sexual function,  
 He deceived his wife  
 For the rest of his life  
 By dexterous use of his truncheon.

Note also the pleasure that one takes in the fact that it is a member of the constabulary who is thus afflicted. In this respect, the limerick has something in common with Colonel Bogey.

However, folklore's tour de force, with regards to castration, is a folk song entitled, aptly enough, No Balls at All. Since this is not a common work, and is to be found only in the libraries of the cognoscenti, I reproduce it in full below.

NO BALLS AT ALL -- Anon

Come gather round people and listen to me  
 I'll sing you a song that will fill you with glee  
 It's about a young lady so fair and so tall  
 Who married a man who had no balls at all.

How well she remembers that first wedding night  
 She turned down the covers and turned out the light  
 She reached for his shoulder, his shoulder seemed small  
 She reached for his balls, he had no balls at all.

"Oh Mother Oh Mother Oh what can I do?  
 My troubles are many, my pleasures are few.  
 Why is it to me such a fate should befall  
 I've married a man who has no balls at all."

"Oh Daughter Oh Daughter Oh don't be so sad  
 I had the same trouble with your dear old Dad.  
 There's many a man who will come to the call  
 Of the wife of a man who has no balls at all."

The daughter she followed her mother's advice  
 And found the proceedings exceedingly nice.  
 A seven pound baby was born in the fall  
 And the poor little bastard had no balls at all.

Now, there is certainly a hint of divine justice here -- the sins of the mother as it were. The daughter of a woman who married a eunuch, herself marries a eunuch, only to give birth to a eunuch. One is almost tempted to suggest that infertility is an inherited trait. However, note that the women don't suffer at all in this process, other than the daughter, until she seeks the advice of her mother. In this we have the conspiracy of females so feared by John Alderson. It is the male who is cuckolded all the way down the line, though one imagines that he himself was a tacit supporter of his wife's scheme in both documented cases, as the arrival of a child is certainly not something that would be easy to conceal, unless one assumes that, with the pregnancy well established, both women severed connections with their husbands.

What then does folklore of this nature tell us about castration. Well, in the implicit approval that No Balls at All gives to the extra-marital affairs of mother and daughter, we have a contradiction. It would seem

that castration is being seen as a good thing. Now, either this means that the song was authored by a person fitting the image that John Alderson assigns to feminists, or that some male is in favour of castration.

Personally, I find the latter explanation the more reasonable. In general, you see, there is a taboo against men having intercourse with other men's wives. However, should the husband be a castrati, then the interloper can justify his actions. The woman thus married becomes every man's ideal, as she is available, and yet, through being already married, she provides no danger to the cockster. Her vagina dentitis has already claimed a victim, and it is that victim who will continue to support her, and any offspring.

The English language is also full of stories about men who have had their "essential equipment" blown off in the war, and each of these seems to provide the basis of a cruel pun. I'm sure the punchlines will serve to identify the stories...

"Rectum?"

"Well, it certainly didn't do 'em any good."

or, "Darling, look what the fucking Germans blew off."

Here, of course, the source of amusement is the relief that one feels in the knowledge that is is another who has suffered the unkindest cut of all.

Castration is also seen as punishment, often for stupidity, such as the bloke in the limerick

There was a young sailor named Bates  
Who did the fandango on skates  
He fell on his cutlass  
Which rendered him nutless  
And practically useless on dates.

And then there are the numerous limericks about foolish characters who failed to insulate their wedding tackle against the extremes of weather found at the Poles or around the equator.

Naturally the folklore also deals with those unfortunates who don't pick their women partners with adequate care. Perhaps the ultimate expression of this can be found in the limerick about the young whore from Dakota

Who lived in an ivory pagoda  
And all of the walls  
Were lined with the balls  
And the tools of the fools who had rode her.

The harlot of Jerusalem had, it is rumoured,  
very similar habits.

The one uniting theme throughout the folkloric examination of castration is humour. Castration is treated as funny, be it that of the bloke from Coblenz who kicked his ball over the fence, or the poor fellow who never could work out the difference between circumcision and castration. It is then here that we see the essential import of



the male sexual organs, because, as has been noted by many scholars, the subjects for humour are always those which people hold dear, and consider most serious. Thus, through humour, man has attempted to excise that most terrible of fears, that of emasculation.

I refuse to attempt to plumb the depths of sociological reasoning that prompt John Alderson to suggest that this is all part of the great female plot, but, perhaps to explain some of John's attitudes, I should conclude with the following story.

