

Weber Woman's Wrevenge

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WEBER WOMAN'S WREVENGE TEN

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(Illustrations in Joy Window's article were provided by Joy; source unknown)

THE RUBBISH BIN

AN EDITORIAL

by Jean Weber



This issue's editorial started as a reply to a letter, a reply in which I again found myself clarifying what I am trying to do with this fanzine, and why.

The letter is from Annemarie van Ewyck. Portions of it are reprinted in The Great Castration Debate later in this issue, but the bits that concern me here are as follows:

"Your Wrevenge Vol. 2 No 1 left me surprised and confused. Such a lot is being ventilated: about rape, about child-raising, about euthanasia and castration and sterilisation... And most of it is just plain opinion or feeling. There's hardly a solid fact to be found. It scares me to see opinionmaking on so large a scale without the feedback of at least some statistics."

Ah, but that is exactly what I am trying to get into the open: what people feel about things -- and not just their opinions (which are mental functions and at least potentially rational), but their feelings, (which are almost by definition irrational). In the realms of interpersonal relationships, even when people know the objective "facts", these are often contradicted by their feelings, and their beliefs of right and wrong. In the past two issues, for example, the difference between what's legally possible, and what's seen as socially or morally possible, has been pointed out. I am deliberately not presenting a lot of statistical material. It's available elsewhere, and is generally too dry and boring for a fanzine format, in my opinion. One exception was the data in the rape article (in which I also presented my sources).

And even if I did present statistics, the problem lies in interpreting them. Annemarie goes on to say:

"It is nice to see that all of two people wrote to you telling you castration does not prevent men from having intercourse, but what value am I to put on that if one of the two apparently confuses vasectomy with

castration? A very thin base indeed, for thinking yourself and 99% of the population misinformed... There must be well documented case histories in your country... do read up on them, and don't play around with things that you 'feel' or 'believe' or 'assume'."

The problem here is that "well documented case histories" can be found to support different points of view. Annemarie quotes evidence from a clinic in The Hague, that castration "leaves no possibility for the so called ordinary sex act", but other sources assure us, with evidence, that post-pubertal castration has no effect on the ability of the male to perform the "so called ordinary sex act". Is it any wonder that the general population doesn't know what "the facts" are?

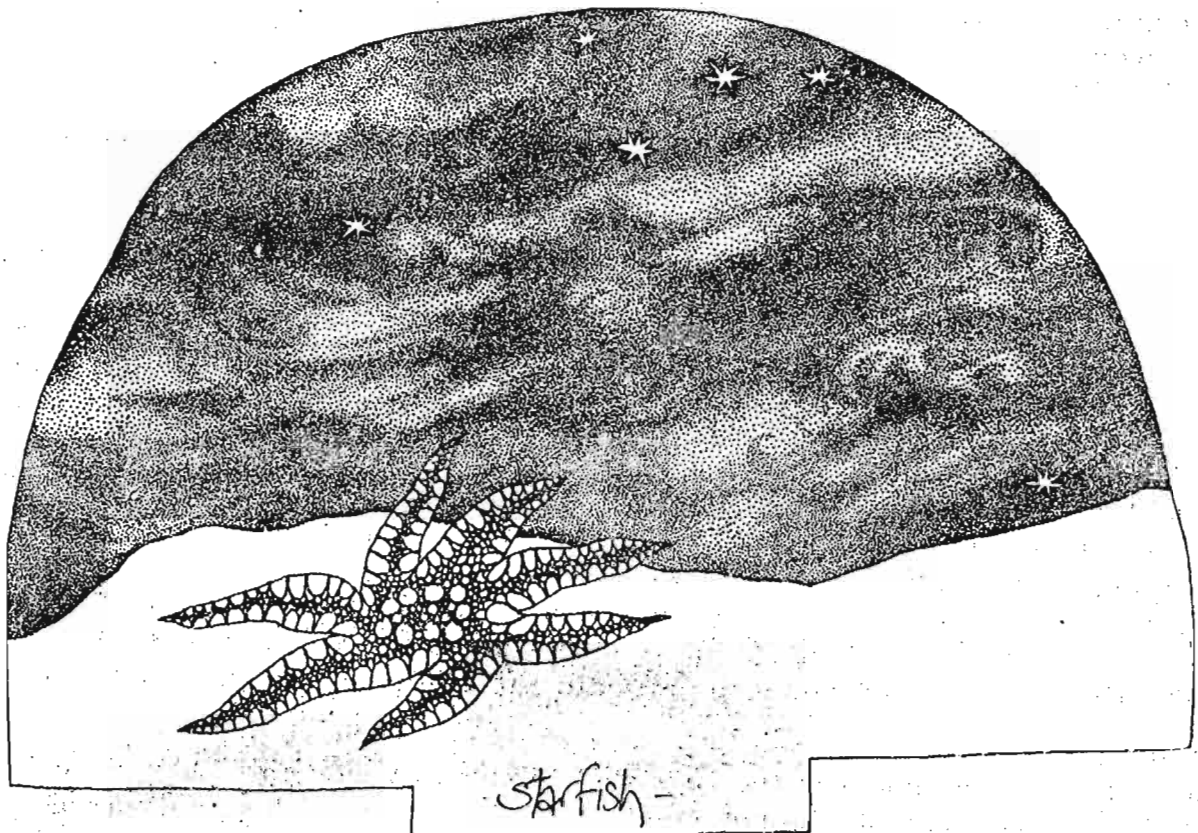
Most case histories are a mixture of observation and analysis. The doctor or social worker or whoever must interpret the evidence ("facts"), and this interpretation may be based on inadequate information mixed with pre-existing opinions. This is so well-known as to hardly need re-stating.

So, my deliberate approach, to primarily publish opinions and feelings, will continue, but I do not believe I ignore "the facts" as much as Annemarie suggests. When one of my correspondents, who has a degree in law or/and is a practicing legal person, makes a statement about legal matters, I'm generally inclined to accept their statement as correct. I am not inclined to consult the law library to check the item, though I might consult another legal friend in regard to whether the practice mentioned is the same in other States. However, I shouldn't be so flippant in some of my published reactions to statements about the law, as my remarks appear to confuse and/or distress a lot of people.

A FEW WORDS ABOUT THIS ISSUE

Herein you'll find the first installment of Joy Window's trip report. Joy spent three months visiting the U.K., Ireland, and the U.S.A. Her report is not "fannish", so some readers may not find it of great interest. Joy was especially visiting historic sites related to the old religions, and persuing her interests in neo-Paganism. This is a topic about which I know very little, but which I find quite interesting -- at least what I've heard from Joy. Although this installment doesn't discuss neo-Paganism, I still find Joy's reaction to places and events most interesting, and hope you do too.

This is followed by a compilation of letters on the castration debate; these have been accumulating for months. I'm pleased by the response, but now feel we've covered the topic fairly thoroughly. Letters on other topics raised in recent issue are presented separately. I'd hoped to have some book reviews this issue (I've accumulated quite a few), but ran out of space. Despite a backlog of some types of material, I'm always looking for well-written, interesting articles, of almost any length. Although I emphasize personal stuff, the occasional "think piece" is welcome, as a conversation starter. I would especially like some articles discussing how science fiction has treated some of the topics raised in the last few issues of this zine. For example, the loss of portions of the body, including the deliberate modification of the body (either surgically or genetically) for better adaptation to environments either on Earth, or in space or on other planets. Anyone interested in writing such an article?



