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POSTAGE



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CHAO VI

OCTOBER 1971

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which is irregularly but hopefully every second month
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Contributions are welcome. We want discussion of Sf, fantasy and any
allied subject. Above all we want it discussed as though normal
literary standards applied. We need art work, serious and cartoon.

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Editorial

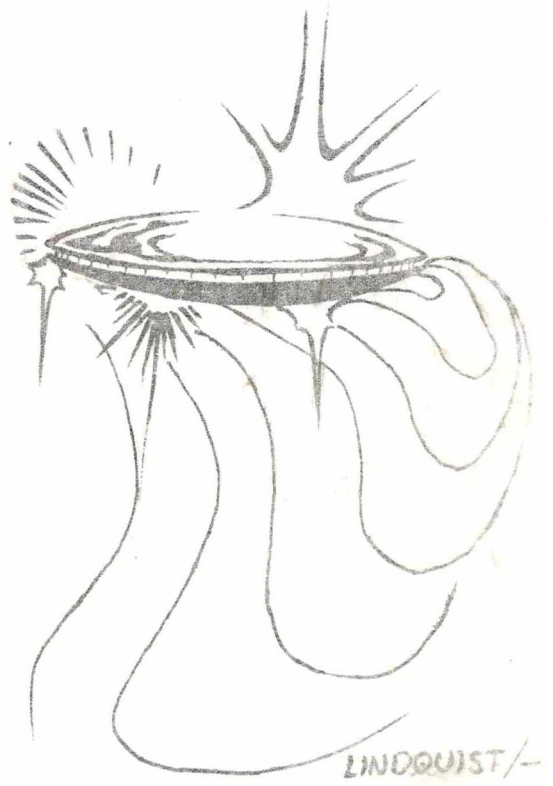
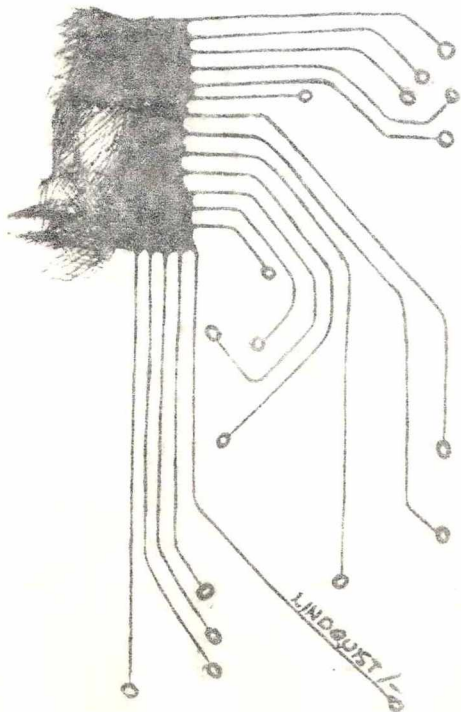
There is a sense of satisfaction in sitting down to cut the stencil of the last page of CHAO VI. That means the other 38 pages are settled. I know the numbers only go to 38 but I didn't count the art work... plates are not usually counted in the text anyhow, but the truth is that I forgot to consider it in the numbering.

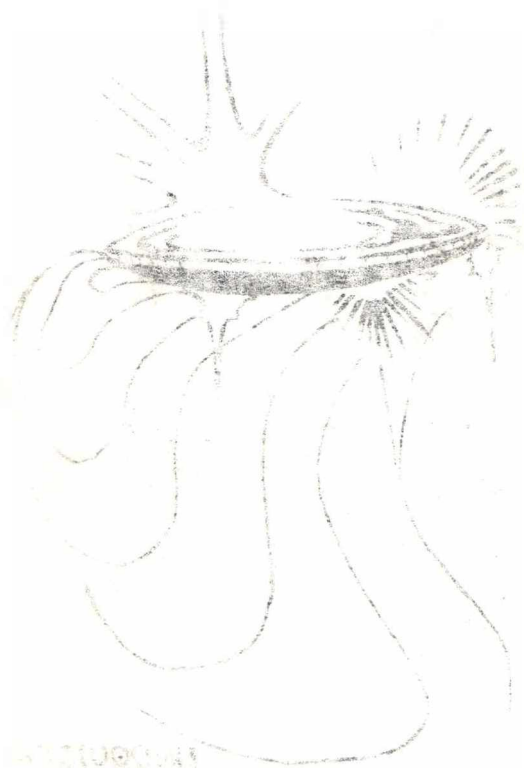
I regret that there was a factual error in MISE last issue. It was not Goldsmith (who did write a history of Ireland which I have and which led me astray) but Thomas Moore and the Irish savant Dr Petrie. Sorry about that. This issue is only 14 pages larger than planned, that is only half as big again. Sorry about that too as it will cost me a lot more money to post, twice as much actually.

CHAO VII will be bigger and brighter than ever. It will contain... a special Christmas cover illustration by Daryl Lindquist IF I don't lose it etc. It is quite an unusual one. Also a comic piece by John Bangsund IF he gets it to me on time. Also a cartoon by Jack Wodhar IF it don't get lost etc, Also a magnificent further contribution by J.W. IF I don't lose it. Also an article by Iain Ban IF he gets it here on time. Also the tale of my wanderings in Scotland IF I get time to write it. Also Bert Chandler will have one of his books put through the mincer IF I can find the book- its been waiting on my "desk" since last March and planned for every issue. Also, IF I get time to write it, a dissertation on sex and sadism in Heinlein. Also further art work by Daryl Lindquist IF I can afford the stencil. Also lots of wonderful letters IF you blokes write them and post them to me instead of Ron Clarke or someone This should rival SFC 19 in size. Also I am going to run off some extra and sell them to everybody at the Adelaide con so I can eat there. Also the price is going up.

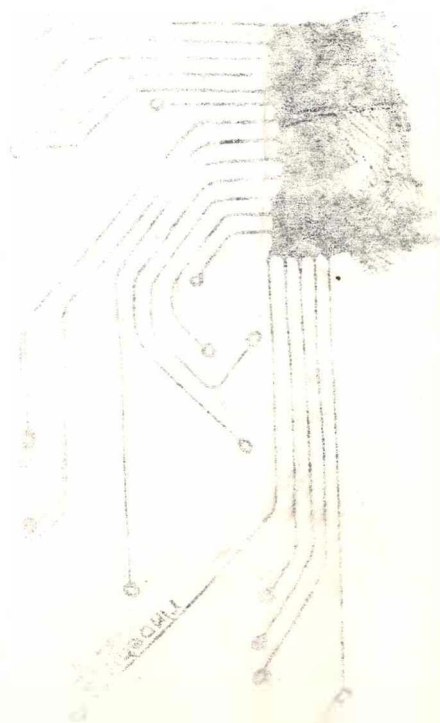
CHAO is now available for sale at the Space Age Bookshop, 317 Swanston St Melbourne. Mark the words, "for sale"

Now before we close this editorial and hence end CHAO VI ready for the printer (that's me) I should like to say that we are prepared to add another page or two if you have something to say or something you have drawn and which you would like inflicted on the long suffering world. Now if we don't get this Christmas issue out before Christmas may we offer you in anticipation a Merry Christmas. In any case this applies to overseas readers who are most unlikely to get it before Christmas unless the Post Office reforms its ways, and they seem pretty hardened in iniquity, we hold little hope for them. Let Plato speak...."If beggars and persons who hunger after private advantages, take the reins of the state, with the idea that they are priveleged to snatch advantage from their power, all goes wrong."





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TO DO OR DIE

by John J. Alderson

In no other words could the alternatives of an objective and subjective approach to a problem be stated. Those words in our heading are taken from the concluding line of Burns' Scots Wha Hae which is subtitled "Robert Bruce's Address to his Army, Before the Battle of Bannockburn" - the most passionate National Song ever written, and amazingly set to the dourest of dour Lowland tunes

Humanity is divided into the objective and the subjective types. Women of course, if they have the correct number of chromosomes are subjective, and theoretically men are objective but as these terms are so often merely relative to the point of view this does not always follow. Literature is however subject to a more reliable subdivision. On the whole Australian fiction has been overawed by the nature of the country so that the characters move and are influenced by the massive backdrop of drought, heat, bushfires, floods and politicians. They are victims of the machine and their acts and struggles are those necessary for survival. Our fiction is subjective in mood and theme. By way of contrast Aboriginal myth is usually objective, the characters of the Dreamtime actually "create" the country and they are in particular the ancestors or totem ancestors of the present day story-tellers.

The questions that the writer of a piece of historical fiction has to ask himself and answer are simple and few. If the answers were simple and few he wouldn't have a book to write. The main action of the story is determined and the actors' participation is known. He may ask, Why did they do this...? How did this come about...? or What sort of characters were these people...? So that usually such a work becomes a study in character and motivation. When writing a contemporary story the background is as is, the characters unlimited, the story undetermined. An author asks What would happen if these sort of characters interacted...? or In this situation what would these characters do...? or If So-and-so did this, what would happen...? In speculative fiction, that is fiction not fixed in time or background the author can ask.. How would these characters react if this happened...? or If somebody did so-and-so what would happen...? In the latter two cases the question resolves into the objective and the subjective question...the objective question being What would happen if so-and-so were done, whilst the subjective question is, What would be the reaction under such-and-such circumstances. This division of literature holds good whatever the subject matter and whatever the story or theme.

When H.C. Wells published his "scientific romances" as he called them he had no intention of creating a new genre of writing. In a way he followed in the footsteps of Jules Verne and many others ancient and modern. Both Verne and Wells were born teachers and the purpose of their works was to teach. Verne wished to popularise the latest discoveries, scientific or otherwise and his Five Weeks in a Balloon, Among the Cannibals and Round the World in Eighty Days are purely adventure stories giving a great deal of "scientific" information (where "science" refers to all sorts of things from geography to aerial navigation). Ballantine The Coral Island etc set out to do exactly the same thing. Wells not only wished to do this but he had a socialological aim in mind as well. Since then however the term "science fiction" has come into use to describe almost everything until the position has become nonsensical. To help the situation some genius suggested that Sf stand for speculative fiction. Except that what fiction is not speculative.

