

Atom

...previously, in *Outworlds*:

"Have I been seeing fandom in the wrong way..." • "No one much flirts with me, though--this can be distressing." • "Being a writer doesn't get you laid. Well, not always anyway." • "--bugger off and leave me alone. I don't look like Terry Carr, do I?" • "At the risk of sounding pompous, I knew how good they were--" • "I asked WR what about the money and he replied by pointing out that he had secured us immortality." • "It was reassuring that she had a driver's license, though." • "You'd be hung by the nuts until dead, or at least dead for all practical purposes."

• "I've done marginally more foolish things." • "Gee, ten years ago I could hardly spell 'locer', and now I am one!" • "At least I was born before you became a fan." • "What is the meaning of this, have you rediscovered the joys of fanzines or just run out of other, better, things to do?" • "Be of stout heart, Dave Locke, this is not a convention report." • "The way you pull against the grain of your upbringing and The Comfortable Life is so self-conscious that it does, on occasion, make me uncomfortable to watch you." • "Went up to Baltimore; found some old fossil who was still hawking 7-year-old copies of *Outworlds*..."

...and now, in...

Outworlds 38

"Virginal conception or not, parthenogenesis or not, was the baby formed, fed, and birthed all without an umbilical cord?" • "If I must talk about Joanna Russ, and I'd rather I didn't..." • "I seriously doubt, on the basis of Brian's own published work, that he can tell the difference between good writing and bad..." • "Reflect on the spelling of my own name, if you will, and consider the sort of egregious hacks whose junk is so often racked up next to *my* books." • "Maybe we exude auras or something." • "I hope a copy of this issue went to D West." • "The Union troops then marched *into* the hole, where the southerners on either side of the breach shot them like fish in a barrel." • "I have a new excuse for not responding; *Outworlds* often seems better when viewed in bunches." • "Activity can be a lonely thing." • "Literally you're right that Wm. A.P. White did not predict you in 1943. It was the previous year." • "I think Resnick is completely off base on the subject of literature." • "Enough misanthropy for one letter." • "...after all your whining and sniveling, after all of your snide remarks at CFG meetings about former faneds who never loc fanzines, I've decided to shut you up for a while." • "Ho hum, another splendid issue of *Outworlds*."

•••after a brief word from our Sponser:

"Naturally you'll be going the reduction route," Dave said.

"...that would make sense," I responded. "But I don't think so..."

You see, even though it has obvious economic advantages, I basically don't like whole issues in reduced type, at least in mimeo format. There will be some reduction in here, of course: there's this fancy new toy that sits no more than five feet in front of my board at work that not only has two reduction factors, but also one enlargement setting. And Dave and Jackie have figured out that it only costs 3¢ more to electro-stencil a page than to use a regular stencil. So a sparing use is almost mandatory.

It seems very logical right now.

It's going to seem considerably less logical when time comes to run off two & a half times the number of pages, but what the hell...

I have enough 9x12 envelopes on hand for one more biggie...and besides, for the mere cost of a case (make that two) of videotapes, I'll spare you eyestrain this time. I just knew you'd be properly appreciative.

Terry Carr

Ho hum, another splendid issue of *Outworlds*. --I say this because it's the inevitable result of a faned publishing regularly: you may be remembered in years to come as the guy who maintained a frequent publishing schedule when no one else did, but in the short run I suspect you're already starting to be taken for granted. Which is a shame; but believe it or not, there are such things as realities in fan publishing, and this is one of them. It may, in fact, be a major reason why there have been so few regularly-published fanzines in recent years: fans publish largely for egoboo, or at least feedback, and a frequent fanzine is inefficient in this respect.

But *Outworlds* does continue to brighten the fanzine scene, so I hasten to give you what egoboo I can. (Who knows? -- maybe you'll be remembered in fanhistory as the editor with "skewed tastes": that could become an entry in the next *FANCYCLOPEDIA* [more trivial remarks have become legendary.]) If so, you'll finally be getting your due.

Dave Locke's interview with Steve Leigh was diverting, but I kept having the feeling that this wasn't truly an interview in the pure sense, because Dave and Steve seemed to be conducting it on paper rather than purely in spoken conversation. That's fine, but it does eliminate many elements of spontaneity. There isn't even the feeling that what Steve "said" was spontaneous and later cleaned up by editing; it all has the feeling of mere words-on-paper, which distances the readers from the subject quite a bit. I look forward to the "interview" with Walt Willis even though I know it must have been conducted by mail: there are definite advantages to the latter method, as I know because I've been "interviewed thus: the interviewee has the opportunity to consider hiser answers before writing them down, and can even rewrite some portions if they don't come out right the first time.

1|27|84

Ian Cuvell

Received *Outworlds* 36 fairly soon after *Outworlds* 35, which must have been delayed by the system. Blushing rather brightly at your comments on p1265, I shall address myself first to what came first:--

The difference between *The Same Time Next Year* and your own love situation is that the latter is spontaneous and thus the better for it. I have no idea who the lady is and will not ask, leave us merely be thankful that there are more ways than one to love in this world.

Can I pass on to you, with the hope it kindles thoughts, my own thought about media fans versus the 'general sf' fan? The media fan seems to be using the literature to recapture the imagery of the original film/series; having clearly defined limits on the extent of the extent of what is portrayed. The 'general sf' fan must create that reality for himself but must first of all be attracted by literacy, by words. Media fans probably try to capture the same 'rush' they get from their chosen heroes, by trying mass-SF, but it does not seem surprising they often retreat...

I shall say nothing about my own letter (1258), it seems to be long enough for both itself and any further comment I might make. Darroll Pardoe's letter is right only in

fact, not truth. I suppose it depends on how you define 'social interaction'--I would have thought it to extend to the meeting of minds *sans corporeality* (letter and phone call) but if he restricts it simply to being able to *meet* other fans, then the father-to-the-lack-of-deed is finance, not inclination.

Dave Locke's column is based on a misreading of the word 'askew'. It is a fairly obvious slurring of the phrase "I ask you" and being overheard by passing strangers, this plaintive cry has become the declarative "I askew"; like those other statements we only half-hear and wonder for years afterward just what the person was *really* saying. "It was the wrong size, so she buried it..." "I don't care what he says, seventeen times is too much..."

I stared at your final comment (1262) for a long time. In fact I've been staring at it for almost a fortnight. It's correct. It probably hurt you a lot to say it. It describes a type of person I like because, inside the awareness of self is the awareness of others. There has to be a balance between 'selfishness' and 'giving'--the absence of the latter is miserly emotional theft, but the absence of the former is like trying to give the kiss of life using a vacuum pump. How can someone who has no internal life or desire empathise with anyone else?

You are correct in your guess I've never published a fanzine (I did help create and edit my college [actually polytechnic] literary magazine, mostly to see my own fiction in print but...) and so when you mention the expense that's cutting into you on behalf of your own fanzine, I doubt I realise just how much it affects you. The only consolation seems to be that if the basis of publishing fanzines were only the creation of working capital, I doubt any fanzines would have been produced at all. (Even those now charging for advertising, and almost semi-pro, needed 'amateur' fanzines to create a market...or am I being naive about that too?)

I don't keep carbons of letters I send, but my letter as printed looks like the entire two pages, and a rambling, discursive epic it is. My final comments about something imminent in fandom still echo within me; I've received 3 'zines in recent weeks from the States, and somewhere behind the words, like that vague smell of chocolate wrappers or the tree falling in an uninhabited forest, I *still* say something big is brewing. Feminism, maybe. That seems to have been the main topic of most of my recent letters. Politics, maybe, the subject of everyone else's speeches and programmes. Finance, in a sudden plunge in the number of fanzines. None quite ring that distant bell, but...

I agree with Neil Rest: *must* we keep comparing fanzines?

I mean, taking up my point about personal letters in the last ish, I don't compare a letter from friend A with one from friend B marking them on subjects, insight, or length. (Perhaps it's my age, but I've been doing that thing called 're-appraisal' recently--which is where I found out about fanzines being letters--and I've realised that I read every work of fiction as a love story; very little else in the work is of importance to me, only the attitude the author shows towards the [romantic] love at its centre. That's going to draw flak if too many people read it, but at least I now know *why* I dislike so many modern books and films while others rave of style, intent, meaning and so on.)

Dave Locke's interview of Steve Leigh is leisurely, and illuminating. It sounds more like a postal interview than a direct conversation, but I'm probably wrong. I'm surprised at Dave Locke's comment (1270) on Barry Malzberg (an author I've never been able to read/stand) only because the usual accusation against him is that while a brilliant stylist his characters and situations were repetitive. That Locke believes he can't write is very interesting indeed.

When the discussion expands to include the unending-series prevailing among sf, it strikes a nerve. I don't blame authors for creating such series, it being--usually--a guaranteed source of income, at least when a success. What distresses me is how many authors now write nothing *but* series. I am as much a sucker as anyone else for the unresolved plotlines, but I believe I am developing ulcers at the immeasurable *amount* of such unendings. There are times when I don't mind series but it has become fairly obvious that most are massively inflated constructions with little substance within, an

elephant's skin draped upon a mouse's skeleton. The other problem is that most authors can't gain a name until they write a series. This may be due to what I mentioned overleaf about media fans, the familiarity of characters and settings.

I just like things that end.

Except love.

What I found interesting about his list of favourite authors/novels was how much I disagreed. I even disagree about there being such divergence between favourite works and favourite writers. Don't like Delaney, Peake, or Wolfe; like MacDonald but only when he isn't writing McGee books; collected but was never really enamoured of Clarke or Chandler, Marlowe's only redeeming virtue was his eventual marriage. None of my favourite books are included either. I have played the "which books would you retain if you had to cut your collection to the bone" but have never really managed to get it much below a hundred; I admire and collect roughly that number of writers and the least I could do would be to select my 'favourite' among theirs.

If Leigh dislikes romances, I'd advise a perusal of Kathleen Woodiwiss whose works I consider to be the basic justification for the massive expansion in the romantic fiction industry.

What do people see in THE PRINCESS BRIDE that I don't?

I still think 'hse' is the best literary abbreviation, but perhaps not vocal. I wasn't aware 'heesh' was unoriginal, but it doesn't excuse it. The matter of 'his-her' only becoming 'hiser' with male predominant (first) is easily resolved to 'hir', which can either be thought of as abbreviated from 'his-her' or as 'her' with an intrusive 'i' from 'his'. It's the 'him-her' that I can't get right. It would help if we could all speak and write so perfectly the constructions never arose, but I doubt it's possible unless an extremely clumsy result is what you seek.

I've been using 'hir' and 'hse' for several years; people may think it's only bad typing--a justifiable reaction given my style--but it isn't.

Elsewhere than the mag, I've been enjoying a quiet solstice rest and getting through various books and films (videos) in consequence. I'd go through an mention those I particularly like except it's a fairly long list which proves, as my comments rarely do, that I like a percentage of what I obtain while saying I dislike a lot.

However, I'll end this rather grey/gray letter, and hope that the new year found you in good health and company with better prospects than last year but equal prolificism.

1/7/84

I suppose I should add the 'footnote' to Ian's 3rd paragraph I misplaced earlier:

(I mean that some 'media fans' try to duplicate the emotional impact by reading other SF, but finding no visual resonance or similarity to the elements they admire, they return their concentration to the film & TV originals. Media fans who do crossover become 'general' fans...)

...I would suppose that by now, given the ratio of 'films' viewed over books read the past few years, any comments I might have on the subject would be suspect.

And I'm tiring fast of the 'gender-contraction' discussion and gender-specific wordplays (which, in my opinion, reached its highpoint eight or nine years ago when, in the pages of this fanzine, Poul Anderson coined the cuticism 'perdaughter'). You, Terry, and others...go ahead and write 'em the way you see fit, and I'll do my best to transcribe them accurately. I'll simply continue using 'one', 'they', and 'his/her' in my own inimitable way...and trust that we'll all understand each other as we search for something more entertaining/interesting to talk about...

THE PRINCESS BRIDE is simply the most amusing, delightful novel I've ever read. (Of course I've also said--so many times I almost believe it--that The Rocky Horror Picture Show is the 'best' science fiction film ever made...so you may well find that my tastes are a bit...strange. I don't think so, but enough people keep telling me, so...)

Don D'Annassa

I'm glad to see Ian Covell enjoyed SPACE RELATIONS by Donald Barr, but I think he is a bit too extreme in his reaction to James Tiptree and Joanna Russ. Certainly some of their fiction seems designed to either get a rise out of male readers, or stir

female readers to indignation. So what? Getting a rise out of your readers, of any kind, indicates you are communicating something at least. Personally, I thought *Houston, Houston* was inferior to much of Tiptree's other work because of the poorly realized male characters, but then an awful lot of real males I know are pretty poorly realized themselves. Russ was satirical in *THE FEMALE MAN*, which may put most male readers off since they are the objects of that satire, but even if--for the sake of argument--we assume that to be a bad book, the bulk of her fiction is so well done, it amazes me that Ian is so vociferous in his criticism.

He also asks if there is any genre other than SF and erotica where backlist titles never go down in price and second hand books are rarely cheap. Well, mysteries are starting to go that way. There are mystery specialty stores with very high prices already, one locally in fact. There also appears to be a growing Harlequin Completist movement, so romances or some subset thereof may be achieving the same status.

The problem with all of this, of course, is that it drives the price up for readers and collectors alike. I am a completist in the SF field, but an avid reader of mysteries, and it bothers me that the old Dell mysteries I used to be able to pick up for twelve cents are now \$2.00 or more each, particularly if they have mapbacks. Fortunately, we accumulated almost 3000 mysteries before the current wave of price jumps started a few years ago. That is one of the few advantages of advancing age. We've been around long enough to have bought these things before anyone thought they were worth buying, and since I rarely throw anything away... 1|21|84

I have tacked to my kitchen wall a clipping from the January 26, 1981 *Detroit Free Press* headlined: "One Person's Clutter Is Another's Collection". I must admit, as I glance around, to wondering about the validity of the secondary lead, where that story was continued: "There's a deep-seated need for all that clutter". Still, it's reassuring to read such things from youngsters like you, as your last statement...as well as to read, in *Egoscan 4* (which just arrived today), Ted White saying: "Fanzines? I've never thrown or given away or sold any of the fanzines I've received." True, I probably have less mysteries than you, and considerably fewer fanzines than Ted (after all, I'm not nearly as old as he; nor been in fandom quite as long)...but both of you have houses, and I a mere three rooms in which to indulge my proclivity toward ~~accumulation~~ collecting...
...now where did I put the next letter? Oh, here it is....:

Ted White

OW 36 arrived in today's mail, and prompts me not only to write but to enclose herewith a letter I recently turned up from among the debris in my once and future office. (Background: in August, 1975, I had a terrible fire which destroyed the upper storey of half my house--and caused the rooms directly below to be drenched with water. The worst hit was my office, and, dispirited, I simply closed the door to it and opened that door infrequently thereafter. For years I've been about to clean it up, RSN, but a couple of weeks ago I began the task in earnest, and now the room stands empty, the walls stripped of their shedding mildewed wallpaper, the only item still in the room my massive desk. In the process I had to sort out the pulped paper--magazines, comics, music papers, et al--from that which was worth salvaging, and turned up a number of curiosities. What slightly amazes me is the number of letters, many of them running to half a dozen pages or more, which I wrote but never mailed...god knows why. Several letters to Buck Coulson when he was editing the *SFIA Forum*, letters to *Stereo Review*, to local newspapers, to irate readers of *Amazing* and *Fantastic*, and...yes...one to you.)

Better late than never, sez I, so here you are: long-delayed (ten years? more? I didn't date it, but you'll remember better than I when OW 8 came out) egoboo. Enjoy. It's 1984!

Moving back to OW 36, have I mentioned previously how ugly I think the Copperplate Gothic typeface you're using is? It's too black, too heavy, and of course too lacking in lower-case letters, for use as a text type. I think you'd find it a lot more effective as a headliners. As it is, whenever you switch to it (to answer letters) it gives you a "shouting" voice. I'm surprised that someone with your graphics savy would use it

TW

Ted White :: 339, 49th St., Brooklyn, N.Y., 11220 :: Hy: 2-9518

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Dear Bill:

OUTWORLDS 8, perhaps because of meatier letters than usual, and perhaps also because of your lineup of contributors, seems to click with me where previous issues have not.

Maybe it's the absence of art and/or pretentious layouts, too. Previous issues have struck me as full of fluff and without much substance. There's fluff in this issue too, but far better balanced.

Part of what has disturbed me about your previous issues is still to be found in your editorial this issue. It's hard to put my finger on it and say, "This is it," but although I agree with over 90% of the sentiments you express, your way of expressing them put me off. You seem to write around your subjects, approaching them with all the coyness and virtue of a shy maiden her wedding bed. Your comments on your Hugo nomination, for instance, might better have waited for the actual award, and while I really agree with you that Hugos are simply not the reason for putting out a fanzine, your way of saying it suggests that either you're ashamed of such a notion, or you don't really believe it yourself. This probably isn't true, but comes through the overtones of the way in which you write about the subject. The problem is that while no one wants to seem eager for a Hugo, damned few fans (or pros) would turn one down. And inevitably any fan who comments on his nomination for a Hugo seems to end up furiously pushing the dust around with his toe while blushing in anticipation. Better, I think--and this applies equally well to the other nominees as well--simply to shut up until the votes are in.

The fluffiness of your editorial went into overdrive--or you slipped a gear in typing it onto stencil--on p.294, in the fourth line of your new topic. I simply cannot make sense out of what you're saying, and a part of my mind insists that a line (or more) was left out between lines three and four. "...other's won't take the care in doing" is simply a phrase which refuses to make any sense at all. Other's what? Who? Why? And the remainder of the page is probably intended to be funny, but comes out, again, more coy than humorous.