It appears that a young bloke was down from the bush, and he met this sheila, and, things being as they often are, he invited her back to his place, and invited her to fight. She replied that she couldn't fight, because it was her time of month.

"What do you mean, 'time of month'?" he said.

"You know," she replied. "I'm bleeding down there."

"Let me have a look," said the fellow from the bush, and proceeded to do so. Whereupon he exclaimed, "No wonder you're bleeding. Some bastard's cut your flaming prick off."

---oOo---

MY CLIENT  
MAINTAINS HE  
SAID TONSILLECTOMY



AND MY CLIENT  
FEELS SURE HE  
SAID VASECTOMY



*Pickering*

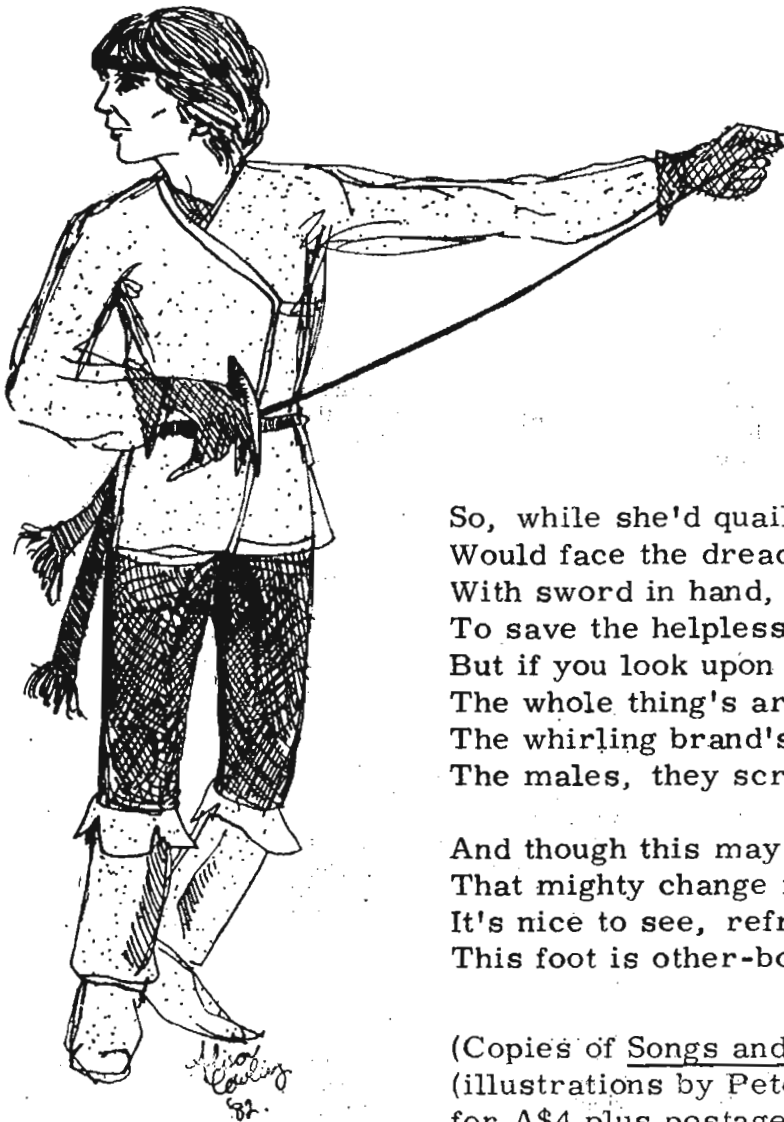
# ON LOOKING INTO A VOLUME OF NIVEN'S "DREAM PARK"

by Dave Lockett

Tune: "Vicar of Bray"  
(Trad.)

In days of old, the pulps were sold  
Upon the understanding  
That when the ruck of monstors struck,  
The plot grew undemanding.  
The female, weak, would give a shriek,  
Her garments would be rended,  
As alien things with scales and stings  
Upon her flesh descended.

And this was good, and understood,  
(Ah, how my mem'ry turns back!)  
It was the way in the palmy day  
Of good old Hugo Gernsbach.



So, while she'd quail, the hero (male)  
Would face the dread inhuman.  
With sword in hand, he'd take his stand  
To save the helpless wuman.  
But if you look upon this book,  
The whole thing's arsy-versy;  
The whirling brand's in female hands,  
The males, they scream for mercy.