However all this great mass of fiction resolves into the two groups of objective and subjective fiction. Can this help?

It would appear to the writer that the basic idea behind "science fiction" was, apart from teaching and preaching, to speculate upon what would happen if or when such-and-such was invented or what you will. This is the objective question. Much reflection upon our part strengthens our conviction that the objective approach is the right one, not that science itself is wholly objective. But this approach, the asking of the objective question seems the most in line with the idea of speculating upon what would happen if somebody did this or that. We realize that by drawing a boundary we thus remove from the corpus of science fiction such classics as The Story of the Three Little Pigs, Alice in Wonderland, and The Man in the High Castle. This is no reflection on their value either as literature or a constructive way of passing a long evening.

Wells' The Time Machine of course falls into this objective approach. Because of this invention the time traveller meets his doom. Because of the use of another discovery in The Invisible Man that unfortunate has a pretty miserable time and he too meets his death. Wells was a little pessimistic, nowadays they always end up with the girl on a bed. I don't propose to go through the entire range of science fiction and explain how because of something objective that someone did the story happened. But it must be immediately realized by anyone with any knowledge of the great breadth of speculative fiction that this classification is only a very small part of the genre.

If however we consider a rather wider field of speculative fiction that has some scientific basis, in other words stories that would be possible after some scientific advance or other we find another group of quite good and serious literature. This retains the original objective nature of a background which man has advanced into but which is itself however subjective to that background. The book we discussed recently, Clarke's A Fall of Moondust is such a book. Such a story is possible

after this scientific advance but does not happen because of it. It is therefore a possibility that springs remotely, not immediately out of the scientific or technological advance. It only differs from ordinary mainstream, or general fiction by its setting. Its subjective approach fits it better for the stories of fantasy to be discussed later, but which because of its scientific basis and because of the long habit of considering this sub-type as science fiction we leave in the true science fiction classification as a subtype.

There is a third type of story that moves against a back-ground of the stars, complete with spaceships and little green men, and which cannot be seriously considered as speculative fiction, and known commonly as "space-operas". These are only fantasies usually cooked with pseudo-science. Here again we reluctantly class them as science fiction, mainly because they are generally objective in approach and their goodness or badness is to be determined upon their merits as a story, not upon their classification as a lesser subgroup of science-fiction.

The fourth group are objective stories whose science is so vastly advanced that it is far beyond the present realm of possibility, as was the helicopter when da Vinci invented it. Because of the surprising advances science can make we still have to regard these stories as science fiction, more particularly so as the author's advance is almost wholly objective.

We have examined very briefly the type of stories that were objective in their approach and/or set in a world that man has fashioned. Now it stands to reason that if a story is subject to the circumstances of its background then it is subjective. This can be a subtle distinction. If man develops a hormone that injected into cats make them chase dogs then the story is objective and belongs to science fiction. If however the author makes cats chase dogs then the story is subjective. By the author we mean some act that was not a deliberate act by the part of man. Stories can be complicated as The Day of the Triffids. The triffids were the result of man's biological warfare, the blindness of the population an act of nature. The simplest subjective story is therefore obviously one that is set in a world and time very similar to our own. If it were our world it would be merely mainstream fiction. Dick's The Man in the High Castle is such a story. It looks very different as it is set in an alternate universe where the Axis countries won the World War. Otherwise apart from the different social aspects the story is very conventional. Morris' The Well at the World's End is a very different story but still in the same category. This type of fantasy does not strain one's credibility. The characters do not change the essential nature of the background of the story, they act against it as a backdrop.

The second type of subjective fiction is vastly different. It too is set in a different world or under different conditions. It abounds in wonders, remarkable things happen at the drop of a hat. Heinlein's Glory Road is one such book. Conan of the Isles is part of a whole series.

For those who were disappointed about Alice in Wonderland and Peter Pan this is where they fit, a whole amazing world of their own where anything can happen. Often this world is given a pseudo-scientific touch as it is popular for alternate universes and futures. Remote futures and remote pasts are common so that most of the "space operas" actually belong to this classification. If anyone compares the corresponding sections in each group they will note little more than the objective-subjective classification as the difference.

A third group comes with the introduction of non-human identities. Wells' War of the Worlds tells of a Martian invasion of Earth. This happened independently of man's own progress so he becomes subject to circumstances. Orpheus invading hell is an objective story because a man does the invading, not an alien. This type of story accounts for a whole host of speculative fiction but it is not science fiction because it takes place because of an alien's science, not the science of man. We can add to this section too, all stories of mutants unless deliberately made by man. Here too is a subtle distinction. If by some means man cultivates his brain power to become an esper then this is science fiction. If it happens by accident then it is fantasy, and as espers are so far removed from normal man we cannot but consider them as alien. Again as before the distinction lies in the question of whether the story is objective or subjective.

Finally we come to the last subsection of the fantasy group. That is stories that don't concern humans, or only so very indirectly. This group has a long and honorable ancestry, Aesop wrote a whole book of such fables but which all carry a moral for man. Animal stories such as Davis' Manshy has little contact with man and little moral, but Orwell's Animal Farm is Aesop told like a Calvinist sermon. The latter part of Gulliver's Travels is a very bitter satire. But unless this type of story has this type of application, or unless it is a straight out educational story (also quite common) then they have little interest. However Aesop's fables are being continually rewritten set on Vega 1 or somewhere and passed off as science fiction. This is the fourth type of fantasy.

Into these eight subsections all speculative fiction can be fitted. Of these the first alone qualifies for that select brand of speculation known as science fiction, that is that type of story in which the author speculates on what the effects will be of a defined technological movement. The other three subsections are in a way so similar that they could be lumped together as stories where the author uses a technological movement as a background rather than a theme, and the term "science fantasy" is probably the best way to consider them. The fantasy group proper has the background, atmosphere and situation provided for man not by him. This subsection is usually used for stories with a "message", eg. Swift's Gulliver's Travels is a satire, as is Orwell's Animal Farm,

As a table these are so arranged..

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| A. Science fiction | 1. Science fiction proper |
| Science fantasy | 2. Incidental science fiction |
| | 3. Space operas |
| | 4. Super science fiction |
| B. Fantasy | 1. Common fantasies |
| | 2. Marvellous fantasies |
| | 3. Alien contact fantasies |
| | 4. Alien fantasies |

Using this system a story can be readily assigned to its subsection. Of course there will be endless debate on some stories. The real difficulty now lies in not assigning a story to one of these subsections but to determine where "mainstream" literature ends and this "speculative" literature starts. It may horrify many to be told that there is no dividing line at all. Like going around a curve, there is no actual point where one changes direction; like a river entering the sea, where is the line that divides the two? And of course quality does not enter the question at all. Another bugbear is the definition of "science". Would librarianship be considered a science? If you don't think so then ask a librarian. The invention of pantyhose has allowed dresses to get shorter and shorter without the girls dying of 'flu, which in turn has lessened the demand for wool which in turn is sending us woolgrowers broke...is, or was this a theme for science fiction? Because of such borderline cases we doubt if any practical dividing line can ever be drawn. But this is not important. The important thing is that no-one who wishes to be reasonably well read and reasonably normal in his outlook can afford to read exclusively on one side of that illusive line.

REVIEW

SCYTHROP No 23, June 1971, 20 pgs, edited by John Bangsund G.P.O. Box 4946 Melbourne 3001, 40c etc.

SCYTHROP No 24, August 1971, 4 pgs, as above.

The sad degeneration in size John tells us is purely a temporary measure to keep faith with his customers whom he promised a bi-monthly. However he is also working on a rather large tribute to John Campbell which should appear soon...with No 25 actually. No 23 contains a rather sad autobiographical editorial, John being out of work and having bad dreams and a cat to feed. He gives some details of the finance involved in publishing a fanzine. There are some letters including a long one from David Crompton whose portrait adorns the cover. The book reviews by George Turner and Henry D. Couchman are surprising; we have read some books of the same name by the same authors but they were obviously not the same books as read by these reviewers.

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by My Gentle Self.

"I would live in England except there are two things there I can't stand; coalsmoke and Englishmen"....Heine.

I may as well warn the readers of this chapter in my autobiography that I did not get on at all well in England and left it with a bad taste in my mouth and a pious hope that the sea would swallow the entire population for the benefit of mankind. If I am less than just suffice it to say that at this stage it is not through malice.

"Oh Cricklewood, oh Cricklewood,
 You stole my youth away,
 For I was young and innocent,
 And you were old and grey."

So John B. Keane sang of his experience in England, J.B. being an Irishman who returned to Ireland from England. And Liverpool is where so many Irishmen stay, indeed the Liverpool Irishman is known throughout the world as the very worst of Irishmen. I had a mate once, and I use the word "mate" in the old Australian sense, and he was a Liverpool Irishman, and he was one of the finest men I've ever worked with. He cooked a good meal and told a good story. If you read this Pat, take a bow; I would still like to hear that story about the old black gin. But this is not my story, Liverpool was not for me, I was to London, and that by bus. Of that journey I remember very little except that the "nervous complaint" I suffered with in Ireland attacked me at an inopportune moment and I had to ask the driver to find a toilet and suffer acute embarrassment while he seemed to drive half way across England. One other fact was that we went through Stratford-on-Avon where a great writer of fantasy was born, but more of that when I returned as a traveller. The final three hours were spent in the proverbial London traffic jam. Boy would the Victorian Government go to town in London with their bulldozers pushing over old buildings. They probably hope that will be their reward in heaven.