Anderson's column this time is slighter than usual. I wish he'd spoken more about good dialogue and its uses in characterization, and spent less time defending his own use of lectures from characters--which never much bothered me in his stories anyway. Dialogue was undoubtedly my weakest point when I began writing sf, and still is far from my strongest. But I'll pass along to Poul something I've picked up from my various associations with unlettered (but not unintelligent) types.

Most people aren't very articulate. That almost goes without saying; Heinlein's well-known use of "Ahh"s and "Umm"s in his dialogue is an effort to show this without making his dialogue incomprehensible. The so-called "Hemingway" dialogue (actually, it comes from Dashiell Hammett) is another approach to the same thing. But people whose grammar and idiom are limited are not necessarily illiterate--in their heads they

think complex thoughts, but they lack the courage to express them. A very effective device, I think, is to use such a person as a narrator, contrasting the story he tells, and his own thoughts, with the dialogue he speaks. I did that once, successfully, in a short story in F&SF a few years back. If I ever write a mystery novel, which I hope to do some day soon, I expect to make use of the same device.

Because I admire competent people, I've hung around carpenters, plumbers and mechanics a lot, and I've absorbed their speech patterns. I'll be damned if I can codify them into rules--as I once tried doing to contrast British English with American English (stuff like "I've not" for "I haven't"; that sort of thing)--but it's not hard for me to visualize one of those men as an appropriate character, and then just "listen" to him speak.

Lee Hoffman, by the way, is superb at this. One of her westerns opened with a chapter which was nothing but dialogue (between a sheriff and his prisoner), and it sucked you right into the story perfectly. Her characters are a pleasure to "listen" to.

Memo to Andrew J. Offutt: Ace Books has published not only the two Alan Garner books you so admired, but also Elidor, which is equally good. Might I suggest that your prejudice against juvenile novels is putting you off some good books? Like Le Guin's Wizard of Earthsea? (Or even mine?)

I'd like to let Steve Fabian know that he is not entirely without admirers--I like his work, and for the most part I like it better than I do that of his detractors, several of whom stole everything they know. On the other hand, this column seems both disjointed and largely without substance.

Rumor has it that Jack Gaughan is no longer "Assistant Art Director" at GALAXY pubs, and I gather from the most recent issue that when Jack's stuff is used up there won't be much (if any) interior art in those magazines. The latest GALAXY has only one illustration of any size or merit in it, and one novelette (in the back of the issue) has a heading which takes up an inch or so at the top of the first column and that's it. No blurb, nothing.

As I've said before, if I had the money (budget) to throw around which Jakobssen has, I could do five times the job--as so, I expect could almost any competent fan editor.

The sort of WW3 Greg Benford envisions as the most likely was written about--very well--in a novel which was serialized in AMAZING over ten years ago: "The Last Vial" by Dr. Sam McClatchee (sp?). I wonder if I'm the only one who read it or liked it--it never came out in book form. It deals with biological warfare and an undeclared world war. It struck me then as a grim prophecy, and one which deserved a lot of heavy thinking; fandom and just about everyone else ignored it. *Sigh*

I've skimmed Wollheim's book--read a few chapters in detail to see, for instance, what he had to say about Ellison--and my opinion of it is nowhere nearly as high as Doc Lowndes'. But his comments on the book make about the best item in this issue--reminding me of WARHCON of

you--and I only wish Doc had been more specific in his comments on other critics. For instance, his comments on Johnnys--come--lately, and those out "for a fast buck". Who are they? Kingsley Amis? Or--? And I wonder if Doc's read yet Sam J. Lundwall's SCIENCE FICTION: What It's All About, which I considered a waste of paper. (I review it in the December issue of FANTASTIC...)

Paging along to the letters:

I think Terry Carr is copping out in his comment that "art ~~confounds~~ contradicts and confounds ~~its~~ intellection; it operates on a higher plane." No, it operates on a different plane, and that's not the same thing at all. Art affects us emotionally, but that isn't to say that it needn't stimulate our intellects, and can't be intellectually accessible. Art can not only be consciously grasped, it can be--should be, and, indeed, ought to be--consciously manipulated. That is, a man who can create a work of art deliberately and with a complete grasp of what he is doing is the consummate artist--he is a genius.

I don't think that most artists (in any area of art) regard the product of their labors as arcane or terribly ineffible. This they leave to their audience. Most people have a considerable difficulty finding the literal connection between an artist and his art. They come upon it in its finished state and imagine that it sprang in some mysterious fashion full-blown from the mind of the artist. I've been set upon by librarians, for example, who "just loved" my books and couldn't imagine how I was "clever" enough to think them up. The process, as any writer knows, involves rather little "cleverness," and a fair amount of dogged work.

For Terry to spout this nonsense about how "critics are a pretty useless species" is astonishing, when you consider that his job at Ace was, for the most part, that of an acting critic who said "this is good" and "this is bad" and usually supplied reasons for his judgments. (And his review in F&SF of a book of mine was the most perceptive and worthwhile piece of criticism I ever received.)

Perhaps what Terry has overlooked (or is too polite to mention) is that critics in general--and Ted Pauls in specific--really arrive first at their final judgments and then seek out the supportive arguments. That is, Ted Pauls probably finished reading Fourth Mansions and said to himself something on the order of, "Well, it was okay, but nothing great." Whereupon he set out to find the reasons why this should be so. That leads to a biased and less-than-objective piece of criticism, but this is what all critics (and editors) do. The emotional response comes first, and is followed by the neat intellectualizations. Some critics will tell you this isn't true in their case. They are lying--either to themselves or to you.

Jerry Lapidus asks for a "good long article on the basics of fan art and reproduction" (I'll fore swear the pun on that last). The article was written, Jerry, some twelve years ago--and I wrote it. In fact, if memory doesn't fail me, I did two articles on related subjects, both for Ejo's PAS-tel. Others (Juanita Coulson?) also did related articles. They ought to be collected and reprinted. There's a lot of lore involved in putting out a good, attractive fanzine, from the proper use of lettering guides to stencilling artwork, and it ought to be made available again to newer faneds.

Finally, yes, I'd like OUTWORLDS 8.5, and I'm surprised you felt the need to so segregate Anderson's contest winners. This too strikes me as unnecessarily coy--especially coming after those Rotsler photos.

Thos.

SR! YOU
CONSIDER
THIS A
LETTERCOL!



for blocks of text. (But then, I think Bergeron's use of Old English type in his recent fmz is equally ugly, and we all know what a swell graphics designer he is.) Seeing it plastered across the first page of *OV* #36 in the full blackness of offset (or Xerox, whatever you used) really brought it all home to me. How's it look to you, in sober contemplation?

I see Brian Earl Brown is still bitching about *Pong*. Taral told me that Brian was sorry that Taral's "overview" of *Pong* wasn't more negative than it was, and I gather Brian has dropped his anti-Sixth Fandom; andom jehad in favor of "debunking" *Pong*.

Brian may well be right that little in *Pong* "could stand the 'test of time,'" but only time itself will prove him right or wrong. In contrast to his flat assertion on the matter I could offer the assessment of someone like Dave Rike (who, in his *Ped Notebook* #3, mentions that several people, he among them, found *Pong* engrossingly enjoyable without having much if any current knowledge of fandom), but I am content to wait until Time does indeed render its Verdict.

But I do take exception to Brian's assessment that "most of the writing" in *Pong* "could be directly compared to apa-natter--in style, in tone, in skill". I seriously doubt, on the basis of Brian's own published work, that he can tell the difference between good writing and bad, between apa-natter and what we published in *Pong*, or between the tone of what appears in a typical apa-zine and what appeared in *Pong*. And I think to most fans the differences are obvious. Unlike my current fanzine, which is composed on-stencil, *Pong* was second-drafted and carefully lathed and hand-buffed.

You know, it's funny that Brian Earl Brown, who is apparently embarked upon a campaign to discredit *Pong*, used to write us these kissy letters all about how great *Pong* was. It's a shame I didn't save them, because a few quotes from them now would do much to offset Brian's current stance. (After Richard Bergeron complained to me about the limited feedback he'd gotten on his contributions to *Pong*, I bundled up all the unused letters and sent them to him for his amusement. I wonder if he still has Brian's letters....?)

Terry Carr "begs to barf" at the use of "they" in a sentence like "No one should feel they have to..." because "it makes for lousy grammer." Of all people! Or was the misspelling of "grammar" yours, Bill? Actually, in terms of conversational usage, "they" has replaced "he" or "she" in such constructions. But conversation is notably agrammatical anyway.

What bothers me--and probably bothers Terry too--is the way in which some modern dictionaries have begun ratifying sloppy conversational usages, on the grounds that usage defines the standards and dictionaries only reflect usage. Thus, words which simply did not exist in the literate world, like "woken", are now to be found in some dictionaries --as I found out to my dismay, after taking Marc Ortlieb to task for using that word in my *Sikander* piece.

Where are the standards, he cried.

1|4|84

It probably was mine; ...the misspelling, that is. (Although I'll never come up to Dave Locke's 'standards' in eliminating typos...I do think I'm doing considerably better as time goes on. But a few glitches do still occur.) ¶ When did you say that fire was? *Outworlds Eight* carried a pub-date of June, 1971. Ah, well...I'm glad you sent it along: These 'blasts from the past', while commenting on subjects as foreign to me as you in the here & now, are always amusing and sometimes interesting. I recall Jackie Causgrove & Bruce D. Arthurs as also having sent along long-delayed LoC's a year or more ago, but I think those were ones that had never been finished. The responses I find most interesting are those from someone who 'acquires' a whole slew of my back issues all at once--often 'runs' that may have taken me years to produce--and then sends me an overview on them. Is that what they mean by "time-binding"? ¶ In the meantime, God knows what else will surface from out of my past...

Larry Dumes

Thanks for the last two *Outworlds*, #35 & 36, which have found their way to me despite moving ... and then not spending any time there. I should get into the habit

of making notes in the margins, as once again I have forgotten all that I wanted to write as commentary. I hope a note of my chit-chatting will do to keep me on your list. (I was disappointed you ~~WANTED~~ the last one; I'm not dating Patti-niece-of-Asimov any more and thus that letter probably represents my only commentary on the gentleman. I may see her again [I hope to], still...)

This month has been eventful already, and I'm feeling thoughtful because of it. Feb. 2 was my third anniversary of corporate life and second anniversary of completely out-of-town assignments (March 1, my birthday, is a one year anniversary of being assigned in New York). Over the weekend my paternal grandfather died, leaving alone his wife of 62 years. Today the apartment I'm sharing in NYC with two co-workers was burglarized, though nothing of mine was taken. And last night I finished reading 1984, which I started on January 1 on the way home from a weekend trip to California. My average air mileage per month is usually about 5,000--this month could easily go over the 7,000 mark (My two-year travelling score is 125,000--I gain a pound and a wrinkle for each 25,000)--with the funeral in Detroit and idiotic one-day trips to Chicago.

In some way those events all seemed linked, and my sense is that it is by the common thread of Orwell's book. I should start by saying I didn't like it, or more correctly, *I didn't buy it*. I have too much belief in the human spirit to imagine a society of that nature possible--it would be too much effort for Thoughtpolice to really have watched Winston's every move, and too many loopholes in the social fabric for them to truly catch everyone with a human touch. I expected Winston's discovery was going to be that Big Brother and the Party had disintegrated long before; that nobody had realized this or had the energy to bother putting something else up in its place. I imagined a society capable of building the television surveillance network, but not using and maintaining it. In this regard I'm still relying on my old dead uncle Henry Adams, stating (correctly, I imagine) that technology saps mankind's energies for doing anything else, and that historically society was growing less able to manage itself, gaining speed like a comet approaching the sun, but then flinging itself back to the void. This seems to have been the Soviet experience, and several times during the Reagan administration I've had the sense of a government on the verge of hysteria, so twisted by its own ~~double~~ think that the business of the day wasn't going to get done.

But I can't help but notice a Party mentality growing inside of me, encouraged by the cultish ways of my employers, the dehumanizing aspects of travel and--of course--New York City itself, where one learns to look through people because chances are someone you make eye contact with is insane anyway, and who has time to deal with that? It isn't anything direct and obvious, like $2 + 2 = 5$, it's smaller things: suddenly finding thoughts in my head (and clothes in my closet, and food in my refrigerator--or my God, you wouldn't believe the *crap*) that I know didn't come there naturally. I'll start to listen to myself talk to other people, or about other people, and hear inhuman, mean-spirited and self-serving things--worse still, they are things that used to repulse me in others. And in trying to track that thought down, I come upon another and another, and find they always lead back to some little greed, some little lust, some little jealousy that I let get the best of me.

And then having expunged *that*, I look around at the people I'm surrounded by. And then I get really scared.

With so much around us, the process of weeding through it, sorting and choosing the good and rejecting the bad becomes a full-time career. Freedom really *is* slavery, but we are not slaves to anything as harmless as a Big Brother who tortures us, we are slaves to our own personal tortures.

Well, dark thoughts for what was actually quite a beautiful February day. Really, if I didn't have this damned cold I would get up tomorrow morning and go for a jog in Central Park. To me, that is the ultimate luxury. Artichoke hearts and cashmere overcoats aside.

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"...the ultimate luxury"? I doubt that any single item I came up with for that term would stand the test of time: yesterday's luxuries, no matter how much once desired, are today's clutter. ¶ So why not come to Midwestcon or Spacecon this summer...?

Bill Breiding

To continue our conversation from my printed loc (my god! you rat! That must be my first loc in *Outworlds*. *gasp*) my (our) vacation went great--so great that I'm planning to spend a month in England & Europe with Mary this May. (Talk about living beyond your means...)

Things at home are playing themselves out. It seems Leslie and Marcus weren't made for each other and Leslie is looking for another place to live... whether she moves remains to be seen...

Patty's birthday was/is the 9th of this month. Planning a blowout part at Terry Floyd's. Should be good.

Hey! Billy Wolfenbarger sold a story to Karl Wagner for the YEAR'S BEST FANTASY STORIES, 1983: YAHOO!!!

Hope to see the OW annish. Don't X me out just yet--there's still hope. (Did you pause before deciding not to put that 'X' on my mailing label?)

Question: Do you take your fanzine seriously?

Paul Williams (alias: Double Digit) seems not to go for our (San Francisco fandom) type of partying, but he did introduce a whole slew of new people to us who show up regularly at our get togethers. That boy must be a hermit.

Anyway--enough gossip!

PS: get this: APA-50 is almost 10 years old!!

Whither Chris Sherman!?

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Of course I take my fanzine seriously...even if not so seriously as when it was Big & Fancy...but in many ways even more 'seriously' than when it was Big & Fancy. Then it was my life; now it is a part of my life...flexible & mutable, but still a very important part of whatever it is I do, of wherever it is I go. Taking something seriously, it took me a while to learn, does not equate with somberness, humorless, or pretentiousness; even though the mechanics sometimes get wearisome, I have fun with what I do, and the way I do it. At least most of the time! ¶ Hearing from you, from Larry...and getting a note (w/photos) from Patty--

"I'm not sure why you're keeping up this frenzied rate of publishing, but sure am glad to hear from you regularly."

--can't help but giving me flashbacks to the Summers of '76, '77...even '78: surely one of the more...err...'intense' periods in my life, even if it was easy for all the rest of you...and *Those We Knew*. Still, *We All* not only seem to have Survived, but to have done so with a certain degree of Fortitude & Style none of us would have suspected of each other Then--even though I'm not going to be certain of any of this until I get a Certificate from Leah certifying that I have passed beyond the adolescence I so recently entered. ¶ So maybe you'll run across Leah somewhere in the wilds of Europe, and so maybe someday you'll come back to the heartland (I'll be glad to pick you up at Cincinnati's magnificent Amtrack station)...but I'm hoping this 'vacation' goes as well as the last... In the meantime, here's a mutual friend, someone I've known over twenty years, even though I only 'met' him once...in 1975:

Billy Ray Wolfenbarger

11:48 p.m. & counting. Thanks for *Outworlds* 36. It was the only thing in today's mailbox worth reading. You change formats so often we never know what to expect next. Harry Morris in a strange place called Albuquerque does the same sort of thing with *Nyctalops*. Which is nice. But fandom: if fandom is a continuing conversation, I sure get a lot of interruptions with everyone.

Activity can be a lonely thing. I was a supporting member of the World Fantasy Convention in Chicago (the only way I had to receive a copy of the Program Book)--and that entire page of blank autographs looks *lonely*.

Got a kick reading Dave Locke's chat with Steve Leigh.

John Varley is having a party tomorrow night, but we won't be able to make it. The last I heard (was it a couple of months ago??), he'd finished writing ~~books~~. Paul Novitski is living in Seattle, Bill Breiding is in San Francisco, Dwain Kaiser is in

southern California, everyone is everywhere but here. I'd like to live closer to a city, but please don't expect to get a letter from me one of these days in New York City or Memphis, ok?

How has the Winter been treating you? Harrisburg Oregon U.S.A. had its share of snow/ice/freezing-winds weather like everyplace else--except for sunny Florida, I understand. The state of Florida itself, I don't understand. Now the snow has gone, ice disappeared, the awful cold evaporated; all of this has been replaced with chilly, foggy nights & mornings and what one could almost call warm weather--very weird for January in these parts. Like the poem enclosed called Like Some Cry in Wilderness [[see page 1320; *Outworlds* 37]] may help explain, Winter here so far has been quite intense.

Have an interesting News item for you: one of my stories (from *DARK HORIZONS* in England) will be reprinted by Karl Edward Wagner this coming summer in *THE YEAR'S BEST HORROR STORIES: SERIES XII*. I always knew I'd be a "paperback writer" one of these days.