And though this may not mean to say  
That mighty change is mooted,  
It's nice to see, refreshingly,  
This foot is other-booted.

(Copies of Songs and Ballads by David Lockett  
(illustrations by Peter Saxon) are available  
for A\$4 plus postage from 21 Gold St, South  
Fremantle, WA 6162, Australia.)

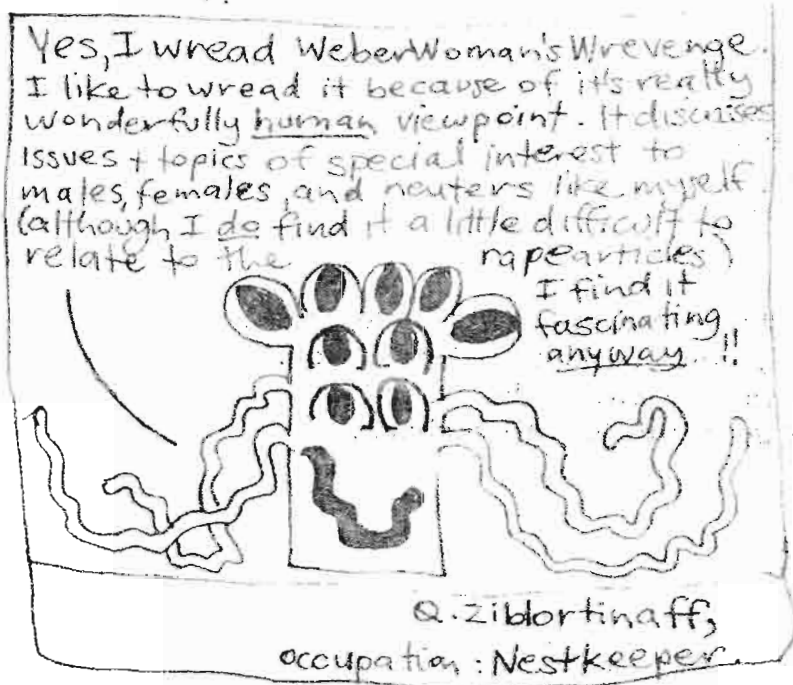
# NATTER & ANTI-NATTER

A



from Christine Smith

(Letters and related forms of communication)



← Christine Smith  
18 Coleman Ave  
Homebush, NSW  
2140 Australia

MARY GENTLE  
Flat 1, 11 Alumhurst Rd  
Westbourne, Bournemouth  
England

4 Feb 1983

the social systems which are desirable don't work, and the ones that do work (fascism, typanny) are undesirable; which is ridiculous... isn't it?

Which is why I take a different view from that expressed in Skel's letter about people who invent 'primitive' cultures that incorporate the benefits of modern technology. I don't think you can call these people 'Luddites of the Imagination', unless you're then willing to say that modern Western industrial civilisation is heaven on earth. It ain't. Nor is it valid to say that such utopias are faulty since such primitive societies would be changed by the incorporation of such technology; because I think what we have (consciously or unconsciously) is not a flight back into the past, but an attempt in the best traditions of 'forward thinking' sf to shape a future post-industrial society. If this involves the better aspects of pre-industrial society (the more pastoral aspects of fantasy), plus the technological advantages of the 20th century, fine and good. It's a damn sight better than getting the worst features of both, which is not out of the question.

I know that letter was more concerned with the psychological aspects of belief in fantasy worlds, and I suppose fantasy can become an end in itself (though even then, it must affect the individual's reactions to the outside world, and so is not wholly isolated). But it can be a game, a playground for

I don't know if I think anarcho-communism is any more workable than you do; but then that puts one in the position of saying that

ideas, an exercise of the alternatives, an escape -- in the sense that Tolkien spoke of an escape, not from responsibility, but from imprisonment. No, I'm afraid there's a psychology behind the letter that I don't easily understand; that of the person who knows what reality is, without doubt or hesitation, and can't see fantasy as a useful tool for making sense of the world. Maybe it does make sense to him -- I wish he'd let me in on the secret.

GREG HILLS  
c/o J Foyster  
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St Kilda, Vic 3182  
31 Jan 1983

((Note new address, effective 1 May 83.))

Any rational male would indeed be horrified at the loss of a limb, including the penis. It is quite reasonable for him.