A seasoned traveller now, I was bound for the Youth Hostel. Naturally asked the directions and naturally went by Tube. The station platform was one mass of humanity (well in humanoid shape), and this at eight o'clock at night. Waited for it must have been a quarter hour before

a train came, the explanation being that there had been a hold up. Then occurred one of those priceless exhibitions of English logic (the Australians are not quite so bad under such circumstances though we have no room to blow). The train stopped and the doors opened and a great mass of humanoids on the platforms surged forward pushing into the already overcrowded carriages, carrying with them those passengers who wanted to get off there. Almost immediately behind was a second train, and behind that another, and this went on for a quarter hour before sanity returned (measured by the absence of people) and I picked up my bag and got aboard. The train went on and on and eventually I got worried and asked someone about the station I wanted, to discover I should have changed about ten stations back onto another line. The Londoner knows his Tubes and expects even foreigners to have the instinct to change trains at the right station. Give me the Metro and the French, they don't let you get lost. But I say this for the Londoner that although he may not know anything else or if he does will not condescend to share that information, with information about the Tubes he speaks freely, happily and exactly -except for station changing which is of course too obvious.....

I wanted somewhere to live and a job. I went to a housefinder...a species of shark who culls the morning papers for rooms and houses to let and sells the information. I registered for a quid and went through a great heap of cards. You know where you stand in England on such things, No colonials, no coloured, no Irishmen, no Australians, no dogs, no children, but let Hilaire Belloc sum it up,

"I will gather and carefully make my friends

Of the men of the Sussex Weald."

Saw a fair bit of London hunting a room and finally found that the cards were weeks old. But it cost me a lot of money in fares. Finally went to the Y.M.C.A. and stated my plight and was directed to Wandsworth to a tiny street hidden by factories, a little village in itself where everybody knew the other and the nearest other streets of houses were blocks away. The landlady was a fine old country lady, West Country I think. There was one other boarder, also from the West, a small bespectacled fellow of who more anon, except for now he once wanted to fight me and he hadn't been drinking either. That always amused me. The houses were two storied terraces with a back yard just big enough for two cats to sleep in and at the end of it rose the huge wall that held up the main railway line to Clapham Junction. The line was level with the roof top and every three minutes a train thundered by. Was informed by the way that it was the busiest railway station in the world, obviously by people who had not had the misfortune to see Flinders St. It took two hours for enough dust to accumulate so you would write your name on the table. The landlady was an excellent cook....

Got a job nearby in a factory making car window-frames. I worked on a milling machine though I did a turn at glazing. Nearby, so I was informed, was the "smallest" river in the world, I just forget who piddled there.

October 1971

CHAO VI

12.

One afternoon I got a piece of brass in my eye and when they decided it was the job for an expert to get it out I was given some tram tokens and sent half way across London to an eye hospital, and this with tears streaming down by face and nearly blind! After, to my mind, pointless sight test (I couldn't see the board with the injured eye) I climbed onto a bed and a Japanese doctor shone an extremely bright light into my eye, and said, "Have a look at this will you." After everyone in the room and half the rest of the hospital staff had looked in my eye I asked when they were going to get the piece of brass out, to be told it was long since out (doubtless flooded out with my tears). Then I wanted to know what was so special about my eye. "Oh it just as an abnormal amount of blue pigmentation." I was not long at the hospital but the journey there and back took five hours. I still think it was pretty callous of the management to send me off like that.

Whilst there mending my shattered fortunes I attended the Putney Baptist church, one of these magnificent buildings they erected last century when the world was expanding etc etc, with amongst other things a lovely cast-iron balcony inside to accomodate the congregation. Now it could accomodate all the worshippers alone. However it was painted in colour, every flower picked out. The kids had done it, hundreds of man-hours of work, but it looked wonderful. The other thing I noticed was at youth meetings and the like it was difficult to see the other side of the room through the tobacco smoke...not that Baptists are any more worldly than anyone else. In Bradford the Baptists would never of dreamed of smoking. After a few months one of the leaders came to me one Sunday and said, "What about dipping down into your murky past and giving us a talk next week." I said I would have been delighted but that I was leaving at the end of the coming week and they had left it too late. I may say that I was never at any church for more than a few weeks without being asked to speak to one of the auxiliary meetings. The local churches know my wicked ways much too well to make that mistake.

However to return to this inoffensive young fellow that was my fellow boarder. He had the misfortune whilst I was there to become schizoid, and in his other moments he thought he was Jesus Christ and was all for rebuking the world for its wrong. But he ran up against a difficulty, his knowledge of the Bible was scanty though he began to study it a great deal, he applied to me for ready digested knowledge. I explained very carefully and very often that when Christ returned he would do so in the clouds and every eye should behold him, which was a little dempening to his delusion. May say of course that prior to this he had shown no interest in religion. But this is an unfinished story, I don't know what happened to him as I left about this stage.

Contrary to popular opinion, London is not a good place to study the theatre, if it is anything. The theatre is very expensive and hard to get to in point of time, London traffic being little faster than walking.

If I was in a hurry I rode the bicycle. As for studying, the British Museum which has the famous collection of books will not allow any student access unless he can prove he cannot read the said books elsewhere. The other libraries are part of an interconnecting system and the same books are available all over Britian, it is an excellent system. However I haunted the art galleries and attended lectures on art. Up from Trafalgar Square was a street of second hand book shops where I spent more time than money. The prices were too high. Indeed I only remember buying two, Old Gorot which is a fine novel and the second a wonderful translation of The Tain by Mary Hutton which appears otherwise unknown. I believe her collection of books on things Celtic has been donated to the National University in Canberra we hope as a nucleus of a Department of Celtic Studies.

So with the summer I headed off, along the road of Chaucer and his pilgrims to Canterbury. The Cathedral was in the middle of a ploughed paddock, ploughed by German bombs. Their accuracy amazes me, to destroy everything else and leave the cathedral. British bombing in Cologne was just as accurate. This Cathedral is the one of Murder in the Cathedral which I later saw performed in St Giles Cathedral in Edinburgh. When Augustine came here with his monks there was already an ancient Celtic church nearby, as there were all over England. That night I went to see the local theatre group perform Mary Rose, James Barry's haunting play that is set in the Hebrides, possibly the finest fantasy play yet written, excepting perhaps The Tempest. I loved the part where the bare-footed boatboy explains how he and his father go to Aberdeen and share a room and attend the University because an education is the most wonderful thing in the world.

It was in Kent that I saw the apples in flower and was not impressed. But I saw sheep shearing and was impressed. A little tend was erected in the middle of the field and all around were shorn sheep. They tie their legs and lay them on a box and get to work with the hand shears. Twenty or thirty a day would not be exaggerating.

The first Chritian martyrdom took place in St Albans, north of London ... the passive actor being a chappie named Alban. The Cathedral has a nave of enormous length and a tower built partly of Roman brick. Roman brick was used quite a lot in the Dark Ages and Medeival times and they are still in good condition. They are a flat brick about half the depth of the Australian brick (British and American bricks are different and both smaller). They are red of course. This was a Roman settlement and nearby I looked over a Roman villa with its heating under the floor (an excellent idea, can't think why we don't use it). There was also a Roman Amphitheatre carved into the soil. If the spectators sat on the ground it must have been cold on the bottom. Having open air theatres in Britian must have been the biggest absurdity of Roman Colonial rule. Their motto apparently was, Where-vere you are, do as Rome does.

Colchester interested me greatly. It was the Roman port of Britian and from here they exported great quantities of wheat. The Britons had a mechanical harvester. In fact the Celtic people were as advanced as we were until we developed the stationary engine. The City takes its name from Old King Cole and his immortal fiddlers. Nor is it the only piece of folk lore in which it appears. The buildings, particularly the really old ones are made from plundered Roman brick which look as though they will easily last another two thousand years. Boadicea and her men completely destroyed it as well as St Albans and London, putting to death some 70, 000 Romans. Her nation, the Iceni have left us a word in English Ikey, and is the origin of our own term, "Don't get off your bike, I'll pick up your pump." She wore her hair in a pony-tail.

If one really wants to see England the best method is by serice coach. These buses wander in and out of the most surprising and delightful places and are liable to wander into farms where the driver has a sweetheart or a daughter he is keeping an eye on, places where the tourist would never dream of going, not in a hundred years. When I first arrived in England, I took buses from Southampton to Bath. This is the country Constable painted and the dreamy beauty he put in his paintings is the dreamy beauty of the country. It is very very beautiful country. I saw it when I first arrived through eyes of wonder and when I came back, bitter and savage at heart it still charmed me. This England is very lovely.

The bus goes from village to village and as the passengers get on or off one notices the subtle difference in the way they walk, the way they hold themselves, in their complexions, in their speech, ever varying and becoming ever more beautiful the further westward one goes. My great grandfather came from Cornwall. Village life is something particularly English (as distinct from Continental towns) and full of life and vitality. Of recent years there has been a great deal of migration to these villages from other parts of Britian and other parts of the world and village opinion has hardened against them as they destroy that which is essentially English. I agree with them too, this is too precious a heritage for the country to lose. As Chesterton summed it up in an earlier day, "We are the men of England who have not spoken yet."

Most of these villages are singularly beautiful. Built of course when carriage was by wheelbarrow the buses of today have to squeeze to get along the streets and around the corners. But widen a street or round a corner and start a revolution. These people know the quality of life that is priceless. So the roads wind around and back and forth, narrow strips of bitumen, to quote Chesterton again, "The rolling English drunkard made the rolling English road." Well he may have. One has to drive slowly and see the country.