Latest reading: the first story I read in 1984 (o, Happy New Year!) was Lovecraft's *The Colour Out of Space*. First time I read this one was many many wild years ago, and it seems to still hold up pretty well. I truly can't recall the last time I read any current sf. I buy *F&SF* on a regular basis, but find I don't read all the stories--a bad habit I've got to change. (Reading all the stories in any given issue, that is.) The only other newsstand mag I get is *Twilight Zone*, my current favorite. First book I began reading this new year is Ramsey Campbell's *INCARNATE*, & I still have a long way to go: it's thick. In fact, the main reason I joined the World Fantasy Convention for a supporting membership (I wish to *hell* or whatever I could have attended) was to get the Program Book, which has a chapter from Ramsey's new novel not included in *INCARNATE* due to the length of the book. It was frustrating to wait for the Program Book to arrive before beginning reading the novel.

12:44 a.m. & counting. Thanks for the space & the time. The only things worth hearing are the typewriter keys and the passing train, distanced by a mile. 1/7/84

I love that last line...

...and now a note from someone relatively more recent in the annals of my life: he claims to have have met me at St. Louiscon in 1969, but I don't recall encountering him until much later. (Usually, it's quite the opposite...and that's the obligatory esoteric comment for this stencil...).

Mike Slicksohn

I suppose I'm largely to blame for the disappointing amount of response to your last couple of issues. Once I stop writing you those lengthy, point-by-point reactions to your fanzines, there goes a large fraction of the worthwhile response you're used to getting, eh? Well, I can only plead creeping middle-classism. Mine as well as yours. You must remember that I haven't actually lived with anyone since 1973 so adjusting to being one-of-two instead of just me along with getting the house in shape has definitely had an effect on my fanzine fanatic. I can't promise it'll get any better in the next seven or eight years but if you'll just have faith in me perhaps I'll eventually get back to locking *OK*. Maybe. (Your responsibility, of course, is to publish material that is both interesting and commentworthy at least every third issue. After all, there are only so many synonyms for "restricted comprehensibility" I can come up with!)

I was amused to read your public announcement of how brazenly self-indulgent you've been of late and how deeply it's thrust you into debt just a couple of days after you paid me off. Under other circumstances I'd not have nudged you about it, but right now I'm deeper in debt than I suspect you've ever been and one's priorities must change with the times. I expect I'll miss the first worldcon since 1970 this year because of the difficulty of justifying the expense to myself. So it goes...

I don't blame you for not reacting to Ian Covell's comment that he doesn't think fanzines should be judged by relative standards and I certainly don't intend to re-open that can of worms, but I think it necessary to at least answer his question, "Have I been seeing fandom in the wrong way?" Here goes: yes.

Joel Zakem

I realize it has (once again) been three issues since I last responded to *Outworlds*. Let's see, what excuse can I use? The one about law school taking up too much time should be good for another 2½ years.

I'll get to 36 later. I have a new excuse for not responding; *Outworlds* of ten seems better when viewed in bunches.

Issues #34 and #35 serve as the perfect example of this. They were very different. The first was highlighted by the articles by Alex, Steve, and George, not to mention Dave's column and the very fine Foster cover. But while it was nothing shabby, *Outworlds* 34 seemed to lack a certain something. I think that was the lack of a long, rambling, esoteric Bowers' piece. And I, for one, missed it.

Outworlds 35 was the opposite. The two outside pieces, Tucker's elevator report and Dave's column, were brief. But there was a long, totally esoteric, Bowers piece which was, along with the letters, the highlight of the issue. Issue #34 may have spoiled me, though, as I was expecting more outside contributors.

What I seem to be suggesting is a lessening of the frequency of publication and an increase in size. An issue combining the material published in #34 & #35 would prove, I feel, that the sum can be greater than the parts. After all, you already number the pages consecutively. And while I would miss having as many *Outworlds* to read, it would give me (and possibly others) more time to respond.

And since you plan on having another issue out for Confusion, I don't have much time to waste in responding to *Outworlds* 36.

Having been on the opposite of the net from both Dave and Steve, at various times, I was pleased to see the conversation. And while the remblingness of the piece illustrated the informality of the session, I would have enjoyed some tighter editing. At certain points, Steve and (especially) Dave got a bit repetitious, and it contained a few too many in jokes, especially the ones about the participant's alleged tennis prowess. Being a fan of Steve's (infrequent) short fiction, I would have enjoyed more about his writing. Still, it was a fun read, even though the secret of Steve's behind the back shot at the first CFG picnic was not revealed.

I hope that the pessimistic tone of *Outworlds* 36 does not foreshadow the beginning of the end. Since I'm beginning to feel like a hermit down here, *Outworlds* remains one of the few contacts I have with fandom. It would be a shame to loose that to a video fixation...
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I'd be the first to admit that certain single issues don't hang together as well as some others. But as you see here, 'bigness' does not indicate either more 'outside' pieces, or 'long, esoteric Bowers pieces'--and obviously what it does to the "schedule" is all out of proportion to what having stuck to a couple of 12-pagers would have done. The occasional twinge to produce a Big & Fancy genzine still hovers, but the editorial whim is still for smaller, more frequent communication. ¶ From the beginning--no matter how Big & Fancy certain issues appeared--the cumulative effect of issue-after-issue was what was important to me. That's probably the only remaining constant from 1970...

Alexander Mudenitsch

I guess that this is the first real honest-to-goodness letter that you have received from me for more than two years, not counting short notes and brief lines enclosing money. Nonetheless, thanks for including me in the OW35 IAHF, even though I did not deserve the listing.

I expect that, by now, you will have received the \$7.00 that I have sent you via Buck Coulson. I hope you understand what moves me and do not disapprove too much: I usually have little time for fanac and correspondence, specially since I honestly prefer to use the better part of my spare time reading books and magazines (including fmz), watching movies, and listening to music. Another reason is that, living in Brazil, and surface-mail communications being as slow as they are, by the time I learn that another issue has come out, it may be too late to do anything about it. So, if you are willing to send me your publications for money and the occasional loc, I will continue to go on

as I did before.

I still remember the pleasant hours that I spent after you had sent me all those OW back numbers (remember, all those years back?), and the sense of something missing when you stopped publishing OW. The issues of *Xenolith* assured me that you were alive and, well... (sorry, that's a Sturgeon book title joke!) But, seriously, I was happy that you were doing what you wanted, but it still didn't quite satisfy me.

At first, I thought that the New OW was another issue of *Xenolith*, to which I had become reconciled by then, since the characteristics of both were similar. Even now, with OW 35, I still can't quite bring myself to equate this publication with the previous run of *Outworlds*: its feel is different, to say nothing of its thickness and variety--and frequency!

Do not take the above as a reproach or complaint; it's a statement of fact, except for the feeling part, which is my opinion (but, I think, shared by many).

The issue which came closest to the old OW was, for me, #34: it had 24 pages including an illustrated cover, the micro-elite type was confined to the lettercol, you had illustrated column headings, etc.. But why the change in the page numbering? The last page in OW 33 was 2026, and OW 34 started (presumably) with page 1227. Was the reason for this explained somewhere, and I missed it, or will All Be Explained at some later date, perhaps a new *Outworlds* Index? Was the numbering cumulative with *Xenolith*, and then disaccumulated, or did you count wrong? Eh?

What do you publish between issues of OW? I noticed that they all are even-numbered publications; what are the odd ones? Don't try to confuse me by saying that OW itself is odd enough, because it isn't. 1 | 30 | 84

...not only were you the only one out of the Vast & Perceptive OW Readership to notice the Case of The Missing Thousand Pages--but you were also correct in assuming that it would be cleared up in an OW Index (see OW37). [Obviously I am becoming too predictable.] The bottom line is that I simply screwed up. ¶ I keep meaning to take some time and do an analysis of the mailing list and determine the actual figures, but for an off-hand guess I'd have to say that less than a quarter of the present mailing list were getting the 'old' *Outworlds* regularly, as it was being published. Time passes: mailing lists change, and so do the fanzines they service. I do sympathize: when I find an author (or director; or musician) who pleases me with their work, time after time, I tend to get a bit upset when they experiment, and go off in a totally off-the-wall direction. After all, I am just as hide-bound as any other science fiction fan. Sameness and repetition of proven formulas have their lure; clarity of vision and consistency of execution are not virtues I necessarily rebel against for rebellions sake. A lot of the things I "do" make sense when I do them, but not afterwards. A lot of the things I "do" don't make sense even when I do them... As I see it, while there are many variations on the theme, there are only two basic ways to do a fanzine: a) you do it for others (for a specific audience, on a specific theme, ~~at the/with a purpose~~); or, b) you do it for yourself. I am constantly amazed that some people like what I do (and am occasionally puzzled when some react more favorably to a given issue than even I do); I can still be a bit hurt when someone I like, admire, ~~just after~~ doesn't care for my brand of fanzines, or, even more cruelly, could care less. Life is full of decisions, and I suspect that I made mine concerning what satisfied me in terms of my fanzines a long time ago. ¶ But obviously all of the above is writ in stencil wax, and not stone: by this time next year, it's possible you could have the 'old' OW back. Not likely, but...

Marm Hullun

It seems long overdue that I send you a loc rather than relying on green-backs to assure me of receiving *Outworlds*. Your colophon says one dollar per issue "or Editorial Whim". It's not real clear what happens to people who send you the money but your whim may decide they don't deserve the OW. Why take the chance, I say.

I have been reading the issues you've been sending me. You've moved into quite a different world than you were in when I was more active in fandom. Actually, we both have moved into different worlds, haven't we? The major difference is that I've moved

further away from fandom and you've moved much deeper into it. It makes many of the in-jokes and comments in your own writing fairly non-understandable to me. I wouldn't mind a glossary and/or set of footnotes with your editorials, but since I assume that I am one of the few people who are getting ON who don't have the foggiest notion just what in hell you are talking about please don't change anything for me (though a little hand-written note explaining just what some of your in-allusions are all about would be real helpful--just kidding, only kidding, hey! put down that Faan Award!!).

Hmmm. When did I get into fandom? I guess, you might say 1970, when I went to my first con and got my first fanzine--*Locus*, which wrote quite a bit about fans in those days, and didn't publish a lot of photos with blue or red borders around them. That makes me a thirteen year veteran if you don't include the years that I wrote almost no locs, stopped going to cons, and spoke to almost no fans. Moshe Feder was great about calling me up and inviting me to all sorts of fan doings that I never was able to go to. But even he finally realized that I was Too Far Gone for hope. At least I haven't sold my old fanzines yet. So long as I continue to like reading fanzines, I can't imagine ever selling them. So there!

I liked Alex Krislov's piece. In fact, I might even like Alex Krislov. For me, these two things are not unrelated. He seems funny in print. Hey, maybe when I grow up, I can be Alex Krislov too. God! I hope he's not tall and ugly! But he does sound interesting; more interesting than Harry Hagglehound, anyway, of whom I could have had about one page less and still been very comfortable. But whatever Alex was in print, I liked him just fine. I sure do hope he finds himself.

"Yes, Naomi ... that's all he does." [This has been Esoteric Reference For You To Explain #1.]

Cons were always non-relaxing experiences for me, much as they seem to be for Mike Glicksohn, M.D., PhD, LLBean. I suppose it all is dependent on what your normal contact with fans is like. If you spend very little time with fans other than at cons then conning is running around a lot and trying to see lots of people who you can engage in various legal and illegal actions with. If you spend much of your time in your Real Life running around and seeing fans and performing lots of legal and illegal acts with them then maybe you'd want a chance to Just Hang Out. If you knew how.

The nice thing about talking with doctors (this is in re: Stephen Leigh's C-section story, in case you weren't following me) is that they are so good and concerned with the welfare of the patient. The nice thing about the C-section, according to Denise's doctor, is "you'll know when it's going to happen. You won't have to call me away from a gig." How about trying this on for size? "Well, it would be damned inconvenient for you to have the baby this weekend because there's this football game on the tube Saturday and I promised to take my kid to the Mall on Sunday." **SURIEK!!!!** It is interesting to contrast this with Bob Lichtman's discussion of birthing in *Trap Door 1*. I'm glad everything worked out for them though. Babies are little miracles, to be sure.

Apa-writing, as Dave Locke suggests, can be quite interesting and well-done. But, just as Dave believes in first-drafting everything and rejecting anything that is not up to his standards, I would submit that a lot of apa writing (unless it's changed in the last five years or so when I dropped out of apas) is pretty much compose-on-stencil stuff written under deadline pressure. This is not conducive to great writing. Often, it's not even conducive to good writing.

Loved the Brad Foster art in this issue, in particular his humor as well as his firm style (whatever that means). Let him proliferate about fandom. [I'm probably showing my horrible unfannishness by saying this--Foster artwork probably appears in fifty of the top fanzines of the era.] As to his remarking on salary negotiations, I've found that people who like to think of themselves as good managers (which means they've read the books on Japanese Management Systems as well as ~~THE TWO MINUTE MANAGER~~) always insist that I provide the first figure in slary negotiations. This made me quite nervous on my present job. I had asked for about \$100 a week over what I figured we would settle on. About 30 seconds after I made my offer, the production manager looked at me and said "Sure!" all too enthusiastically. Made me wonder if I could've asked for more. I'm quite happy with what I got, it just makes me wonder, that's all.

I only have two questions for George R.R. Martin on his GoH speech. First, did he ever get to Sans Souci? And, finally, just what the hell is Sans Souci? 1|25|84

"people who send the money" get treated the same as anyone else; in fact their status is probably somewhat more secure than most, since my whim is a very fickle thing indeed. ¶ You're Probably Going To Be Sorry...But Since You Asked, Dept.: Naomi is a co-worker, a sometimes-friend/sometimes-mere acquaintance, and a part-time fan. Let's take this in stages: 1) Why she is a co-worker. Three years ago, less than a month into my present job (when I was still temping...before I sold out & down to go direct), I was called into the office with the manager and two supervisors behind a closed door (always good for total catatonia among the workers). They were bringing in additional help, the agency had submitted Naomi's resume...and mentioned that I had worked with her before. And what did I think of her work? "Fine," I said, neglecting to mention that our total simultaneous job experience consisted of a day & a half, in-house at the agency, during which we probably exchanged a total of ten words. 2) Why she is a friend. ~~She used to introduce me to neat women in the local mensa group.~~ 3) Why she is a mere acquaintance. Much later that year, one of the lesser luminaries of the local fan group came up to me at a party and mentioned that he knew/had become involved with a friend of mine. "Ah," I said, frenetically reviewing my list of friends to determine which one would have the inexcusable bad taste to get involved with someone made famous in NERG 16 by Steve Leigh. "...and who is that?" "Naomi", he said. I didn't blink, I didn't pause, as I heard myself saying to him: "She's no friend of mine...just a mere acquaintance." (I never jump to conclusions; especially not when I can leap to them.) Time went on and that relationship ebbed and flowed and ebbed again. "But I've read all your fan articles on fannish relationships, and I'm just trying to follow your example," Naomi said to me. "Wrong," I said. "You're not hanging THIS rap on me...!" ¶ All of that is to explain the "Yes, Naomi..." portion of the ~~Referenon~~ ~~you wish~~ explained, Norm. The rest is a bit more complicated. ¶ One of the bones of contention in their relationship was that he was going to be a "writer" and therefore needed his space in which to write. But it seems that when he had that space, he was always doing something (or someone) else rather than writing. And during one of the ebbs in their relationship, one Saturday afternoon after work, I drove Naomi to her first convention. Once there, I ~~palmed her off~~ introduced her to ~~one of the lesser~~ a beginning, but selling, writer--the better to enable me to lust after his wife. (Hey! This was when I was still in my adolescence, so give me a break!) Apparently fairly soon into their conversation, he mentioned to Naomi that he was a writer. "Ah", she said brightly, "...and is that ALL you do?" ¶ Now let us return to issues past, and in particular to the last paragraph on page 1234 of OW34...and now you will see why I followed Alex Krislov's article with that cute little jab you found so esoteric... ¶ I really don't see why everyone makes such a big deal about the esoteric asides that I on rare occasion toss into my writings. It's not as if I'm not willing to explain them, when asked directly, you know. Well, maybe not THAT one; but then, that one isn't all that interesting, anyway. Trust me. ¶ 4) Why Naomi is a part-time fan. Primarily because of the responsibilities of parenthood. But I understand, primarily because she has promised to save her daughters for me. R.S.N.

Al Curry

Finally, after all your whining and sniveling, after all of your snide remarks at CFG meetings about former faneds who never loc fanzines, I've decided to shut you up for a while. Here it is! Get ready!

A LOC.

Re: Ian Covell's reference to different laws in different parts of the country. Not only different laws, Ian, but even, in some instances, conflicting laws. For instance, my wife, Iyn, was previously married to her first cousin. This isn't legal in Ohio, so they went to North Carolina where the marriage laws are more liberal. Since their marriage was legally performed in another state, however, it became legally recognized in Ohio.

Confused yet? Wait, there's more. In the state of Massachusetts their marriage

would not have been recognized. If the marriage could not be performed in Massachusetts it would not be recognized, even though it was performed within the laws of another state.

What many people forget (including Americans) is that, for all practical purposes, we are a collection of fifty individual countries. At least, that attitude was encouraged. At one time, our federal laws amounted to little more than a complicated series of treaties and trade agreements when you examined them closely. At one time, individual states could print their own currency and, if memory serves, they had certain preemptory powers over the postal system.

Re: Brian Earl Brown's career comments. Why should Brian be surprised by lack of direction? At thirty-four I find myself almost blissfully unaware of what might next be rolling down the toll road of my life.

It gives one the opportunity of looking on each new day as a frightful adventure.

Some stray thoughts after reading Dave Locke & Steve Leigh:

*It's nice to see that someone is keeping tennis alive in the purest form of its true, martial arts tradition.

*I've heard numerous references to the differences between Steve Leigh and SLeigh--mostly from Denise--but I've never witnessed them personally. I understand, however, that certain tapes still exist. I'd love to hear those.

It's a funny thing. I don't really know what I'm like on stage, whether my personality is significantly different on stage than off. Well, hell, Dave, Steve, Bowers, you've seen me before. You tell me.

