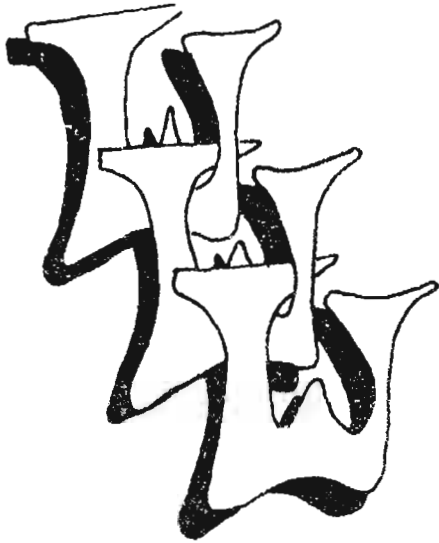


# WEBERWOMAN'S WREVENGE



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Miksgann



WEBERWOMAN'S WREVENGE TWENTY-FOUR  
(Volume 5, Number 2, May 1986)

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## THE RUBBISH BIN

An Editorial by Jean Weber

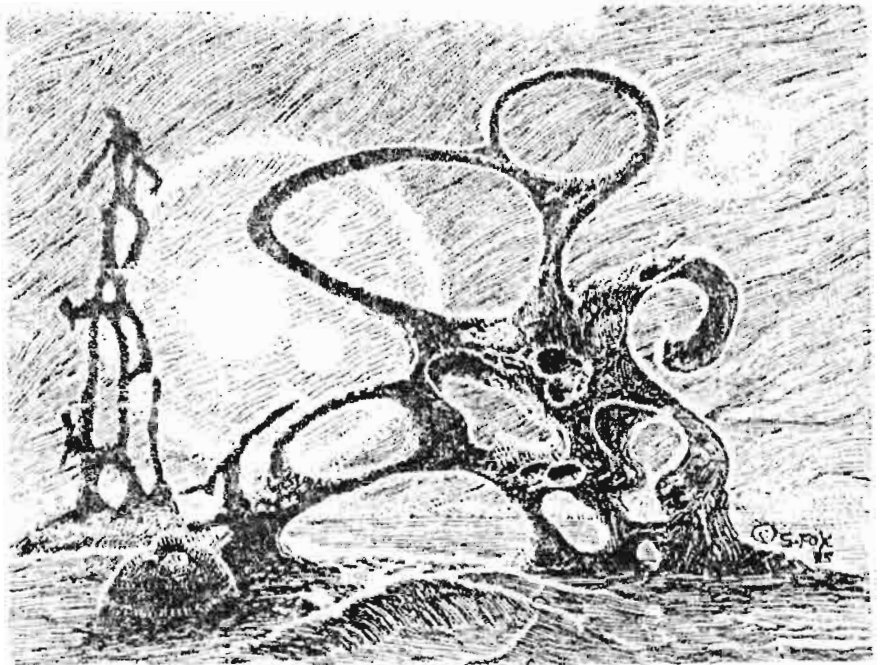
Although it's been 9 months since the last issue of WREVENGE, most of you should have received CLOSE ENCOUNTERS, the Aussiecon-report plus DUFF-promotional zine I co-produced with Eric Lindsay in October or thereabouts last year. We were delighted to learn that our preferred candidate team (Lewis Morley, Marilyn Pride and Nick Stathopoulos) won, and hope lots of our North American readers will have the chance to meet the terrific trio during their DUFF trip later this year. Besides being talented artists, they are nice people.

(continued on page 18)

# CYCLE

by

Stephen  
Dedman



SHE: Okay, weekend's over. Where are the kids?  
(PAUSE)  
HE: Have I ever told you, Ishtar, that your sense of humour constantly astounds me?  
SHE: Do you always have to think in eternal? Where are they?  
HE: They're safe.  
SHE: That's not what I asked.  
(PAUSE)  
HE: Has it ever occurred to you that they might not want to go back?  
SHE: Ah, but they do. That's why I'm here.  
HE: What gives you that idea?  
SHE: Have you listened to them lately?  
HE: Of course, but a few complaints...  
SHE: If I asked them, what do you think they'd say?  
HE: We agreed never to do that.  
SHE: Hypothetical question.  
(PAUSE)  
HE: Some would stay with me.  
SHE: Some of the boys, maybe.  
HE: Girls, too.  
SHE: Oh, you've used some splendid delaying tactics, I'll grant you that. You disrupted the cycle for a thousand years with your new religions...  
HE: What's a millenium between friends?  
SHE: Don't make me laugh. Anyway, the millenium is over. They're tired of your tricks.  
HE: What makes you so sure it's a cycle?  
SHE: Even THEY've noticed that it's a cycle. Women start choosing men for their intelligence, and suddenly you have intelligent men. After a few centuries, they start seeping into positions of responsibility...

HE: It's called "equality".  
SHE: Equality never lasts; that's what causes the cycle. When the men start choosing the women, the pendulum swings back again... It needn't have been a cycle. If you hadn't invented paternity...  
HE: I didn't. YOU invented sex.  
SHE: What does paternity have to do with sex? It's a ridiculous concept. YOU wouldn't even have put up with it if it didn't justify rape.  
HE: THAT'S NOT FAIR!  
(PAUSE)  
HE: They would've invented paternity anyway. YOU made them curious.  
SHE: They wouldn't have let it confuse the issue.  
HE: Very funny.  
SHE: If you hadn't been so obsessed with your own image...  
HE: Have they suffered? Look at them. They're doing better than they ever have before!  
SHE: Only because they've stopped listening to you. (PAUSE) Is there anything you WOULDNT do to hold on to them? You all but bound their feet for a thousand years.  
HE: They needed a new direction to grow in...  
SHE: You kept the brains celibate and the brawns fertile! You bred for violence with the rape invasions! You preserved status quo by killing off the young. That's GROWING?  
HE: It was only an experiment... You didn't have to interfere.  
SHE: I didn't. It ran its course and failed.  
HE: I thought that eunuch of yours stopped it.  
SHE: Mephistopheles? He was a hermaphrodite, not a eunuch, and he wasn't working for me. Don't you remember what happened to him?

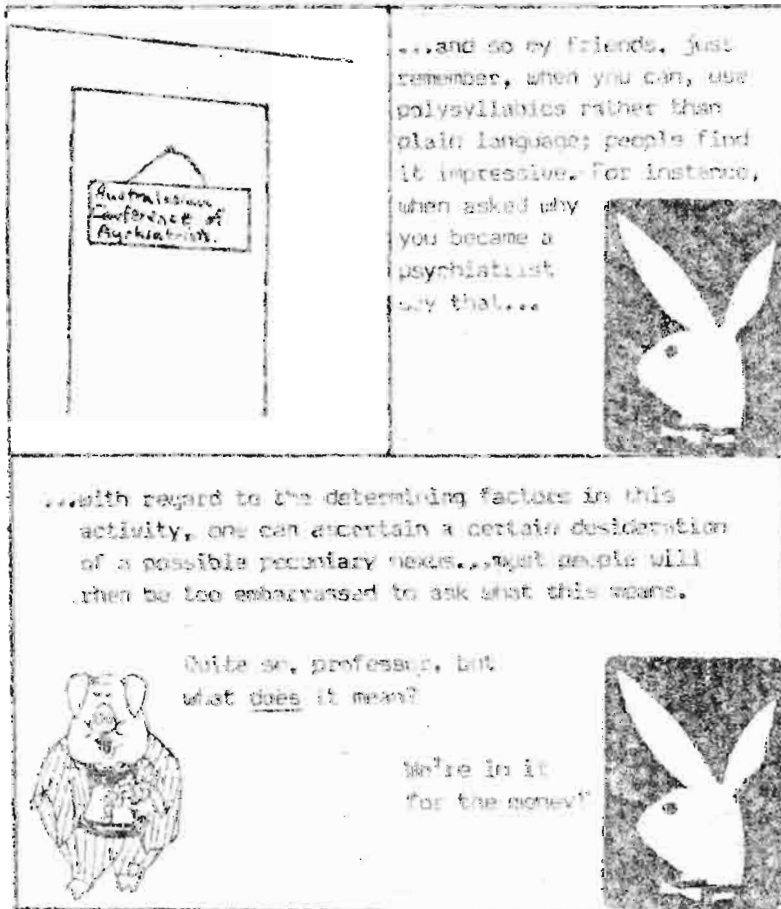
HE: That was Lucifer's doing, not mine.  
 SHE: He was YOUR son. What do you expect from a child without a mother?  
 HE: So he goes a little wild, sometimes. He's only young.  
 SHE: You could have stopped him.  
 HE: He never listens.  
 SHE: You're GOD! You've insisted on the title for centuries!  
 HE: We have a covenant. Mephistopheles just got caught in the middle.  
 SHE: What about Faustus? They've both been in the same cell for five hundred years.  
 HE: Which Faustus?  
 SHE: Johannes Faustus. Sixteenth century.  
 HE: Oh, that one. He and his woman threatened to destroy the whole cycle... I mean, it's one thing to respect intelligene, or even to worship it, but to want to MARRY it? (PAUSE) I still think you interfered. What was a woman with a brain like hers doing in the sixteenth century?  
 SHE: Suffering. Anyway, you killed her.  
 HE: I had to get rid of one of them.  
 SHE: And Lucey disposed of the other. He always DID take after his father. And the

Renaissance happened anyway. (PAUSE) Where are the children?  
 HE: Oh, they're still down there. (PAUSE) Of course, one day, they'll want to leave home.  
 SHE: I know. You only slowed them down by a few thousand years.  
 HE: That's not the point. What happens when they don't want EITHER of us?