I arrived in Bath on a Sunday and attended the Baptist church (please don't get the idea that I am or have ever been a Baptist but their

churches are plentiful in England and I am a dissenter). Remember in those days I was a beardless youth and after the service the minister asked me if I would like to stay for a youth meeting down below in the crypt. I was given a guardian angel, a very attractive and very beautiful girl. This is easy to say, there were dozens of them, all very beautiful and all very attractive. She looked after me and made sure I was well fed and not left on my lonesome. Reminds me of that wonderful country dreamed of in a poem of Shaw Neilson "where all the girls have lovely legs." So a dozen or so surrounded me and finally one said "Why don't you settle down here and get married?"* But then I was bound for Scotland but I must concede that not going back there was one of the follies of my youth.

Cornwall is a wild place, extremely broken. With Scotland it shares the honour of not having been conquered by either the Romans or the English. More power to their elbow. I believe they have a national movement for a free Cornwall and they have just as much chance of being a successful country in their own right as many of the African countries have. The roads in Cornwall have grades up to one on three, so does parts of England. Mountainous Scotland makes special mention of grades of more than one in eight on the maps! But then road engineering began in Scotland. Visited Tintagel Castle, reputed by some to be where King Arthur held court but at present Archaeologists are digging somewhere else. All history books state that the Cornish language died out last century, yet only a few years ago a play was successfully staged in Cornish. But they are a very close race.

Legend has it that Christianity first came to England in these regions, brought hither by Joseph of Arimathea. The Cornish miners used to sing,

"Joseph was a tin merchant,
A tin merchant was he.."

He is reputed to have left his staff at Glastonbury, thrust into the earth, and which taking root exists to this day. Glastonbury is in Somerset, home of Zomerzet zider as they say it there. Once it was a lake village of no mean culture judging by the excellent metal work in the museum, and later it became a church site. Here it is reputed that King Arthur and his most unfaithful wife lie buried together in sacred ground. The great church has gone and only the stumps remain set about

.....

* Inadvertently I misquoted Neilson. The verses run thus...

"There was a little dream of mine,
In the cold wind it grew and grew,
And the ludicrous moonbeams made
Strange countries white and blue,
Where all the citizens were girls
With most delightful legs to see:
Bravely they beat about my heart
Stirring the little dream in me."

Witnesses of Spring P 16. Thought you would not like to miss that.

with lawn with the double grave in the midst. Obviously if he lies buried here he cannot have been carried off to the Vale of Apples as Tennyson relates. It should not be long now before archaeologists and historians bring this man from the realm of legends into history.

At the risk of offending all my Welsh friends I am going to dismiss Wales in two paragraphs and not devote a full episode to it. This is no reflection on my delight of Wales or the great time I had there. I had timed my appearance in Llangollen (which I heard mangled to Langollen on the A.B.C. a few days ago. The llan is difficult enough but the central "ll" is merely sounded as a "th") to coincide with the Eisteddfod. Luckily I had booked at the Youth Hostel and so was sure of accomadation. Llangollen is a small town and is swelled mightifully with this annual international event and beds are scarce. Two New Zealand girls came to the hostel and asked for beds and were told to wait but not liking the wardens' tone they left in a huff and tried in the town, only to be sent back to the hostel. New Zealanders are touchy at the way lesser mortals speak to them and the Welsh have their own bluff manner, and the two clashed. The warden was somewhat amused and told me of the incident, and anyone who confides in an Australian is more likely to be wholly mad than bad. The Eisteddfod was held in a huge tent pitched on a convenient green hillside so that the whole thing had a delightful country air about it. There I saw my first Indian dancing and have admired it ever since though once mentioning it to a classical ballemaniac I was in danger of being slain for heresy, you see they just can't be any good as the don't dance in the "classical" mode. He was an Australian too.

Despite Wales being mainly hillside the roads are relatively flat. But there was one huge rise I remember though where it went I don't know and hours of searching in my library fails to discover the place. But I went there to visit the grave of Dafydd ap Gwilym the greatest of Welsh poets. It is in a lonely churchyard on a hillside together with a yew tree some thousand years or more old. He was the first of the modern Welsh poets, one of the greatest Mediaval poets. His nature poetry is only equalled by Wordsworth and he also wrote love poetry. So nicely he writes of a woman's comment on a man in love....

"Let him wait then till Doomsday wake him;

Fie on the fool, the Devil take him."

Ah the tender-heartedness of the femine sex.

It was here in an empty hostel, with the well a several hundred yards walk and no water, and me with eight days growth on my chin, that I decided to grow a beard. I had intended to return to Ireland for this event, but praise be to Wales, she decided me to do this wonderful thing so bristling with eagerness I set forth to conquer the rest of Wales.

Only one city in England ever took my heart...indeed the only other city I ever loved was Edinburgh. That was York. Well I remember the first night I spent there, shortly after arriving in England, groping

around the wall by starlight, and discovering the ancient river wall, not knowing then that one had existed. An archaeological triumph! York has its ancient walls intact complete with gates. Parts of Roman work remain, and some of this has been converted with the English love for the past, into toilets. Perhaps the Victorian Housing Commission could spare a few old buildings for dykes, heaven knows, Melbourne needs both. Was delighted with the old Stained-glass Workers Guild church with its very ancient glass. It is so different from the soaring mass of York Minster which is one of the loveliest buildings ever built.

Most of the religious establishments in Northern England were founded by Irish or Scottish missionaries, many regrettably now in ruins. Partly due of course to the English custom of using churches as castles during wars. Fountains Abbey and Bolton Abbey are both magnificent ruins.

Berwick-on-Tweed is Berwick-on-Tweed. It is neither Scottish or English, and one may read either the Scotsman or Punch there... Scottish papers and magazines are not allowed to stray south of the border. Not that Berwick has any reason to love the English. Having annoyed Edward the English king during the Scottish War of Independence he ordered that everybody, man, woman and child were to be disembowelled alive, and it was only the sight of an unborn child kicking in the gutter made him spare what remained of the population.

I have crossed the Border many times but have never seen it but I knew when it was behind me, going north by the deep sense of welcome stealing deep into the heart, and going south by the sense of unutterable loss.

REVIEW.

GEGENSCHEIN No 3, edited by Eric Lindsay, 56 pgs, 35c. Address 6 Hillcrest Ave, Faulconbridge, N.S.W. 2776.

For an almost first effort on a new duplicator the reproduction of this is very good. So are the contents. The outlay is somewhat experimental, using black ink on green paper. Why the green paper Eric?

There is a number of book reviews, mainly plain straightforward reviews that give some indication of the contents and value of the book. There are some reviews of Fanzines, -incidentally Chao is not Latin for Chaos. Chaos is a oan-word from the Greek. But Eric is right, CHAO is Greek for chaos, the word being derived from "Ha" a yawn which we used for short.

Amused by the picture of Jane who is a somewhat oddly proportioned female. You need a model Eric, definately need a model. The cartoon on the back page is good, we need good cartooning. To sum up Gegenschein the top four in Australian fanzines.

MUTTERINGS IN THE MULGA

From David Grigg

1556 Main Rd
Research
Vic 3095

Dear John,

Received CHAO IV today, quite the best magazine I've had for some time, not excluding the Worm Runner's Digest

You astound me by your incisive and logical attacks on the ideas of Daniken and yet in the same article saying agreeable things about WORLDS IN COLLOSION. I do recall you expressing some agreement with Velikovsky at some past convention, when I wasn't really sure if you meant it. But...

Surely any theory, and especially one so sweeping as that of Velikovsky, must be soundly based on experimental evidence, and also on the weight of the past, proved opinion. (Not all past opinion is proved, of course not, what I mean is that past opinion which has been found to agree with the facts, both past and predicted). Yet Velikovsky's theories do no such thing, rather he rejects out of hand not only a lot of fairly solidly based historical opinion, but also soundly based scientific opinion, and most condemning of all, he ignores the facts. I'm willing to admit that the consensus of opinion in many fields can be argued with, if one chooses to do so, but not factual experience. It's like Ptolemy's epicycle theory of the planets: nice on paper, but it doesn't fit the observational evidence.

I've read WORLDS IN COLLOSION twice, and am still to be impressed by it. Correct me if I'm wrong, but the book sets out to show that the Biblical and mythological events of about the period he discusses are factual, in that they record a close encounter of the Earth with a "comet" which turns out to be Venus, originally captured, or spewed out of Jupiter. Fine. Except that no comet was ever anywhere near the size of a planet, and to use the term to cover normal comets and something as vast as a wandering planet is nothing less than scandalous. But this is only terminology. What does hurt is the idea that when Joshua stopped the motion of the sun, the earth was brought to a halt, rotation-wise, relative to the sun. Even neglecting the incredible forces involved, and the catastrophic inertia of things on the surface of the earth not tied down, even so... Do me a favour John. Take a raw egg from under one of your chickens, and place it on the table. Now spin it. It takes a bit of doing, but once you've got it spinning, reach out and stop it suddenly but gently with your

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fingers, then immediately let go again. What happens? That's called momentum, and it should apply to the liquid core of the Earth. It would be a little difficult to stop its rotation, I think you'll agree. Now not only were these catastrophes caused by the comet-Venus, but also all the plagues of Egypt, ie. a red dust fills the waterways, giving rise to the plague of the rivers of blood. And I'm not sure about the plagues of insects and mice etc, but all those too, I seem to recall being explained by the book. Not a mildly poetic legend is left as being anything but sheer fact. That hurts.

But here's Venus, supposedly bouncing around the solar system like a billiard ball with hiccups, eventually settling down to a moderately stable orbit. Now all the other bodies in the solar system that have evidence to show that they have been captured by their primaries, rather than formed at the same time, have markedly erratic orbits, ie. lengthy ellipses, out of the plane of the ecliptic. It so happens that Venus has the most perfect orbit in the solar system in approaching a circle. It is in the plane of the ecliptic. This would be awesomely co-incidental in Velikovsky's idea, but merely statistical if Venus is a normal planet (Earth's orbit is very close to a circle, but not as close as Venus').