ONCE AROUND THE WORLD...

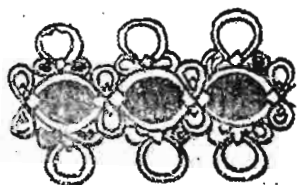
PART ONE, ENGLAND By Joy Window

Thirty-six hours on board a plane, or in transit between flights, is not my idea of a good time. The first stop-over, to pick up passengers, was Melbourne. Considering I had boarded in Sydney, I was not amused. Four hours on the ground in Bangkok in the middle of the night was one of many 'last straws'. Finally, I just endured: I must have slept, if one calls it sleeping. because when I arrived at Heathrow, I was not as exhausted as I expected. Perhaps it was the 10-year-old boy, whom I acquired somewhere along the line, who kept me on my toes. Normally I can't stand kids, but misery loves company. He was visiting parents and relatives who put him on and off planes. On touchdown in London, he would have been around the world once, by himself. He was chirpy and informative about things to do, and one of many who told me to see Disneyland. (I didn't, not from any perversity, but sheer lack of time.)

Day 1. At Heathrow, I was thrown into the deep end by a note from Judith, giving directions to her place. Being five minutes' walk from Victoria Station, in Pimlico, it was very easy to find. We spent the afternoon scanning the clothes stores, and noticing how incredibly cheap they were. Probably because of the economic conditions, they were going for little more than cost price. Unfortunately, I was not there to spend money on clothes.



London was crowded, but not in the frantic way of Sydney. My first impressions were -- clean air, squat little taxis, old and very old and new buildings side by side, many black people.



Day 2. Took an around-London bus tour to orient myself, and saw such standard sights as Buckingham Palace, the Houses of Parliament, Cleopatra's Needle, St Paul's Cathedral, and numerous other things I have forgotten. The bus passengers, mainly Americans (at least, they were the most obvious!), let out a gasp of horror when the guide pointed out a "Chelsea Pensioner" -- until we had it explained to us that it **was** a great honour to be one, since only those with military service records could qualify, and they were very proud to wear their rather obvious uniform. The bus driver was Irish.

The famous buildings looked smaller than their reputations, and crowded together. Yet there is a definite sense of age and many events taking place in a small space - that one little island, just larger than our state of Victoria. The Brits must have had a huge adjustment to make when they decided to grab Australia, not the least being the climate and the bareness and emptiness of the land.

The afternoon was spent at the British Museum. Words fail me in describing this huge storehouse of bygone times. Before entering, there was a bag search - another indication of paranoia, first noticed in the Underground train stations, where large posters warn one to leave suspicious, unaccompanied parcels alone, and call the bomb squad. Unnerving, especially as one cannot sense an undercurrent of violence such as exists in New York. The British Museum has long, long halls of carved rock, ripped off the Egyptians before they started worrying about it. I was looking forward to seeing the "Temple of Diana", but it was but a single stone and a ground plan. There was another, fully-constructed, smaller temple, but one couldn't get inside it.

After the British Museum, I had arranged to meet a friend, Carrie, whom I hadn't seen since last year in Sydney. We first met in Hong Kong in 1975, and keep bumping into each other around the world. However, things went slightly wrong. I managed to get on the wrong train, which took me past the station nearest her home, but which she said was closed on Sundays. (Never arrive anywhere in Britain on Sunday, everything shuts down.) Sure enough, on the trip out the station was closed, and the train sped by. I got off a few stations up the line when I realised my mistake, and caught the next train back to London, but it stopped at the supposedly closed station. Quickly thinking that if the train doors opened, the station must be too, I leapt out, to find that I was in fact securely locked inside the station. Thinks I, I will stand on the station platform looking lost and forlorn when the next train goes by, and it will stop and pick me up. It didn't. I quickly checked the exits again, and not even seeing any phones to use, decided that the only way was to break out. I finally climbed several rows of barbed wire to gain access to a flat factory roof, which descended step-wise over a couple hundred feet to someone's back yard. From there I fought my way through the weeds to street level, and rang Carrie from a phone in the pub. The phone outside the station was not working (probably because it was Sunday). Carrie told me later that the area is quite rough, and no one would be surprised to see a person crawling, with as low a profile as possible, over the roofs. So much for urban guerilla tactics.

To recover from my little adventure, Carrie took me to a picturesque tourist-type pub, which was nevertheless intriguing for being my First English Pub. Aussie pubs are more like Irish pubs in layout and atmosphere. One feels quite conspicuous walking into one, where many men will stare at you. In English pubs, it is the done thing for women to participate, and they would consider Aussie pubs uncivilised, which they are. I felt quite at home in English pubs, but confused about the many beers, so that I left the ordering to my hosts, which may be chauvanistic of me, but I just didn't know what to get.

We took a little drive to Blackheath, where the dead of the Black Plague were buried, and on to the gardens around the Greenwich Observatory, where I stood on the East-West line, zone degrees longitude.



Day 3. British Rail is expensive, but my Britrail pass was worth its weight in gold in cutting down costs. I rode out through the pleasant, over-cultivated fields and hedge-rows -- at least, I figured that's what they must be, since they took the place of our wire fences and Ireland's dry-stone walls, though I didn't see any Rats or Moles in them -- to Salisbury. The express purpose was to visit Stonehenge, and just as I was wondering how to get there, a large double-decker bus pulled up, and an ever-so-English man (he must have been especially chosen for the job, to impress tourists) announced that this was the bus and he was the guide, for the tour of Stonehenge. Having paid my two pounds, I leapt aboard with a dozen or so Yanks and one Kiwi, and we rolled slowly through the town and out into the windy Salisbury Plain, scene of so much history. The downs (which means 'hills' in Britain -- and they think we're upside down!) quite dwarfed the standing stones as we came upon them, so that I was initially disappointed. Somehow, I expected enormous boulders, but the longer I stayed, the larger they grew. A rope surrounds the stone circle -- you can't actually go inside, which has its disadvantages (to you) and advantages (to the stones). It guards the stones against more initials and messages being carved on them, over the pre-Christian double-headed axes recently found, and prevents souvenirs being chipped off them, too -- modern morons like to do this to historical sites. Those who are sensitive to such things say the stones "feel" better, without the dissipating energy of the crowds of strangers drawn to this second most popular site in England (the Tower of London is the first). There were about 60 people on the day I was there, and that was a cold, blustery, rainy autumn day.

I stood on the ley line which runs through Stonehenge, Old Sarum, and Salisbury Cathedral, and tried to imagine myself back in time, contemplating the dozens of tombs visible as mounds in the neighbouring fields. The bus dropped me off on request at Old Sarum, two miles north of Salisbury. The original Salisbury, it was built in the Iron Age, and used as a fort by the Romans, and later developed into a town by the Saxons. It gave way to New Sarum (now Salisbury) in the late 13th century. Now it's a grassy mound with the remains of an Iron Age Hill Fort (earthworks), a Norman Castle moat, and the foundations of a castle, a cathedral and a bishop's palace.