First, there is the loss of a genetic stake in the future. ... Those who subscribe to the concepts of evolution and natural selection will see that there is a strong pressure on every male animal to preserve the penis, even if it means risking some other limb. A male who undervalues the penis will quite possibly lose it/ not care about losing it. This is nonsurvival and will breed out of the species. Artificial insemination capable of making up for this has not yet been around long enough for this fear to also breed out.

And then there is the second fear, loss of orgasm, and that is directly sexual. Orgasm is very important to me. ... Loss of my penis would take with it, unless I was exceptionally lucky, the most exquisite pleasure my body is designed to produce. I'd rather be crippled. Cripples can still have orgasmic sex.

So how important is that little lump of flesh to this



particular example of the male of the species? Well, a friend and I were talking once after sex (bad habit, that; REAL MEN roll over and go to sleep) and we got onto function-loss. My scale of how 'crippling' each loss would be as follows:

- Loss of speech (least crippling)
  - Loss of hearing
  - Loss of one leg/arm (leg 1st, then arm)
  - Loss of two legs
  - Loss of two legs & one arm
  - Loss of two arms
  - Loss of arms and legs
  - Loss of sight (most crippling)
- LOSS OF PENIS

Which, I guess, tells you a lot about my personal fears. Loss of penis did not come up, but I have inserted it here where I would have done so if it had. Between loss of mobility and loss of easy communication.

So it should be clear that my penis is very important to me. If it therefore seems to Avedon Carol that I am "obsessed" with it, I am afraid our views of the subject must forever diverge. I've got one, she hasn't; and I feel that this gives me just a trifle more reason to value it than she has, so there.

It is not loss of "power" that I fear so much; it is loss of pleasure. If a woman cannot comprehend that viewpoint, I am afraid she has no right to assert any sort of opinion on the subject. I will not be told it's silly to value the penis so highly. Because I know it is not silly to the one individual concerned, namely myself.

(I trust that attitude makes you more sympathetic than many men to the plight of young girls whose clitoris -- the main site of sexual pleasure in the female -- is removed in childhood, usually to make them more suitable marriage partners.--JHW))

But if it makes Avedon feel better, I don't greatly fear loss of any limb at present, and "loss of sight" was/is most important of all to me. Reading -- magazines, books, whatever--and sight in general are, to me, paramount over almost everything short of total sensory deprivation. If I have a fixation, it is on blindness, not penile loss.

Incidentally, castration per se (loss of testicles) is a minor worry. Children, which I pointed out as very important to some people, are not that important to me. I have been toying with the idea of vasectomy for some time. I have not yet tried for one because (a) I might yet decide I do want children; (b) I am quite sure NZ medicine would turn thumbs-down to this request from a single, 25-year-old male, with no known offspring, nor any known dysfunction or crippling genetic ailment.... Actually loss of testicles worries me from only one viewpoint, and that is esthetic. I'd feel unbalanced without 'em...

Incidentally, the girlfriend with whom I talked over that list above had had a radical hysterectomy some years back: cervical cancer, spreading. They took the cervix, uterus, and ovaries complete. She's never missed them (besides which, somewhere in the world is an adolescent girl who is her child). So I can well understand your own stand on that subject, Jean. Hasn't affected her sex life, either, unless to improve it. They'd had her on depoprovera for years, with terrible effects on her orgasmic potential. Now...but that's a different topic.

(Thank you for that long and thoughtful letter, Greg. That's the sort of personal "feelings" that I'm especially interested in publishing -- when the writer is willing to go public, at least! Your letter, and others, substantiate my claim that it's one's feelings that really count on such personal matters, not so much what the "facts" are.--JHW))

LAURRAINE TUTIHASI  
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4 Feb 1983

I would like to inform Jon Noble and anyone with similar thoughts about childbearing ((see #7, let lettercol)) that I am highly unlikely ever to have

children. I am prevented from having my tubes tied by my fear of surgery and distrust of surgeons and hospitals. However, I make extensive use of birth control methods. And though I still believe that the soul enters the body at conception, I would choose abortion if I become pregnant. If prevented from getting an abortion, I would try to induce a miscarriage. I will not willingly suffer nine months of agony. Are Jon and other men acquainted with the side-effects of pregnancy -- nausea, to which I am very prone; water retention; back problems; and others? If I ended up having the child anyway, Jon is right that I would probably raise it myself, if I could afford to; I wouldn't trust anyone else to do it right. I would hire a nurse while the child was an infant, then a governess or whatever passes for one these days. As soon as it is old enough, it will be packed off to a boarding school. Having improved my downhill skiing by thinking about it, I have great faith in my gedanken experiments.