\*\*\*\*\*

AUTHOR'S NOTE: For those of you who haven't seen my play CELL, it depicted Faustus and Mephistopheles after nearly six centuries in a tiny, book-lined cubicle in Hell -- a fate Faustus had earned by using Mephisto's magic to save his brilliant student Marguerite. Though it's no secret who inspired MY Marguerite, she is sufficiently unlike Goethe's original that people have asked how such a clever woman existed in the sixteenth century. I'd damned it I know, but the play was a fantasy anyway.

This is not a sequel to CELL. It was inspired by Merlin Stone's THE PARADISE PAPERS and a conversation with David Brin, and written to protect me from the terrors of a rainy afternoon.



THE RABBIT'S PROGRESS

by

Lyn McConchie

# IT'S TWINS!

by E.B. Klassen

One of the most powerful and disturbing occurrences in my life happened to me last February: I became a father.

The pregnancy was a surprise to us both. I was visiting my parents (about 750 miles away) when Paula realized that her period was late. Really late. The doctor confirmed it. Preggers.

Paula was worried sick about my reaction. Having had a less than idyllic childhood (pretty severe physical and mental abuse), I have never been particularly child oriented. Kids have always been okay for an hour or two, but for keeps? Thanks, but no.

A month Paula had to wait before seeing me again. A month without telling me -- preferring face-to-face to over the phone. And then the greeting: "I'm going to have a baby".

To say the least, I was stunned. My parents, and hers, were pleased. Both families are very family/ grandchildren oriented. I was just numb.

Then at three months came the ultrasound. I was busy trying to be supportive -- Paula was working and I was homemaking and trying to make sure she ate well etc. (I mean, if you're going to do something, you may as well try to do it the best you can, right?) So there I was, feeding her fish and lots of fresh veggies, making sure she took her vitamins, and the like. Then we go in for the ultrasound.

A bit of a shock. I finally got in to see what's going on, and the technician told us that there are two fetuses on the scan. That morning I had joked about how it could be worse, it could be twins. Never, and I mean NEVER, will I make that joke about triplets!

I had another six months to panic in. Lots of time, you would think. Not near enough! Life got interesting. I worked midnights, Paula got bigger. By January she was 61 inches tall and 51 inches around. Perfect pregnancy, though. Kids due February 21, and it was only Christmas. Then, December 31, and Paula went into labour.

# GHOSH!



Nope, said I. Far too early. Yup, said the doctor. And far too early. Kids won't be big enough yet. (Hah! But that comes later.) They put her on labour-stopping drugs. Three days later they sent her home from the hospital. The doctor kept her on the prescription two weeks longer than he felt he should have. Oops, quoth he. This should have been a warning to me.

February 2 and things had gotten serious. Paula was beginning to retain water. She was too pregnant. Toxemia raised its head. Paula went into hospital again. I ended up at a Lamaze class by myself. Paula got bigger, and her blood pressure began to soar. That strange panic that lasts twenty-four hours a day set in.

I suppose I should mention that this was our GP's first set of twins. And because of this, he brought in an obstetrician. Fellow was supposed to be quite good. Resident OB at the hospital, etc. Survivable examination room manner, ditto bedside manner. Told us that no matter how nice the birthing rooms were at the hospital, he wanted us in the operating room "just in case". We felt we had no choice but to agree. I mean, it was in the best interests of the mother and children, right?

Finally, on February 9, they induced labour. Paula's blood pressure soared. All the carefully acquired knowledge of labour procedure went out the window. I couldn't relax Paula, she couldn't relax herself, and Bev (a very near and dear friend) couldn't help either.

Labour was induced about 9:00 am. At 10:30, the doctor stuffed Paula full of Demerol (a tranquilizer) and something to bring down her blood pressure. Paula, extremely sensitive to drugs, went out to cloud coo-coo land. The GP would come in to ask how she was doing, and Paula would apologize for not having cleaned the bedroom floor of all the socks strewn about. She'd thrash

and moan, and try to sit up or go to the bathroom. If I helped her to the bathroom, she would get out of bed (with help), walk to the can (with help), sit there for awhile, get up (with help) and go back to bed (with help). And never during the whole affair would her eyes open. Hallucinating freely.

That evening they moved Paula across the hall into the OR. I (and Bev) was told to go change into OR garb. We did. Then they kept us out of the room for another half hour. I was about to kick open the door when a nurse finally said, "very well, you may come in".

When Paula and I were separated, she had just become fully dilated. By the time I was allowed to see her again, our son was halfway down the birth canal and there was someone WHO WASN'T ME holding my wife's hand and telling her when to push. Paula was very worried about where I was, and when I finally came up and grabbed her hand, she visibly relaxed.

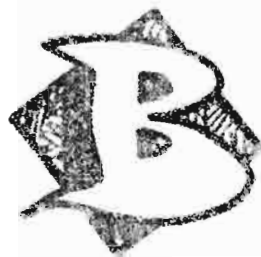


My first words were: "It's all right, I'm here now. Now let's have those babies and get the fuck out of here." I was in an intense, controlled rage. Paula had her feet up in stirrups, which she hates with a passion, but they

had taken advantage of the fact that she was half dead to do what they wanted to her.

The OB had his hands inside Paula, checking on the babies' progress. A contraction came, and I said, loudly and clearly enough to be heard around the room, "Push on that fucker's hands and get him out of you. That's it, push that asshole's hands out." My anger doubled when I discovered that the OB had not said one single word to Paula since she had been moved. And didn't for the rest of the delivery, except for "I'm going to freeze your uterus now".

There was another fifteen or so minutes of pushing, panting, and me cursing the doctor to his face. I think I called him everything from a butcher to a cretinous socksucker. I have seldom hated anyone like I did (and do) him. He went out of his way to be an asshole. Finally, he pulled out the forceps (which scare hell out of Paula -- her uncle was brain damaged by a forceps delivery), broke them apart and shoved one half in. Paula woke up, yelled, and jumped up from the guernsey. He never even blinked, but then he slid the other half in the same way. Same reaction. I said a few more nasty words and comforted my wife as best I was able.



Ben was born in a rush. No head out, shift the shoulders, and then out. Flat out, damn the torpedoes, my sister's shoving me from behind, that was him. Paula only got the quickest glimpse of him before he was taken away.

I had tears pouring down my face, I was crying over Paula, and about five minutes later went over to tell our son his name.

Our daughter was not so sure about this whole affair. Having sent her brother out to check on things, she waited about half an hour before making her appearance.

In the meantime, Paula was having a few difficulties. She lost a lot of blood during Ben's birth, and her abnormally high blood pressure had dropped to well below normal. Her body had gone into shock, and she was unconscious during most of Lily's birth. When a contraction hit, I had to shout her name into her face to get her attention, and then keep shouting until she opened her eyes. This was the only way that I knew she was with us -- if she didn't open her eyes, there was no response when I told her to push.

It was obvious, I think, that I was rather frantic, but I don't think anyone knew how frantic I was. I have lived through many things in my life, but never anything as scary as this. Paula was as close to dying as I ever hope to see. There was worse, but I wasn't there to see it.