The whole of England is picturesque, as if someone had designed it specially for the tourists.

Day 4. Judith took me on a crash course of cathedral architecture, which made Winchester Cathedral much more interesting than it otherwise might have been. It was begun in 1079, replacing an even earlier Saxon building, since Winchester was the ancient Saxon capital of England, and contains the graves of William Rufus, King Canute and others, plus the mortuary chests of Saxon kings.

It is interesting to compare the mortuary figures of later priests in their fine garb and calm faces with the earlier pre-occupation with decay as shown by the skeletal bodies with their death grimaces. There's also a statue to the diver William Walker who worked for six years beneath the cathedral to stop it from sinking into the marshes. It's still sinking.

The remains of a Norman castle contain one of the many Arthur's Round Tables, but this one has been proven to be wishful thinking only. The feasting hall of the castle, restored, is absolutely huge, and would fit in a lot of peasants.



Day 5. Avebury in Wiltshire is older than Stonehenge, and fewer tourists visit it, for two reasons which I experienced. One is that it's less well-known -- I had heard of its worthiness through rumours only. Secondly, it's a pain to get to with public transport. Only one bus goes there every day from the nearest town, and only one comes back. I was lucky enough to see one of the indigenous large red squirrels

narrowly missing being squashed by the bus, and also to see one of the 9 Wiltshire white horses. They are huge figures carved on the hillsides by removing the topsoil and exposing the white chalk underneath. I did not see the White Horse of Uffington, the surrealistic horse figure thought to be made in pre-Christian times. The modern horses were dug by soldiers and locals during the last couple of hundred years.

I had done absolutely no homework on Avebury, so was rather surprised to find that the stone circle encloses the village, rather than the other way round. It's reputedly the large stone circle in the world. The monument consists of a circular, grass-covered chalk plateau 1400 feet in diameter, with a circle of a hundred stones on top. Inside are two smaller circles of thirty more stones each; in the very centre three stones make up the Cove. Associated with the circle are Silbury Hill and West Kennett Long Barrow. The former is the largest artificial hill in Europe, and the latter, the largest barrow grave. Michael Dames in his two books "The Silbury Treasure" and "The Avebury Cycle" proposes some interesting theories as to how these sites were used in religious practice thousands of years ago. Of course, there is no proof any more.



Day 6. Visited Ken, who was recommended to me, and he took me to Sisterwrite, the feminist bookshop, and Atlantis, an occult bookshop near the British Museum, then on to see Queen's Wood, my first very English wood. It's quite an atmospheric place, with lots of squirrels. Somewhere along the line I visited Foyle's Bookshop, which is positively huge and has just about everything. Ah, for something like it back

home! (I kept saying this at various points along the trip -- that's a problem when living in the backwaters of the world. Yet there are advantages, too, as I'm sure you're aware.)

Day 7.



Judith and I spent the day on the train to Inverness, on the River Ness (yes, close to Loch Ness), halfway thru Scotland. We arrived rather late in the day, to find the Youth Hostel booked up, but we were directed to a nice little Bed & Breakfast establishment, where we shared a crowded bedroom (2 of us each on 2 beds) with a couple of European women. It was my first experience with B&B's, and I was most impressed. I positively detest the impersonality of hotels, and will go to almost any lengths to avoid staying alone at night in a hotel room. I like Youth Hostels, because at least you have company at night, even if you don't know them at all. With the B&B system, you have a homey atmosphere, lots of breakfast, and a chance to see how people live.



Day 8. Rising early, we caught the train to Thurso, and the bus to John O'Groats, the furthest north tip of Scotland. The further one gets away from England, and the tame, cultivated garden country, the wilder, colder, bleaker and more elemental the countryside becomes. Grim, bare (except for the heather) steep slopes loom in the near distance, although they are not as tall as I'd expected -- but tall enough. The peat bogs and greenness indicate the amount of rainfall (lots!) and deer and rabbits (lots!) inhabit the fields. I longed to see the rusty, hairy, highland cattle, but not a one did I see, except on postcards. I saw the wild haggis -- not running around mountains on its longer pair of legs, avoiding the haggis hunters who lie in the bottoms of valleys waiting for these dumb beasts to go in the wrong direction (their shorter legs on the other side of their bodies tangle and unbalance them) and tumble into their waiting nets -- but wrapped inside sheep stomachs like a large sausage, in butchers' windows. I also bought a canned variety to share with friends in the States, but after telling them what was in it, no one wanted to risk it. It's delicious!

After killing 4 hours in John O'Groats, where there is nothing but tourist shops (it being Sunday, the ferry service cuts down by half), we loaded upon the small fishing boat, and scudded the 45 minutes through seal- and guillemot-infested waters to Orkney. The sea was grey, the sky was grey, and I was reminded strongly of some Alan Stivell harp tunes, bleak and wave-washed. A bus took us to Kirkwall, where the sun was setting, and we found the Youth Hostel and bunked down, after a quick walk about.



Day 9. There wasn't much to see, so no time was wasted in avoiding the tempting pottery shop, and catching the Stromness-bound bus in the morning. We were dropped off somewhat before that town, and walked a couple of miles to some sets of standing stones. The local stone is much taller and thinner than the bluestones that make up Stonehenge and many of the circles in England. The wind whistled across the gently rolling hills, and one felt very lonely and insignificant.

The grey stone walls of the houses seemed to be keeping a barrier between the elements and humankind, who huddled together for comfort. Unlike tree-less, barren Scotland, "The verdant countryside is a sanctuary for birds, and the islands are intensively farmed. Long a haven for seaborne peoples, Orkney was invaded by the Norsemen in the eleventh century and remained the seat of the Norse empire for 400 years."

Norse influences remain. After visiting our stone circles, the "Standing Stones of Stenness" and "The Ring of Brodgar", we walked to Maeshowe Cairn, "a stone age chambered tomb with fine, runic graffiti on the interior walls, left by twelfth century Norse plunderers." I was impressed by the cairn. It's said to be the finest example of its type in Europe, and comparing it to those in Ireland, it's certainly the best preserved. Locking it up, and making sure people go in with a guide, keeps it that way, though it may detract from the atmosphere of the place. I was impressed at having to crouch down to half-height and scramble along, how far I did not know, and suddenly be able to stand up again, and look at the ceiling 6 feet above me. It would have been more impressive by flame-light. Our young guide, daughter of the family who owned the land, gave us a rave on site, pointing out the runic graffiti, which said something like, "we took 4 days to haul all the treasure out", and "Hagar is the strongest swordsman in Vikingland" and "Sigfrieda is the most beautiful woman in the world" -- human nature surely hasn't changed! In addition, they drew pictures -- one a walrus, one a long-ship, and the other an exquisite creature which has become known as the "Maeshowe dragon".