(My attitude to pregnancy is similar to yours, in that I knew it was unlikely to change before I was too old to safely have children, so I can quite sympathize. But I think you do Jon a slight injustice; he is aware not only of the hazards of pregnancy, but of the hazards of birth control for the female. Jon has had a vasectomy. Are you aware that you can have your tubes tied in a clinic, under local anaesthetic if you want? Even with a general anaesthetic, you can be in and out in one day -- no expensive overnight stays. Contact the University of California Medical Centre, Ob/Gyn Dept, in San Francisco. "Fear of surgery" strikes me as a poor excuse for endangering your body with contraceptives, or risking an abortion. (Okay, maybe you use a 'safe' method with no chemicals -- I do not include the diaphragm as 'safe' because of the spermicides used with it -- but all have risks of failure.) Excuse me, I don't mean to be insulting, but surely you can overcome "fear and distrust"?--JHW))

I have a question about the rape problem. Is there anything wrong in bringing assault rather than rape charges against an attacker? All the discussion seems to point to the fact that rape concerns violence not sex, so why treat it separately from other assault?

((Good point, and one I have often wondered in reading about some rape cases. Perhaps our legal readers could say whether there is any reason why one shouldn't bring assault charges, especially in cases where the victim has been bashed, I believe the penalties tend to be lower, but the conviction rate ought to be higher.--JHW))

KAREN WARNOCK  
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Australia

18 Jan 1983

...the rape debate/discussion... many of the personal comments and experiences here touched a "raw nerve" with me in that I've seen what such an experience

can do to a 12 or 13-year-old. Also re sexual harassment, involving teachers and students: last year one male member of staff had the habit of giving the girls "matey" hugs and saying "We are mates, aren't we!" A difficult problem to solve, in that many of the young girls were unsure what to do. Those who reported this to those who could help, received little assistance as 90% of the staff refused to accept the behaviour of this member of staff. However, with constant harassment by some members of staff, myself being one, and the threat by the Deputy Principal to leave if he didn't, said male was told to go! The worst part of this is that his actions were obvious and often seen; little is said about what we don't see!

MAIA COWAN  
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48013 USA  
23 Feb 1983

My favorite fan writers are those who seem to be as interested in their readers' responses as in speaking their own piece. That description fits you

very nicely... I enjoy the "serious" tone of the articles. I find I get grouchy if I don't have something to think about. But I also understand your desire to lighten things up; too much is too much.

I get the impression that Joseph Nicholas uses "American" to mean, not "citizen of the United States", but "anything I don't like". Peculiar semantics; but that's neither here nor there. I agree with your response that some things should be discussed publicly. It may be more tasteful, or whatever, to refrain from mentioning topics that may disturb people, but such reticence only helps to perpetuate the problems through a failure to confront the problems. I'd rather be rude than oppressed.

What does rape have to do with SF? For that matter, what does life have to do with SF? I understand there's quite a nasty scene in Heinlein's latest novel involving a gang rape.

Samuel Wagar sounds like someone I'd enjoy knowing. Though I've been working at it for most of my adult life (not all that long, admittedly), I'm only now beginning to realize my own strength. The hardest part is learning not to be afraid of it. We seem to have come to some of the same conclusions -- strength comes from an acceptance of oneself and a freedom from artificial roles and the need to do things the way other people expect. And it's a lot easier to simply realize this than it is to start living it. I can easily jump from what he's saying to my own conclusion that this is revolution: one person at a time realizing that the old games aren't fun anymore, and so deciding not to play them anymore.

There's a very popular movie in the States these days, called Tootsie. In it, Dustin Hoffman plays an out-of-work actor who, in desperation for a role, dresses as a woman and lands a part in a soap opera. ... I was pleased that the movie showed, not the differences between being a man and being a woman, but the difference between being treated as a man or a woman.

(I haven't seen the film yet, though it's showing in Australia; but I've read many reviews, some of which think the film is quite positive, as you do. Others (mostly a few militant feminists) think it's another example of a film saying a man can be a better woman than a woman can! --JHW))

I very much like your statement in the review of Why Children? that reason has little to do with choosing to have children. I believe it's one of those things that, if you have to think about it, then you should put it off a bit longer. I feel about children much the way you do (as does Ian), but I do admire those who choose to raise them. I wish I understood their feelings and motivations -- though maybe not, since if I did I'd probably share them, and I don't even want to want to have children!