One could go on forever listing the contradictions of known science that Velikovsky uses (without applying, in turn a theory which replaces those facts and fits the observational evidence, the critical test of any new theory in science). It seems to me, that if we apply Occams' Razor, that is, when confronted with two equal theories (even if Vel.'s was equally good, which it isn't), one chooses the simpler. In this case, the theory that God caused all these things to happen as Divine punishment on Egypt is a simpler one than accepting Velikovsky's rubbish. And there's more historical and mythological evidence for that, unlikely as it is..

However, I enjoyed the rest of CHAO, and was very interested in your biography, particularly where you visited Bradford, Works. It so happens I was born there, and indeed lived for many years on the very banks of the River Aire, in a place called Saltire, a model industrial village built by a certain Sir Titus Salt, who used laama wool or something in his mill. Irish blood, maybe? My mother's maiden name was Rowland, which she assured me is Irish in origin...

Yours,

David.

Daniken "misused" three authorities. Metraux which I covered in a sentence, Heyerhahl which occupied almost the entire essay, and Velikovsky which took up one paragraph. Daniken, Heyerdahl and Velikovsky all have one thing in common, a belief that there is historical substance in myths. This is the fundamental controversial point which I did not attack because I believe that this is a valid interpretation of a myth. This leads right back to the fundamentals of Velikovsky's research, and why he began this research. Velikovsky is a doctor of psychology and has spent a life time in controversy with Freud whom he considers to be totally wrong. Thus

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WHEN Freud delved into mythology and Moses, Velikovsky began his own research into the origins of these myths and the history of Moses. From these studies he got the inkling of a series of great catartrophes and from these WORLDS IN COLLISION was born. Springing out of these same studies was a reconstruction of ancient history AGES IN CHAOS and the study of the Oedipus myth OEDIPUS AND AKHNATON. All these works, though tieing in with each other will stand alone and would survive the fall of the others. EARTH IN UPHEAVAL is a mass of archaeological and geological evidence to support WORLDS IN COLLISION. If the sum total of Velikovsky's thesis is true Freudian psychology stands hopelessly and utterly damned. Darwinian evolution has been nailed for ever, and rather little is left of Einstein's Theories of Relativity. Mythology would have a solid basis and archaeology and ancient history would have to adopt different time scales.

So I must correct you in your third paragraph. Velikovsky accepted an historical basis for myths and assumed that Biblical history and a dozen other histories of those ancient times were factual, and these he interpreted in the light of astronomical evidence of the day and archaeological evidence unearthed since. The astronomical aspect therefore comes from contemporary observation, and remember that mathematics was invented by these astronomers for this purpose. Faced with this contemporary evidence is it logical or scientific to dismiss it all because it does not fit some modern assumption? I ask this as a question of science and logic. But please don't be hurt because "not a single mildly poetic legend is left", he did not explain Leda and the swan, or ten thousand other stories. You exaggerate.

Further, I have not bothered with that egg experiment. You misinterpreted the book. Nowhere does Velikovsky speak of the rotation of the earth being stopped though the blurb on the dustjacket reads "the book about the day the earth stopped still"...rather the enormous electrical discharge between the two planets caused it to rotate end for end without altering the normal spin, and this gave the appearance of three days on end or three nights, depending where the observer was. Incidentally when Velikovsky wrote it was believed that the planets did not carry any electrical charge, he said they did. We now know they do. That was one fact he rejected out of hand. Now, you take a gyroscope, get it spinning, then turn it end for end and feel the surges of forces which send miles-high tidal waves over entire continents and washed enormous masses of debris in lateral directions - check on the geological reports of Alaska.

Now Venus which Velikovsky said was hot and the Russian space probe found was hot...Presumably its early orbit was an ellipse one end circling the sun and the other going close to Jupiter. It would pass through the asteroid belt and cross the orbits of Mars and Earth and probably Mercury. Ignoring the asteroids this gives Jupiter, Mars, Venus, Earth, the moon, the Sun and Mercury...my maths. is not good enough to handle a seven body problem but it could result in a circular orbit.

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But what is the conventional theory to account for Venus being hot? De Vaucouleurs in 1956 gave its temperature as 120 deg. F.!

To say that "no comet was ever anywhere near the size of a planet" is a pretty bold statement and against pictorial evidence for there are paintings and sculptures in existence showing Venus with a beard, and identified as Venus long before Velikovsky was born. Evidence sent back from satellites show that every planet has an invisible beard facing away from the sun which presumably would become visible if a body passed close to the sun.

I am sorry to contradict you about Occam's Razor, but the simplest explanation is almost never the right one in science or history and at least historians deplore the tendency of educators to simplify history as it can only be a bastardization of history.

Your mother is probably correct. Rowland is derived from O Rothlain (Rolan), the family comes from County Mayo.

Further note Since writing the above have discovered that Kant speculated on there being planets beyond Saturn and noted that the remoter the planet the more eccentric the orbit and considered that such planets would be properly termed "comets". Thus a planet sized comet is hardly a new idea. Usually when I refer to Velikovsky I use the form...If Velikovsky is to be believed..., a form I use for a lot of other ideas. I don't disbelieve Daniken's theory or accept Velikovsky's as the first did not prove his case and the second presented a plausible case that has yet to be refuted. I don't believe the fundamentals of mathematics as they have not been proved but I accept them as a workable theory most times. But I do maintain that 2×2 does not equal $2+2$ because the second is a linear dimension whilst the first goes into two dimensions - plot this graphically and you'll see what I mean. Algebraically $A+A = 2A$, $A \times A = A^2$. All this is quite frustrating for those who argue with me. Thanks for your comments.

oOo

From Carey Handfield

2 Banoon Rd
South Eltham
Vic 3095

Dear John,

Some people don't know what they have got until they have lost it. At the moment I am reading David's copy of CHAO IV, please put me back on your mailing list.

Although I haven't read either of von Daniken's books I agree with your arguments. Personally I hold with a psychological explanation. That is Daniken's aliens and all gods originated from man's mind. Man has been noted for having a vivid imagination which is always willing to help explain the unexplainable. This of course is just my own personal view, but it would be possible to document a case from physiological,

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psychological, and historical evidence which would probably be more convincing than Daniken's books.

I found your autobiography very interesting and rather refreshing. Recently there have been a number of fannish biographies published in fanzines. To say they were boring pieces is being rather generous. Hence my relief to find that some fans can write reasonable biographies.

My immediate reaction to the third We Don't Believe was-
"For those who believe in the existence of John Bangsund no proof is necessary.
For those who don't believe in the existence of John Bangsund no proof is possible."

On further consideration the meditations of Descartes came to mind, You have heard of Cogito, Ergo, Sum - I think therefore I exist -? In John's case I think "I produce fanzines, therefore I exist!" - is more appropriate. I hope my reflections have helped you,

Cheers

CAREY

You echo Voltaire, If there was no God we would have to invent one. Freud attempted to do just what you suggested, refer to the comment on David's letter. I am personally more interested in what men think of an event than in the event itself. Man is fundamentally a devout and worshipping creature; if he has no God he will find gods.

Could produce that line of red type at some effort which would be hardly worth while. As for your reflections on J.B. let Iain Ban finish what he began.

oOo

from Clive Morley

5 Ireland Ave
East Doncaster
Vic 3109

Dear John,

CHAO gets better and better. No IV is your best yet, except for the cover which didn't come out- after a good look I see a rocket heading towards (into) a gigantic pair of hips, but what was that splodge in the lower left hand corner?

Thank you for the good article on von Daniken's books. Your showing up, of his lack of evidence to solidly support his theories was just what was needed. It captures the imagination but doesn't fit the facts, like so many theories. Still I would like to know who those Sons of God who saw what the daughters of men were fair, were.

Iain Ban's article was spot on. I think that people degenerate/ evolve from Sf reader to fan, as I tried to show in my fictional biography in one of those fanzines with a banal and unpronounceable name. Try investigating has the traits detailed - they're only faults when looked at one way. Try thinking of some fanzines (eg. Fanarchist) as a letter, a sub-

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stituted for conversation, rather than a magazine. The Lonely Hearts Club is most apt, but for what club isn't it at least partly applicable? It's good to know that there is someone else who doesn't think Lord of the Rings is Sf (it's too good for a start). Funny though, how every time I deny Tolkien wrote Sf I have to put in the comment that its really great stuff. I notice Iain did too. Fandom and all is good fun. The "to be dismissed as such" crack is ridiculous, there is nothing higher than fun. As for the "serious quest for Science Fiction", what does he think it is, the Holy Grail? Sf is some light weight tales concerned with exploiting a novel idea, at its best it can't be taken seriously for too long. Sorry I really did like the article except for that concluding paragraph.

Re We Don't Believe it can be proved that John Bangsunā exists -John Bangsunā can prove it and that's all important.

Yours

Clive

Eh, wishful thinking, that pair of lips. That spōdodge you refer to is the dusty little island that is convenient for the existance of Havelock. My regrets about fandom is that I cannot share very fully in its activity. The world can be a lonely old place when there is no-one around that shares one's interest. However I interpted that last paragraph differently apparently and I agree that fun is wonderful, let us have much of it but out of all the stories I revied in the last issue only two had any real humour. That's deadly. As for Tolkien, I regret I havn't read him so can hardly comment except the "much too good" is irrelevant.

oOo

from Eric B. Lindsay

6 Hillcrest Ave
Faulconbridge
N.S.W. 2776

Dear John,

Thanks for CHAO IV. I was interested to see your experiments with duplication. The cover might have worked out if it had been on lighter paper, but as it is there is not enough detail visible to get the full impact of the cartoon. Don't like the Lindquist drawing on page 5, mainly because it took up a whole page, now if it had been a half page, maybe, but it is just not good enough to stand by itself. Paper itself, I still like the green ink on white, mainly because I admit because it is different. The sepia on orange looked very nice also, and I think that bright green on yellow has a lot of potential for drawings or the odd page, however it is very hard on the eyes for the entire 'zine. Don't use sepia on yellow, that is hard to read.