Hitching is supposed to be easy there, so we stuck out our thumbs, and after 10 minutes or so, were picked up by half a dozen electricity linesmen, who dropped us off at the edge of Stromness. The Orkney accent is not quite Scottish, somewhat European. Scottish "English" is just about unintelligible, with all sorts of shortcuts and pronunciations -- I was totally at a loss. It seemed that they could all speak "the Queen's English" once they knew that was what you wanted. We had an hour or so to kill, but Stromness is more a port than a tourist town, so contented ourselves with stocking up the larder and buying postcards. The ferry travels past the island of Hoy, which has a series of spectacular cliffs, foggy that day, and a rock stack called the "Old Man of Hoy", supposed to be 700 feet high, and popular with climbers. Once back in Wick, we caught the bus to the station, and hung around the requisite several hours before the train took us in its own good time back to Inverness. The scenery is pleasant and very Scottish and rural.



Day 10. The B&B was deserted except for us, and we caught the Linden train and stopped off for a few hours in Edinburgh. The streets were more crowded than usual, for we had hit it right in the middle of the annual arts festival, which is extremely popular. All sorts of alternative entertainments and theatre, as well as the famous Edinburgh Tattoo, which my father would love to have

seen. We wandered up to Edinburgh Castle, which looks strong enough to survive anything. It is situated on an extinct volcano. The walk from the Castle to Holyrood Palace (the official Scottish residence of the Queen) is called the Royal Mile, and passes old buildings and many tourist shops.

Back on the train, we travelled down the east coast, passing Lindisfarne, the Holy Island. The Priory was built there in AD 635, and is the first recorded base for Celtic Christianity in England. The island is connected to the mainland by a causeway, which is flooded when tide is high.



Days 11 & 12. Did very little, feeling burnt-out.

Days 13, 14, 15. Were spent with Ken, who kindly motored me around the south of England a bit in his old Mini. We went to Ashdown forest, which isn't really a forest, more open grazing land with low bushes. The only place you seem to get actual trees is in "woods", not "forests". Funny lot, the English.

Day 16 was spent with Carrie, my last chance to see her for a long time. We wandered around the city of London, found some spiffy health food restaurants and stores, and generally tired ourselves out. I guess we will meet up again somewhere in the world, we usually manage to.

Day 17. The Big Day -- to Ireland by ferry from Holyhead. I was nervous, wondering what the next 18 days would bring -- the culmination of a year's planning and a large amount of money spent. I met up with Debbie, an American arts student travelling around Europe, and together we found the Youth Hostel and wandered around Dublin at night. It's glittery at night, and only in the morning did I see it as it really is.

Part Two, Ireland, will appear in the next issue of Weberwoman's Wrevenge, March 1983.

THE LADY'S REWARD

by Dorothy Parker



Lady, lady, never start
 Conversation toward your heart;
 Keep your pretty words serene;
 Never murmur what you mean.
 Show yourself, by word and look,
 Swift and shallow as a brook.
 Be as cool and quick to go
 As a drop of April snow;
 Be as delicate and gay
 As a cherry flower in May.
 Lady, lady, never speak
 Of the tears that burn your
 cheek -
 She will never win him, whose
 Words had shown she feared to lose.
 Be you wise and never sad,
 You will get your lovely lad.
 Never serious be, nor true,
 And your wish will come to you --
 And if that makes you happy, kid,
 You'll be the first it ever did.

THE GREAT CASTRATION DEBATE

(Responses to my "writing assignment" in W³#7, and some remarks in #6. I think we've covered the topic thoroughly now, and don't expect to publish any more unless it's unusually well written. -- JHW)

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8 July 1982

woman anywhere who would choose to be sterilized by hysterectomy rather than tubal ligation. Not because it removes the option of having tubes re-connected later on, but because it has such a destructive effect on one's self (body) image. Without exception, women I have talked to about their hysterectomies have gone through a grieving process for some time after the operation, feeling 'incomplete'.

Having a mastectomy (breast removal) doesn't affect your sex life and isn't obvious to strangers (as opposed to say losing an arm or leg), but women would fear it quite apart from the association with the big 'C'. It would be for the same reason - of permanently affecting the person's body and not just the functioning of it, that would cause people to suggest castration for sex criminals. The prevention of erections could surely be achieved by some ingenious device...but I don't think this would satisfy those who demand the disablement.

(I guess I'm just weird -- the idea of losing a part of my body, per se, doesn't worry me at all -- certainly not my uterus, and not much a breast. Losing the functioning of a part (arm, leg, eye, etc) does worry me. --JHW))

AVEDON CAROL
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19 August 1982

From my own reading of Freud--particularly his use of the phrase "the fact of castration" in reference to females--I would gather that the man had an irrational belief that females really had lost their penises and that the same might even happen to him, or at least that it wasn't unreasonable for some males to worry a lot about it. Any rational person would be horrified at the idea of having any of her limbs removed (particularly if they are being removed for no good reason--a "good" reason being, presumably, a medical one), I don't see why the penis has to be singled out. Given the choice between the tongue, a leg, an arm, maybe both legs or both arms (we are talking about completely losing at least one function) and a mere penis --well, which do you choose? You'd have to be a bit of a fruitcake, I think, to automatically choose to preserve the penis above all other limbs...

Although people lose other limbs all the time, for some reason certain men seem a bit pre-occupied with the loss of the penis, as if it were the only limb one might lose, or perhaps

Surely it's the matter of losing part of your body, not just the functioning of it that is behind castration fears. I don't think there would be a

the only limb one might miss... That's a castration complex. A more modern (post-Freudian) analysis of the "castration complex" is indeed that the penis itself isn't that uniquely important, and that it is loss of power that is feared--but Freud pretty well denied this analysis when he talked about things like "penis envy", insisting that yes indeed, it is the organ itself and not any implied symbolism that we are supposed to be falling all over and envying and protecting and fearing for and everything else. (What? That thing? Are you kidding?)

Eunuchs, by the way, are quite capable of having sexual intercourse...Castration refers to removal of the testicles, not to removal of the penis...Removal of the testicles does not interfere with erection and orgasm in a post-pubescent male. In fact, there are quite a number of legends about what great lovers some eunuchs were supposed to be...Castration prevents the production of sperm but does not interfere with non-reproductive sexual function. The corresponding procedure when applied to the female body is of course ovariectomy...which is performed on women in the U.S., U.K., much of Europe and Australia every day.

((Diane Fox wrote saying much the same things about eunuchs being reputed to be great lovers. As for losing a limb, I certainly wouldn't want to lose any bits of myself, but it's not something I exactly fear, especially if the apparent alternatives were worse, e.g. regarding cancer. --JHW))

DIANE FOX
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2 August 1982

I think the fear of castration as such is a much misunderstood one -- what is feared is not so much losing part of the body, but what it symbolizes...

Sterilization would be done forcibly for similar reasons to rape--as a gross and obscene insult, a demonstration of the torturer's power over the victim, a power so total that conventional codes of decency and honour no longer apply. Hence the prevalence of castration, sterilization and rape in concentration camps and their rarity in ordinary prisoner of war camps. Like the sexual act itself, sterilization is not an innately destructive act; done forcibly it is a degrading indignity. Hence the horror of castration etc is on some level a political as well as a sexual fear.

((As Avedon noted, forced sterilization is commonplace in Western society; but it's known as "standard medical procedure", thus acceptable. But stories (authenticated) of sterilization of poor, minority women in particular, without their informed consent, are well known. Many other women are talked into hysterectomies by their physicians, for various reasons.--JHW))

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I think you're right about the loss of power belief. In some parts of Southern Europe (Sicily in particular, I believe), it was long thought that the most effective way for a man to ward off the effects of the evil eye was to immediately touch his testicles.