Finally, about a great deal of effort on my and Bev's part (to say nothing about Paula), Lily was born. I was having to grab Paula and fold her in half and yell at her to get her to push, when suddenly Lily's head appeared. Forceps were again used, and again it was their insertion that woke Paula up, however momentarily. But unlike her brother, Lily decided to wait a moment after getting her head out. Letting her body twist into a more comfortable position, she generally checked everything out, and I am convinced that if she hadn't heard my voice or Paula's, she may well have said, "bag this, I'm heading back in," and would have done so to the great consternation of all concerned. That one knows her own mind!

After Lily arrived, Paula collapsed backwards, able only to say, "it's a baby!" before passing out. I spoke briefly to our daughter before returning to her side.

Paula's recovery was understandably slow. Such things as an orderly coming into the operating theatre before she was moved into the recovery room and saying "aw shit, look at all the blood" certainly didn't help.





fter a couple of hours, I was sent home. Paula was sleeping, the babies were fine, and there was no real reason for me to stay. The duty nurse offered me a tranquilizer which I refused.

I went home and lay in bed for three or four hours, just like the nurse had expected, unable to sleep, and going over everything time after time, occasionally crying in shock and relief.

I was back at the hospital early the next morning. Paula was intermitently awake, and said that she had had a chance to see the babies earlier. She had hoped to take them to her breasts immediately after they were born, and it hurt her deeply that she was unable to nurse them for several days. I took one look at her, whole blood and various drugs dripping into her veins, and thought that perhaps she WAS trying to push things a little.

I had stopped in the special care nursery to check on the kids earlier, and the nurse on duty had told me that if I came back at feeding time, it might be possible for me to hold one of the kids while they ate. Paula was delighted to hear this -- at least one of us could cuddle them.

At feeding time I left Paula to see if this would be the case. I walked out of the room just as a nurse was walking in. As I went in to the nursery, two or three nurses were going over Paula. One mentioned that Paula's uterus wasn't contracting quite the way they expected. She asked Paula to give a little push so the nurse could feel the muscles etc. Paula did, and felt something warm splash her ankles. The other nurse was taking a blood pressure reading, and jotting the numbers on the sheet beside Paula's head. Paula could see her blood pressure drop thirty points in thirty seconds. The nurses went into emergency overdrive, and had Paula on her way to emergency surgery with the on-shift OB running behind.

I was busy watching the nurse bottle feed Ben before she handed him to me. I saw Paula's parents

coming through the door of the nursery and went to talk with them. They told me about Paula, and the OB came up after them and talked briefly (but reassuringly) with me. Paula was all right. She was in recovery. He'd had to sew up a large tear that the delivering physician had missed. Paula had asked if she would need a hysterectomy. He had said no, there was no reason she couldn't have more kids (well, there was one: me). I went back to play with the kids. I wasn't to see Paula for awhile, and this was the next best thing. I guess.

All in all, Paula went through something like eight pints of whole blood in two days. It was three days before she made it over to the mother and babe ward. She was white as a ghost for two months. Her strength didn't come back at all until three months later.

This was about the time that I went in for my vasectomy. Enough is enough after all. Two healthy kids (birth weights of 6 lb 2 oz for Ben, 7 lb 1 oz for Lily), particularly one of each sex, is plenty. We have replaced ourselves, given the families the first grandchildren on both sides, and have our hands plenty full. We had forgotten birth control (in our case the cervical cap) one night, and I didn't want to risk that again.

I had always said that they would have to kill me to keep me out of the delivery room, and the birth is one experience I would never choose to miss, even now. I have never been more scared nor, strangely enough, have I ever felt more wonder. I am one of the lucky ones, in some ways. I PARTICIPATED in the birth of my children. Paula says that she could not hear any other voice but mine. I know that I worked to have those babies. Every time Paula held her breath to push through a contraction, both Bev and I held our breaths as well. Bev has had a child before, and she says she was pushing with Paula. I know I damn well did. I had sore muscles the next day.



ow I just have to get through the next 20 years of being a parent. Should be a piece of cake.(HAH!)

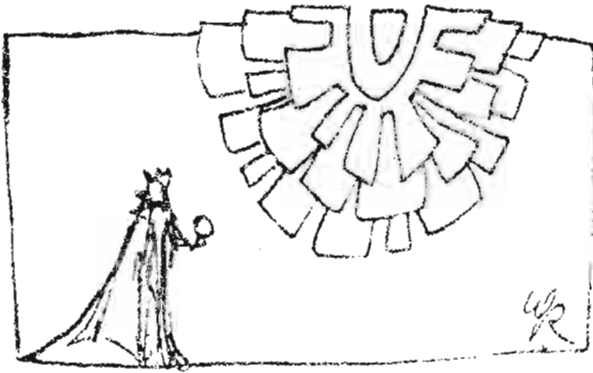
OH, NO!



WEBERWOMAN  
FOR GUFF AGAIN!

IS STANDING

HAVE YOU VOTED?



DESPATCHES FROM THE FRONTIERS OF THE FEMALE MIND, edited by Jen Green & Sarah Lefanu. The Women's Press, 1985.

This superb collection of seventeen original stories includes many familiar names: Zoe Fairbairns, Mary Gentle, Tanith Lee, Naomi Mitchison, Joanna Russ, Josephine Saxton, Racoon Sheldon, Lisa Tuttle. The stories cover a range of styles, and the editors have done a fine balancing job. It's one of the best anthologies of women's science fiction I've ever seen (more to my taste than Pamela Sargent's "Women of Wonder" series, for example). I was particularly impressed with the variety of ways in which one can make a strongly feminist statement, and yet tell a good story that holds the reader's interest. I have long believed that SF (in its many guises of "speculative fiction", "science fiction", "science fantasy") and fantasy are ideal places for feminist writing: one can indulge in both positive and negative "what if" visions of alternative futures, give vent to venom, and celebrate the strengths of positive emotions. This book provides a smorgasbord banquet of attitudes and approaches, and should delight those who, like me, long for strong feminist visions -- yet the writing is good enough to please an audience much wider than "just feminists".

If the collection has a theme, it's that of power and control: over oneself, not over others. Power (in this sense) is probably THE over-riding theme in modern feminist thought. We quibble over definitions and details, and means and goals (and some feminists fall into the trap of trying to use force -- power over others -- to achieve their goals), but the basic theme is as summed up in the marching chant: "Not the Church, not the State, women must decide their fate". These stories look at a variety of situations where women have -- or don't have -- personal power.

An economy of words is one striking feature of the entire book. Each of the stories is an excellent example of the SHORT story. Each makes a strong point, but briefly, and each is very readable as a story. Most anthologies I've read are very uneven in quality; this one is consistently excellent.

## BOOK REVIEWS

Barbara Hambly, THE TIME OF THE DARK, THE WALLS OF AIR and THE ARMIES OF DAYLIGHT (Darwath Trilogy), Unwin Paperbacks (Unicorn), \$6.95 each.

Originally published by Ballantine in 1982-3, this trilogy is a real delight. Hambly invokes many of the trappings of high fantasy, but mixes them with more science-fictional elements and a healthy dose of humour. Two people are plucked from southern California to an Earth in a parallel universe where a dark, evil, apparently unbeatable menace is threatening humanity. There they assist the last of great wizards in fighting The Dark.

Swords and sorcery are the weapons this feudal society has against The Dark. The woman, Gil, is already skilled in some of the martial arts and becomes a Guard; the man, Rudy, discovers (despite his initial refusal to even consider the notion) that he has great magical powers. Hambly's humour is not the slapstick variety of Elizabeth Scarborough's SONG OF SORCERY series, but a wry commentary on American attitudes towards fantasy. Gil and Rudy frequently make comments to each other along the lines of: this is impossible, I do not believe this for a minute, but it's happening; they compare the discomforts and dangers of their new environment with those of their old home and come up with some surprising conclusions!

There are various science-fictional elements in these books, especially in the third volume where we learn what The Dark really are. Several things which seem like "evil spirits" or "magic" turn out to have quite rational, scientific explanations, which this society is unable to see (recall Clarke's comments on advanced technology and magic), and for a long time the Californians can't see them either. Unravelling the truth was fascinating.

Hambly's writing is powerful, swift and rich in detail: you feel you're right there slopping through the mud and shivering in the snow, terrified for your life. Her characters are well developed and not stereotyped. No one is a hero or a wimp; each has strengths and weaknesses, just like real people. When someone shows a side of him or herself that's unexpected, it fits realistically into the situation (stress brings out hidden traits, both good and bad, in most people).