Re: Porn. As with anyone who writes porn, I don't give a flying rat's ass about the integrity of the material I sell them. As Dave said, it brings in a bit of badly needed scratch. There is no integrity to porn. It is, if anything, an even stricter formula than the romances.

What does the editor want? The same as every other editor ... S A L E S! Ergo, it is a simple matter of balancing equations. If humping the housecat is out of vogue, you simply pull Tabby out of factor 1 of the equation and replace her (with Farkle the Dog ...or Aunt Margie...or Uncle Ray...or a '57 Nash). Factor 2 of the equation (SALES!) will balance itself.

Stray Comments:

Interesting, Dave, your comment on the influence of declining literacy (he said, failing miserably to construct a complete sentence, yet having the nerve to end the mess with a period). The lack of emphasis on education must, by its very nature, affect changes in attitudes, priorities, quality of produced goods, art, music, literature, and nearly any other aspect of human experience I can imagine. Literature would have to be one of the fields suffering the most drastic effects.

In a recent syndicated column, Sydney Harris lamented that poetry, once thought of as the epitome of fine literature, suffers today from a nearly total lack of interest. He also questioned the health of any society in which poets are unable to support themselves on the value of their work, without the necessity of plugging away at the afternoon tea circuit for readings and moist palm pressings. Meanwhile, the romance writer casts about for personal accountants and tax shelters.

The average (?) "new" writer for Silhouette Books (according to one of their sales managers with whom I spoke) can expect anywhere from fifteen to thirty thousand per year...per title...after calculating advances plus royalties. Considering the fact that Silhouette was (and, very likely, still is) publishing six separate lines with four new titles in each line per month, one can see where a lot of the publishing money is going. And if the budgets are expended there, you can bet your last buttock that they represent only a small percentage of what's coming in.

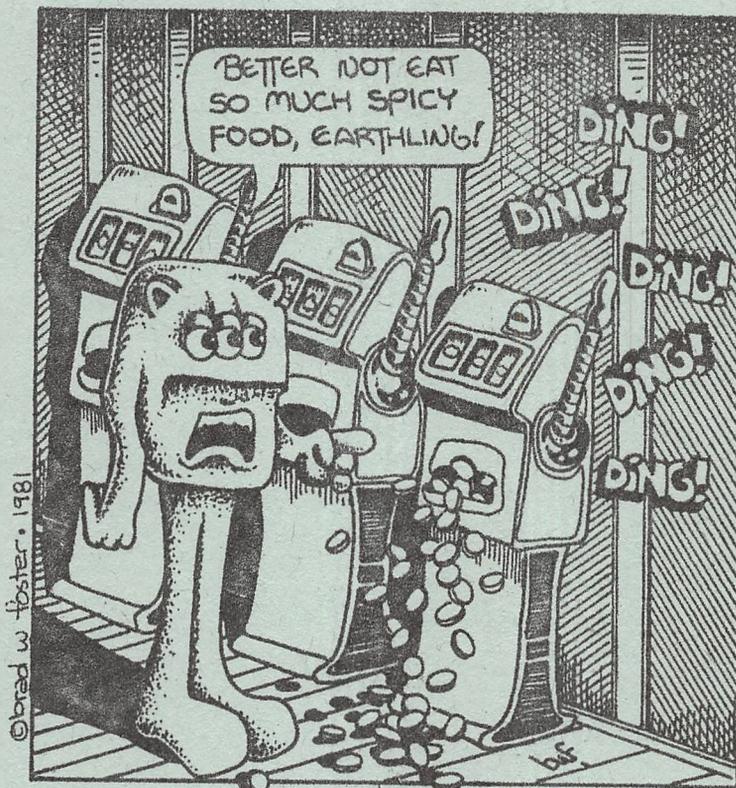
Romances aren't the only example. Any "trash" will sell. It's the well-witten work that usually goes begging. My porn is a prime example.

Those maniacs want two books per month from me...to start. Christ! In no time at all I'd be found curled in a corner pulling out my eyelashes and mumbling, "Whips and midgets, whips & midgets." Yet I have no doubt that the garbage would sell.

This has been another message from the Chapel of the Holy Diatribe. Please stay tuned for early news and the farm report.

Beard Mutterings

a column by
BOB TUCKER



Be of stout heart and good cheer, Dave Locke, some of us still read science fiction and even discuss it in fanzines like this one. We are a vanishing breed, of course. If you too wish to vanish with us I'll loan you my copy of *Amazing Stories*, November 1983, which appears to be a Canadian copy. Maybe all the Stateside fans have moved across the border. This copy provides no Stateside price but it does state '\$1.95 Can' and 'UK: 75p'. You will please not make puns on the United Kingdom price or offer to buy it from me in coin of that realm. I haven't yet recovered from your dissertation on dorsal boils.

M.E. McMullen has an entertaining short story in this issue entitled *Gandy Plays the Palace* and I thought it a dandy piece of lighthearted fiction except for one bit of stage lore. The hero, Harry Gandy, did his opening turn on stage and then "... walked upstage and took a big, exaggerated bow ...". Neither Harry nor his author seemed to realize that he walked away from the audience and bowed to the back wall. The footlights are downstage and the audience is supposed to be on the other side of those footlights. In the absence of props or other furniture there is nothing upstage except perhaps a backdrop, or draperies, or the rear wall of the theater. It's always possible that if one does bow to the wall he will get a bigger laugh than if he had walked downstage and bowed to the audience, but I don't think Harry Gandy intended that.

But this isn't the first time that someone who *should* know has exhibited their ignorance about the theater in which they were working. I once met a playwright who didn't know the difference between stage right, and stage left. No, I didn't have the heart to tell him. He was making far more money than I was, and should have been smarter

because he was a college man. I also met an amateur stage crew in a large theater who didn't know the same difference, but this time I did set them right. I had brought a show into their theater and it would be my neck, not theirs, if scenery and props were mixed between stage left and right. But that was all right, none of us were college men and women. There is a sharp difference. The playwright and the amateur crew made the mental mistake of sitting in the audience and looking at the stage, thinking that their left was also stage left. It isn't. Stage left is always the actor's left, when he is standing in the center staring at the audience. If you aspire to be a correct playwright, or a correct science fiction writer, make all stage directions operate from the actor's viewpoint and let him walk downstage to the footlights to take his bows.

(Next month, if there is a thundering demand, we will discuss flies and trucks on stage. I don't really expect a thundering demand. But that's all right, flies aren't really flies and trucks are not those lumbering behemoths one dodges in the street.)

Now, one more merry anecdote of a college man loose in a theater and we'll get on to better things, even maybe science fictional things. College men belong in business and in government where their blunders can cause bankruptcies and worldwide depressions, events easily seen by everyone. They don't belong in theaters where their blunders are shifted off onto the hired help or onto students learning the trade.

This particular college man was a Theater Major who had graduated from some back-water university in South Dakota, and found his first job as a stage manager in a back-water Illinois university where I sometimes worked as an electrician. He also taught classes in theater arts on that same stage and passed along his ignorances to his students. The theater was brand spanking new and all the equipment was as good as university money would allow; it was a joy to work with and work on, when that stage manager would leave us alone. We took our first, full good measure of him just before the theater opened, and when we were still installing the final touches to the whole. It was all downhill from there.

Another electrician and myself were putting the final wiring into the service box, a large monster of a box on the backwall where the power came in from the pole and entered the theater. It was three-phase service, which meant there were five copper bussbars: three hot bars with a 400 amp fuse on each bar, another neutral bar across the bottom, and finally a fifth bar which served as a zero-ground. Some Broadway shows and nearly every rock concert used them all, and a few rock shows approached the full capacity of 400 amps. (We also had to teach some traveling rock electricians the value of that zero-ground. They were a rowdy bunch but they learned quickly. A properly connected zero-ground eliminates that annoying hum from guitars and loudspeakers.)

The stage manager, a Theater Major, watched us finish work on the service box and fit the three 400 amp fuses into place. "My, my," said the boy wonder, "we will never need twelve hundred amps around here." The electrician and I put away our tools and went home (or maybe down to the bar) trying not to gape or laugh aloud. I don't think I bit my tongue but I managed to contain my laughter until I was outside. Pity the young students who were learning stagecraft from that man. They may be teaching still other students today.

NOT ONLY DO SOME OF US still read science fiction, we read science magazines and books as well. I heartily recommend science magazines and books to you; they broaden one's mental horizons whether or not one has downward slanting eyes. I found the following statement in the March-April 1984 issue of *Biblical Archaeology Review*. The author of the statement, Robert A. Wild, was reporting on his examination of The Shroud of Turin and his examination of the evidence supporting the authenticity of the shroud. He thinks it is a fake. He thinks it was concocted either by a master forger, or by an innocent but inspired religious painter shortly before the year 1357. The shroud can be traced backward for only 600-plus years, to a day when it was first exhibited in the village of Lirey in northeastern France.

The author seemed to be leaning toward the theory that the shroud was concocted by a devout artist when he made this statement: "The apparent absence of any navel could

even be an effort to remind the viewer of the teaching of the virginal birth of Jesus." I stopped and reread that sentence another two or three times.

Who, I wondered, was confused? That pious artist, the master forger, the author of the article, or me? Virginal conception or not, parthenogenesis or not, was the baby formed, fed, and birthed all without an umbilical cord?

Later on the author states: "While obviously I cannot prove it, my impression is that an artist (or forger) scorched a linen cloth with a properly heated statue or, more likely, a pair of bas-reliefs, using whole blood to create appropriate stains. Such a technique would explain the lack of paintbrush marks, the unusual 'photographic' negative and the image's three-dimensionality."

But, I'm moved to ask impertinently, why go to all that bother? Why manufacture, borrow, or steal statues and bas-reliefs from the village square just to produce an image of a dead man? Why heat them and risk burned fingers to cast an image? There certainly were enough corpses in the fourteenth century available to an artist or a sneaky forger, and a fresh corpse would provide the blood needed to make stains in all the appropriate places. Wrap a corpse in a linen cloth and scorch it/him. The corpse isn't likely to complain and one can always air out the studio afterward. Why do these investigative authorities much about with hot statues when a corpse offers a more direct and likely body of evidence. (No pun there, Dave Locke.) As the author points out elsewhere, the face seen in/on the shroud is a common face often seen in works by medieval artists. They tended to copy one another, those medieval artists, because none of them were eye-witnesses to the event and so they adopted the face that was popular in their own age. For that matter, I'll point out that the face on the shroud also resembles some faces of the 1960s hippy crowd. Long hair, heavy mustaches, and unkempt beards have been around since Jericho was settled about ten thousand years ago. Maybe earlier.

SCIENCE FICTION WORLD CONVENTIONS (and to a growing extent, now some regional conventions) are not the only gatherings plagued by poor planning, miscalculations, and multiple scheduling conflicts. The biblical archaeologists are complaining of some of the same problems we encountered at Baltimore last September. They held their 1983 meeting in Dallas in December, and encountered conflicts that were described as "maddening".

Dave Kyle, our 1983 fan guest of honor, could surely sympathize with the harried archaeologists.

In Dallas: "The opening morning of the meetings--when everyone was the freshest--did not include a single session of broad interest." But later in their convention the archaeologists trotted back and forth between two large halls where two equally interesting and equally important sessions were running opposite one another. Many of the delegates wanted to hear both sessions and so they did the only thing open to them: they set aside good manners and scurried from hall to hall, catching snippets of both programs, but creating something of a nuisance of themselves. The scurrying back and forth annoyed others no end, those who stayed in their seats and attended only one program, but the convention planners found no way to alleviate the problem and so the rat race continued for three hours.

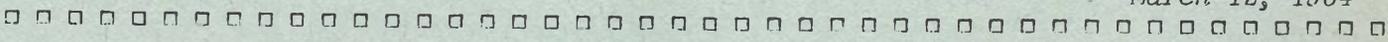
The Dallas planners also encountered the same difficulties as our convention planners in anticipating the size of the audience for a given event. Their con reporter said that sometimes only 15 people would be found in a hall with a seating capacity of 300, but at another time a session was so packed that "...distinguished scholars from around the world had to sit cross-legged on the floor..." to listen to a star attraction. The crowning blow came when the crowd attempting to see and hear another speaker was so large that it blocked the doors and trailed out into the hall. Their con reporter also bitched about the planners' habit of scheduling business meetings opposite regular programming. The only familiar items missing from this archaeological con report were complaints of multiple hotels, shuttle busses, and cantankerous elevators.

I attended two regional conventions last year which made the same incomprehensible mistake in programming, but yet the committee people were old hands at the convention game and certainly knew better. At those conventions, the guest of honor speeches were scheduled and given at either six o'clock, or six-thirty on Friday evening. At the same

time, long lines of incoming fans were standing in the hotel lobbies waiting to check in at the desk and get their room keys.

The committees wondered aloud why so few people were in the hall to hear the speeches.

---Bob Tucker
March 12, 1984



...what an awkward widow! In the Old Days, I'd have gone back and retyped the last couple of stencils to even it out. (In the Even Older Days, I would have completely typed out Bob's column in advance...to 'justify' it, and to make sure something like this didn't happen.)

But this is the 1980s, and the above is an example of what 2+ decades of fanpubbing will do to a former perfectionist. Let that be a lesson to all of you contemplating your Very First Fanzine at this very moment...

...and Bob, I thought Dave's dissertation on dorsal boils perhaps his best piece of writing yet. And apparently I wasn't alone, as it's been selected for inclusion in FANTHOLOGY 83...

And now, it seems to be time to get on to the comments on Outworlds 37... We'll start the proceedings off with an outtake from a letter to Dave Locke (furnished with a gleam in his eye by that selfsame troublemaker):

I think Resnick is completely off base on the subject of literature. Based on his analysis of why he thinks Malzberg is the greatest literary artist in the SF field, it seems to me that he's equating literary artistry with writing faan fiction for writers.

---David Kulan; 4/7

Don't worry, Mike -- things get better. For awhile.

Dick Bergeron

I was delighted with the Dave Locke interview with Walt Willis--this may well be the first time I've enjoyed the interview format in a fanzine (and we live in a time when there seem to be almost as many 'interviews' as there used to be book reviews), but it probably has as much to do with the subject than it does with Dave's very evident skill in handling the form. More than occasionally I have reason to be reminded of Dave's comment on Wrhn 28 (quoted in Wrhn 29) which put into words better than anyone what I saw in Walt's work and my experience of him as a fan. Locke was probably the perfect person to write this kind of a piece and it's one which would have fit in well in Wrhn 28--I needed a sort of coda to wrap things up and bring the reader up to the present in Walt's life after the chronology of what (as Dave points out) "is the story of one fan's odyssey through fandom". Of course I got my coda in Tom Perry's article which I thought a marvelous piece of writing which through being intensely personal was wonderfully moving. But, then, this kind of interview probably couldn't have happened in 1977 (by then Wrhn 28 was completely set in content) because (1) I doubt Walt would have felt able to assume this reflective frame of mind and (2) I certainly wouldn't have had the inspiration to come up with so gracefully handled a concept. And I suppose "grace" is the mot juste here as we wend our way through Walt's gentle and unassuming prose--so unlike the strident (and aggressive) tone which dominates so much fan writing (my own included, of course).

A lovely job.

2|8|84

Jae Christopher

Literally you're right that Wm. A.P. White did not predict you in 1943. It was the previous year. I refer you to ROCKET TO THE MORGUE (as by H.H. Holmes, 1942), Ch. 6 ("The Last Day"), Sec. 3, in which Lieutenant Marshall of the L.A. police calls upon Arthur Waring (your pseudonym - predictions can't get every detail):

The boy led the way to a small room. Marshall gasped as he entered. The entire wall was pictures. The same sort of pictures that he had seen in the Nitroscretic Lab, originals of illustrations for s-f magazines, but hundreds, seemingly thousands of them.

Waring heard the gasp. "Aren't they swell? That's a Rogers cover over there, and I've got a half-dozen Boks and three Finlays. And look over here: That's an original Cartier, and did that take some getting!"

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Marshall looked about the room. No books here. Just an infinite number of pulp magazines, all carefully arranged by title and date; apparently almost complete files of a half-dozen different publications, and assorted samples of others.

+++

"I'm going to do an article for one of the fan-mags debunking the classics. Who cares about . . . Poe or Verne? They're old stuff, and I'm going to show them up."

"Have you read them?" Marshall asked with quiet amusement.

"Well--no. Not much anyway. But all these people that rave about the classics, which maybe they were all right when they were young, but have they read what's being published now? You bet your life they haven't."

+++

"He [another character in the novel] talked a lot and he used to write pieces for the fanzines--he wrote one for mine once--"

"You're a publisher?"

"Sure. Here." Waring crossed to a pile of mimeographed sheets and picked up a stapled magazine with a lithographed cover. It was called Fandemonium. "Take it."

Confess the truth, Bill. Isn't that close enough to be a prediction? (I suppose you have paperbacks these days, instead of pulp magazines; but otherwise . . .) 2 | 9 | 84

...well, since I was July-born, it is more than likely that I was--in one manner or another--at least conceived (of) in 1942. Now then, Joe, if you can demonstrate that the novel was published in October of 1942, I might be impressed. Otherwise I'm afraid that I'll have to continue to think of myself as an Original...

Ian Covell

Received *Outworlds* 37--what an issue! I always loved the Ace Double idea, but this goes one better: both sides are good! You were also right that the contents were a treat; finally, finally, to hear 'directly' from Walt Willis, a fan author whose *Enchanted Duplicator* I wanted to get, first because it was co-written by Shaw, second because it was funny, but never did. Walt Willis who seems to have lived a fairly decent and ordinary life, only once achieving the status of Ghod but making it a life-time tenure. It is a long and--of course, you know--funny and interesting long term view of fandom, and I thank Willis, Locke and yourself for getting it into print. I only hope enough Willis-fans find out about it and obtain copies. I also love the idea of an earlier-type Van Vogt novel re-edited by Sturgeon, now there is a collaboration! (I did wonder, on hearing it, how his 3rd NULL A book would match his first two.) I also loved one of those typos that reads better than reality:--

Page 1297 - "Locke: .. what are your reactions (to acclaim) ...?"