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There is a large difference, for Alderson's benefit, between (a) deciding that one wouldn't like to be castrated and (b) developing a pathological fear that such an occurrence is likely. The former is healthy, the latter is not. I am afraid that a "castration complex" is in the latter category. I am not afraid of castration in that sense. Most men I know are not afraid of castration in that sense.

ANNEMARIE VAN EWYCK
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The Netherlands

There are several forms of castration, the most radical form being to cut off penis and testes in one stroke. Obviously no person could still perform the sex act after such an operation. There is chemical castration, which is temporary, often with long-term aftereffects, but the whole apparatus is still in a condition to function if the chemical influence can be counteracted. And there is the neat form of castration that tomcats also suffer: the removal of the testes; it leaves the penis intact. But no castration can ever remove the thoughts and longings of sex from a person's head.

I have checked with the specialized clinic here in The Hague that performs, amongst other things, vasectomies and sterilization of women, under local anaesthetic...and I have been assured that true castration, in which at least the testes are removed, leaves no possibilities for the so-called ordinary sex act, though the person retains a sex life, and sexual thoughts and desires. In the past this has been used as a deterrent for people with pederastic leanings, and all it removed was the possibility of doing it, not the desire to do it. No cure.

On the subject of sterilization, I myself have been sterilized under local anaesthetic...I was able to follow every step of the operation, the doctors were happy to explain everything and I had no more pain, when the oviducts were burnt through, than during any monthly period. When I came out of the clinic that afternoon I felt I was a complete woman for the first time in my life. The fear of begetting an unwanted child, or having to undergo an abortion with all its attendant sorrow and, who knows, guilt, had been removed from me. I could function in life the way I wanted to, and I felt very happy. But I know from many discussions with women, that a great many of them are just as fearful of losing their unique quality as prospective mothers, as a great many men are, to lose their virility, as symbolized in the ability to beget children. Women who, in the course of some operation, have their womb removed by solicitous surgeons ('It's only in the way and a

bother, ma'am, and you're well rid of it") without having known beforehand, are often extremely unhappy, and feel they have been degraded to un-women.

JOHN ALDERSON
Havelock, Vic 3465
Australia
5 July 1982

The matter of terms... It does not surprise me, after a trip to our local library to get definitions. Oxford only gives old, very ordinary meanings of "castration" and the Encyclopaedia Britannica has no article on the subject that I could find...there are a number of methods... (he mentions cutting, bruising or otherwise damaging the cords or the testes themselves without necessarily removing them) In these cases the...operation is still referred to as "castration". Vasectomy is but a more humane method of obtaining the same end result. X-rays, hormones and perhaps other chemicals are effective... This is one reason I oppose the male contraceptives -- the possible genetic danger is too great. Incidentally, I oppose The Pill on the same grounds, whilst the side effects are such that no woman should have to put up with them.

In most literature now "castration" has been replaced by "sterilization", but psychologists and farmers use "castration" as the term. To my mind they are synonymous. So, I define...

Castration is for all intents and purposes identical with sterilization and is the operation whereby a male or a female is rendered either permanently or temporarily incapable of reproduction.

Impotence, however caused, falls into that category. Impotence is the physical inability to do the act of sex.

Infertility is the inability to produce issue. Psychological castration is the causing, or attempted causing, of impotence by psychological methods.

Only in extreme cases does psychological castration cause impotence, though these are sadly plentiful enough. Usually the attack (not necessarily deliberate or with such an effect in mind) is directed at a secondary sexual attribute and is normally a form of humiliation.

...Finally as to your question as to why men fear castration so much if they can still have an erection and their sex life is unimpaired... possibly the origin lies in the fact that it is the male who generates germ cells at the rate of several million per day. A woman on the other hand is born with a large number, but it's still finite, and these she ripens. This creation of germ cells, considered, perhaps inaccurately, as the creation of life by the man, was considered of old to be the root of man's creative endeavour. That is, the excess sexual potentiality is channelled into such things as the arts, industry, inventiveness, exploration, etc. A similar idea still exists today though now it is said that this creativeness is channelled into aggressiveness, vandalism, speeding, etc etc...all those naughty things men are accused of doing when they are not in the saddle. There may be a lot in this and I think that down in their hearts men subconsciously believe something of this nature.

It is understandable then how castrated men are said to have lost their manhood, to be no longer men, to be no longer whole...to be deprived of the ability to father children is

the loss of a man's birthright. This, notwithstanding that he may never father children, or that he may have fathered children. It is the loss of a freedom and a privilege that nothing can replace. Sex is no substitute. In fact the ability to perform a shadow of the act adds to the horror of the loss of the substance...

((Thank you, John, for explaining your definitions so well. It is a lot easier to understand what you're talking about when I know what you mean by the words. The fact that I do not agree with your definitions is then irrelevant; at least I know what you're talking about. A lot of what you say then makes a good deal more sense.--JHW.))

LOUIS BOOKBINDER
704 Laurel Avenue
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USA

((Louis is a non-fan friend of mine for some years. He wrote to me earlier this year to say

that he and his wife Donna had just had a baby daughter.))

How, you may ask, did Donna get pregnant? Well, I haven't had my vasectomy reversed. I'm still happy with it. But Donna wanted a baby, so we found an artificial insemination program. Donna got pregnant on the first try, this despite only one ovary. The pregnancy was normal. I don't feel any less the father than if it were my sperm. A haploid cell weighing a fraction of a microgram does not a father make.

HARRY ANDRUSCHAK
PO Box 606
La Canada-Flintridge
CA 91011, USA

I was 26 years old when I decided to have a vasectomy operation. At that time I was in the US

Navy, single, with little prospect for marriage and no real interest. Children were of no interest to me, and I never had any desire to be a father. I...found out that in 1970 it was very hard for a single man to have such an operation.

The Navy had stationed me in London. Nobody in the London Medical Staff would give me a "yes". We need not go thru the routine...the run-arounds...doctors' visits and questions...psychological tests and talks...and all the rest. Same thing when I was sent back to the USA at the end of my tour of duty. What it amounted to was this...a single man was not considered sane if he didn't want some children.

In 1973 I left the Navy after ten years of service, went to California, got work at JPL, and tried once again to get a vasectomy. I was tired of condoms in my few sexual encounters. I still had no real desire for children. And then I heard of Planned Parenthood, made an appointment, and after just 15 minutes talk an arrangement was made with a doctor for the operation, and that was that. And one week later, with a minimal fuss, the operation was carried out.

Oddly enough, the operation seems to have had little effect on my sex life one way or the other, at least as far as frequency goes. ...In 1975 I met Beverly Kanter, LASFS, and Fandom in just a few weeks. Beverly and I

agreed to live together...she knowing full well that I was sterile and had no desire for children whatsoever. In 1982 this is still true. And I am glad I made the choice. I have come down with high blood pressure and diabetes. Both are known to be related to genes.