Kate Wilhelm, WELCOME, CHAOS, Berkley, 1985  
(c 1983).

Kate Wilhelm has a talent for taking popular sf topics, combining them with political and philosophical analysis, suspense, intrigue, horror, action and good characterisation, and coming up with a gripping novel that also makes an important point or two.

The topic in this case is immortality, and who decides how and when it's made available, and to whom. Wilhelm focusses entirely on the introduction phase, and short-term problems (her characters discuss possible long-term problems, but the time-scale of the novel is too short to examine them directly). Assuming someone has found a treatment, what are the immediate undesirable effects? In this case, 50% of treated people die within a few days; the others are immortal. A longer-term problem is total sterility of all immortals. Should the general public have access to the treatment before a cure is found for the sterility problem? Should any authorities make the decision for the public, or should members of the public be given full information and allowed to make their own decisions? Does anyone have the moral right -- or obligation -- to make such decisions for anyone else?

Wilhelm recognises that there are several strongly-held differences of opinion on these questions. She assumes (realistically in my opinion) that the US Government wants the whole process under its control, due to obvious military implications. The Soviets are rumoured to plan to release the drug without telling anyone, claiming the resulting deaths to be due to a new strain of "flu". The scientific types who discovered the treatment are divided in their opinion, except to oppose any government interference; however they tend to see themselves as the proper people to make the decision on how and when to release the information.

The story unfolds from the point of view of Lyle Taney, an academic who finds herself the focus of manipulation by agents of the US Government in its attempts to find the drug developers. Wilhelm is superb at creating a feeling of paranoia: why are all these people picking on me? ARE they in fact picking on me? The reader knows Taney is merely a pawn in a power struggle; there IS no personal reason why Taney's been chosen, she's simply a convenient person at a particular time and place. Soon it develops that the immortals are trying to recruit her too. They succeed, and she becomes involved in their efforts to keep the process out of the control of any government. This includes smuggling a Russian scientist out of Europe (a touch of spy thriller here, with Taney a terrified though competent

member of the team -- none of this cool unruffled James Bond stuff), keeping on the run when the immortals' hideout is discovered by the Feds, and so on. Will they succeed, or will the drug be released and cause chaos in the populace?

This novel is the kind of science fiction I like best. It has plenty of philosophical fibre for the reader to chew on, yet does not lack for action; it's well-based in science but not overwhelmed by it, and the characterisation is good.

Sheila Finch, INFINITY'S WEB, Bantam Spectra, 1985.

I was thoroughly delighted to discover that this book lives up the back cover's enthusiastic description: it "has combined compelling, believable characters, the ancient magic of the Tarot, and the latest developments in quantum mechanics" -- and it's done that very successfully. (I was rather skeptical, for example, of a "witch" who uses a computer to deal and interpret her Tarot cards; but Finch manages to carry it off.)

Each chapter focusses on one of the possible lives of a woman, Anastasia Valerie Stein, in each of four alternate realities. Each of her "selves" begins to perceive that her reality isn't the only one, but each approaches this conclusion from a different viewpoint. The differences between the four women are obvious, but their similarities are more subtle and not always immediately apparent.

The effect on the reader is slightly confusing, until all the different viewpoints begin to merge into an overall picture. This confusion, I believe, is quite deliberate on the part of the author, because each of her characters goes through a great deal of personal confusion before reaching her own form of enlightenment. To say more would give away too much of the plot.

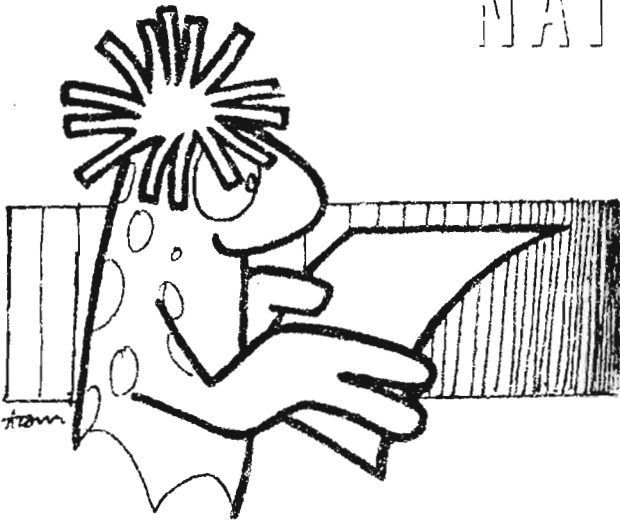
I particularly enjoyed this book because I've been doing a lot of reading lately in the areas of "creating your own reality" and quantum mechanics. I've been surprised how much overlap there is between modern physics and metaphysics (recommended reading: THE DANCING WU LI MASTERS). INFINITY'S WEB discusses the notions of quantum physics from several points of view, as the four women struggle to comprehend what's going on. By focussing on one woman (in four realities), Finch has personalised the concepts.

INFINITY'S WEB is a very fast-paced book. Finch doesn't waste many words, and she held my interest all the way through. If you like philosophy and science, served up with action, you could well enjoy this book as much as I did.

# MATTER AND

# ANTI-

# MATTER



((I had asked for creative interpretations of Brad Foster's cover on WREVENGE 23. Here are a few of the better responses. -- JHW))

DANIEL FARR, #403, 1750 Kalakaua Ave, Honolulu HI 96826, USA

15 December 1985

The centrepiece, the tube sprouting into dozens of ending, could be paper... representing fanac and all its many, many divisions. The guard on his motorized track might be Jophan's libido, protecting our young neo with his upraised hand from his desire for Fiawol.

SUE THOMASON, 1 Meyrick Square, Dolgellau, Gwynedd LL40 1LT, North Wales, U.K.

16 November 1985

At first I thought the object in the centre was an exploding dustbin, but it now looks more like a paper table decoration. The steam-driven (coal-fired) armoured hard toy on the left seems to be ineffectively challenging the cushion-mounted soft toy on the right. The soft toy is obviously a fan -- beer-bellied and legless (nothing between feet and stomach).

TERRY JEEVES, 230 Bannerdale Rd, Sheffield S11 9FE, U.K.

November 1985

Brad's cover: what else can it be than a fine example of metal-shear Origami as performed by a chess-playing monopod tank driver who does not wish to touch his opponent with a ten foot pole.

PAMELA BOAL, 4 Westfield Way, Charlton Heights, Wantage, Oxon OX12 7EW, U.K.

19 November 1985

I see no meaning in the cover other than a parody of Ned Kelly and a parody of the popularly imagined Australian male, big, blond, brightly and casually clothed, usually to be found on beaches. If I were to make anything of the background other than a most pleasing design, it would be something in the nature of the past and present in conflict as in some never-ending chess game, with a notion that has not been quite resolved in the artist's own mind that the two are tied by technological developments which he feels should be rejected. There is if you like a female image in that the Medusa is female -- odd that by the way, the snake is usually regarded as male evil yet it becomes sexless as the Medusa's hair and part of the whole that is female. I take the writhing curls to be metal shavings.

((No one admitted to finding sexual symbolism in the cover, except yours truly. Hmm... Well, if you don't find 'em, I'm not going to point 'em out! On to other matters...))

((Self Transformations, love, and relationships are topics which draw a steady stream of letters. Some excerpts from the latest batch follow. -- JHW))

JUANITA COULSON, 2677W-500N, Hartford City IN 47348, USA

7 August 1985

The discussions on long-term relationships and so on bemuse me. Perhaps that's inevitable, looking down from my perch of 30+ years of a partnership. Of COURSE it's achievable. IF you're willing to work at it. I suspect too many of the letter writers expect it to fall into their hands like an overripe plum.

JOY WINDOW, 88 Young Street, Annandale NSW 2038, Australia

10 September 1985

To Julie Vaux: you do not need money to do a Self-Transformations course. You do however need to give something back in return for what you get -- most people give money as it's the easiest and least committing form of energy, and they don't have time to do a number of hours' work in return for a course.

To Gordon Lingard: I must disagree with your statement that "most of their more advanced courses deal with mostly metaphysical subject matter". This is an assumption on your part. I have done several and, as in the initial course, the metaphysics is a small part and ignorable if you don't like it. I find it fascinating at it accords with my own ideas, but you can gain tremendous amounts of practical, hard, down-to-earth motivation without it. In fact, after the initial course, you really don't have to do any more -- all the tools are there, you only have to use them. The advantage of doing further courses is that they concentrate those tools on particular areas and so accelerate your action on them, as well as providing a support group when you need one.