Walt: .. I great praise..."

It was at this page too that another moment of time-binding took me back. 1926, and a young boy, barely into his teens, stares at this new type of magazine. In a few years he will be submitting his own stories, then finding others in his area with like minds, and he'll join a fan club, rather like one for film stars, except the fans think... and he'll go on... And then it'll be today, 58 years later, and the young man will be an old man with grandchildren and a treasure collection of sf and fanzines, and memories... SFandom now covers several lifetimes. If the ink has faded, the paper disintegrated, in those early magazines, the heart hasn't.

I agree about not damning any fanzine outright because its editor obviously put *some* creative effort into it; I might criticise format or content but I wouldn't dismiss *anything* in one savage paragraph as I've seen done in the mini-reviews of certain bigger semi-pro-zines. There's definitely one fanzine whose content I totally disagree with but I'd rather argue than damn outright. (It's the same subject as Avedon Carol's long reply to me...)

Dave Locke's own interpolated life story, and his thoughts on writing and fans make sense, but I think his remark on page 1290 about Robert M. Williams seems a mite unaware of RMI's letter (in *SFR*, I'm sure) where he was desolate to look back on so much poor writing, and wish he had been edited or pointed in a different direction. If he'd read that, I doubt Locke's remark would have been quite so offhand nor his quote of Mular. There are moments when the pain and disappointment of another human being reaches and hurts you; RMI did it to me.

The letters, spaced through your mag, are mostly lengthy and involved arguments or comments. I will probably comment at just as much length, but hope I don't, that I can encapsulate my reaction in a few words. My reaction to Avedon Carol can be said in very few words.

But the others first:-- I wonder how you reacted to Roger Waddall's loss. There have been several fanzines where I found the content totally inapplicable and almost incomprehensible, but I've found with *Outworlds* that it's the thoughts and memories beyond the content that are as vivid as what's written about. At times, indeed, my problem is the opposite of Waddall's, the thoughts conjured act on so personal a level that I can't talk about them, and what I reply is not everything I'm thinking. That is when I feel worst about loosing a 'zine; I want to capitalise whole sentences of reminiscence about similar doings, but daren't.

I'm happy for Edd Vick, but--at least re my country--he's not typical. One firm in my area advertised 60 jobs. It got 1200 applications. I have a job now, too, but it's strictly part-time, will end soon, and has no prospects anyway. Alas, it too is in a bookshop and I wish it could be prolonged. I finally met the sf fans in this area who always got to the second-hand shops and cleared them out before I arrived. Strangely, none of them are involved in fandom, they just love sf... I've even met a little oldish lady who has been reading sf for forty years, and loved the Big Three, and hated what the 1960s did to sf... I have precisely the same ambitions as Roger Waddington as, I'd guess, does everyone else except those so entrenched in the work ethic they can't see living as including work rather than work including life. Of course, in thirty years time, pensionless, alone, and probably penniless, I'll curse the younger me...

I wasn't sure anyone could review *THE SF BOOK OF LETTERS* let alone write a column on it. It seems the American edition differs radically to the British, and maybe that's where all the confusion arose? A UK text plus US typesetting? (By the way--a snippet of info gleaned courtesy of the newest, biggest, issue of *The British Fantasy Newsletter* --Maxim Jalubowski is the pseudonymous [Charlotte Stone] author of an extremely sexy [explicitly so] novel from DAW, *CHILD OF WELTARIED*.)

Like Dave Locke (1297) I find words interesting in themselves. I'd like to recall the words he uses, but I know I won't--and that in future years, writing stories as I write them now, I'll cudgel my brains for a single euphonious (hah!) word to describe an event and find I eventually have to use three. Obviously enough, the word *agnosy* is derived from the same base as *agnostic*, *ag-nostic*, *gnostikos* being the Greek for knowledge...no, the Greek for *knowing*. I just realised that the Dictionary definition of this word says it means "one who believes only in facts" (ie, not God) but that originally it meant just the opposite! I was going to mention that I was fascinated by words that have reversed meaning down the centuries (like 'sophisticated') but it seems I've found a new one. I purposely waited to re-buy a dictionary until I could get one that gave you the derivation, and I keep running across intriguing manipulation of words. The only Delany book I really liked, *PAPER-17*, hinted at the power of words; as I grow older, I find propaganda has been in operation for centuries - Why should someone who believes only in facts be called ignorant? It's like the word *atheist*; someone sets up this thing called 'theism', the nonsensical belief in gods outside Earth, then people are

judged relative to that belief, so that I 'become' an a-theist because I'm no fool. Labels really do divide people, don't they?

Reading Brad (hi!) Foster's puzzlement about 'years' reminds me of my brother's remark. He said, in January 1984, it had been two years since he'd received a certain gift. My sister looked at him, "But that was Christmas 1982". "Yup," he replied, "two years..."

Although I have like certain trilogies, tetralogies, quintologies (?), sexologies (yes indeed!), I agree with Harry Warner that most of them are padded single novels. Which is a pity because I reckon most of them would be excellent and acclaimed if they were only one novel. What they wouldn't be, of course, is bestsellers, or even good-sellers. People want more of what they like. They rarely care who writes it (and can never remember titles) but start an obvious series, and I don't know any case where the sales haven't built book by book. Maybe there's a case that just as many authors' work is extremely similar book to book, there is honesty in continuing the same set of characters through many volumes rather than changing names and locations even when virtually everything else is the same?

Rece the postcard on 1302, was it reported in the US newspapers that UK government scientists have had to admit they used animals in weapons research? Like, for example, strapping pigs into tanks and aeroplanes (?) and then blasting them with bullets and explosives to test the effect of such ammunition on roughly comparable human skin and flesh and bone? I'd have thought we knew enough ways to damage or maim or kill each other.

AveDon Carol: what can I say? Why should I say? True, I haven't met any feminists at all. I thought I'd read them, in Friedman and Geer, but I've been told (Joy Hibbert) that these, and many others, promoted as 'feminists' by the media, aren't feminists at all, so I suppose this argument is going to get convoluted... If the definition of feminism is what the speaker thinks it means, I'm a feminist... I just disagree with 99% of what's called, written, promoted, disseminated as feminist thought. Again and again while reading her letter, I keep seeing the argument that women shouldn't be confined to the kitchen/bedroom/home. My point is that I've never thought they should. Of the four jobs I've had, one involved me with all-women colleagues, and in another everybody from colleagues to the boss were women. I didn't care. They knew their jobs, I knew mine. We got along. If the subjects they talked about wasn't always applicable or comprehensible to me (clothing; etc.) I didn't care either. We found common interests like literature and films, and even fantasy fiction. What has always bothered me is that all-inclusive 'MEN', again and again Carol uses it. She doesn't seem to see that sentences like "...why men automatically thought they were being *accused*..." are sexist; the word to insert is 'some' as in 'some me...thought...'. I grant the chauvinism of some men, even of many men, but I don't grant it of all men. Joy Hibbert thinks I'm a hypocrite who pays only lip service to equality, but she's wrong. That I am is an egalitarian. I think that those with the ability to do so should be allowed access to the areas at which they are competent.

The point at which I finally laughed aloud was this: "...she and I both know that neither of us will live to see the day that a woman can meet a man and say that she likes to write or do music or paint or all of the above, and assume that he would never think of these as merely nice little hobbies she can do when she's finished the cooking and cleaning". Meet me, sunshine! I didn't wonder, when receiving a fanzine from a woman that this must have been produced in the evening because her life revolved around the home; I don't assume anything about anyone. I admire people who create things, I think the best sf novel (among about 12 of equal worth) is ~~THE DISAPPEARANCE~~ and I really didn't see LeGuin as anything other than a writer. I think it's safe to assume that if someone says they like to write or paint or do music then it's not a professional stance, in which case it can be taken to seen a hobby, whether said by man or woman, but that's it.

But this is all apology and no doubt AveDon has heard similar protestations before. It's never the one you're speaking to who's part of the oppression you feel. The sad thing is when you assume a potentiality for oppression and judge representatives against it. Eg, Joy Hibbert told me I oppressed women; I replied I didn't oppress anyone, and

never intended to; ah, she replied, you do possess the power to oppress, you just haven't used it...yet. Now can you argue with the inarguable?

If I must talk about Joanna Russ, and I'd rather I didn't, I read every single book up to *THE TWO OF THEM*. Every single book annoyed me, but I listened. God's above, did I listen! I mean, Joanna Russ was SF's loudest feminist voice wasn't she? What she had to say about the relationship between the sexes must be of importance mustn't it? Well, in short, no. She's just a fairly clever writer. Nothing she ever said related to anything I'd seen between the people I knew, she was strident, but most of all, she was unjust. According to your words, as seemed obvious at the time, this injustice was meant, it was a warning, it was an exaggerated picture in which all things could be read. I have the same reaction to all such polemics: my back goes up, my interest goes down, and my annoyance level creeps up a notch. If what Russ said wasn't true now, then it shouldn't have been heeded as it was--if what she wrote was designed to be unreal, inflammatory, then it succeeded. Sadly, getting angry at lies doesn't teach you anything.

I don't agree with George Gilder: I read *Arjey* to mean that everyone had a territorial imperative (the question of sex doesn't count, I thought) but I haven't read *Tiger*. It seems that, just as I have been 'wrong' for reading them more strident feminists as symptomatic of the movement, so she reads about Wells Angels and Gilder and judges all men relative to that.

I told Joy Hibbert months ago a thing I knew would get people mad, and I'm telling Avedon Carol now: a complete human is a partnership of a man and a woman. I don't decry living alone, I don't demand that everyone join a couple, I simply believe that our race is two-sexed, and a mixture of the sexes is a racial type. Whatever else I may say, that's the base. Disagree, and no argument will work...

The Mike Resnick interview told me a little about him. Though obviously well-known in the US I only knew him by two BBF-pastiches of the late 60s. Although I found and read a couple of singles like *REDEWARD* I was to learn that my meagre list didn't include the literally hundreds of stories and novels he had written under many pseudonyms. I've never been able to get more details. Same applies on Westlake and Offutt. I agree with him totally about Asimov--a writer, like Kuttner, I was for years convinced I liked until I realised I wasn't rereading any at all--especially that the 'lightweight' *MAN OF TWENTY* is his best book; every review of Asimov has called this among his worst or most negligible, and it puzzled me for years until I decided that what disqualified it from serious notice was that it's a straight love story with a plot to justify it.

It must be the first interview where the interviewer reads a book while the interviewee answers.

As someone who gave up reading Malzberg within two or three years of 'finding' him, I find my memories of the books meagre and probably inaccurate, but reading the occasional argument about him, I had an idea. What SF readers dislike, and probably mainstream readers if it's blatant enough, is cynicism when it's obvious an author is making a point not against the genre but against the reader. I don't find it odd that many men have replaced works based on 'Men are shit' themes on their shelves and not seen the 'proper' intent of the work; so in the case of Malzberg, and I submit Ballard as well, his constant reiteration that the inaccuracies, precisities, faults, and so on of the work are intended to exist because the fantasy/SF genre itself is inaccurate, precious, or faulty, turns the reader's willingness to read away from the book. A novel which says 'You read trash, here's some more' is not designed to endear itself to anyone. Your cynics will find you out. Malzberg turned out a seemingly endless stream of false sf taking the nicky out of its readers--I think you can only take so much flak before deciding it's better to try someone who writes what he believes (if only while he's writing it). All fiction is false, why should cynicism be an improvement? Readers (pace Dorothea Brande) may encounter philosophy only in fiction but why should they endure disdain to read it?

I'm not sure what this section has to do with Resnick's own writing, but I guess if he admires Malzberg it's because he agrees with much of his work, and that may say in advance that I won't like Resnick's writing either...

I'm amazed at his inclusion of James White; not sure why but I am.

All in all, the interpolation of everyday life into this dialogue, and indeed the in-depth dissection of other authors--possibly to example what might influence Resnick--was excellent. It's a shame it's not always possible to just have a relaxed chat between author and interviewer like this.

The con reports, speeches, and asides, were also interesting, and this is where Mr. Weddall's comment comes into play: I wasn't there, so have no exterior comment, and obviously nothing can be said to be contentious in it (much). It gives an inkling about "the pleasurable rememberence of times we never lived".

I rather think 3½ pages (2500 words?) is more than even generous people can endure and thus I shall end comment.

Though not the letter, ha. I want to thank you for your labour of love. O'37. The *soup de jour* was indeed to my taste.

As for me, I'm pleased to announce that after years of writing sf and fantasy stories I finally sold one. It wasn't sf or fantasy, but it sold. When it got published--without consultation, as it happens--I found it had been chopped in half and e'ite' and another name put on the contents page in lieu of my own, na' the loss, it's there, and I wonder if I'll ever be eligible for one of those awards for best new writer? 3|18|84

Dear Ian,

Received your letter--what a missive! ¶ It's probably the longest (and yes, it was edited--slightly) single letter I've published since the *Old Days*, and that was a letter by Piers Anthony/Ted White/Dean Koontz/Harlan Ellison (pick one, two, or three...). And I have very little to say in reply--except to tell you that Mike Resnick is MOST well-known in the US for having been a prime part of the movement that denied me my best shot at a Hugo. But that was long ago, and far away for both of us...and fortunately I have an excellent dose of short term memory loss...

Hubert Coulson

"The fannish type." Well, for me it means someone who knows enough about varied subjects--feminism, history, archaeology, spacewalks, science fiction, photography, biology, glassblowing, whatever--to carry on a conversation about any 30 or so, though probably not enough to get a job in any of the fields. And someone who has a sense of humor, preferably an offbeat one. I go on the "broad mental horizons" theory of fannishness. Some of the "fannish types" I've known had no potential whatever for becoming fans, because they disliked the entire idea and were too stubborn to change their minds--another fannish trait, now that I think of it.

Hum. A WAFB fund for boats; mindboggling. WAFB rails I've heard of, but not ehtire boats.

Well, "self-actualization" may not come from pop psychology, but it's certainly there now--one hopes it's a short stop on the road to oblivion, but one doubts it. Began life as a euphemism for "egocentric" eh? And egocentric began life as a euphemism for "selfish". The main trouble with psych--aside from the fact that it's an art masquerading as a science--is that one has to wade through increasingly fuzzy jargon to find the meaning. If any.

I'm not sure Avedon Carol is correct in including Ardrey among the people saying that men are naturally violent. In the Ardrey books I read, he was saying that Man as a species is naturally violent, and I agree with him. He also says that the only way to overcome this natural violence is repression, and that "letting it all hang out" is the worst philosophy there is. (Carol should agree that repression works; women have repressed their violence for so long that men think they're naturally non-violent and that the ones who finish off their husbands with both barrels of a shotgun are un-feminine.) Carol may have read more of Ardrey than I have, of course, but if his later books are examples of MCP I'm sorry to hear it because his early ones were quite good. Even if I didn't agree with quite everything in them.

For the rest of it, though, I fully agree with her. (Mind you, Juanita still does most of our housework. It's not that I think it would be demeaning if I did it; it's that I'm lazy.)

Bill's Page--

which would have been more timely in March or April, but...

We surely live in wonderous times. First Mythologies 15 arrives.

What you have to understand is that I may, even at this late date, admire a fanzine or the work of a particular fanned, but there are very few of either that I'm envious of. Even though I don't ever recall having sent a loc to it, Mythologies was one of the few, and I'm glad to see it back. Thanks, Don! [\$3.00; DON D'AMMASSA, 323 Dodge St., East Providence, RI 02914.]

And then the mailbox produced the March 1984 issue of National Geographic. Always impressive (moving the dead weight of a box of the suckers is one of the Challenges of Our Time), this one nevertheless freaked me out and gave me a sense of wonder no other inanimate object has provided in too many years... The cover contains the first hologram to be printed by a major magazine; impressively so, also. If you don't get NG ~~where~~ ~~or~~ ~~you~~ go immediately to your library, or to a friend with more taste, and just hope that their copy hasn't been ripped off. [Let's see, now: the Annish is how many months off? ...and if I carefully save my pennies?]

And this, in a scrawled note dated 3/3:
I must be famous again--

I received a call last night, after midnight, from Andy Porter.

"I hear you've revived Outworlds..."

Now this would have been 'news' a year ago, but I replied, sleepily:

"...after a fashion...in my own inimitable way..."

"Want to trade?"

"...with what?", I asked, not-so-innocently...having woken up.

"...Chronicle."

"...oh, that," I said. "Well, Andy, you see...the club has a sub to it, and I usually get to read it before Cavin buries it, and..."

A few more minutes, and Andy hung up. I had not committed myself; I was proud.

The Story Behind ~~THE COVER~~: A few years ago my publishing schedule slowed down and I stopped pubbing Big Important (i.e., lots of pro contributors) Fanzines...and eventually most people cut me off their trade lists. I do it myself, probably quicker than most, so that was cool. But Andy Porter, one who I had traded with, man & boy, did he simply cut me off? No, he sent me a RENEWAL NOTICE! I was mortified. I may not hold a grudge, but I have a very, very long memory.

This is something a certain Lawrence K. Tucker should be aware of [see above insert].

Oh...eventually I capitulated and sent Andy a copy of OW37. Just to prove to rich brown that I'm not a total asshole, and his newfound faith in me is justified...

...and, since I haven't heard anything, now I'm going to send Andy a renewal notice.

UNCLE ALBERT'S VIDEO FANZINE

#1 March 1984

Produced and edited by Larry Tucker, 2818 Whitewood, Ann Arbor, MI 48104. Available for \$15, or trade of a Beta or VHS videotape plus \$2.50 for postage and handling.

Illus by Larry Tucker.

A Spare Change Videotape Production (c) 1984 for the contributors.