((My experience with tubal ligation is similar to yours with vasectomy, and occurred at about the same time, early '70's. Single (or in my case, divorced) women were considered even less sane than men if they didn't want any children. And I located my sympathetic surgeon through California's Planned Parenthood, too. Though I had previously joined the Association for Voluntary Sterilization, which was working to change the few restrictive laws, and the far more common restrictive practices -- until the mid-70's, the American Association of Gynaecologists (or whatever it's called) had rules against sterilizing women except under certain conditions -- not that this stopped the involuntary sterilization of many poor black women.--JHW))

KEVIN DILLON
PO Box 471
Haymarket, NSW
Australia 2000
8 July 1982

Maybe there's a slight (traumatic memory) correlation in male castration or penis operation cases to previous, early circumcision, strengthened by modern "maleness" bangups. Have you seen the TV treatment of this recently or heard/read of it? Commercial TV here (I think) had a version more graphic than radio item caught earlier.

((No, I haven't seen/heard/read of media treatment of the topic recently.--JHW))

((I also heard from various other people on the topic, usually in passing in letters on other subjects. I hope I haven't mislaid any letters of substance; if so, I apologize to the writers. I do appreciate all the thought that went into the many letters I did receive. My next project will be to try to work this topic into a discussion of *surprise* science fiction! --JHW))





ADULT EDUCATION. ANYONE?

Also known as continuing education, these classes are designed to meet personal needs rather than providing credits towards certificates, diplomas or degrees. The subject matter varies greatly, as shown in the examples below.

SELF IMPROVEMENT

- S100 Creative Suffering
- S101 Overcoming Peace of Mind
- S102 Guilt Without Sex
- S103 Ego Gratification through Violence
- S104 Moulding your Child's Behaviour through Guilt and Fear
- S105 Dealing with Post-Realisation Depression
- S106 Whine your Way to Alienation
- S107 How to Overcome Self-Doubt through Pretence and Ostentation

HEALTH AND FITNESS

- H200 Creative Tooth Decay
- H201 Exorcism and Acne
- H202 The Joys of Hypochondria
- H203 High Fibre Sex
- H204 Suicide and Your Health
- H205 Biofeedback and How to Stop It
- H206 Understanding Nudity
- H207 Tap Dance your Way to Social Ridicule
- H208 Optional Body Functions

BUSINESS AND CAREER

- B100 "I Made \$100 in Real Estate"
- B101 Money Can Make You Rich
- B102 Packaging and Selling Your Child
- B103 Career Opportunities in El Salvador
- B104 How to Profit from your Own Body
- B105 The Underachievers' Guide to Very Small Business Opportunities
- B106 Tax Shelters for the Indigent
- B107 Looters Guide to Cities

HOME ECONOMICS

- E100 How You Can Convert Your Family Room into a Garage
- E101 Cultivate Viruses in your Refrigerator
- E102 Burglarproof your Home with Concrete
- E103 Sinus Drainage at Home
- E104 Basic Kitchen Taxidermy
- E105 1001 Uses for your Vacuum Cleaner
- E106 The Repair and Maintenance of Your Virginity
- E107 How to Convert a Wheel Chair into a Dune Buggy
- E108 Christianity and the Art of Television Maintenance
- E109 Yachting Your Way to the Bottom of the Harbour
- E110 Needlecraft for Junkies

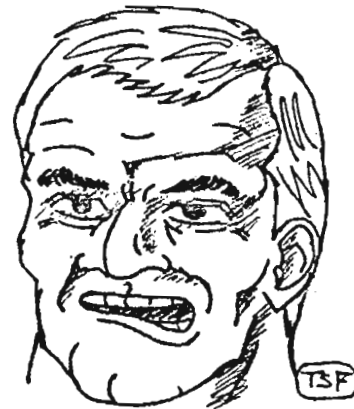
"I like Americans.

They are so ridiculous.

They are always risking thier lives to save a minute."

--Nancy Boyd (1892-1950)

LETTERS



REAL MEN DON'T
READ THIS ZINE!

DIANE FOX
P O Box 129
Lakemba, NSW 2195
Australia
18 Sept. 1982

Marc Ortlieb's dragonriders
-as-fans article was most
fascinating, and like all
great ideas, it seemed
perfectly obvious once the
connection had been made.

No, I don't consider your views on euthanasia 'weird'. They are probably the views of any sensible and decent person who doesn't have some sort of religious or political axe to grind either way. And I suspect that the people who make a good deal of fuss about the matter would promptly shut up about it if they could get lots of fame, attention and power in some simpler and easier way.

27 November 1982

I feel that Joseph Nicholas' attitude towards treatment of serious social problems in fanzines is slightly reminiscent of those people who oppose sex education for pre and early teenagers--'they all know about it anyway' or 'they can learn at home'. There are bound to be huge and deadly dangerous gaps in information... waiting to avoid distasteful subjects merely because they are unpleasant seems unworthy of a true fan. If SF can deal with bondage, s/m, rape and such exotica from the adolescent fantasy viewpoint, it can certainly treat of VD, pregnancy, rape, family violence...from the sensible and compassionate viewpoint. In fact this is a necessity.

Sam Wager's description of his views on liberation, sex, sexism and non-sexism etc was so sensible as to appear cliché! But it is true that not only do we have to find fresh aspects of what is right and proper -- we must also affirm the basic and even prosaic facts that goodness and decency should be supported. Hence I thought highly of his article.

I reacted with deep contempt to Robert Clements' pseudosophisticated remarks, which show lack of political insight in the extreme ((and)) lack of compassion or even common sense... Hitler and the Ayatollah did not rise on a wave of political awareness, ((but)) on a wave of political unawareness. Fools who lacked both compassion and practical experience of the cruelty of oppression were the bulk of their fanatical supporters.

((I agree their supporters were probably unaware politically, but I suspect a lot did know first hand about oppression.--JHW))

LESLIE DAVID
P O Box 5057
Ft Lee, VA 23801
USA
26 Nov. 1982

I enjoyed Marc's article...up to the point where he starts drawing analogies between McCaffrey's writing and fandom. This is probably the silliest thing I've ever read....I think he's reaching for parallels that aren't really there.

((Um, yes, that rather was the point, Leslie. It was a send-up of literary analysis. But thanks for the many pages of thoughtful comment showing how wrong he was!--JHW))

Rev. Jerry Falwell (('Moral' 'Majority' spokesman)) once claimed that herpes was God's way of punishing those who were not true believers and behaved in blasphemous ways.

JACK HERMAN
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Univ. Sydney NSW 2006
Australia

Marc's article was excellent and quite well disguised. In the light of his previous article about Anne's female characters, I was preparing

for one of his few serious articles. His fannish subplot and the metamorphosis of the article into a fanfic piece caught me by surprise -- a delightful surprise because Marc is our best fanfic writer (with the possible exception of Leigh Edmonds). His McCaffrey piece was up to his usual inventive standard...

Gerald's piece on Rape & The Law continues to beg the question: is a lawyer's major responsibility to 'justice or client'. To me the whole system is screwed when a person has to deny knowledge to defend a client, to serve client rather than discover truth. The adversary system of justice seems more concerned with obfuscation than determination of truth. If they are to serve any purpose, lawyers should serve that of truth.