GEORGE "LAN" LASKOWSKI, 55 Valley Way, Bloomfield Hills MI 48013, USA

11 July 1985

I think ... most people are not comfortable being themselves. They have a need to be liked, and when they see someone who is liked by others, they figure that if they act like that other person, people will like them too. Advertisers picked up on this very early, and have used this to sell products and make lots of money preying on the insecurities of others. Look at all the "body conscious" people... keeping in shape is healthy, but health clubs have sprung up like mushrooms (and) books, records, tapes, videos and TV programs have the expressed purpose of putting people into physical shape. Good physical conditions doesn't necessarily mean looking anorexic or grotesquely muscular, but that is what has been advertised. People try to live up to the artificial standard set by those who have a good chance of making money from them.

MAIA COWAN, 55 Valley Way, Bloomfield Hills MI 48013, USA

10 September 1985

I can identify a couple of things you mention (about Self-Transformations) from my own experiences. Particularly, that we do indeed

Create Our Own Reality. My way of expressing this is, "It's not what life does to you, but what you do about it"... I've seen so many people who put so much energy into more and more detailed analyses of "what's wrong" with them, that they're actually reinforcing the problem, not fighting it!

EUNICE PEARSON, 32 Digby House, Colletts Grove, Kingshurst, Birmingham B37 6JE, U.K.

28 September 1985

I was interested in your article on the Self Transformations course. I could understand when you said you felt dissatisfied and unhappy, as I felt like that last year. Only I found peace with myself through the Christian faith. However, I think my experience is a BIT different from yours as I became a Christian because I believe in the existence of God, Christ and the Holy Spirit, not just because of the psychological benefits.

I find that non-Christians are not able to understand that. They do not share my beliefs, therefore it doesn't exist. They assume I "joined up" to get an emotional crutch. But life as a Christian is not easy. My conscience has become sharper for one thing, as it entails taking the command of Christ to love my neighbour seriously. Even those who irritate me or cause me pain when they react with mockery or hostility to me because I've vowed allegiance to God. Especially when they're people who once counted me as a friend. I am no less lonely for being a Christian, but I have found a greater confidence in my humanity and in my ability to achieve. Plus a band of warm, caring people who are willing to accept me, "sight unseen", because I love the same God.

Could I include a plug for my two Christian fanzines? They are GLORIA MUNDI (a genzine) and AMIANTHUS (a perzine). Available for the usual.

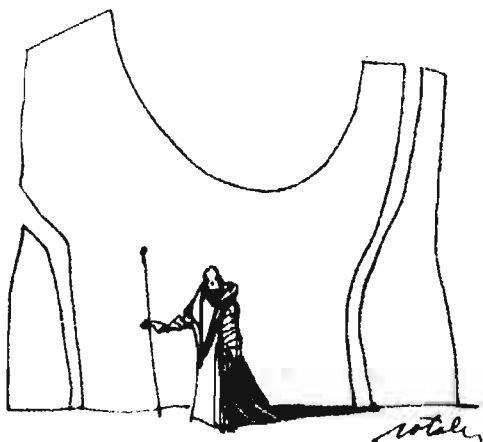
((I published an article by Lync 'way back in July 1983, which discussed amongst other things her problems being accepted as a Christian. Debi Kean has often talked about this subject as well. I suspect that Christians suffer from one of the same problems as feminists: the ones I notice are the ones that irritate me, or do things I heartily disagree with, or who seem to want to tell me how I should live MY life, etc. As a feminist who knows that a minority of feminists give all of us a bad name, I've become more sensitive to the problems of Christians. Also my interest in things like Self Transformations serves to continually remind me that so many ideas are really the same idea in different wrappings. Some Christians find offensive the suggestion that the essence of Christianity is much the same as the essence of Eastern religions, though the details vary. -- JHW))

I could HUG Eric Mayer! Marriage was one of the reasons why I started to move away from the present state of feminism. I felt I was being looked at as a freak because not only am I in a monogamous relationship with a MAN, I married him. But I don't feel I "disappeared" into it; it freed me to be myself. I have confidence from knowing a person who likes the person I am, who supports me when I need him to. Phill is the closest friend I have ever had and I can quite comfortably see us sharing the next hundred years or so together quite happily and hopefully with children. Phill is all I need and I am all he needs. Neither of us wants a sexual relationship "outside", though we do have friends of both sexes.

I do think that a person who has "affairs" is looking for something they cannot get out of their marriage. And if that is the case, why bother to stay with their spouse?

((On that last question, there are lots of reasons. I think it is very rare that two people are "all" each needs. I do not expect my best friend, lover or spouse to fulfill all my needs (it is possible, but I do not expect it). Why should I leave my best friend simply because he or she doesn't fulfill all my needs? If I have the freedom to fill some needs (not necessarily sexual) with other friends, the quality of my primary relationship is improved since I am not making unrealistic demands or having unrealistic expectations.

((Why is it so important who one has sex with? It seems to me there are far more important indicators of the quality of a relationship. I know people who are strictly monogamous but stab each other in the back every chance they get. If I have love and trust and support, and give the same, to me that's far more important than who fucks whom. (In a moral sense; the possibility of disease is a practical matter, not a moral one.) Alan Sandercock's comments in a following letter address this topic, too. -- JHW))



JOY HIBBERT, 11 Rutland St, Hanley,  
Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST1 5JG, U.K.

January 1986

Jack: Ideally discussions in personal relationships should be done calmly, but in practice, in my experience, I've noticed a tendency for the problem to be hidden away when the anger dissipates, and for the anger to come back as a hiding mechanism once the problem is raised. This is because, I think, rows happen over trivial matters which lead to the more serious problems. There's an awful lot of hiding going on in relationships. Some people never solve it, or want to, but that wouldn't do for me.

Gordon: This is the problem with so many things that seem to me to be good ideas for getting to know oneself -- they're surrounded with religious/metaphysical trappings which make the intelligent rational person avoid them like the plague, when they can probably do a lot of good.

((I have been very amused over the years to discover the many ways the good ideas and techniques are packaged and marketed to make them acceptable to different groups of people, including the "intelligent rational" ones you mention. For example, in a class on executive stress management, the basic techniques are exactly the same as those in Self Transformations, but the explanatory material is different. In fact, the ST people are now marketing their OWN executive level course: I'd love to attend just to see how they present their message. -- JHW))

A brief look at British law. A couple are considered married if they go through a ceremony, either religious or civil, held by an authorised person. The minimum they can promise each other is to be faithful for life. If they won't promise this, they're not married. They can't claim the added tax relief (but the woman loses her right to social security, as she's cohabiting), and they are not each other's next-of-kin... So you can't get married and make suitable vows for an open marriage, since it's not legally permissible.

Margaret is putting the sexual side of marriage on a separate pedestal, by the look of things. She can have close relationships and do anything but sex. She presumably believes marriages can go through great changes -- in her marriage, for example, the production of children, the setting up of their own business, her involvement in fandom -- as long as those changes don't involve opening the marriage to other sexual relationships. And, in the legal sense, she's right. Marriage is about sex and breeding, not about love and companionship. Her marriage would be far too open for most people to deal with.

She's allowed to go off for weekends alone at conventions, where there are a majority of men. She's allowed to write to people of both sexes.

I can see Eric Mayer's point that a longterm relationship is better than a short term relationship, but why is a full relationship with one person better than a full relationship with two? Aren't two entire symphonies better than one?

ALAN SANDERCOCK, 567 Clairmont Cir.#3, Decatur GA 30033, USA  
16 December 1985

My mother doesn't really like the idea that I have friends of the opposite sex now that I am married. I admit that I was totally surprised when I suddenly realized that my mother was uncomfortable about this; it had never really occurred to me that such behavior would be regarded as unacceptable...

I wonder if one SHOULD make any distinction between the two types of socializing (casual and anything but casual). This reminds me of an old friend of Sue's who had an argument with a boyfriend who she claimed had not remained faithful to her while she was in Europe. The gentleman in question had promised not to have sex with any other woman while she was abroad, but saw nothing wrong in taking a female acquaintance to a motel where they proceeded to spend the night in bed together performing all sorts of sex acts with the exception of actually inserting his penis into her vagina. According to this guy, by refraining from the latter behaviour, he had kept his promise. Of course, all this story suggests is that there was a communication problem between the two people who could not agree on what words meant what actions. But it also does suggest that our society places somewhat arbitrary constraints on certain behaviour. It's just rather strange to find the cutoff point put at penis-vagina insertion, although I suppose that this attitude is not all that uncommon!

