

XENOLITH 4

AL CURRY

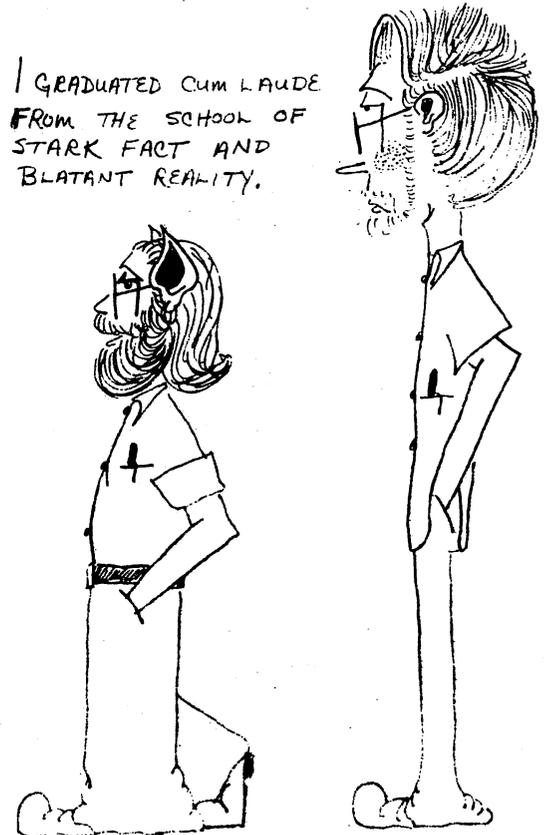
IF YOU WERE ANY KIND
OF CARTOONIST, YOU
WOULDN'T MAKE ME
LOOK SO MUCH LIKE
MIKE DOONESBERRY.

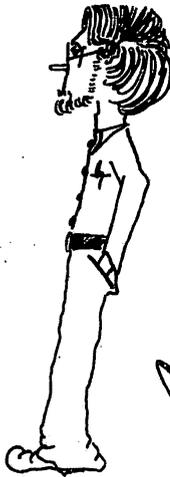
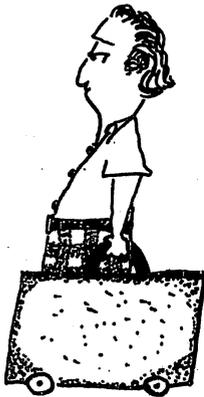


THE OBVIOUS ANSWER
TO THAT IS THAT YOU'D
STILL LOOK LIKE
DOONESBERRY EVEN IF
THE CARTOONIST WAS
OLAN MILLS.



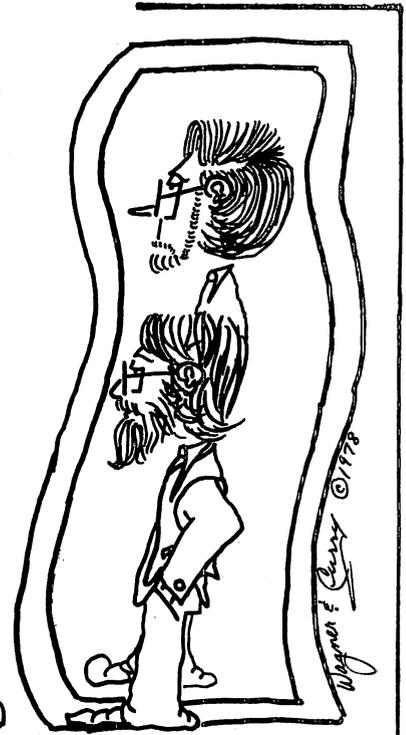
I GRADUATED CUM LAUDE
FROM THE SCHOOL OF
STARK FACT AND
BLATANT REALITY.





Curry ©1978

BOWERS, I DON'T KNOW HOW THESE BRITISH FANS DO IT. I JUST NOTICED THAT ROB JACKSON'S CASE IS FILLED WITH NOTHING BUT SCOTCH AND COPIES OF MAYA.