29 November 1982

I think it strange for Joseph to use the word 'didactic' in a pejorative fashion. I find most of his material earnestly didactic -- but since didacticism is also one of my attributes, I don't use the word negatively. I agree that there are subjects some would reserve for privacy that deserve airing and very often writing on serious subjects does become 'didactic', certainly when one has information to disseminate.

I'd like to think that things have changed since Sam's days at school. I occasionally run up against male predisposition to reject aesthetics, more so I run up against a general feeling that the mass culture has ruined any attempts to communicate aesthetic and emotional appreciation to any adolescent. But,

generally, I find, in better students, no sex differentiated response to poetry, art, music and other attempts at truth and beauty. I'm hopeful that that double standard is on the decline. It might do so while role models like male teachers are prepared to.

I find Robert Clements' comments quite frightening in their reflection of a community attitude that legislation and politics are not their concern except within the narrow range of their selfishly defined interest. Hitlers and Ayatollahs rise on the tide of the political awareness of minorities when the majority is alienated from the political process.

Judith's comments on Dorothy Parker are quite superficial. Certainly she had fits of depression (don't we all), but in between she was one of the most creative, witty, intelligent, incisive and 'beautiful' women of her era. She called her budgie 'Onan' because it split its seed on the ground; she described a K Hepburn performance as 'running the gamut of emotions from A to B'; when confronted at a door by a 'friend' who waved her on with 'age before beauty', she swept in remarking 'pearls before swine'; she cowrote 'A Star is Born' and many other movies, plays and countless poems, humourous and serious. The world would have been a sadder place with Dorothy Parker.



CHRIS CALLAHAN
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MD 20740, USA
19 Sept. 1982

Marc's comments on fire lizards are especially interesting, but he left out an important angle. In the books, fire lizards are as available to women

as to men, which distinguishes fandom in general from prodom even now. I emphasize fandom in general because I read very few 'mainstream sf' fanzines (as opposed to media sf) and don't know the sex ratio among writers and editors. From what I've heard about the small but active organized Pern fandom here in the US, the membership is largely female (this also applies to Darkover and Sime fandom). In media fandom here (I read a lot of STAR WARS zines), editors, writers, and loccers are primarily female, though male names are becoming a bit

more common the last year or so. Granted, it's a long time since I read the dragon books, but it seems to me that more women than men were mentioned as owning fire lizards. Fire lizards and fandom are more available to women than dragons and prodom; women seem to predominate in certain areas of fandom and as fire lizard owners. Interesting, no?

((Mainstream sf' fanzines seem to be dominated by men, largely because the subject matter often does not appeal to women -- at least that's my theory. I wonder if the female domination of media fandom is related to the low esteem in which it's held by many 'mainstream sf' fans? (stir, stir)--JHW))

JOHN ALDERSON
Havelock, Vic 3465
Australia
22 Nov. 1982

I am afraid I read Wagar's essay with mounting concern for the man. He's all sick. I doubt if there's a place on his

earth where he could have acquired the education he claims was inflicted on him...In fact it is only too transparent that all this is an illusion, or delusion may be more accurate. This obsession with sex, with maleness and oppression does not ring true. Nor does his statement that he was taught to distrust his 'smallest impulse towards pleasure' etc etc convince.

((John goes on at some length, indicating to me that he and Sam simply don't speak the same language, and thus John is unable to 'hear' what Sam is saying. Otherwise, the only explanation I can get is, 'What universe do you live in, John? Certainly not the same one Sam and I inhabit.' More of John's ideas on sex-related topics are elsewhere in this zine.--JHW))

JULIE VAUX
14 Zara Rd
Willoughby, NSW
2068 Australia
18 Sept. 1982

Marc Ortlieb's article was most amusing and interesting. The analogies he draws made this one of the most delightful pieces of fan writing I've read this year, although I doubt that Pern is a deliberate metaphor for fandom on Anne's part, at least not consciously. And I don't agree with his statement about Mirrim. The poor girl gets so much flac.

As the victim of discrimination due to a comparatively minor handicap, I followed your reply to Neville Angove's letter with particular detail. I am hyperkinetic with a speech handicap and I can certainly certify that some people including some of my school teachers seemed to think or feel that that means that something is missing upstairs....I hear sounds alright but I don't always perceive them. Some noises that most people tune out are almost painful particularly bad music. Also I find that my verbal memory has gaps. I can remember written words easily, but sometimes the pronunciation of relatively common words completely slips my memory... and I have a limited notion of how my voice sounds so that I don't always realize how good or bad I sound...The worst thing about it is that although my speech is acceptable after years of speech therapy as a child and teenager, thanks to the weird cross-circuiting of my brain, I don't know when the anomalies will occur.

((I often don't sort speech out into words when people talk to me, so I have to keep asking them to repeat themselves. Usually they think I'm not listening. Whenever I mention this at teatimes, many co-workers say they have the same thing. JHW))

CHRISTINE ASHBY
PO Box 175
South Melbourne
Vic 3205, Australia
5 November 1982

((Re Neville Angove's letter in WWW# 8)),
At first blush it just looks as though he's hopelessly muddled about the difference between mental retardation and mental illness. At second blush it looks as though he's a hopeless optimist -- surely he must see that there are some conditions, like amputation of a limb, which no amount of treatment will 'cure'. Well, I don't know what Nev actually thinks, he doesn't express himself clearly enough, but I see the underlying philosophy of his views, and I am not pleased. What he is arguing for is the therapeutic model of deviance, and you of all people ought to be enraged. Just you read his letter again. Anyone who is not completely 'normal' is sick, and ought to be treated by qualified professionals, preferably somewhere out of the way behind high walls so that the general public won't get upset. And who is 'normal'? Not homosexuals, not political radicals, not feminists, certainly not retarded people or double amputees (who are visibly 'distasteful'). The Russians use the therapeutic model quite a bit, I understand.

I think it is quite clear that Nev is saying that deviance equals illness. If he is saying that only some forms of deviance equate with illness, then he'd better tell us just where he draws the line. At the moment I reserve the right to take a scunner at his ideas, which I find extremely nasty. If you don't, I should be interested to know why not.

((I did just read Nev's letter again, and I do not read into it what you have. However, I do not agree with him that it would help matters any to regard certain conditions as illnesses, and your remarks certainly clarify why I do not agree with him. Whether or not Nev himself subscribes to the philosophy you suggest, certainly many people do, and it is extremely dangerous. Certainly my own experience bears this out: university counsellors who tried to 'treat' my depression by 'helping' me become 'normal', where what I really needed was to accept myself the way I was, and build on that. Since I am a 'deviant' -- a feminist (in those days I didn't have a name for it), to be pushed into what was considered 'normal' for young women in 1964, only made my mental state worse.--JHW))

JESSICA AMANDA SALMONSON
PO Box 20610, Seattle WA 98102
USA

16 August 1982

I think it strange that liberal and even radical sorts are so unwilling to rush right in and try to help aboriginal women learn about feminism and the like. The aboriginal lifestyle must be truly screwed up by now anyway, and from evidence in many monographs, women had a much higher position in aboriginal society before white folks got to Australia; and now that everything is futzed up and women and young girls are veritable slaves in some aspects, now people decide to leave well enough alone and let the folks decide on their own what's best and not to make any effort to help aboriginal women unless they come and ask (come crawling perhaps?). Women in tribal situations need information on all kinds of things related to health and well-being and while it shouldn't

be aggressively shoved down their throats, it should be made easily accessible. As easily accessible as button shirts and cigarettes which nobody seems to get weird about providing tribal peoples around the world. If feminist-oriented women take the attitude of 'I'll help if they come to me', then that leaves tribal women at the mercy of the religious and government interveners already at the show.