SIDE ONE

UNCLE ALBERT EXPLAINS Uncle Albert

GENUINE CONFUSION FRI. NIGHT SPEECH
Bob Tucker

NO FOOD IN THE JACUZZI Dick Smith

LESS THAN 20 MINUTES Bill Bowers

THE REAL FAN GUEST OF HONOR. . ?
Martha Beck

WE INTERRUPT THIS CONVENTION. . .
Cosmos and Chaos

STANDARD GUEST OF HONOR SPEECH
#308-B: PERCEPTIONS
Mike Resnick

7TH ANNUAL CONFUSION MASQUERADE BALL
Visuals by Illuminatus, Tucker Video
Music by Mike Gould

SIDE TWO

You fool, this is videotape. There is no Side Two.

David Szever

Enjoyed Bob Tucker's Constellation report (well, you know what I meant), but I'm still glad I didn't go. This reminds me, I hope that Tony Cvetko runs the article I just sent him--a parody of *The Right Stuff*, starring Colonel Wilson "Bob" Yeager. I think it's good, and I think that Bob would love it. Two years ago I discovered that my great grandfather had been captured by the Rebs at the Siege of Petersburg, the battle that ended the war (by cutting off Richmond from any supplies). Once I found this out, and I found myself in Hampton, Virginia for a month, I had to get to Petersburg, where I found some of the strangest fighting that I've ever heard of (and unlike Bob, I loved American History). The two sides held a dress rehearsal for the trench warfare of fifty years later, when a unit from the coal mining hills of Pennsylvania figured that they could dig a tunnel from their line to the Confederate line, and plant a massive charge, that would breach the line. They were given the go ahead by their Colonel, and when it was almost done, the Union officers finally accepted the possibilities of breaking the line, and trained a unit to charge around the blast, and hold the breach, while the Union charged behind them. The thing to remember is they were trained to go around the hole that was to be made. And the fact that it was a Black unit. At the last minute, the night before the explosives were blown, the unit to hold the breach was changed, because it didn't seem right to use the blacks as suicide troops. The new bunch was just told that there would be a big blast, and that they had to get in there before the Rebs could recover themselves. There was a fearful blast, and the Confederates lost something like 75 men in the explosion. The Union troops then marched into the hole, where the Southerners on either side of the breach shot them like fish in a barrel. Another unit was sent in, and they too marched into the hole, and by the time that the black unit came in, trying to hold the perimeter, the Rebs had begun firing artillery into the hole, killing even more Union troops. The Northerners withdrew late in the day, having lost something like 250 men, and the Southerners lost 150. The siege lasted another six months after that, and Lee surrendered a month or so after that. Our nation's armed forces in action. One hundred and twenty years later, the tunnel that was dug is highly visible, as is The Crater (the whole fiasco is referred to as The Battle of the Crater), and the earthworks (trenches) extend for miles around the whole city of Petersburg. It's the closest thing that an American has to compare to the battlefields that a European must be surrounded with, and it left me in total awe of war, and the misery that my ancestor went through, during his three year hitch.

Agree with Terry Carr, that you do have skewed contacts, but even you don't have anything from Cvetko here, so I don't know how much good that most skewed (Official Namer of the 1984 Olympics) of contacts is doing for you. I don't see anything from Tony "Mr. Lizard" Renner here, either, so that lets you out of that one, and no Deindorfer, either. Shit, I dunno, you don't have as many skewed contacts as Terry might think.

The advance thing about Dave Locke's interview with Willis (referring in O136 to it in O137) is so very true. I didn't like the one with Leigh, but Willis comes across as a real person, rather than an object of worship. Good work, Dave!

Always good to see how 'old time worldcons' did it, as reported by Bob Tucker; I appreciate, I do. In these days of Chicon & Constellation, it makes me wonder how this old Chicon managed to hide things, their new typewriters, in the typing expense of only \$2.25--were typers really that cheap back then, months after I was born? Where the footfixers under the Supplies heading, the Entertainment, or Misc.? Boy, I tell you, they were giants then, they were giants.

Locke on typos seems to be the ways that I have cut down on the number of them, going from the *Pune* Collective to me doing *Scrivener*. Wise will talk.

Locke on words is just chock full of logomachy. My just the other day I was saying, "Gee, that Dave Locke is about the most logolept person I've met in days, weeks!" They didn't respond, of course, because I was talking to my onions, with whom I had been cromyomancing. Enough of this horrisonant word-play, while we've dodged, Powers has entered into a nympholeptic trance. Better get the fire hose again.

Tell me, when is the last time Harry Warner mentioned his wife. How many people

out there thought that he wasn't even married? Raise your hands! Does Harry's wife vacuum around the fanzines, or does she hand the vacuum to Harry?

Me thinks Avedon overplays what happened in the sixties and seventies, or else my parents raised me much less aware of sex roles than even I thought. I wonder which it is? By the way, she's right, Bill, the "no discussion" went on for a long time. It doesn't make it to the front cover of *TIME* anymore, but people are still talking about it off stage. Back to Avedon; if you live in a world where men brag about being male chauvinists, then by Jesus, I'd move. I've told people in work telling racist jokes to shut up, it's resulted in at least them not talking about them in my presence, and a female friend says that they just aren't told anymore. I doubt if it was all my doing, I've not that big an ego, but it's stopped. ...and this is Minnesota, where they still don't hate the black, because they're still busy hating the Indian.

The name of the restaurant that Denise comes up with is also the name that Greg Ketter came up with, given your earlier description, Bill.

About your preprint--It seems a shame that Scott Ines showed up and that David Innes didn't, to otherwise ruin your order of things during the Fan GOH panel. Someday I'll have to attend the thing, by god, just like someday I'll finish building that chair I started back in 1978. It's still in the cellar (basement for you midwest types), I hope. 2|14|84

...well, if you're going to do it, you'd best do it soon. Another year or two, and *Confusion's* Fan GOH panel will be as long as a Phil Farmer speech...introduced by Dave Kyle. (Me...? I plan on packing a lunch, next year.) Watching Larry Tucker's post-print of the convention (as long as you don't fall asleep during Sid's commercials) and comparing it to the pre-print, will give you a terribly exciting evening--as long as you make sure he adds my COMPLETE speech to the end of your copy of the fanzine.

Brad B Foster

I was a little worried when I got your card regarding the art for the cover of CW37, when you said you at first weren't quite sure what to make of it, but then it began to grow on you. Woohoy! The thing I love about doing art for fanzines is that it is such a free and open area where I can do just about whatever I like (the stipulation usually being something like: "We need a cover; or, we need a fillo"; and that's all the restriction there is!). But sometimes I'm afraid that when I do something that isn't really "science-fictiony" in look, it'll be looked at askew. I figured I'd try you with one of the weird ideas since it seemed that you were interested in playing around with formats and looks in *O'*. So, glad it did finally grow on you--now, I've got this new idea...

As for your question. Yes, I wrote out the numbers from 0 through 9, then put that on a light table and traced them in different positions to fill up the bowl...

...unfortunately, although I've read and enjoyed the entire issue (especially liked the speeches in *Genuine Outworlds*; Tucker's the best), I'll have to let it lie at that as for comments. Signed a contract last week to illustrate a children's book, and am trying to clear up the backlog of correspondence and whatnot here before getting started on that (64 pages due by May 1st!). It's a major job, and will bring in some badly needed bucks to help support my real business of fan artwork, so really should get to it. 2|13|84

...well, here it is slightly (five weeks) past May 1st...so I hope the project went well. Now then, Brad...about that "new" idea of yours...? Anytime you're ready!

Ed Wick

Hey, what a nice cover (okay, Brad? How can I write what I want to about the rest of the zine?).

I can't say anything about how wonderful, etc. *WNI* is; it's already been said by others better at such things than I. I will say that this 'dialog' gives the best picture I've seen of him as he is now. In other words, if we accept--as I do--that

Wrhn 28 is the definitive statement by WAW, then ON37 contains the definitive statement about him. Of course, the problem with such statements is that they change with time. I'll look for a new interview in a couple of years. Hopefully, it too will be conducted by Locke; he seems to bring out the best in his dialogs (unlike some interviewers who bait or otherwise antagonize their subject--which makes for a more exciting by less interesting time).

Roger Weddall's loc takes me back (not very far, luckily; I found my way back). We were all new to the scene once upon a time. Luckily for my piece of mind I avoided making so many gaffes because I had been collecting zines for a while before I first locced. Sure, I made a few mistakes (I hope to Ghu Geis has thrown away those first couple of letters I sent him), but at least I only made three-quarters of an ass of myself (rather than a total), since I knew a little of what was going on.

I'm not saying that Roger came across badly in his letter--but rather that we have all been ignorant of the lay of the land. My way of rectifying the situation was to pick up all the zines I could at any convention I attended--and even to "gasp" subscribe to one or two of them. That way I got to feeling that Bill, for instance, was an old friend because I'd read most of the first run of OI (see? I even knew the abbreviation).

It is interesting to note Roger's awareness of the structure of fandom rather than its content. This awareness seems to appear every once in awhile in several locations at once, be discussed for a bit, then disappear. Perhaps you received the first issue of Brick from Anders Bellis, which includes an attack on the insularity of fandom. Are American fans less sensitive to the structure of fandom, or are nonamericans more sensitive?

Close Enough For Fanwriting was good, as usual. The only part of it I wanted to respond to was the Verds section. There was an attrahent quality about it (for me at least). It seems an apposite subject for discussion in a fanzine, but I can't help but notice his appetite for the letter 'a' in this section. I asseverate that when Locke describes nineteen verds, and twelve of them begin with 'a', that this is an unhealthy attraction for 'a's. That is apodictic. But I am being lenient when I speak of nineteen verds, for it means I overlook his aposiopsis re logodaedaly.

Luckily I was able to find 'logodaedaly' in my dictionary as being the state of a copyrighted symbol that is very popular (obviously there is meant to be some connection with Daedalus). I was led by this revelation to look up the word--excuse me, verd--'logoicary', and sure enough there it was. A symbol is said to be in a state of logoicary when it becomes a household word and may not be copyrighted (one could say that it flew too high).

Well, I gotta go to werk--excuse me, work. Don't take any nonwooden fanzines. 3|23

Okay, Edd, you're a faned: You tell me what YOU'd do if you received a letter containing the following: "Luckily for my piece of mind...". Would you a) 'correct' it to 'peace', presuming a typo?; b) print it "piece [sic]...", and possibly embarrass the locwriter?; or, c) print it as is, guessing it to be a deliberate play on words? ...just curious.

Arthur Thomson

A missive...oops...massive Outworlds annish. Chockfull of goodstuff. Especially so the Willis interview. Both Dave and Walt came out of it well. By that I mean that I found Dave's questioning as interesting as Walt's replies.

This will probably be the first time for many fans to read and realise just how high and senior a 'civil servant' Walt was in the Northern Ireland government. How much at odds too, it was to his fan life. That he was able to combine a successful profession and hobby and reach the top in both shows the measure of the man.

Again, look at the host of fans and science fiction personalities that have passed through the Willis household over the past forty years. All met and treated with the same openhanded courteous manner by Madeleine and Walt. I don't think there's a person who hasn't gone away from a visit to the Willis home without realising that they have been in the company of two of the nicest people they had ever met and had a terrific time in their house.

Gee, that's a real blast from Avedon, in the letter section. I'm sure though, that she'd agree that whilst we'd agree there are those male types about that she writes of there are also some better men around too.

I wish she'd maybe qualified her statement and said she realised that we weren't all shitheads...or was she saying we are? 4|25|84

...since I'm even more lax about overseas communications, than I am about stateside acknowledgements...: I'm really glad that you are still active, and I really appreciate the art you've been sending. (It does occur to me that I can't recall ever having had an ATom cover on any of my fanzines, though. This is what is known in the fanned biz as a blatant hint.) ¶ ...at one point, one of the cornerstone pieces of my fannish collection was my copy of The ATom Anthology. I say "...at one point" because, when he was in Northern Ohio briefly after Torcon...the fall of 1973...I lent my copy to Dan Steffan. And haven't seen it since...despite repeated pleas... I'd like to get it back someday...if only to show 90% of the fans of my acquaintance what can be done with stylii and a blank stencil... ¶ You do good work, sir, and I enjoy it muchly...even if we're all just shitheads here...

Jerry Kaufman

Neil Rest shows himself a true neo in fanzine fandom indeed, when he says he wonders why he got *Thyme*. The Experienced fanzine fans never wonder why they got such-and-such a zine; they wonder why they didn't get it. I simply had a lot of *Thymes* on my hands, and pulled Neil's address from *Holier Than Thou*. Also, explain to him (and anyone else reading *Outworlds*) that locs go to the editor, not the overseas agent.

As for my "primary claim to fannish fame", well your primary claim may well have been marrying the person you met through my kind...and unrepaired...intercession. She didn't move here entirely by coincidence. My presence here swayed her slightly. It isn't my fault that the potential of your marriage didn't work out. You might, in future, want to move on to a more recent joke, though it would mean deleting the only "inside joke" I can understand in *Outworlds*.

Dave Locke is the best thing in *OT* these days--he's almost the only thing, with two dialogs and a column. He gets to be more interesting all the time, despite occasional lapses of sense (none this issue) and strenuous efforts to be tasteless. I'm really glad to see the Willis dialog, and read the whole thing out loud to Suzie.

I don't think you have to identify entirely with the author of an article to find that article interesting, amusing, useful, etc. I don't have as narrow a definition of "relevance" as Roger Medfall, so I can't make as sweeping a statement on *OT* as Roger did. But I can't argue with him, either, that much of *OT* can be of interest only to fans who attend a certain group of Midwestern conventions and play poker, eat dinner, and chat with you...or even "chat" (as Ginjer Duchanan used to use the word). "Genuine *Outworlds*" has something of that flavor, for instance. I used to be able to guess who you were talking about, but no longer... a piece like *Same Time Next Year* does nothing for me except make me wonder who, or what, you're talking about, and I assume there might only be one other person who does know.

Brad Foster's cover is good, as is Jackie Causgrove's, the interiors by Shiffman, Atom & Rotsler are all up to their standards, Tucker's column isn't terribly interesting (I'd like to see more original material and less dependence on reproduced trivia), Locke and Resnick are interesting on Malzberg (I haven't read any Resnick yet but have heard wonderful things about *BOUL. BATTER*), and Dave's remarks about typos may have been directed at you. After all, you misspelled "Shiffman" on the table of contents. 2|14|84

...ever since the "quote-T-shirt" schtick got started (yet another of those insufferable Midwestern fandom ploys) Dave Locke has been searching for one appropriate to him. And now, by golly, I think we've got it! I can see it now...: DAVE LOCKE: "Strenuous Efforts to be Tasteless". ¶ Ah, but Jerry...I don't play poker. I'm the one who plays Etchere with the Poker Widows; much less expensive, and much more opportune for engaging in "meaningful chats". And as for anyone who eats dinner with me: epics have been told.

FEBRUARY 25

DEAR BILL -

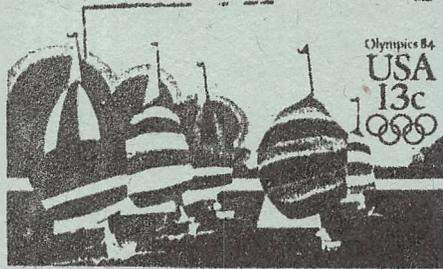
ANOTHER ISSUE OF OUTWORLDS HAS LANDED IN GLEN ELLEN. I REMEMBER THE LAST ONE FOR THE PATTY PETERS LETTER ABOUT OUR HOME TOWN BOY PAUL WILLIAMS, YES IT WAS I WHO PEDDLED HIM ON IN THE PLAYING OF ROCK & ROLL & SERIOUS DANCING IN ROOM PARTIES AT WESTER CON. I REMEMBER THE BLUE PAGES AS WELL, BUT I MUST NOW HAVE MY VERY OWN COPY OF 37 PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE. THE BOYS ARE TIRED OF LOANING ME THIERS & ROBERT SAID I MUST READ AVERON'S RAVE - HE CALLED IT RAVE (HA, MEN, WHAT DO THEY KNOW? DON IT GET ME WRONG NOW, I KNOW FOR A FACT THAT ROBERT WILL INDEED WASH THE DISHES. HE WILL EVEN CHANGE DIAPERS* BUT THATS GETTING ESOTERICALLY NITTY GRITY) I REALLY WANT MY OWN COPY, THE COVER IS SOOO DELICIOUS.

THANK YOU *Jeanne Bowman* 1260 HILL RD
 GLEN ELLEN
 95442

JEANNE BOWMAN
 1260 HILL ROAD
 GLEN ELLEN
 CA 95442



2/1/84



*EVEN "SOILED" 1
 ONES
 -R" B" L

1 - POLITE LANGUAGE
 FOR THE
 © USPS 1983

BILL BOWERS
 2468 HARRISON AVE
 CINCINNATI
 OH 45211

Robert Lichtman

It makes fanning a pleasure when, among other things, one finds Bill Bowers still (& apparently continuously) active in fanzine fandom and in such interesting and engaging form, if the three issues of *Outworlds* you've sent are "representative".

It was truly wondrous to open up *Outworlds* 37 to the Dave Locke "interview" with WAW. This is the article I've been waiting to see in a fanzine for ever so long: "Everything You Wanted to Know About WAW Since 1965, But Were Afraid to Ask". I mean this in no disrespectful sense; this article answered a lot of very deeply-felt questions about what happened to Walter after he stopped fannish activities. I hope a copy of this issue went to D West.

While I don't have a copy of OW34 here to see what set her off, Avedon's letter was touching and moving and--cringe!--unfortunately true. What a drag it is that in a place so special as fandom sexism is running around at all... Maybe Ian and John Alderson need a refresher course in the fact that at its best fandom is classless and free of bigotry and that this best is what all True Fans strive for in their life in fandom. I know this sounds really pollyannaish in one way of looking at it, but it really is the glue that's held things together and kept people coming back and sticking: round for years and years.