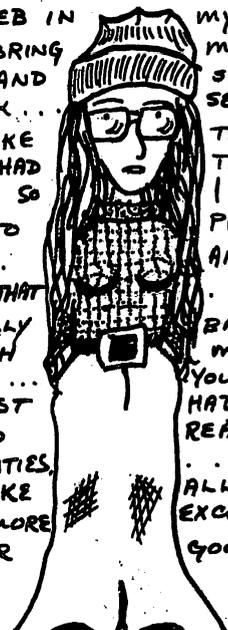


Wagner & Curry ©1978

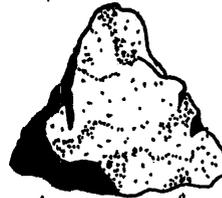
To answer your questions, Wally . . . I bought the mirror from a bankrupt fun-house . . . and no, Bowers hasn't seen it yet. Why d'ya ask?

MAKING PAULA GOLD FAMOUS, Part One

Well . . . UH . . . SEE . . . I WAS GOING TO HAVE THE NEXT RISTERIA READY FOR OCTOCOON, BUT . . . UH . . . SEE . . . THIS SPIDER BUILT ITS WEB IN MY MIMED . . . AND I COULDN'T BRING IT OUT . . . AND HAD TO WORK . . . WE COULDN'T MAKE . . . AND I HAD TO THE VET, SO THE CHANCE TO STENCILS . . . BESIDES ALL THAT I HAD A REALLY COULDN'T WASH WEEK — SO . . . I'VE JUST BIT OF MILD OF MY PRIORITIES, YOU DON'T LIKE GOT A FEW MORE THROW IN FOR



Curry ©1978



Curry ©1978

Bowers, do you have even the remotest idea of the commercial potential if we could figure how the hell Carter does that?

XENOLITH #4 -- from BILL BOWERS : POBox 3157 : Cincinnati : OH : 45201 : (513) 481-3613.

Home address (for first class, letter-sized mail ONLY): 2468 Harrison, Cinti., OH 45211.
Please do not review. Copyright © 1978, by William L. Bowers, for the contributors.
"X" is available solely by editorial whim, tho my "whim" is subject to being influenced.
This is My Publication #99. Cover/cartoons by AL CURRY. Lucky Maroon 13 Issue. 4/6/78

Let's start off with the letters this time... First, a comment on X¹:

DAVE ROWE You do have this quite obnoxious habit, which you must cure yourself of, of sending your far better than average fnzs to me right when I'm up to my eyeballs in other things. This results in my having to read it in blissful stolen moments and then scribble some inadequate critical appraisal whose detachness is only equalled by its brevity.

Despite your standard "I've had yet another *yawn* change of policy, but this is my ghod damn fanzine anyway" editorial which stated "X" was not a small OW, it did come across just like that. There is the standard Bill Bowers editorial (someone else should write it?), the name badge game, part two, Beer Mutterings (very enjoyable) and Language at Midnight.

Complaints Dept.: Putting a 3/4 deep insertion of the top left hand of a left hand page. When I flipped to this page my eye passed across the top of the insertion and went automatically to the second column. Wolfenbarger is an acquired taste, which I have at last obtained, so why did he serve up a sour bottle by merely namedropping monotonously? Why didn't you stop him? That was way below par.

With Derek's excellent cover & quick sketches thru-out the whole issue had a beautiful unity. Why not print each issue illustrated from cover to cover by a different artist? I think that would work very well indeed and you'd have no lack of volunteers, plus a small zine like "X" with your 'expert' layouts lends itself perfectly to the idea.

I'd thot of having sequels to "Derek's Issue", and I still hope to, but "X" is not all that organized. Besides, my habit of trying to surprise everybody (I think Tanya is the only one who has known in advance of each issue) is not conducive to such planning. However, if volunteers/schedules work out, we shall see. (In the mean-while, there's always Al Curry, who flatters me immensely in his cartoons... hoping, I suppose, that I'll make him as famous as Paula Gold!)