FRANK MAC SKASY NRR
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Upper Willis Street PO
Wellington 1, New Zealand
1 October 1982

I find myself more in agreement with Harry Andruchak when he states that Hypatia

Cluster should work within the established spaceflight organisations. Competition and diversity may be a fine theory for profit-making companies, but for small, non-profit organisations with special goals, I believe that unity is the key to success... I would suggest to all the space-promoting groups that they become one, united group. Under one banner, they could become an extremely powerful lobbying group and would achieve much more, in much less time.

some of ((I've already stated/my views. I think there is a place for a group appealing to a segment of the public, as opposed to lobbying government or big business. As people are drawn in by a special-interest appeal group, they can be led to work on the 'powers-that-be' through the 'big' space-lobby organisation. This is similar to the approach taken by many feminist groups -- some are outreach groups, recruiting (as it were) women who, if they decide to go on to lobbying, join a lobby group. New recruits are often too intimidated by a well-known, large lobby organisation, if only because they feel they can't contribute (everyone else is far more talented, knowledgeable, etc). Or they don't understand yet the relevance of the topic to themselves. A group like Hypatia Cluster potentially serves as a missionary arm of the space-lobby organisation. // To look at such groups as only for the true believers, and/or only for those who want to lobby governments etc, is to take too narrow a view. For those who wish to lobby at that level, I agree, one big powerful group has more impact than a lot of little ones.--JHW))

KIM HUETT
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Australia
31 August 1982

I would like to see Julie Vaux do something a little different now and then. I enjoy her drawings of the Comorri races, but this is not stretching her artistic ability to its limit which every artist must do to get the most of her (or his) ability... I would really like to see her try a non-Comorri heroic female cover.

In reply to Julie's comments about fanartists, I don't think they are considered fringe fans. That is a gross exaggeration on her part. However I will agree that any fanartist who complains because most people really cannot appreciate their art is being extremely foolish. You cannot blame people because their makeup mentally does not allow them to appreciate art in the same way as an artist. Of course if one is to blame people for something that they cannot help, then one should not be surprised if these same people are not very interested in making friends.

KATHLEEN GLANCY
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Edinburgh, EH3 6PD
SCOTLAND

The McCaffrey article, while quite original, stretched the point a bit too far, I rather thought. I had this

surreal vision of Flar discovering a bundle of hides on which are set out some utterly incomprehensible stories about a collection of incomprehensible people flying about Between in an incomprehensible machine, and in a fit of mania deciding to translate them into Pernese prose and get Robinton to persuade the general population of Pern to buy them.

JEANNE GOMOLL
2018 Jenifer St.
Madison, WI 53704
USA

For so many women, rape is no abstract, unexperienced topic of conversation...I am appalled... at how many close friends of mine

have been raped...around 40%...and my experience/friendships have tended to be among women who are more than usually competent and physical capable. I fear that the number is considerably higher among women in rural, more traditional settings.

The question was asked, in a study of men selected from a random sample of the U.S. population, whether they would consider rape if they were completely sure of being able to get away with it without being punished. An astonishing 35% admitted that yes, indeed, they would consider rape. These are not convicted rapists, but your everyday, next-door neighbor and co-worker.

To me, this points toward a personal 'solution' --or at least a route toward a temporary response for women...that solution is that men be convinced that it is more difficult to be assured that crimes against women will go unpunished....a response that's going to be effective for me now, for women now, until the legal establishment starts reflecting our society's changing moral and cultural complexion. I want women to start thinking of themselves and behaving as if they were the strong people they are rather than accepting our culture's traditional image of women as weak, incapable girls. It seems to me that a large proportion of rape occurs because men are convinced of the unlikelihood of punishment right from the start: that they can threaten women or young girls with further violence and scare them into keeping their violation a secret. Or that most women have accepted so much of the cultural myth of rape that they can be relied upon to themselves feel guilty after they've been raped, enough to ensure at least the probability that they will not report the crime, especially in those most frequent cases of rape involving friends and/or relatives.

A close friend of mine was a counsellor of rapists up in Waupun prison a few years ago... Over and over again, the men told her how outraged they were that they were being held at fault...most of them assumed that this was an act...that should not be classified as a 'crime'...that it was not wrong...and that they would do it again when they got out of prison, because it was not a crime that they believed they could easily be found out or punished for....The image of powerless women as seen by these rapists came across. And it seems to me that if more men thought of women less as being powerless, and at least

as potentially willing to fight back or at least to call them for their actions, we'd see a decline in rapes.

GARY RAWLINGS
P O Box 145
Mt Druitt, NSW 2770
16 July 1982

Has anyone thought of legalising prostitution as a method of lowering the incidence of rape?

I have no figures to support me, but surely some percentage of rapes committed happen only due to the mans inability to get sexual satisfaction through more orthodox outlets. If he had access to females who were legal and easily accessible, wouldn't he use this avenue rather than go out and risk a jail term, even his life, by committing rape? Also, another benefit of legalisation would be that girls in the game could be required by law to undergo a medical examination, say every three months, thus helping to reduce the spread of Venereal Disease.

((Studies have shown that rapists are unlikely to be willing to pay for sex even when prostitutes are available; apparently 'paying for it' is, to them, demeaning, while 'taking it' isn't.**There are other good reasons for legalising prostitution, of course, but as a deterrent for rape, it's not a solution.

**This view is supported by the comments in Jeanne Gomoll's letter. --JHW))

((The above 'loc' from Gary was first published as an editorial in his fanzine, POSITRON 9.))

I ALSO HEARD FROM: Nic Howard, Sally Ann Syrjala, and Joan Dick, all of whom supported my decision to publish so much material on rape; Mat Coward, who made a lot of stirring remarks about feminists which I found difficult to take seriously; Garth Spencer; Susan Crites; and Rick Kennett.



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THE DIARY

Well, I've moved. That's the big news. I'm now settled in at Eric Lindsay's place in Falconbridge, and into my office at CSIRO on the campus of the University of Sydney, and I've even rented a room in a group house in a suburb near the University, so I can have a place to stay when the trains aren't running, or I want to stay in town for a meeting or a party, or when I simply can't face the effort of riding the train 1½ hours back to Falconbridge. This is being written during the Christmas-New Year holiday 1982.

I have started a separate diaryzine, modelled after Arthur Hlavaty's (though I don't expect to reach the heights of writing and thoughtfulness in his zine). It will be available for editorial whim only, and the timing of its production is undecided as now. I've found I haven't room to say much in this zine, nor do I necessarily want to reach the same audience with more personal stuff. I see a diaryzine as much of a letter-substitute, and so it will probably also go to non-fannish friends. If you're particularly interested in being considered for the mailing list, do let me know. No promises, however.

In general, things are going Very Well for me just now, and I'm very much looking forward to 1983. The best to all of you in the New Year.