And Bill, I want to get on your case about your attitude about kids as alluded to on p.1304. I mean, I'd have to agree with just any old thing anyone could say about how kids can be a drag and/or hard to be around. But we were all kids once ourselves and we kinda owe it to the furtherance of the species to learn how to be around kids and not to have bad vibes about their essential kid-ness. We who are so high minded as to have come together under the banner of the literature of the future owe it to a saner future to learn as much about how to be with and around children as possible and to be as impeccable as possible in your dealings with children, your own or others'.

Ghod, I'm sercon tonight! But I really do have these strong feelings in these areas. 3 | 5 | 84

"But we were all kids once..." strikes me as being a rationalization fully the equal of "...but I was only following orders!" I had to go back and look up wh t aroused your ire...gee, that was really mild for me. (Actually, it was just an aside to Denise, a schtick that goes back several years...and therefore was as 'unfair' to the rest of you as most of my writings are...) Actually, I think kids are great in theory--just like the Fan Hugos, the American political process, and communes. I would imagine that a lot of the things I feel strongly about...you would consider "great in theory". But I determined a long time ago that a) I don't have any great desire to propagate the species as long as others are doing it so well...and that I don't have the personal ego-drive to find out if fanzine publishing is genetically transmitted; and, b) that in all honesty, I am much too selfish to devote 18 or so years to giving a child the proper amount of attention and caring. (It is my personal observation that at least 90% of those who DO have children are likewise too selfish, but we won't go into that here.) I don't hate kids as a sub-species--but I do find it much more preferable to my chosen life-style if I don't have to HEAR them...and I'd be appreciative is some so-called "parents" would be just the slightest bit considerate of my "space". (What I wouldn't give for an adults-only grocery store...is that too much to ask?) ¶ Incidentally, I find absolutely no conflict between this attitude and the fact that I work for the U.S.'s second-largest ~~shop~~ ~~to~~ ~~be~~ #1 toy company...and that if you have any Star Wars toys in your house, the odds are that at least a few of the parts in them will have my imprint on them somewhere in the manufacturing process. (It is true that I put sharp edges on at every opportunity...but you should be assured that OSHA keeps knocking them off--no sense of humor there at all!) ¶ Assuming you are still talking to me after that, Robert, I should mention that *Trap Door* #2 just arrove...was enjoyed...and that I was more than slightly astounded to learn that YOU had published the First Issue of *Outworlds*...in 1959...whereas my first-first issue wasn't done until 1966. You'd think that someone would have mentioned it to me somewhere along the line...

Neil Rest

I may have even less of a handle on this bit than I thought. One of the staple loc topics seems to be how well the final zine lived up to its original vision, or the line which it joins, or stuff like that. I rarely even know what I am visualizing, much less being able to induce (as in the opposite of deduce, not cause) what someone else dreamed up. And this whole bit of either "It's another one" or "It's not like the other one(s)" seems pretty pointless. You can't step into the same river twice, how can you publish the same fanzine twice? And anyway, it's yours, if anyone doesn't like it, they can do their own.

So I can't make any contributions to the usual basis of a loc except to say that I could read everything, your spelling is at least not noticeably worse than mine, and I am somewhat aghast at the amount of work in obvious but not emphasized evidence.

Mostly I turn out to have replies to other locs.

If I hadn't already used my Roger Meddall anecdote, I could here, so if I hadn't already used my remark about zinac burning up one's repertoire, I could use it here. It's a little spooky to have a loc in print in the same month it's written!

My last letter to Roger gave a brief itinerary of my season last fall--September, October, and November totalled a con or con equivalent every other weekend. (Sue Levy's and Michael Harper's wedding being a "con equivalent". I flew to Minneapolis, was surprised by which out of staters I did and didn't see, saw people who live 2 miles away I rarely see here, made a couple of dates for the next time I was in town (which turned out to be New Year's), and stayed with people ((Scott & Margie) I wouldn't have gotten out to see at the event itself.) So he's at least on the way to an idea of what Midwest fandom is like.

Damn! I knew I had good reasons for liking Avelon. Thank you for printing some.

Can't quite deal with the *deja vu* section. "Our" panel can only get weirder and more strained.

3|23|84

Harry Warner, Jr.

Every time I receive a fat fanzine I look at it with mixed pleasure and sadness because I sense that it's probably the last of its kind in this era of excessive publishing and postage costs. But each time I turn out to be wrong, an old, familiar habit I've developed on more topics than thick fanzines. So I'm very happy to find *Outworlds* regaining its old avoirdupois and foolishly imagine I'll never see anything like it again until government subsidies are extended to cover fanzine publishing.

The Locke-Willis section is very informative. It's a shame it couldn't have been done in time to have extra copies bound into the big Willis issue of *Carboon*, because it provides a great deal of factual and opinionative material which is very relevant to all those Bergeron reprints. There are other merits, too. Just the other day, Terry Carr published a fanzine in which he insisted that Sid Coleman exists, immediately causing a lot of his readers to suspect another Carl Brandon in their midst. Now by accident Walter describes a visit from Sid, and apparently settles that semi-mystery once and for all. "I wasn't really a writer" might be taken as Walt's way of being modest but I think I know what he means. And there are parallels in other fields. Almost every major symphony orchestra has a legend about one member who played brilliantly for years but never liked music at all, and I've been reading Gregor Piatigorsky's autobiography this week, in which the cellist tells about a symphony orchestra violinist who confided in him that he had developed the knack of not listening to the music he and the others were playing. I wondered when I retired if I would find myself unable to stop writing after forty years of producing so much wordage in the course of my job. Within a few months after retirement, I had written and revised more than a hundred thousand words which I think would have a good chance of selling to a publisher but I haven't been able to bring myself to type out the final draft, and I've written since retirement almost nothing for fandom but locs and FAPA stuff. The only things I feel a strong impulse to write nowadays are linked to my packrat instincts: I hate to think of anything being thrown away and irretrievably lost, and so I do feel an urge to write down things which exist only in my memories and thoughts and will no longer exist anywhere in the world if I don't put them

on paper during my lifetime. It doesn't matter particularly if they are worth preserving, it's just their uniqueness that I value, much as an antique collector will be delighted at finding rare bottles but won't put them to use as liquid containers.

Inadvertently you did me a great service in the letter section this time. You published a loc from Roger Maddall on one page and a loc from Roger Maddington on the other side of that sheet of paper. There was a blinding flash of light into the murkiest recesses of my mental confusion and I saw clearly for the first time that there are two separate and distinct individuals whom I've been confusing all along and wondering why Roger sometimes lived in England and sometimes in Australia. I did the same stupid amalgamation of two persons into one long ago when we first acquired a television set in the house and I thought Peggy Lee and Peggy King were the same person, despite the fact that the latter was only about one-third the thickness of the former. (Peggy Lee has remained moderately famous while Peggy King drifted into obscurity after a few years of staring on the George Gobel show.)

It's a strange thing about the official photographs that used to be taken at worldcons. I thought I was prepared for everything that I would encounter when I finally went to my first worldcon, after having read about them for twenty years or more in fanzines. But the appearance of that panoramic camera in the banquet room was the one worldcon event that startled me. I don't think these pictures had ever been mentioned in any conreports or advance publicity or any other form of fanzine coverage of worldcons, up to the time I finally attended one. If any oldtime fan possesses a good collection of those photographs, it would be an enormous service to fandom to have them preserved somewhere safe with as many fans as possible identified on each. It's almost impossible to find pictures of hundreds of congoing fans before the Jay Kay Klein era began and I imagine some of those superwide pictures are the only available source for finding out what those fans and even some pros looked like.

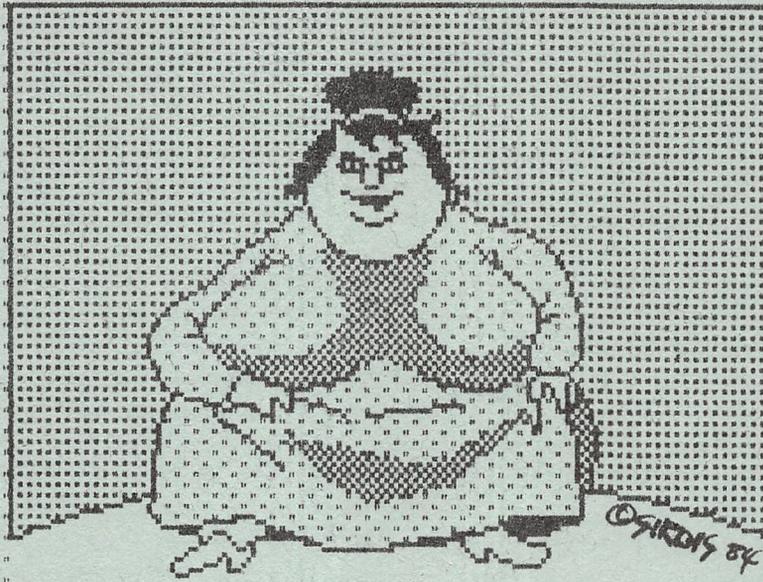
There's one possible objection to any theory that a "fan type" exists. If there is such a thing as a fan type, why do so many individuals become fans and then gaffiate permanently after a year or two in that status? If a fan type existed, its ingredients would presumably cause the individual to become a fan as soon as old enough to participate in fanac and wouldn't permit the person to gaffiate until physically or mentally incapable of fanac.

All the Mike Resnick material would be more interesting to me if I had read a substantial amount of his fiction. But I do find myself on Mike's side in the matter of Barry Malzberg; I haven't anything resembling a complete collection of Barry's published fiction but what I've read of it has amused and interested me and has left me unable to comprehend why the author has received such a bad time in fanzines. In the con talk, I wish Mike had developed his theme a bit further and told us why he thinks he should be writing science fiction if he believes "the only thing worth writing about is the human heart in conflict with itself". Maybe I would understand, if I'd read Mike's science fiction output. Sight unseen, I can think of several reasons why an author who feels that way would be better off writing mundane fiction. I definitely don't share his disinterest in ways of getting to other planets, his boredom with bers, and the other lacks of enthusiasm he mentions. I don't read much science fiction these days because I don't think much of the current output is worth reading but when I encounter a good new story, I feel all the old excitement over landscapes of other planets and the technology of future cities and such things that I felt in the mid-1930s when I was just discovering the prozines.

Confusion is appropriately named. I'm still not certain about the precise nature and intent of the preprint section of this issue. Did you write everything you attributed to others, or did you get their manuscripts and intentions in advance of the con, or is the whole thing a hoax? It's a good thing most of your readership will have been on hand for the event and therefore won't ask stupid questions about your piggy-back section.

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I'll go along with your plea to preserve the oldtime worldcon banquet photos--with the exception of Chicon III, 1962: Dave Locke may be pleased with his likeness...but I....



I go to cons to get
laid doesn't everyone?

Al Sirnis

Thanks for sending the *Outworlds*...I've been remiss in replying, but then what can you expect? I'm less fannishly oriented than many fans...sometimes it amazes me that I'm still "participating", albeit in my own small way, in fandom. Just three weeks ago I was at my first con in a couple of years: Lunacon. I renewed acquaintances with many fans, including my "peers", so to speak, among fanartists: Alexis Gilliland, Steve Stiles, Stu Shiffman, and Dan Steffan. I get along pretty well with the other artists, but I sort of have a hard time talking to other fans, at least other fanzine fans...there's a definite barrier there, Not sure what it is. I think perhaps it's because there does tend to be a fair amount of name-dropping going on (someone even dropped my name at a party in my hearing...kind of funny...) and I really get turned down low by that. I guess it's because it reminds me of my own days as a nerd. I still am a nerd in many ways, but let's face it: fandom is CHOCK FULL of weird people whose eyes show white all around the iris! Me, I just want my fucking VW to quit stalling in the rain.

Oh well.

Enough misanthropy for one letter. Recently I have been working for an educational software firm in New Haven, as Art Director (a wonderful job in many ways). This gives me access to computers and graphics packages and printers. Herein are some fruits of my labors at the keyboard. The cartoons were done on an IBM pc, printed on an Epson, and the logo was done on a MacIntosh--which just happens to be the best pc I've ever seen: the bane of all hackers, the MacIntosh will be the standard by which home users measure all future computers. It is a sweet piece of hardware.

Hoping you are the same...

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Likewise, I'm sure. ¶ The cartoons are above and opposite; the logo may be along next time. ¶ Now Al, about that list of names you "dropped" earlier in your letter... ¶ The reason I don't hang with the hardcore fanzine crowd as much as perhaps I "should" is

rather simple: it's still the most male-dominated area of fandom. Besides, who really wants to talk about fanzine publishing at 4 ayem...? (Fanzine publishing, I've found, is like so many other areas of life: those who talk about it the most...) ¶ I haven't had a chance to play with a MacIntosh yet, but from what I've seen of its capabilities ...it has moved the acquisition of a pc up several notches on my priority list. But I still haven't recovered from the ambivalence for small flickering screens developed after more than a year as a CAD/CAM operator...so I can wait.

Richard Brandt

Two nice covers, for starters.

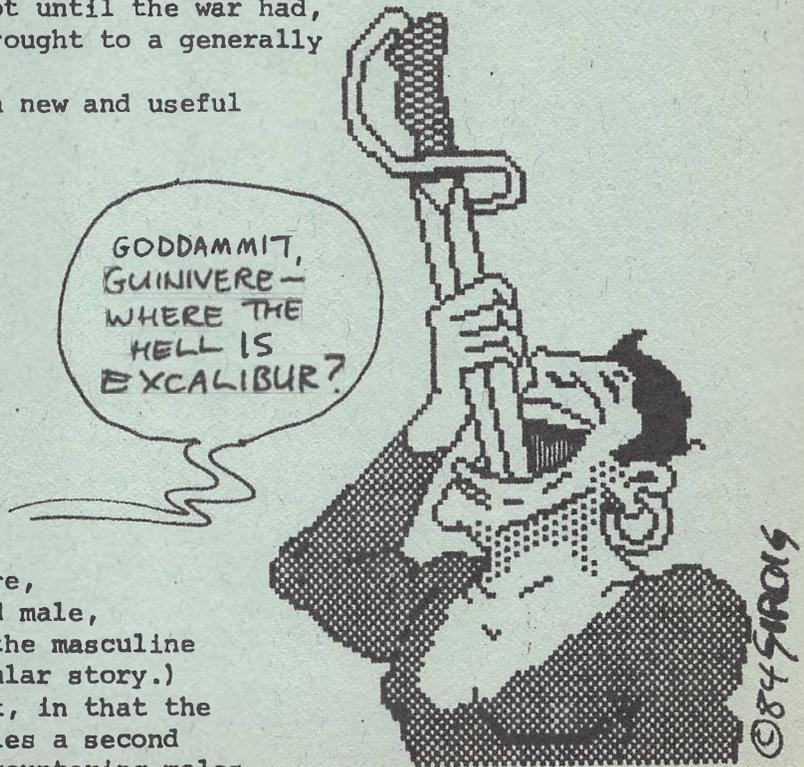
Genuine Outworlds is, as always, appreciated by an old stay-at-home like me, who may sneak off to two cons this year. Mike Resnick's speech also seems to offer more background info than crops up in his dialogue with Locke. So be it.

As a matter of fact, Locke's two dialogs this time out offer a nice contrast. There's Resnick, successful hack turned serious novelist of note; and then there's Willis, whose reputation as a dropper of bon mots remains unthreatened. (Or is that "bons mot"? Someone called our station the other night and complained because our sportscaster didn't refer to them as "times out".)

Is there a fan type? One issue Mr Locke doesn't address directly is whether a devoted SF reader is, of necessity, a fan type. One could even argue that a collector need not be a fan type, although any time two people who share a taste for amassing vast and useless hordes of the stuff come in contact, a profanish attitude is bound to develop. This sure happened to me, and I'm sure my friend and I were accurate when we boldly claimed to be "the only two fans in this town." (A few years later, that would have been *fen*.)

Roger Waddington's note on the British passion for celebrating ignominious defeat makes me wonder if there just isn't something more aggressive in the American national character. (Just look at what we consider a "peacekeeping" force, eh?) Sure, we came out and declared imperialism was dead in this hemisphere, on several occasions in the last two centuries, but this was generally after we had (a) exercised our right of eminent domain to the bulk of the Continent, or (b) snatched odd pieces of territory in the Carribean of the South Pacific. Also, the one thing most Americans remember about the War of 1812 is not that it was fought largely in 1814, or that the Redcoats burned down the White House, but that Andy Jackson kicked ass at the battle of New Orleans. (although not until the war had, unbeknownst to those combatants, been brought to a generally unsatisfactory conclusion.)

Avedon Carol provides what I find a new and useful description of the rise of nasty old feminism, although it seems to me the trend has had a wider significance than being merely the dissatisfaction of the companions of draft-dodgers. (And for my part, I don't complain about doing dishes; I merely point out how unnecessary it would be if the missus weren't messin' up the kitchen, doin' all that cookin'...) I also find her rationale for *Houston, Houston...* of interest; e.g., "The views expressed herein are not necessarily those of..." Yes, we don't think men are such bastards; they do, and a pity if they are, indeed, right. (Speaking as a certified male, I do feel, myself, that Ms Sheldon had the masculine sex drive pegged to a T, in that particular story.) I found *THE FEMALE MAN* an ambiguous work, in that the only main character inclined to give males a second chance was one who had no benefit of encountering males



in her own experience. I prefer to think she had the proper air of objectivity about it...

Darry Malzberg? A fellow who I have found, on rare occasion, to be capable of a beautiful and literate prose style; exhibiting occasionally a mordant sense of humor; a fellow whose obsession with particular themes leads him to write the same story again and again, in essence, without having gotten it right yet? For all the despair and anguish (as in a neglected little story called *Allowances*), there seems a great deal of emotional detachment to his method.