DIANE FOX, PO Box 1194, North Sydney NSW 2060, Australia  
25 November 1985

I think Julie Vaux is misunderstanding something. Intensity YES, but it isn't good to waste energy or anger if it can't be used constructively -- to strength one's determination to do something about the many displeasing things of the world, or even to help clear the piles of psychic kipple that accumulate in one's own life. There is nothing more exhausting and frustrating than anger which fumes and rants and gets nowhere -- one feels ridiculous, and even cheapened, by it after the emotion starts to wane, which it inevitably must.

BEV CLARK, 10501 - 8th Ave NE #119, Seattle WA 98125, USA

2 January 1986

I also can't agree with Eric Mayer's comment that a long-term relationship with one person is intrinsically better than other kinds of relationships. Ask a Moslem what his opinion is on this subject. That is, that comments reflects a cultural prejudice of western civilization. It is not shared by the rest of the world, and it is also a fairly recent prejudice, at least in terms of all of human history. I recommend a book called THE MOUNTAIN OF NAMES which deals with things like kinship and marriage patterns around the world. The author, Alex Shoumatoff, points out that 86% of human cultures (not 86% of the population) practice something other than strict monogamy... Of the cultures that do practice monogamy, the tendency has been toward serial rather than strict monogamy in this century. Many anthropologists believe that this movement is actually in the direction of the natural order of things for human beings. That is, humans, like most other primates, are ... naturally polygamous; in our case, mildly so. Strict monogamy, in this view, is an unnatural and hence ultimately doomed aberration.





((Charlotte Proctor's article in WREVENGE 23, which I had titled "Sexual Perversion in the BSFC", inspired quite a bit of response, some agreeing with Charlotte, some disagreeing. What follows are excerpts, except for Jessica Salmonson's letter which is printed almost in its entirety.

((I hesitated to print Jessica's letter at all, because it is abusive of Charlotte personally (and I decided several years ago to cut personal abuse out of the lettercolumn), but it makes several points which I consider worth discussing. I sent the letter to Charlotte, who did not object to my printing it, and she also wrote a response. I do hope that any further correspondence on this topic will stick to the ISSUES and not get involved in the alleged character flaws of the WRITERS. -- JHW))

JESSICA AMANDA SALMONSON, PO Box 20810, Seattle, WA 98102, USA

I have upon occasion been invited to attend suburban science fiction clubs and found them oppressive and narrowminded people even while they strive to be liberal; people frightened of the city and city life, people who are complacent, whose intellectuality is stunted though, one presumes, as readers of fantasy and s-f, they are the best the suburbs have to offer. This is in the Northwest, not an area noted, like Alabama for instance, for Bible-thumping or passing laws against queers or whose police forces are apt to take spike-haired punk-rockers to the edge of town, beat the shit out of them, and tell them never to come back.

I read the article from your Alabama contributor Charlotte Proctor on sexual perversion in her s-f club, with a sense of alarm, and sorrow. Perhaps because I worked for many years in a mental health institute as a counselor and again, later, as a secretary -- I know the young man described in Ms Proctor's essay didn't need the kind of treatment he is getting by Alabama sci-fi morons. I don't even believe, from her evidence, that he is mentally disturbed in any way, but perhaps a bit adolescent in his approach, profoundly sexist, but justifiably in rebellion. His vulgar, near-pornographic letter may have been inspired by anyone from Boudelaire to Ginsberg but he lacked (a) the talent to make it artistic and (b) the common sense NOT to send it to an Alabama sci-fi moron. As well send it to Mother Superior.

His sexism, his adolescent approach, his inartistic clutsiness, and his vulgarity could all justifiably be called to the rug.

Did he deserve to be told to "get out"...? I doubt it. Had it been me, I'd tell the guy, WATCH IT. I might not be nice. No one gets familiar with me very easily. I'm not saying Ms Proctor needed to take a jerk under her wing. What she needed to understand, however... is SHE IS AS MUCH A JERK AS THAT YOUNG MAN. Birds of a feather flock together, as they say; she is safe and satisfied in a society of sci-fi jerks and her desire to defend her territory is, if not okay, understandable and natural. But not at the cost of someone else's humanity, harm to other kinds of jerks.

She describes his all-black costume, his gold cross, his clerical collar with a tone of hatred. What would she think of fandom's famous Tami Vinning, lesbian sadomasochist extraordinaire? What would she think of authors John Shirley or Bill Gibson, doped-up wavo weirdies of extraordinary talent? What would she think of PUNK LUST editor and national faggot-legend Wilum Pugmire in his bag-lady dresses and skinhead and leather jacket with little plastic skeletons attached (street clothes, mind you)? THESE are good people.

That she looks down her nose at someone and tells him to get out, and longs for some middle-aged Christian man (she admits is patronizing) to comfort her in her ordeal... how despicable a person! How despicable an environment to support inhumanity like this! How utterly common and repugnant her response.

But we are talking Alabama after all... What can a wimp turkey wave like this black-clad John expect? What is he DOING in Alabama? Go to New York, son. Go to San Francisco, or Seattle, or Chicago -- ANYWHERE where urban decadence allows that you can find your own way, and be DIFFERENT without being called a fucking PERVERT by an Alabaman and kicked out of a stinking sci-fi club.



CHARLOTTE PROCTOR, 8325 - 7th Ave South,  
Birmingham AL 35206, USA

12 February 1986

Jessica: Now wait a cotton-pickin' minute! I don't remember talking about perversion. I had entitled the piece "The Rape of BSFC" and Jean changed it to "Sexual Perversion in the BSFC". I wondered about that, but was told by someone in Australia that Jean doesn't use THAT WORD in her zine. ((She's right, I changed the title; see below for comments on why. -- JHW))

Re: Black clothes, cross, etc. Clerical garb is appropriate and suitable for clerics; worn by self-avowed pagans, heathens, atheists or whatever, it is a travesty.

Re: "some middle-aged Christian man". I had to laugh when I read that and thought of what Warren or Steve's reactions would be to such a description. Whatever gave you the idea that Warren and Steve are either middle-aged OR Christian? And so far as "comforting me in my ordeal" goes, well, what are men for? Other than having a good time with, drinking and dancing with, working with, living with... they also open doors, carry heavy things and take out the garbage.

Re: "...not taking the jerk under her wing." Damn straight. BSFC isn't a self-help club, an encounter group or a half-way house. It's a social organization whose membership is restricted to SANE people.

I've had God talked to over my shoulder, and then told what He said. I remember a young man who told me he was an emissary from another planet... he had been abandoned here for some offence he had committed, but while here had discovered the "Secret of the Universe" and when he had redeemed himself, they would come for him, and he would give them the Secret. These are the gentle mad. More dangerous to one's peace of mind, the sensibilities of the innocent, and the quiet enjoyment of life is one whose sexual preoccupations and frustrations are close to the surface, and who want to include YOU in the acting out of their fantasies.

I never doubted my judgement on this matter, and everyone who has read the letters (including a doctor, lawyer and psychologist) agreed that the subject matter, sentence-structure (or lack of it), and other features pointed to an unstable personality (and repugnant in the extreme, not the kind of person one would want in one's home). I may have said before that John had been thrown out of better places than BSFC, including church groups, poetry societies and whole apartment complexes. John is known to the clergy, and probably to other counselors. BSFC, as I have said, is not a half-way house, and when I feel

responsible for the well-being of the young people there, there is really no decision to make in matters like this. The greatest good for the greatest number...

And this is all I have, or will have, to say on the subject. It seems that Jessica does not approve of me, my attitudes, or my values. I trust that nothing I have said will change that.

((To answer Charlotte's point in the first paragraph, I changed the title, not because I don't use the word rape, but because I don't use the word to refer to things which are NOT rape. Even sexual harrassment is not rape (though assault might be). I did not want the word "rape" in the title to distract from the real points Charlotte was making. I am sorry that my substitute choice had the same effect.

((My choice of "sexual perversion" was a bad one: apparently the term "perversion" has worse connotations to many people than it does to me. A "perversion" to me isn't necessarily an evil thing, just one that's generally not accepted by society at large. Since many of my values aren't accepted by society (though they may be by my friends), my use of a word like "perversion" is a joke, an attempt to lighten a situation. In this case, as in many cases, my sense of humour fell flat. I apologize to all concerned, and especially to Charlotte.