Your own piece on von Daniken, "The Mythology of Daniken" was interesting and thought provoking, but I really think I would have to read the books before plunging into a discussion on the matter. The condensat-ion of one of them, published some time aga in one of the daily papers is hardly the thing to base any arguments on, and that is all I have

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seen of Daniken's books.

I might start a feud if I make nasty remarks about Velikovsky's books, but I am very tempted

Iain Ban's article was very interesting, but I don't believe he is really as critical as he makes out - after all he does write to the people he complains about.

"ME", well it's about time you 'told all', and as your own writing is generally amongst the most interesting in CHAO, you writing about "you" should be even better. It has often been said that fiction involves the willing suspension of belief, but this does not occur in reading your biography. Logically this means, gasp, that it is all true. Fact IS stranger than fiction!

Glad to see all the fanzine reviews, even if it means that I can't use fanzine reviews to fill up the blank spaces in my own fanzine, and while on the subject, thanks for the review of GEGENSCHWEIN, although you would not, I feel sure, have mentioned "compedotent" if you had seen the streams of begging letters I sent to other faneds asking for their advice.

I thought the illo of you by Mary Parkinson was very well done.

Looks like you were right about the Lee Harding story. The first time I can remember seeing Lee's letter in a fanzine.

I can assure Clive Morley that my statement on peace was intended to stir, but if he reads "Report from Iron Mountain" he might wonder about whether others were stirring or ~~are~~ serious. Still it did succeed in getting someone to think, and to write, about the subject, and this is what I wanted, and (I assume) what John wanted as well.

Must say something on your comments on my last letter. I was very careful to say merely that I would read books on psychology, not that I understood them. Since it looks to me as if you might have derived the We Don't Believe on Ballard from my letter, I will say nothing about it No 2. Of course fans are crazy, would any sane person spend time typing a letter about an amateur magazine when they already subscribe, and swop, magazines in any case. As for serving no purpose we keep the cheap paper manufacturers and post office in business.

No, I don't believe in John Bangsund. No-one could produce ~~Scytrop~~ (~~scitrop~~) by themself. It is all done by a group of professionals from Time-Life who want to destroy fandom by creating giant sized inferiority complexes in fan-eds.

Regards
ERIC

Whatsoever commeth to more than three letters is usually spelt wrong. Oh by all means haveaa chop at Velikovsky, mind the blood though. Was disappointed about no response to Ballard myself, looks like you writing a critique on him yourself. What's this about cheap paper...speak man...

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from Noel Kerr

85 Morgan St
Carnegie
Vic 3163

Dear John,

Even though I havn't sent you a L.O.C. for some time, it's not because I don't find them interesting. This last six months and until I get married in December, have, and will find me rather busy trying to organize my future life. This is one reason why the S.G. is way behind.

Next year I'll make up for it with some comments. Keep up the good work.

I did enjoy your rather sad (if you'll excuse the expression) ME. I could see a few things we had in common as kids. I'm looking forward to the next episode.

Noel

Now there is an optimist. I see a man being dragged off to bed as soon as he's done the washing up. If he's lucky he'll be able to sell his fanzines before they are burnt to remove temptation and backward-looking. What about letting me have that stencil-making-machine of yours, better than having it tossed out the tip.

Did not strike me that ME was "rather sad", you may be right. My childhood (until I was 12) was quite happy, my life until I became an accomplished traveller in Ireland, a nightmare. When I first began to write that autobiography I did it light-heartedly but the urge to get to the bottom of why I tick became too interesting. An autobiography has been a hope of mine for many years but it was not planned to be like this, but if it continues for the planned half dozen more episodes it would make a small book. Must think about that.

oOo

from Ron Clark

78 Redgrave Rd
Normanhurst
N.S.W. 2076

Dear John

Thanks for CHAO IV. Good idea the colour pages...I think (from the repro of the cover) that blue paper is not all that good. I would say that, visually, the yellow paper (the bright yella) is the best both for shappness and clarity. You have the same type of growing pains as I do, I see - the issues get bigger and bigger. I have told people that TM is definatly coming out quarterly from now on, and was nearly deafened by the howls of laughter. (I'll show them..)

A very good issue of CHAO, methinks. I view with great scepticism all the writings about past and present visitations from UFOs (who says Sf fans are open-minded) and, frankly, have not taken too much notice of von Daniken (especially since he was serialized in the Daily Mirror). There was a review of "We are not the first" by Andrew Tomas in The Herald (SUN+HERALD : 4th July) which brought up various "Dream Time finds.

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Apparently Iain Ban (e?) is writing from his personal experiences... about fans, etc?? Funny, I would rather spend my time (and hard earned ca\$h) at an Sf Convention and in a pub on booze...or on a set of tyres for the local drag racing, Still, some (other) people have their hang ups, too.

Good illo of yourself (good likeness?), and the following autob. (don't fans like to talk about themselves...) is shedding some welcome light onto some of the personal stuff which gives some substance to the image one gets in one's mind from another's writings- usually the person is totally different in the flesh, so to speak, than the character that is built up from the writings culled from zines.

Your farm is big, ain't it...cor...60 sq. miles.

I Don't Believe That other countries outside Australia exist. I flew frooSingapore and on to India, overland to the UK...and you can't tell me that Singapore isn't in North Australia and that the whole lot is one big land mass.

See you in Adelaide in New Year,
Best

Ron

Daniken probably has never seen the Daily Mirror, so don't hold that against him. You know I've always had an ~~hankening~~ for motor racing myself but being a born gentelman I automatically allow those who want to pass me go ahead which is not the spirit of racing is it. Some crazy journalist once said that gentlemen were so rare they should be preserved in alcohol in the interests of science. That picture of me, well there's two views on that, mine that it does not do me justice and that of another "friend" who says it is grossly flattering...I fear she is prejudiced. No my farm is not 60 sq miles in area, that refers to Havelock. Now if I owndd all of Havelock I'd put a fence around it and proclaim it a republic and myself as king. As for Singapore etc, its only the thought of getting awfully sea-sick again that keeps me from wandering abroad again.

cOo

from Ed. Cagle

Route No 1
Leon
Kansas 67074
U.S. of A

Dear John,

According to LOCUS, Charlie Brown's newzine, CHAO is recommended. Okay, that's good enough for me.....

Australian fandom is booming over/up/around here in the US. I don't know what's causing it, but I like it, but I like it. And it seems that most of all the zines are high in quality, according to the word spreading around. But whether its something new or only something I've just realized Keep it up.

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(Not bad advice no matter how you take it.)

Whatever...I'll try to drop a line or two after reading CHAO. And thanks for your trouble,

Best wishes

Ed. Cagle

Actually all us fanzine editors work for the Government/...its all part of their top secret plan to run the world but keep it under your hat or they mightn't let youse have any more broken-winded racehorses.

oOo

from Dave Hulvey

Ht. 1 Box 198
Harrisonburgh
Va. 22801 U.S.A.

Alagumps John,

Yawn....Steven Phillips' article caused me to sigh...He reminds me of the type of mishmash I did when I first entered fandom... last Tuesday. Rousing arguments on definitions for Sf, and Sf as literature just don't arouse that ole sensawonda from within. I'm sure he'll ripen into fandom, and forsake these moot points. After all his audience already considers Sf literature, or at least worth the effort to read, as for arguments or definitions...surely he knows they are infinite, or at least very long, and very unresolved in the end. Fans argued about such ehpemara in the 30s...and to my knowledge didn't get any further than we have today in our quest for a valid definition which would accept all cases.

John, you're the pessimist when you rap on overpopulation and migration, but I must agree. The world needs to institute...by some means, fair or foul...a uniform birth control ploicy. I suppose undemocratic methods will have to be employed, as religion and government stand in the way of a fairly administered policy. The pill is effective only if used, and there's no way to check if this Hindu or that Red Chinese, or the other Catholic in Chicago actually used the pill as an effective agent at the right moment. People lie, government employees are bribed, religious teachers forbid on the thread of the loss of eternal life and some people are overlooked due to statistical error. So, the water supply or somesuch will have to be polluted with a fluid that would render the populace sterile...excepting certain individuals deemed vital to society who would go on to maintain the functioning of that society during the changeover Chaos would ensue, but the deed would be accomplished, and further argument would be futile and fruitless. A saddening and horrible prospect, but is the alternative any better? Shall we choke on our own industrial excrement, be driven to insanity in psychologically overcrowded hive-cities and lose our freedoms in the crush as bureacracy evolved to add its dead weight to the tottering facade of earth's social fabric? Loaded questions, to be sure, but nonetheless part of the vision I see if we don't act now, before the shadow covers us all.

In a lighter vein, bain, Ban; let me say that Iain's Objets D'Art of

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Fans was very amusing. Philip K. Dick should know, as we're all part of a gigantic hash-dream of his. I'm sure he'll wake up...come down from his trip... and all Sf fandom will cease to exist. I dread the end, so send Dick some more marijuana. I wanna live, even if I'm only a moon-shadow in the neuronc humour of the master reality-changer of our genre.

Harold Eggleton's letter was fun to read. So there ~~wedly~~ were Sf fans like that in the 30s. Wow!

A comment on 1. under We Don't Believe. Peace is a catchphrase used by many in these days of social unrest. Unfortunately, total peace would probably be an unbelievably dull state of affairs. In fact, to achieve the mythical creature of peace for an entire country...let alone the whole human race...would entail sacrificing other things. I DON'T want peace at any price. It would mean an end of fandom, as we're certainly considered off our beams by Mundane standards, and peace couldn't be maintained if we'd be allowed to walk about spewing our heepeepevert idears at people. In the name of peace we could be locked up, and all our ditto masters, corflu and beanie caps be confiscated. After all, we do disturb the peace of mondlessness of Mundanes, so we should be muzzled to preserve their right to be ignorant and maintain their peace of mind. I don't want that and I don't think it would be a smask hit with everyone else either. With all the creative minds...both in and out of fandom... muzzled, where would our classics of arts and crafts come from. Stagnation is the way of eternal peace.