Do you really have an inexhaustible supply of "fillers" to cull from back issues of *OT*? Or does it only seem that way? (And do you toss them in at random, or are some of the juxtapositions with the material above as purposeful as they seem?)

Enough speculations on the subject of fanzine layout.

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...everything I do in this fanzine is purposeful, even if rarely "Purposeful". The subject of fanzine "layout" is something that is vastly more amusing to do, than to talk about, but what we have this time at least is merely an example of basic linear layout: I simply started out with a pile of letters and simply kept sorting and re-ordering as I went--sometimes trying to "follow-up" on the previous entry; at other times guesstimating what would fill a given space. (For instance, when I started this section--after Tucker's column--the only thing I knew for certain was that I would wrap it up with George's letter.) ¶ So, where IS Jerry Lapidus, when we really need him...?

Don D'Amessa

Fascinating issue of *OT*; one of the best issues of any fanzine I've read in a long time.

Dave Locke's discussion of fannish types was interesting, but I don't think I entirely agree. There may not be a fannish type, but there are a small number of fannish types, despite a few oddballs even amongst fan'om. It's difficult for me to put my finger on it, but let me give an example.

I used to watch *NO BELL TUNE TRUMP*, for reasons which are not quite clear to me. Several times, they had borderline fannish people on--Edgar Rice Burroughs' daughter, the President of the L. Frank Baum Society, and a few other examples. Every time they had a fannish contestant, I spotted them immediately, before they even had a chance to speak. Sheila would always ask how I knew, and my answer was only, "They look like fans."

There is a large majority of social misfits in fan'om. Physically you find people tend to be overweight, wear glasses, males tend to have beards. We are more diverse in personalities, but I strongly suspect that someone more talented and observant than I could, if he spent the time on it, find a very cohesive psychological makeup for the vast majority of active fans. Maybe we exude auras or something.

Avedon Carol and Ian Covell are heated enough that I reluctantly interpose a few remarks. First of all, Ian is wrong if he is implying that there was little discussion of *Houston, Houston, Do You Read?* I remember (participating in) countless arguments about its literary merit and its didactic content. It was described among other things as an "angry" and "despairing" story. Personally, I thought Wintree made the same points far more effectively in *The Women Men Don't See*, which is also a far better story literarily, but the majority of people seem to disagree with me. There I think Avedon, while correct in her comments, strays from the point. The characters in "Houston", male and female, failed to convince me that they were real people. If Ian is saying it is a poor (comparatively) story on those grounds, I probably agree with him. If he is saying that the didactic content marred the story, I probably disagree with him. If he is disagreeing with the details of that didacticism, that's a whole other argument, which Avedon has addressed handily.

Independent of all that, however, is the remark I heard on television the other night, attributed to some member of the Oklahoma legislature, upon voting down the state ERA or somesuch. After commenting that such legislation would be contrary to the Biblically ordained structure of the family, he or she said approximately: "Discrimina-

tion is the fulcrum of liberty." Talk about despair.

I also enjoyed the Locke-Resnick debate on Malzberg, in which I find myself leaning toward Resnick. Malzberg has produced a crop of really bad stuff, but he has also produced some really fine work, although I don't know if we'd agree on which are which. Personally, I enjoyed *MIROVIT'S WORLD*, *THE FALLING ASTONAUTS*, *BEYOND APOLLO*, *OMELAY*, and quite a few of the shorter pieces immensely, and I suspect that much of the dislike of his work stems from the tendency he has to spoof traditional SF themes. Fans are very conservative and don't like the unusual, unless it is the usual unusual stuff.

I have a weakness for lists, so I read through the favorites as well. None would be on my list, but none are real stinkers. I used to think *DEVELOPED MAN* was Bester's best work, but recently I reread everything by him and found that I liked *THE STATE BY DESTINATION* best, and *DEVELOPED MAN* only slightly better than *COLON*. And for what it's worth, my favorite of Mike Resnick's novels is *WARRS ACCORDING*, by far. 3|1|84

...one of the few pluses of my recent three weeks of jury duty was that I managed to do some reading in the waiting room. ...including Mike's *THE DEVIANT*. I mentioned this to Bill Cavin, and he asked my impression of the novel and, not being a reviewer or a critic --I gave a one-word summation: "Slick". I was a bit more circumspect when I talked to Mike but, while it was excellently written, and I'm glad I read it, I could not get emotionally involved with any of the characters. (And ironically, given that my background would seemingly make me a prime suspect, I was not at all upset by the premise.)

George R.R. Martin

Dave Locke's conversation with Mike Resnick was a splendid piece of work: unlike the vast majority of writer interviews, it was meaty and full of content, stimulating, very revealing of both participants, and altogether intriguing. Of course most of your locs--at least the ones not about feminism and/or Howard Cosell--are going to talk about Resnick and Malzberg. This one included. Considering how seldom I get myself to write a loc, the Resnick-Locke piece was obviously something special.

Resnick himself is a good solid writer, but a couple of his comments in defense of Malzberg display, to my mind, such a fundamental misunderstanding about the nature and purposes of fiction (never mind SF) that I found it impossible to file away this *Outworlds* without a few words in reply.

Resnick says, in defense of Malzberg's *GALAXIES*, "As the book continually points out, the world and the writer of 1973 simply do not possess the language or the concepts to present a truthful picture of the world of 2973, so what science fiction writers do is transfer people and problems two thousand years into the future and hope no one will notice." Later on, Mike says that by setting the conclusion of *GALAXIES* in Ridgefield Park, New Jersey, Malzberg has made a "devastating attack" on a "promising art form gone awry" because, "When all is said and done, the inhabitants of New Jersey, circa 1973, are far more important to Malzberg, and should be more important to the adult reader, than all the space heroes and pirates ever to run rampant across the ephemeral pages of a paperback 'sci-fi' book."

Well, okay. Mike's first comment is absolutely true, but also absolutely irrelevant. No SF writer can really present an accurate picture of 2973? Of course. No SF writer that I have ever met has ever pretended to be presenting an accurate picture of 2973, or 2203, or of the Galactic Empire, or of life in the Greater Magellanic Cloud. No SF reader except a few especially brain-damaged types has ever imagined for a moment that this was what the literature was all about. Malzberg needed to write a novel to make this point? That strikes me to be a bit like writing a novel to demonstrate that the sun rises in the east. Of course we transplant present day concerns and characters into the future. What the hell else would we do? Like every writer--not every SF writer, every writer--who has ever sat down to quill pen, typewriter, or computer, we are all writing about our own lives and our own time, whether we set the stories in Ridgefield Park, New Jersey, in ancient Rome, or on the fifth moon of a gas giant planet revolving around Rigel. Unless the story makes sense, intellectual sense, literary sense, and most important of all, emotional sense, to a contemporary readership, the

writer will never get the chance to see if he can speak to the ages.

SF is not--never has been, never will be, and should never attempt to be--any kind of predictive science. SF is a kind of metaphorical language whose devices and forms provide the modern writer with a set of symbols, an unusual angle of attack, a species of argument that are not available outside the genre. When this language of metaphor is used to speak effectively to the modern reader, SF is a valid and worthwhile form. When it is trivialized, SF becomes print television. When it is ignored, one has to wonder why the idiom was employed at all.

As for Mike's statement, and Malzberg's implied view, that the people of Ridgfield Park, New Jersey should be more important to the "adult reader" than the characters of an SF novel--well now, yes and no. Certainly real people should be more important than characters in fiction. Any other position would be morally indefensible. The real people of Ridgfield Park, New Jersey must be more important to any thinking human being, adult or child, reader or illiterate, than any number of space pirates, not to mention Madame Bovary, Captain Ahab, and the Great Gatsby.

The point that's being so blithely overlooked here is that the people of Ridgfield Park, New Jersey at the end of *GALAXIES* are no more "real" than the larger-than-life sci-fi stereotypes who occupy the earlier portions of *GALAXIES*. They are, all of them, lies. Characters in a work of fiction. Phantoms conjured up briefly by a writer's words on paper. If they should assume any emotional importance to us at all, it is only because a writer's individual talent, his skill at conjuring, makes them seem strangely real while we are holding the book, and perhaps even afterwards if the writer is very skilled indeed.

The way "real" people come into all this are as readers. A well-drawn SF character, rooted in an entirely imaginary SF setting, can theoretically have far more to say to a great many readers than a thin, badly-drawn "real-life" character in a mainstream book. With SF, the language is metaphorical, but good books, in or out of the genre, are all talking about life, and truth is still truth, no matter how it's expressed.

Forget *GALAXIES*; I'll talk about my own books. I've written three solo novels. *EVING OF THE LIGHT* is set on a distant imaginary planet thousands of years in the future. *EVERY DREAM* is set along the Mississippi river system, from 1857 through 1870. *THE AMBIGUOUS RAG* is set in our "real-life" present. Does it then follow that Sandy Blair, the protagonist of the *RAG* is more "real" than Abner Marsh of *EVERY DREAM* or Dirk t'Varien of *EVING OF THE LIGHT*, and does this "reality" mean the adult reader should care more about him? Nonsense. Sandy, Dirk, and Abner are all equally real; that is to say, none of them are real at all. They are all fictional constructs. Whatever degree of reality they may seem to possess is illusion, and illusion directly dependent on my skill (or lack of skill) as a writer. That is the writer's craft, art, and magic: to make the unreal seem real.

From my own obviously prejudiced point of view, Sandy does seem more real than Abner, and Abner in turn seems more real than Dirk, and therefore I regard *AMBIGUOUS RAG* as my most successful novel to date. *AMBIGUOUS RAG* is also my most recent novel; my skills have improved since I wrote *EVING OF THE LIGHT*, and I was thereby able to do a better job. That's half the story. The other half is an undeniable fact; it's easier to evoke something you have actually seen and experienced (the 60s, a rock concert, a peace demonstration, Ridgfield Park) than something that exists only in your imagination (2993, the Festival of the Fringe, a galactic war, Mau Ceti IV). Note: the word is "easier", not "easy". None of this is easy. That's why there are so very many bad books, both inside and outside of SF. Are there more bad SF books? Very probably. Are the bad SF books worse? That too. Failure is more obvious and more total when one is attempting the more difficult task.

It seems to me that the not-so-hidden message of *GALAXIES*, and indeed of much of Malzberg's fiction, goes beyond this, says that it is not so much a matter of it being hard to approach reality and all its complexities through the avenue of SF as it is a matter of it being impossible. And if it is impossible, then all of us, readers and writers both, are wasting our time, and why should we even bother to try?

Far from being the "serious literary artist" that Resnick paints him as, Malzberg

strikes me as a writer who has, in fact, long ago stopped trying, if indeed he ever did. The ultimate indictment of GALAXIES is not that his starship crew is unlikely and thinly imagined and sketchily drawn. No, Malzberg is doing that deliberately, making these characters and situations farfetched and hollow to prove a point. The real let-down comes when we reach the "real" inhabitants of Ridgefield Park, New Jersey, and find they are just as empty, and just as one dimensional as the starship crew. Of course, they really aren't on stage for very long--but the various notley assassins, handicappers, and mad astronauts in other Malzberg books, in "real" present-day or near-future settings, are no better drawn. They are, however, every bit as impossible for the "serious adult reader" to care a wet fig about. The sad truth is that Malzberg is a one-note writer. He has known pain, and he can conjure it with words, no doubt of it. He has tasted bitterness in his time, and grief, and disappointment, and betrayal, and so too do his characters sip from these cups. But that's all. Reading Malzberg, one would never suspect that there was also joy in the world, and triumph, and love and friendship and hope. Malzberg's people don't even seem to enjoy a good meal now and again.

Does this mean I'm calling for a literature of sunshine and music, of happy endings, hearts and flowers, uplift and progress? Well, no. Anyone who has read my own fiction knows that a current of darkness runs through my work as well. Malzberg's pain is valid, if he can make us feel it. There's the rub.

Barry Malzberg is indeed one of the most universally unpopular writers ever to work within SF. But why? Because he says vitriolic things about the field? Harlan Ellison has far exceeded Malzberg in that department, and his mantlepiece is crowded with awards. Because he has a dark view of life and an unpopular message that narrow-minded SF fans cannot accept? Tom Disch views humanity just as darkly and attacks the more simple-minded genre conventions with just as much vigor, but his work has been nominated for every major award in the field these past few years, and I think it's only a matter of time until he wins one. Is it because Malzberg's prose is so eloquent that we poor souls lack the discrimination to appreciate it, because his insights are so deep that we fail to grasp them? Gene Wolfe on his worse day is ten times as polished and sophisticated and subtle a writer as Malzberg is on his best day, and Wolfe has a lot more to say as well, and Gene (after some years of struggle, I freely admit) seems to have found a very sizeable and appreciative audience.

None of this matters. Malzberg is unpopular not because he's too good for us, but because he's not good enough. For all the darkness that runs through their work, Ellison, Disch, and Wolfe have something in their stories that Malzberg lacks: people. Nowhere in any of the Malzberg fiction that I have read is anyone that I could accept, even for the duration of the reading experience, as a living breathing bleeding human being. Pretty Maggie Moneyeyes and Daniel Weinreb and Severian the Torturer hurt, and I hurt with them, because I've loved with them too, and tasted their dreams and their nightmares, and stood next to them when they had their triumphs. I have shared life with these people, or at least as much an illusion of life as fiction can impart, and therefore I care about them. There is the Malzberg character to stand beside them. There is none.

Malzberg's characters all seem to be, first, last, and always, mouthpieces for the author. Now, all writers draw heavily on themselves when building characters, that's so. Yet we also draw on the people around us, on our own observations of humanity and life, and the best characters in fiction are rather more than just the author in pancake and a wig. Malzberg doesn't even seem to try to differentiate his characters from himself, or each other. His people are all wafer-thin, walking bags of bitterness, and their pain is abstract and non-affecting because it is not happening to us, or to people we care about. Maggie is not Harlan; Dan Weinreb does seem remotely like Tom Disch to me; Severian is certainly not Gene Wolfe. Malzberg writes of neurotic astronauts, of race-track touts, of time-travelling assassins, of inept impossible chess players, of regulars on radio phone-in shows, of bureaucrats, politicians, common men and uncommon men, and of course of failed writers. Everybody, everywhere, sounds like Malzberg sounds in *ENGINES OF THE NIGHT*. Imagine if you will a convention of Malzberg characters, all these different sorts getting together for a drink. Would they disagree about anything?

This is not the result of the crass demands of genre and deadline. This is a simple failure of art.

GALAXIES is going to appear on the stands next to THE MASTERS OF ARCTURUS, Resnick argues; therefore we shall excuse Malzberg from any higher standards, since he must compete with egregiously written space opera. Nonsense. In bookstores around here, John Steinbeck's novels often appear next to those of Jacqueline Susann, but were Steinbeck alive I doubt that he'd accept this as a justification for writing his books as badly as his rack-mate wrote hers. Malzberg can take umbrage at being displayed in the same section with Lin Carter, Otis Adelbert Kline, Terry Brooks, and John Norman if he wishes, but in fairness he also ought to feel flattered that his own work is being sold next to books by Ursula K. LeGuin, Gene Wolfe, Jack Vance, and Michael Bishop, among others. Besides, his complaint is far from unique. I've mentioned Steinbeck and Susann. Bradbury and Bishop rub right up against Edgar Rice Burroughs; Smith, Cordwainer must inevitably "compete" with Smith, E.E. "Doc". Reflect on the spelling of my own name, if you will, and consider the sort of egregious hacks whose junk is so often racked up next to my books.

Resnick says Malzberg is forced to "compete" with the MASTERS OF ARCTURUS. Let him compete with THE LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS instead; the field and Malzberg himself might benefit.

The strangest thing about all of this is that Resnick-the-fiction-writer knows all this very well, whereas Resnick-the-Malzberg-fan doesn't seem to know it at all. The single greatest strength of Resnick's "Galactic Milway" series is the vivid individuality of its people. People come up to Mike and bitch about him killing off the dwarf at the end of SCOTCH! TOOTIN' GIBBLINGER et. al. because Mike made that character real to them, because they became involved with his fate, and it mattered to them what became of him. Do you think that any reader, anywhere, has ever broached Barry Malzberg at a con to berate him for killing off one of his characters? Why do I suspect that the answer to that is no? Why is the answer no?

That's why Malzberg is unpopular, I submit.

Anyway, a great issue of Outworlds, Bill, the best since the revival. Keep Dave Locke going on these dialogues of his; if they are all as good as the one with Resnick, somebody ought to hand him a Hugo. 4|4|84

...okay, everybody has had five months to have their say on the Carol/Covell and Resnick/Malzberg mutual admiration societies. The "principals" are entitled to another round... but after that, hopefully, we'll be going on to other Significant Things.... [I'll be damned if I'm going to spend the rest of my life typing out "Ridgefield Park, New Jersey"....!]

Thanks to all...for your caring, your comments...and your self-control...

I do have one letter left...and it's a long one. But that's not the reason it's not here: It's simply that I want it to stand alone, so it will be the 'lead' item next time. (My apologies to Skel for delaying its printing another month...)

...

...I do seem to get my dander up, once in a rare while. A few years ago I more or less 'disowned' the Cincinnati New Year's Parties that I'd co-founded ~~because they weren't going the way I wanted them to!~~ I've had a great time at 'em ever since.

There seems to be a possibility of a 'do' being held at the Napakoneta Holiday Inn --the hotel where we hold SPACECON--over Labor Day weekend. Opposite LAcon. Now there are very few things in fandom I hold sacred anymore...and I'm not at all certain I'll make LA either...but if I don't, I won't be in Napakoneta that weekend. Stubborn, I am.

I am mellowing on the possibility of the so-called "Cincinnati Worldcon" bid. I won't work it, and I won't endorse it...but if you fools want to vote a Worldcon 15 minutes from my apartment, go right ahead. You should be aware, however, as it is presently put together, it is essentially a Columbus bid, with a sole Cinti front man. But, what the hell; Like I said before...if Phoenix worked (as it did), anything might...