((I think my reaction to John would have been much like Charlotte's, though I am not a Christian and do not find the wearing of clerical garb by non-clerics to be a travesty. As for Jessica's question about reactions to the people she mentions -- they may be talented as hell, but I doubt I'd let them in my house. Not because of the way they dress, but I suspect because they wouldn't abide by my standards of behaviour. Mind you, there are plenty of people I think are superb and fully support for their challenging of society's norms -- but if they also challenge MY standards, I'm not having anything to do with them personally. Life is too short for me to spend it with people I don't feel comfortable with. That isn't the same as rejecting them as people. -- JHW))



JOY HIBBERT, 11 Rutland St, Stoke-on-Trent,  
Staffordshire ST1 5JG, UK

I think you'd have been better asking Charlotte for a more specific version of this story -- as it is, the nastiness and fear don't come across and Charlotte is left looking rather prudish over the sort of bloke who writes this sort of thing out of childishness and the desire to be noticed -- the sort of bloke to not want to associate with, true, but not to be afraid of or to unilaterally ban from a club. True, she was vindicated by Greg's research and by BSFC's solidarity, but she didn't know this at the time, and I didn't know this till the end of the article.

I wouldn't have expected a bloke like that to cause any trouble at a meeting, since you have to face the people you offend. Also, Charlotte seems to be taking his letters personally when they weren't written to her as a woman or as a person, but merely as an editor. As a fan, she must know that people behave differently to a faceless paper person than to a face-to-face person, saying things they wouldn't dream of saying, with vitriol they'd never dream of using if they could see the reactions; and going by the examples given in her article, I'd have taken these letters the same way. But I can only go by what's on the page, so I'm probably underreacting.

((I agree that Charlotte's case would have been more convincing if she'd presented more information. I am forever getting into arguments with people who don't agree, on the basis of the evidence presented, with my assessment of a situation -- when of course my assessment was based on much more than the evidence presented. When any of us deals personally with someone, we pick up non-verbal cues, observe patterns of behaviour, etc, and then evaluate a specific incident in light of past experience. Sometimes we're wrong, of course. Someone an outsider can see more clearly what's "really" going on, but quite often they can't. Our perception is correct, but the evidence presented may not be sufficient to explain why, much less convince another person. -- JHW))

SHERYL BIRKHEAD, 23629 Woodfield Rd, Gaithersburg  
MD 20879, USA

30 December 1985

Charlotte got off easily. Unfortunately, such confrontations quite often end differently. She's lucky the guy didn't get violent or physically abusive -- especially since her back-up wasn't there.

DIANE FOX, PO Box 1194, North Sydney NSW 2060,  
Australia

25 November 1985

Charlotte Proctor's article -- the fellow's smarminess and pretending he didn't mean to offend (of course, people like that know how much they nauseate others and get much pleasure from it, and from a self-righteous "injured innocence" act) was sickening enough, but somehow the "religious" aspects (black clerical outfit and cross) made him seem menacing as well. His literary style is very close to one of the popular pseudo-intellectual style of the late 60's, one that seems to have an almost unrivalled capacity to make me lose sympathy with the person using it. I have a feeling that this pervert at some level WANTED to be thrown out, and was very disappointed that there wasn't a big scene.

TERRY JEEVES, 230 Bannerdale Rd, Sheffield S11  
9FE, U.K.

November 1985

What surprised me (about Charlotte Proctor's article) is that the writer of the obnoxious letters identified himself. He must have been a nut, as I thought the people who did that sort of thing preferred to remain anonymous...



JOY HIBBERT (address earlier)

4 August 1985

Have you noticed how "prejudiced" has changed its meaning lately? Lewis (Morley) mentions not being able to decide what sort of icecream he likes. To prejudice is to pre-judge, or at least, that's what it used to mean -- my experience has told me that I don't like strawberry icecream, therefore that is not prejudice, but a decision made after considering the evidence. Unfortunately, this decision falls down where people are concerned: how many bad experiences with a certain category of people does it take before you write off that category altogether? People are using the word "prejudice" interchangeably for things that we decided (or were decided for us) from little, no, or superficial experiences, and decisions made after more profound consideration. As Lewis's ice cream analogy shows, you can't just dismiss all sorts of "prejudice" as wrong. It's not prejudiced to like something better than something else if you've tried both.

There's harmless prejudice and the other sort -- who am I oppressing by not eating strawberry ice cream? On what levels is it ok to write people off? Is it wrong to have made a decision about who to have sex with without trying every category? I work on the principle that as long as you differentiate between races/sexes/whatever as people and friends, and/or try and compensate for any prejudices you were fed in childhood, you're on the right lines.

TERRY A GAREY, 2528 - 15th Ave S, Minneapolis MN 55404, USA

21 December 1985

The quote from THE SKEPTICAL FEMINIST got me to thinking about related subjects. There are a lot of views in feminism. There is very little in the way of a united front, and probably never will be. Feminism is going through stages and not all women and men are going through those stages at the same time, nor even the same stages. It's rather like trying to view evolution in a straight line. There is no straight line.

I remember, back in the fifties and sixties, the anger some white people felt, and the indignation, when they discovered a black person who wasn't being fair, or noble, or didn't have his or her ideology printed out on forms to hand out to inquisitive whites on busses and at cocktail parties.

Some whites (myself included) were shocked to find that a lot of black people didn't even LIKE white people, not even the liberal ones, and warned their children against friendships with white children. Once, as a playground director, I

overheard one of the black kids plaintively ask the black director, "TERRY isn't a honky, is she?" The other director was embarrassed because she knew I had overheard. I had a good laugh over it, but at the same time I understood it was probably better for that little child to have suspicions of me and my kind rather than get run over or humiliated later for trusting a white person to do the right thing in a pinch.

It seems to me that many people view feminism the same way as those liberal whites. The cries of "reverse sexism" (a phrase which has no meaning: either you are practising sexism or you aren't, no matter what the sex of the victim) remind me of the same cries of "reverse racism" I used to hear so much.

Women are human, even feminist women. Honest. Women make mistakes and get pigheaded and stubborn and nasty and manipulative and what can one expect?

Some people, not all of them men, have the notion that if ONE man is inconvenienced or distressed by all of the "feminist stuff" then the whole thing is invalid because of "reverse sexism". As I once heard a white man say when he discovered that a black guy he knew had a fancy car: "White man don't have no privileges any more."

There are always going to be some women who opt for seperatism, and some who use feminism for their own selfish reasons, and some straight women who claim lesbians aren't "real" women, and lesbians who regard straight women as too contaminated for words, and women who feel that gingham and lace are the answer to everything, and men who think feminism means they should get to sleep with any woman they fancy. There are always going to be wranglings and boycotts and girlcotts and apricots, and blacklistings and fusses and fumes. Nobody's perfect.

It isn't like clothes one can put on and take off. I was raised in skirts and little plaid ruffles, and sometimes I'm going to revert back to that or get confused about whether I want to wear a lumberjack shirt, a wedding gown, or running shorts. Some people don't think I should have that choice, that I should either be a traditional mother or some sort of corporate nun. There are men who seem to be pissed off that they don't have a similar choice. Well, you know, that's why we have science fiction.

((There were a bunch of other letters on various things, including Taral's letter and Lyn McConchie's "Godzone" article, that I don't have room for. Maybe next time, along with LoCs on the CLOSE ENCOUNTERS issue. -- JHW))

(The Rubbish Bin, continued from page 2)

#### WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE?

This issue of WREVENGE is devoted, as usual, mostly to letters -- a sample of those received. There's also a gripping account of pregnancy-and-childbirth, as experienced by the father; I alternately wept and gnashed my teeth in rage while reading it. Powerful writing, folks. I don't recommend you read "It's Twins" over a meal.

With the other article, "Cycle", I've broken my own rule against publishing fiction. I liked it too much: it was short and punchy (and appealed to my prejudices).

Three pages of book reviews complete this issue. I trust none of my readers think I review -- or even mention -- in this fanzine all of the books I read. I also write reviews regularly for three other zines (Leigh Edmonds' and Valma Brown's THE NOTIONAL; Van Ikin's SCIENCE FICTION; and the Galaxy Bookshop's newsletter published by Shayne McCormack). Sometimes I review the same books here, but there are many that I don't duplicate. And yes, Pete Presford, I DO read and review books written by men -- I just rarely print them in these pages.