There's been a particularly unpleasant case in the news lately involving surrogate motherhood. A married woman was hired to bear another man's child through artificial insemination, and when the baby was born microcephalic the "employer" claimed he wasn't his. Blood tests proved that the child indeed was not, and the case will probably drag through the courts for months and years. The pity is that, one way or the other, the poor child would have been stuck with a father that

only wants a perfect specimen, or with parents that are quite willing to seal him to one. I truly don't understand the importance of having a child. People go to such lengths to reproduce their own genes, when there are so many children who could be adopted.

(My understanding is that most of the children available for adoption these days are either mixed-race, older, or handicapped, and most adoptive parents prefer not to deal with the associated problems. Also there are such long waiting lists, and many of the agencies enforce rather stringent rules -- such as religion (no atheists need apply), or other lifestyle attributes that may exclude many prospective adopters. If one has the money, one can adopt a third-world child, but that has its own problems, not the least of which is the possibility that the child may not be an orphan but rather may have been sold by its desperate parents. Still, like you, I cannot emotionally grasp the driving desire to raise a child, much less produce one from one's own genes! --JHW))

I find "Ms" a great convenience, myself. I wouldn't use "Miss" because I am married, but "Mrs" won't do because I don't use my husband's last name. I am encountering that practice more and more frequently ... M'self, I find the idea of giving up a name that's served me well all these years to be completely bizarre, as much so as identifying myself by marital status where it isn't relevant. But other people can do as they please.

I find Avedon Carol's comments constantly refreshing, here and elsewhere. I too wonder about the rationality of people like Gilder who go on as he does and still expect people to swallow his conclusions. I'm reminded of Marabel Morgan, who wrote The Total Woman; her idea is that women have to cajole, submit to, and especially deceive their husbands, letting said husbands believe they're always right so that they'll buy us frost-free refrigerators. It just Won't Do to be honest with them, because the poor dears can't tolerate assertiveness in women; it just devastates their egos. Several men of my acquaintance have allowed as how they'd want nothing to do with a woman who'd behave like that. Bad for the digestion.

(Eric agrees, and says one of the reasons he never expended much energy chasing Australian women is because few of them were at all interesting or honest with him. He still has trouble believing me when I say something, because he's had so little experience with assertive women who said what they meant. At least there seem to be enough of his sort of men around to pair off with our sort of women, but they sure can be hard to find at times. --JHW))



JOY HIBBERT  
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15 March 83

Another reason for not using statistical material is that you can prove anything with statistics, and therefore if you are trying to prove something which differs from what mostly-male scientists are trying to prove (e.g. that castration isn't that drastic), you will be short of statistics, and everyone who disagrees with you will have plenty of statistics. Also, it's good that someone is acknowledging that feelings are irrational, rather than deciding to try and prove their feelings with statistics... With the castration case-histories, no notice seems to have been taken of the psychological effects; i.e. if he thinks he can't have sex any more, then he can't, no matter what the biological facts are.

Bag searches are in theory to prevent London getting an atmosphere of violence, by stopping anyone taking bombs into anywhere. In practice, if you've got a small bomb, there's nothing to stop you, particularly if you're female and the bomb is small enough to go in a box of tampons.

I think it depends on how you feel about different parts of your body as to whether you'd be really upset by losing them. The loss of my uterus wouldn't bother me particularly since I've never thought of myself as a potential mother. But since bigbreastedness is an important part of my body image, losing one would upset me a lot more. Particularly since I would then have a choice between living a life and using one of those pointless pads in order to not upset people, or upset myself trying to be honest. I would imagine that losing a breast would affect your sex life more than losing your uterus, since partners would be more difficult to find.

I suppose it's the strong dichotomy into man and woman which causes things like castration complex, emotional trouble after hysterectomy, etc. We think of ourselves as male or female and forget that we're all people, and that most of us is the same. The reason women are afraid of hysterectomy is that they centre their womanhood there. The reason I cringe when I hear the word clitoridectomy is because my womanhood is centred there. And so I suppose most women can identify with men's fears of castration because we have a bit of ourselves we feel the same about. I suppose there is a difference -- my fears are purely for the loss of my pleasure, but men's fears seem to be more for what other people will think.