AFAN

Dave.

Easy on Steven, he was my first contributor. He intends to become a great poet. But I agree with you that Sf is literature though I disagree that it cannot be defined. Point is we want to include everything. If we were to define a sonnet so as to include The Iliad and The Tempest because they were too good to leave out we should have great diffuculty. Our trouble is that we want to also include Tolkien and The Man in the High Castle as Sf but neither of those excellent authors happen to be Df.

Far from being a pessimist about world population I maintain that the stopping of migration will allow and cause the world population to reach a status ~~qavel~~ in several, perhaps five centuries. Bernal, Science in History asserts that we have no need to think about population control for several centuries. But your ideas on population control remind me of some correspondence that passed between Hitler and his medical advisers. Hitler wanted to know if x-rays could be used to sterilize the Jews. The doctors pointed out that castration was simpler, cheaper and more efficient, the operation only taking two minutes. Several million people died because we could not tolerate this sort of thing. Consider the logic of your argument. You point out that religion, politicians etc etc (everybody in fact cannot be trusted) so this sterilizing agent is to be dumped in the water...by whom, you? Are you God to do this thing? Consider too, you admit that "chaos would ensue", to what end?...to preserve "earth's social fabric". You propose to prevent people breeding, to what end...so we "won't

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LOSE OUR freedom". And why, because of pollution and overcrowding. Americans with 55 people to the square mile are thumping the drum pretty loudly about an overpopulated world. Australia with 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ people to the square mile is stupidly adding its little bark. China has 250, India 330 and Japan 690. The European Community of Ten have 1390 to the square mile. Holland has the greatest population density in the world, and almost no mineral resources. I have been there. The population is evenly distributed and well fed and housed and one can be alone without trouble. It exports food! I did not see a beer-can, empty bottle or scrap of paper in the country, nor rubbish tips, open sewers or smog. They know how to live. With 60% of the earth's fresh water America should be able to support a population density as high as Holland, somewhat over 5000 million. And they are choking to death with one of the lowest population densities in the world! Quality of life comes from within, not preventing the neighbour from having a few kids to gladden his heart.

Agree with you about peace though it need not be dull. Scotland was the most peaceful country in Europe but the clans have scratched over 2000 years of history to get suitably gory clan histories, yet all the people killed in all the clan feuds could be buried by a very small squad before they got too smellie. Hasten to add that my clan killed most of them while Iain Ban's clan killed hardly any at all.

oOo

Here beginneth Paul Anderson's latest serial.

21 Mulga Rd
Hawthorndene
SA 5051

Dear John,

I see from my last Loc that it has been a mere 3 months since I last wrote to you. Said deficiency is now in the process of being retified. I liked CHAO IV but did not interpt the cover correctly or else I missed the point. Now about the contents, the article from Iain Ban was interesting but I have just read a similiar thing that was written by one of the US fans on the shortcomings of fandom in general. That was more entertaining as one could say along with the author of that little piece - he's right there but he is an absolute galah here. Iain's article was on the types of fans that attend conventions and I thought that perhaps he would like to attend our Con in Adelaide over the New Year in the National Park area. I am enclosing a few progress reports for information on the con. and distribution amongst your Sf friends. We would like to have a representative of Australia's up and coming fanzine and Havelock(s only fanzine present at the con and perhaps you would like to volunteer for one of the penels suggested on the tentative programme lined up. The Editor panel will probably be changed slightly in view od recent events but there are plenty of other panels which you would fit on if you advised me in time. The con of course will be live in as much as we can get it, but if you are not sick of over-exposure to the place by the Monday I am sure you would enjoy it more stayed on a few extra days and did a bit of sight-seeing or tourist trips before going back to Melbourne

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and the mundane life home.

Onward to glory - no I should not be thinking of Man of La Mancha - just because I got sidetracked and started thinking of that song from the play, which I trust you saw. I see that CHAO is still expanding in size as I noted in my last Loc as printed in the live wood or Mutterings in the Mulga. I assume that if they do not mutter they can be regarded as dead wood or mulga. I still rate Fantasy and Science Fiction as a crudzine although they have improved of late with Buck Coulson and a few others. However that zine is under a large handicap with me as its design turns me off completely as the whole presentation of it just screams out that it is on a shoe-string budget - which it is being extremely borderline as far as balancing the books is concerned. Amazing is a little better now but I still only read quickly Ted White's latest whinge in his editorial. Re. No Blade of Grass I hope that it lasted for a longer run in Melbourne as it only lasted for one lousy week in Adelaide before the school holidays came and it was taken off for some immature garbage.

The postulate expressed as one of the arguments for those misguided people who defend war was quite aptly put and quickly disposed of by Clive I thought. In any case progress is stimulated enough by its own momentum now so that it should need artificial force applied to keep it going. But if it did surely ~~spove~~ research would be of far more benefit to the economy. However war can be considered as a form of insanity in that it causes wanton destruction of things that have been painfully built up over time and it is a byproduct of the faults in the human mind in that it does not take the time to judge the consequences of its action. The selfish attitude is far too much to the fore rather than that of helping one's neighbour to even trying to see his point of view. Those who continue the war in Vietnam ignore the actions of the Allies and concentrate on the atrocities of the evil enemy. But when the situation is given an unbiased viewpoint we find that both sides are just as bad as the other. However I may be a little prejudiced in this matter being a pacifist in these matters where no side is in the right. I saw an intriguing thing the other day in the paper that said that the rejection rate of those young men who wish to enlist in the forces was a staggering 71.7% or pretty close to it. Now if we accepted only half of the volunteers I am sure we could scrap National Service altogether. Another method could be to lower the medical requirements for volunteers to those of the National Service trainees. I have heard of cases where a boy was called up, served his 2 years, loved the life in the army and wanted to re-enlist on discharge but was not allowed to do so because he did not meet the requirements of the service!!! Now if he was good enough to be inducted forcibly then he should be good enough to get back in if he wants to.

The only useful purpose that war can serve is to reduce the population in undeveloped countries and that is mainly what it is being used for today. While this cynical attitude prevails we will always have some sort

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of war as distinct from dreams of political power, although they are to a large extent over emphasised by the media. The only peace worthy of the name will be when everyone has been made mentally stable so that they wish to obey "Do unto others..." I doubt if progress can really be stopped now but it can still be misdirected by well meaning idiots who wish to apply short term remedies to long term problems. For a start a universal contraceptive with no side effects that may be detrimental in any way, is needed to be distributed to those who wish to use it and also to those who need it, whether they want it or not. We have no choice in the matter limit the population increase or die in the not very distant future. If war is any use at all we should start a limited nuclear war now and do the job once and for all or else we should divert the funds from it and get to solving the problems of the ecology of the Earth as we cannot do both much longer if we still have a choice. Vietnam has almost been destroyed by the war but they still have a large population.

I seem to have wandered afar from the subject in hand of science fiction and fans, oh well it was interesting at any rate. As you may have inferred I have rather strong views on this topic. Maybe we can discuss this further at the con next year.

Yours

Paul,

Have sent on one of those progress reports to Iain Ban, but I did not mention that in Adelaide they throw blokes in the Torrens who write articles that step on people's toes, and keep poking them under til they drown. By the way CHAO is not the only Havelock fanzine. SENNACHIE also sees the light there...it's merciless spotlight is turned on history...

It is important to realize that it is Government policy to get rid of the volunteer principle in the army and have a totally conscript army as a matter of principle. It's hidden policy of compulsory shows up in the various acts relating to primary industries and subvert but real direction of labour through not paying unemployment benefits to those who refuse to work anywhere in the Commonwealth. Whilst all this disturbs me, conscript armies do so in particular. A conscript army can be relied upon not to show any profession courtesy to the enemy and not to question atrocities against civilian populations. Banning conscription is the most easily policed and most effective disarmament policy that could be devised. War does not reduce population as a glance at statistics will show. Usually the combatants show and overall increase during and immediately after hostilities. In Vietnam most of those killed have been children yet most of the refugees there are children. As for the necessity for population control refer back to the comment on Dave's letter. Almost certainly the contraceptive you ask for is biologically impossible. What we need is as you suggest, the solving of the problem of the ecology of the earth. The problem is not too many people but rather too many fools in places of importance. We have to realize that there are a lot of us and will be more and get some sanity into our way of life.

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from Bill Wright

53 Celia St
Burwood
Vic 3125

Dear John,

I received CHAO IV in the post about two weeks ago, but have not had time to read it until falling ill with distemper or bronchitis or something. Bruce Gillespie has it too....

Here in Melbourne, when it rains
The admp gets into s'burban trains
Causing all the pass-eng-ers
To rug themselves in coats and furs,
To no avail, for,
When e'er the population freezes
The city's full of dread diseases.
Salute the bracing winter breeze
Kiff, Sniffle, Snort, Grunt, Wheese and Sneeze.

I suppose the best thing that can be said about the cover is that the caption makes it understandable. A failed experiment, I'm afraid. Yes the green ink is restful on the eyes, even with a white background. Yellow paper and buff are also O.K., but not, no - never, green ink on green paper. The sepia ink illo of you came out perfectly in my copy. Bell Bangsung - curses, you've got me doing it now- about the technique you used. He collects things like that. And you've got the hyde to compialn about spelling mistakes in SYTHROP 22!

I was glad to get CHAO for many reasons. Firstly getting to know Robin Johnson is a fascinating experience, and there seems to be no better way than arguing with him in print. The first installment of your autobiography was interesting. I have the feeling that your Irish experiences were the most enthralling.