#### GUFF

Astute readers will note from the attached ballot that I am standing for GUFF (the Get Up-and-over Fan Fund) again. My worthy opponents are also good people, and I'll admit that if I were a voter, I'd have a LOT of trouble trying to decide who to put first.

North Americans may wonder why they should vote for a fan fund that takes someone from Australia to Europe. I don't know about my fellow candidates, but if I win, I intend to spend 4 to 6 weeks in the U.K. and Europe, and a similar amount of time in North America (at my own expense) on the way home. I'm sure the administrators will accept American or Canadian dollars as readily as they'll accept other currencies.

#### DIARY NOTES

At Christmas I spent two weeks in New Zealand visiting Lyn McConchie. I enjoyed the trip, during which I did very little except eat, talk, sleep, talk, read books, talk, and watch videotapes. Now and then I'd wander out into the sun to work on my tan, and a large black cloud would promptly appear and rain on me. It got to be quite a joke.

On a couple of days I took a long walk along the beach (Lyn lives about 2 blocks away). We also visited a couple of bird sanctuaries and took a 3-day trip into the center of the North Island to

visit some friends of Lyn's. We managed to miss the fannish New Year's Eve party in Wellington, so I didn't get to see many NZ fans. On the way home I stopped in Auckland for an evening to see Debi Kean, another occasional contributor to these pages.

I came back feeling very refreshed, somewhat bored (from doing so little, not from the company), and plunged back into work. The situation there had improved marginally when a journalist joined the staff in early December, but not enough to deter me from seriously intending to leave. Several months' worth of reading the employment ads generated a half dozen applications, and (so far) three interviews but no job offers.

At present I'm in the middle of three months' Long Service Leave, taken mostly to keep me away from work before I get so fed up I quit without a new job to go to. The past month has been taken up mostly with a trip to Western Australia to attend Swancon 11, this year's Australian National Convention, followed by a tour around the southwestern part of that state with my parents, who are on their own three-month tour of various places (they live in Virginia). A trip report of sorts is intended to appear in Alyson L Abramowitz's fanzine, if she likes it once it's written.

I returned from WA a few days before Alyson arrived at my house, she having survived three weeks of international standards meetings in Melbourne. We ran a few errands in Canberra and had dinner with Eric Lindsay, Valma Brown and Leigh Edmonds at a local non-smoking restaurant, then sent Alyson on her way to Sydney by plane.

In January I decided to buy a house and land in Faulconbridge, but various hassles have prevented finalization of the transfer. The house is livable, and I intend to rent it out for 5 or 10 years, then tear it down and build a new place on another spot on the property. It's a good location, within an easy walk of the railway station and shops, and close enough to walk or bicycle to Eric's house. Whether I'll ever actually live in it is anybody's guess, but it seemed like a good investment and a potential retirement property.

Buying a house (and taking on a new mortgage) and taking a long expensive trip to Western Australia, are not recommended when one is on leave at half pay, as I am -- at least not if one wishes to maintain any semblance of a positive bank balance. The credit card companies are going to LOVE me.

-- Jean Weber

WHAT IS GUFF? The Going Under Fan Fund (known in alternate years as the Get Up-and-over-Fan Fund) was established in 1979 to further contacts between European and Australian fandom by bringing a well-known and popular fan from one hemisphere to attend a convention(s) in the other. GUFF exists solely through the support of fandom. The candidates are voted for by interested fans all over the world, and each vote is accompanied by a fee of not less than one pound sterling or two dollars Australian. These votes and the continued interest and generosity of fandom are what make GUFF possible.

WHO MAY VOTE? Voting is open to anyone who has been active in fandom (fanzines, conventions, clubs etc.) since June 1985 at least and who contributes at least one pound sterling or two dollars Australian to the fund. Contributions in excess of this minimum are gratefully accepted. Only one vote per person is allowed; proxy voting is forbidden and you must sign your ballot. Details of the voting will be kept secret. "Write-in" candidates are permitted. Cheques, postal orders and money orders should be made payable to the appropriate administrator and not to GUFF.

VOTING DETAILS GUFF uses the Australian preferential ballot system, which guarantees an automatic run-off and a majority win. You rank the candidates in the order in which you wish to place them. If the leading first-place candidate does not get a majority of the total votes cast the first-place votes of the lowest-ranking candidate are dropped and the second-place votes on those ballots are then counted. The process goes on until one candidate has a majority. It is therefore important to vote for second and third place on your ballot. It is also a waste of time to put any candidate in more than one place.

HOLD OVER FUNDS This choice, similar to "No Award" in BSFA and Hugo Award balloting, gives the voter the chance to vote for no GUFF trip, should the candidates not appeal to them or if they feel that GUFF should slow down the frequency of its trips.

DONATIONS GUFF needs continuous donations of money and material to be auctioned in order to exist. If you are ineligible to vote or don't feel qualified to vote, why not donate anyway? Just as important as donations is publicity -- in fanzines, letters, convention booklets, and by word of mouth -- to increase voter participation and fandom's overall interest in and awareness of GUFF.

THE CANDIDATES Each candidate has promised, barring acts of God, to travel to the 1987 Worldcon (Conspiracy '87), in Brighton U.K., if elected, has posted a bond of \$10-00 and has provided signed nominations and a platform, which is reproduced overleaf, along with the ballot form.

DEADLINE Votes must reach the administrators by 31st January 1987.

Send ballots and donations to:

EUROPE:- Eve Harvey  
43 Harrow Rd  
Carshalton  
Surrey  
SM5 3QH  
U.K.

AUSTRALIA:- Justin Ackroyd  
G.P.O. Box 2708X  
Melbourne  
Vict 3001  
AUSTRALIA

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This version produced by Marc Ortlieb and the Peppermint Frog Press.

GUFF 1986/7 CANDIDATES' PLATFORMS

VALMA BROWN I want to shout at Dave Langford and go to dinner as requested by Hazel Langford. I want to meet all those beaut British fans I missed at Aussiecon, see the ones I did meet and meet all the ones that Maggie wouldn't let out. I have a soft spot for British accents and because of this weakness Leigh Edmonds will be accompanying me to make sure I come back. I have been involved in fandom since 1971. I am currently a co-editor of 'Fuck the Tories' and co-publisher and boss of 'The Notional'. I like conventions, fans and parties where I can talk to people. I love talking to people.

Nominators: Hazel Langford, Joseph Nicholas, Marilyn Pride, Yvonne Rousseau and Grant Stone.

IRWIN HIRSH Unbearded, and hatless at conventions, Irwin nevertheless possesses all the qualities to be a worthy fan fund winner and a fine administrator. In 9 years he has published 100+ fanzines, including SIKANDER, THYME (with Andrew Brown), and for 6 apas and has been a member of 3 convention committees, including the running of a Worldcon film program. His other interests include films, music, fine art, sports, fine food, and making good use of metropolitan transit systems as a way of discovering cities. A freelance assistant film editor, Irwin would like to be Australia's Steven Spielberg when he grows up.

Nominators: John Foyster, Carey Handfield, Dave Langford, Marc Ortlieb and Arthur Thomson.

JEAN WEBER Having discovered fandom at AUSSIECON I, I have been publishing WEBERWOMAN'S WREVENGE since 1980. I am an enthusiastic apahack and book reviewer, an organiser of conventions until I learned better, have been Editor of ANZAPA for two years, and am suspected of a prurient interest in other people's personal relationships. I'm well-known for my feminist views, my (lack of) taste in rum, and my dislike of large groups (so why do I enjoy conventions?). How much of the above is true? Bring me to CONSPIRACY in 1987 and find out -- if you dare. (Trip report within one year.)

Nominators: Sally Beasley, Leanne Frahm, Joy Hibbert, Cath Ortlieb and Sue Thomason

=====
I vote for:- (List 1,2,3 etc)

- ( ) Valma Brown ( ) Hold over funds I enclose . . . . as a
( ) Irwin Hirsh ( ) . . . . . donation to GUFF. (Make
( ) Jean Weber (Write in) cheques etc. payable to
Eve Harvey or Justin
Ackroyd, not to GUFF)

Signature . . . . . If you think your name might not be
NAME & ADDRESS . . . . . known to the administrators and that
your vote might thus be disqualified,
. . . . . please give the name and address of a
fan or group to whom you are known.
. . . . .
. . . . .