((Not according to the men who've written to me, in letters printed last issue and this one; they seem to be most concerned about loss of pleasure too. Joy says quite a bit on several other topics, some of which I may quote next time, but getting short of space here.--JHW))

JOSEPH NICHOLAS  
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9 Feb 1983

"I'm unlikely to expend the energy required to make major changes in the material I contribute" you state in... your editorial in Wrevenge Vol 2 No 3. One is entitled to ask why, particularly in the light of your agreement with your critics that improvements and amendments are necessary, but this is a question that you don't really answer... Meaning, in effect, that you just can't be bothered. In which case, why on Earth should we bother to read your fanzine?

((No reason whatsoever, Joseph, unless you enjoy it for its contents. Obviously most of my regular readers do enjoy it, and aren't particularly distressed by the shortcomings in style. Some have even

stated that they prefer a zine that just gets on with whatever it has to say, rather than worrying the words around until they are beautifully phrased, but perhaps not saying much of anything in the end. If you, Joseph, or anyone else, doesn't like that sort of fanzine, fair enough. Don't read it if you don't want to. No, it's not that I "can't be bothered" -- it's because my priorities lie elsewhere. I agree that good writing is important; I don't agree with the implication you make in many of your letters, that writing is the most important thing about a fanzine. To me, the contents, the topics discussed, are of equal or greater importance, and that's where I put my emphasis. --JHW))

Fanwriting is an entirely pointless activity unless you're doing your absolute best. Not just because anything that's worth doing is worth doing well, but because of the uniquely personal nature of fanwriting itself... The personal element is thus paramount, or should be -- yet it's entirely missing from Wrevenge. Instead we get dully didactic articles on The Meaning of Rape and such... such things we can obtain from our local public libraries and/or radical bookshops; if they're to appear in fanzines then they should be dealt with from the personal perspective, conveyed via analytical anecdotes.

((Which is why I emphasise the personal, and feelings, over statistical things, with the occasional exception. And whatever you may think, I consider the rape article, which you keep harping on, as an exception. I do not see myself primarily as a fanwriter, nor do I want to work hard at improving my anecdotal skills; I see my role, the one which I enjoy, as providing a forum for other people to talk about their feelings etc. Priorities again. --JHW))

MAT COWARD  
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U.K.  
16 March 83

I agree entirely with your editorial (in #10) -- I can't understand why anyone would want zines to be full of solid, stolid facts'n'figures arguments. I think the ability to write about your personal feelings, without a formal structure, is one of the most useful things about fandom.

I very much enjoyed Joy Window's travelogue. I know so little of my own country, have seen few of the sights, and have never been to Scotland, so I'm rather envious. It's only a pity that she didn't get to real England, i.e. Somerset, but then we all have our little prejudices... I'm surprised Joy thought us paranoid with all the beware the bomb signs etc, in view of the number of Londoners who have been killed and injured by Irish nationalist bombs in the last few years, and as recently as a few months ago.

Also astonished - but very pleased - at her experience of English pubs. I can't think off hand of a single woman I know who would happily go into a pub on her own. In pairs, yes, but lone women are invariably targets for looks, comments etc. It does make for slightly boring bars, and presumably thirsty females.

LILLIAN EDWARDS  
RM EE32, Cripps Court  
Queens' College  
Cambridge, U.K.  
17 Jan 1983

Most stimulating part of your zine is definitely the continuing lettercol/article on rape, an emotive subject which one rarely sees well analysed and dissected at length in fanzines. The legal aspects particularly intrigue me, as I too am a law student... Your letter column is fascinating.

I also heard from (and may quote some next time): Adrienne Fein, Sue Thomason, Diane Fox, Julie Vaux, Buck Coulson, Leslie David, Tom Cardy, David Langford, Peter Graham, Jonathan Scott, Judith Hanna, Harry Andruschak.

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Tom Cardy, cover	Christine Smith, 14
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Alexis Gilliland, 18	Cartoon p. 12 from <u>The Canberra Times</u> . Illustrations for Joy Window's article supplied by Joy; origin unknown.

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CONGRATULATIONS TO

Tom Cardy, winner of FFANZ (Fand Fund of Australia & New Zealand), and Jerry Kaufman, winner of DUFF (Down Under Fan Fund). I look forward to seeing both of them at SYNCON in June. Jerry gave me crash space in Seattle on my visit several years ago; perhaps I can reciprocate this time. I would have been delighted to have seen any of the DUFF candidates win this time; it was an excellent field. Hope future races hold as much interest.