What disappointed me was that nothing was said in CHAO IV about Conventions. I still have memories of the Easter Con at CAPRI theatre, Murrumbidgee, where I followed you around with a tape-recorder and you told it all about your "little town up North". Annual conventions in each State are essential to bring people into personal contact who meet each other inlyrintprint during the year. Australian Conventions up till now, however, have suffered because people are not staying on the premises. When this happens the programme can be a lot more intensive. A choice of two or three activities can be arranged, so that there is always something for everyone, and it is easy for people to do their own thing while still remaining part of the Convention. Believe it or not, Adelaide fandom haave arranged Australia's first live-in Convention. The programme extends over the New Year weekend and looks fascinating. Robin Johnson and I have already joined. The next live-in Con after that will be the 11th Australian Science Fiction Convention in Sydney, sometime after the middle of next year. From then on, it is hoped to hold a national live-in convention every year until 1975 when the 14th Australian Sf Convention (and

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what we hope will be the 33rd Worldcon) will be held in Melbourne.

Regards

Bill

E di it John, e did it, I've got his letter to prove it, e spelt your name with a "g" instead of a "t" or a "d" or whatever it ends with. Dare-say that its quæsscent as it would be in Lallans, Gaelic or French. Point is that John derives his name from a drummer in a Viking pirate ship, which drum I regret to say was made of ~~the~~ hide off one of my ancestors, the only point in the drummer's favour was that the said Hide was taken off when my worthy ancestor was dead, we've always been pretty fleet of foot. But to spell the name with a "g" gives an entirely different meaning, not admittedly unacceptable to John except that the use of the "u" makes it past tense and would mean that John had been a loud song or in the words of a Scottish proverb "the end of an ould sang". John has written a four or five page letter, closely typed, with his typewriter, explaining how deeply this pains him. Cheerup up John, I shall correct my correspondent's mis-spellings and their grammar.

The main reason though that there was no mention of Conventions in CHAO IV was that there was nothing for me to say. I have only ever spent half a day at that Easter Con, and two days at the Gellati-con during most of which time I was very ill. I like Cons and think they are a good idea and a wonderful way of getting together but I am not good at reportage.

You really disappoint me about the green ink on green paper. I thought I had it made with that combination which I confess was an idea thieved from Irish road signs which are green printing on a green background. Hope to see you at the Adelaide Con, have registered if that means anything.

oOo

from Allan St Baker

30 Francis St
Kahibah
N.S.W. 2290

Dear John,

Received CHAO IV on return home this trip. Pity the cover did not come out clearer but I like the thought.

I've had a look at Gegenschein, courtesy Kevin Dillon, enjoyed it, but more of that in a letter to Eric Lindsay, I really feel sorry for him in his isolation, must be terrible to be stuck away from everybody like that. My heart bleeds for him.

Enjoyed the articles, some of which contained big words, like marmalade and if I ever get around to understanding anything that was said I shall doubtless be moved greatly.

Let's be truthful now. I'm not a sailor, I'm a steward, you know a housemaid with balls. This is not a definition to use within hearing of stewards however, it can involve a face full of dandruff, which is painful.

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Page 19, illustrating ME. You can't trust a man with a beard.

This is a pretty low Loc I realize, but I've magazines from all over, stolen from Kevin Dillon when I arrived at his place last week, and I have to try and say something intelligent to all of them. With a mentality like mine this can be bloody difficult.

Allan.

Now this cover. The first comment on it is one not printed. The young critic reached up, grabbed the copy of CHAO IV and ripped the cover off and stamped on it. She was about to do the same to the rest when her mother, who had not yet read it, rescued it. Doubtless that child will end up writing reviews for the Australian Book Review. As far as not trusting a man with a beard a certain friend of mine merely says You can't trust men! , so you could be right

oCo

from Harry Warner Jr.

423 Summit Ave
Hagerstown
Maryland, 21740
U.S.A.

Dear John,

The third issue of CHAO has just oozed from among several hundredweight of fanzines awaiting comments. For all I know it may have spent the summer there, for the wrapper seems to have vanished, perhaps suffering reduction to two-dimensional condition from the backlog of loc obligations. If I have been very late with the loc, my apologies and my assurance that you are not the only one I've mistreated. If you've sent other issues, I'll undoubtedly find them sometime before senility and write another letter.

Your review or discussion rather of Cassandra's Castle struck me as extremely good. You stuck to your general theme commendably instead of wandering away on digressions, so the review didn't really seem as long as it was. You chose unhackneyed subject matter, which I don't remember having seen reviewed in any American fanzine. And you achieved something that almost nobody writing for fanzines ever seems to accomplish: you didn't spoil the effect by quoting from the story in the wrong places. Some fans who do a lot of book reviews inadvertently discourage me from reading what they're writing about, simply because the direct quotations seem so bad. I don't believe the Bluebeard theme has turned up very often in science fiction or even in modern weird fiction. You'd think that writers would have seized on it repeatedly, because it ties in so neatly with Freudian theory.

Stephen Phillips chose a theme that is hard to write interestingly about, simply because its badly worn and tattered from so many previous attempts to establish eternal verities on the topic. His little essay is also handicapped by one assumption that hardly holds up under examination. "The fan must cease to claim equal terms for all that is Sf whether it be an obscure thousand words of rubbish or a J.C. Ballard gem," he

writes. What fan has ever done this? I can't remember any such event, in all my years of fandom. I know a lot of youngsters who mistake rubbish for good fiction, but they wouldn't care for Ballard. Maybe Steve isn't aware of the extent to which science fiction has penetrated the lofty heights of True Literature, as measured by its appearance on lists of notable modern fiction for college reading and even the trend toward special college courses devoted solely to science fiction. If he's Australian, he couldn't be expected to know the circumstances that invalidates his query about "who of our outside lovers of literature have ever heard of Robert Heinlein?". Heinlein's juveniles are on the shelves of virtually every high school library in the United States, are tremendously popular even with kids who never grow up to read lots of science fiction, and Heinlein is also known nationally for his appearance as television commentator during moon flights.

I can't agree with some of your opinions in Migration and the Future. Basically, I fear that an effort to solve overpopulation by stopping migration would do two things: have absolutely no effect on the population growth and make nationalism an even greater force for evil in the world than it now is. I can't see the relationship between migration and population explosions. Surely there are major causes for population increase that you don't mention: in the case of Ireland, for instance, the high proportion of Catholic residents, resulting in disfavour for most types of birth control, and the low income for the majority of the Irish people down through the years, a situation that always or almost always seems to go with a high birth rate. And you don't mention the one nation that historically was not subject to migration until almost modern times and even in modern times has not been exporting vast quantities of its people: Japan. It's harder to imagine greater over-population than exists in Japan. If migration were cut to next to nothing, the demagogues and politicians that become strong through appeals to prejudice and bigotry would gain almost superhuman power, simply because there would no longer be a leavening of "foreigners" and people of mixed nationality to laugh at their patriotic appeals and to disprove what they claim about purity of race and blood. Think about Japan again: the retention of the claims for divinity by the emperor and the kamikaze pilots who trained to die for the good old isolationist fatherland. The population problem doesn't worry me too much because of my conviction that the world will run out of raw materials and breathable air before the population reaches impossible size, perhaps before the end of this century. This assumes that circumstances don't change, and they very well may. The population explosion has been abetted by two quite recent developments: the growth of nationalism which made people feel patriotic when they bred for the homeland, and improved ways of living which reduced sharply infant and childhood mortality. I don't see why we shouldn't have another development of equal importance before we run out of living space or water: development of a new source of power that would make emigration to other planets or distant stars practical, or a wakening of the world's people to the importance of taking The Pill.

My memory of The Man in the High Castle is so pleasant that I was happy to have Iain Ban stir it up. The reviewer's theory that fans are the inspiration for the nostalgia theme in the book is possibly correct. But really, fans aren't the only ones doing it in North America. You can hardly believe the way the general public has gone ape over the recent past, even if you live in the USA. There's a national firm dealing in women's cosmetics and other personal supplies called Avon that packages stuff in quite fancy bottles; some of these bottles that were being sold less than ten years ago are commanding tremendous prices, empty. I saw an advertisement the other day for a television set which said it wasn't in working order "but a real antique, one of the old ones " Howdy Doody a children's programme which was on television in the 1950s, has acquired a fandom all of its own, and colleges are paying its originator high fees to lecture to students on his memories of the show and play a recording of the sound tract from one episode.

Harold Eggleton's letter was very interesting. Besides, its always encouraging to find someone even older than I am in a letter column.

Yours etc
HARRY

Well thanks for that flattering comment on my little essay on Hardings' story. In CHAO IV I dealt with most of the objections you raised about my Migration and the Future. But no-one mentioned Japan. With a population density of 690 to the square mile, appoxiamately half that of Western Europe which is 1390 to the square mile (and the latter are still importing people!). Even with severe natural handicaps they still have a very high standard of living and I cannot consider them overcrowded. As for their isolationist policy, their Pacific Prosperity scheme or what ever, was the reverse. I believe nationalism is the best thing in the world, but it has to be true nationalism, not a monster eating others. We seem fairly agreed however on the conclusions. Yes, we have that fad here of buying junk with the original price label still on it as antiques. People must watch the same TV programmes.

oOo

from Dave Hulvey

Rt 1, Box 198
Harrisonburg, Va 22801
USA

Alagumps John,

Yas, and in this corner we have the White Knight on his silvery three-speed beanie. He will save fandom from itself. He will save us from ourselves, even if he has to drag us kicking and screaming to the Boys' Supreme Court at Most Science Fiction High. Yas, Iain Ban, he will show you The Blinding Light, the finest blend of mimeo ink and paper, the Correct Way to be a Proper Phan. Yas.

Sorry, but I can't dig it. There have been too many fuggheads who've espoused the same views as Iain. Pickering, Degler and Watkins all wanted