KITTY LYONS It was so nice to see you at Confusion. You're looking taller than usual. I could swear you weren't quite that tall when I saw you New Year's Eve. Of course, I could be wrong, you were sitting down for the better part of the evening. But, I have to say one thing for sure... the least you could have done was shave before the con. God, Bill, you can't present yourself like that in Phoenix!

Since I don't remember being at Confusion, Kitty's note left me considerably, well, confused. Rumor has it that the following fella might be somewhat responsible...

MIKE GLICKSOHN The second Xenolith creates a definite sense of deja vu in me. I can almost swear I have seen that cover before but when I try to pin down where it might have been my mental image of its creation altus con-sid-erably. I'm trying to recall exactly where it was I saw it but I'm having trouble lincoln it to a definite time and place. Maybe I'm just imagining things; perhaps loccing your second issue will help me poker my memories somewhat.

I'm sorry I didn't loc your first new offspring but I'm glad to see that a large number of recent graduates from the Mike Glicksohn School of Loccing When There's Nothing To Loc About are represented in your lettercol. It's almost as if I wasn't absent at all! It's touching how all these neofen like Oberembt and Zeldes and Gold can get all excited at the appearance of a Bowers fanzine. Almost as if it really meant something. (OX/KEY)

~~through/never/get/to/see/another/one!~~) Us old-timers are rather blase about the return of one of our own. Can you envision Yog-Soggoth getting excited just because Cthulhu suddenly burped again?

Oddly enough, I'd never heard all of the words to "Short People" until about a week before Confusion when I received a tape in the mail that started off with that notorious song. I knew of it, naturally, and had caught the end of it several times but I hadn't listened to it in its limited fullness. The tape, by the way, was recorded by one Dave Locke and if a more extreme example of pot-calling-kettle-blackness exists I can't imagine it. If Cagle had sent me a tract on the evils of alcoholism I'd have been less surprised. If Tucker had warned me of the dangers of consorting with femmefans I'd have been less surprised. If Bowers had sent me suggestions on how to publish fanzines I'd have been less surprised. I was quite surprised to get the tape from Dave, by the way. If I didn't know he had Jackie to look after him I'd never have been able to guess how he ever managed to get something as large as a forty-five record onto a record player and still have the strength to jump with both feet onto a tape recorder to start recording it.

Enjoyed Marla's song, I might add. I'd have been a lot less subtle in pointing out the defects and disgusting habits of people afflicted with milder forms of acromegaly but Marla always was a gentle tactful person, more than willing to try and overlook the nauseating aspects of the physically deformed. Good song, though, even if it was a little too gentle.

Nothing to say on the locs, is there? All those nice folks saying they haven't anything to say but they love you anyway so they'll write. I apologize for not being in the issue: you know that only something of major importance over a prolonged period of time would have kept me from locking #1. As I recall, I was figuring out the average number of words per sentence in a random sample of ten Perry Rhodan books.

The number of referces to "thin" and "short" in this slender little fanzine is quite astonishing. An entire thesaurus could be constructed for those two words just out of *Xenolith*. It is definitely no small thin who's done this.

One of the things that we do share, Father William, is a relative inability to be all that mobile. At least you've moved recently, but I'm restricted by the fact that the only places I'd consider moving to are banned to me by reasons of politics (and out of the question for economic reasons as well). So I'll likely stay here in Toronto, earning more money than I'm worth and occasionally regretting, just briefly mind you, that I'm not an American with a similar salary. But I couldn't wander around financially depleted and counting on the help of my friends they way fans like Gary Farber and Patrick Hayden do. I admire them their independence, but I couldn't emulate them even if I were free to do so.

For an old fossil you have a great memory (or an excellent set of notes!) in regard to your career as a convention attendee. I doubt I could list the cons I went to last year, let alone eight years ago. I've got a drawer full of old con registration cards and badges so I could probably get fairly close to a reasonable list but there'd be enough I'd miss that my inherent completist's soul would rebel at it. If a thing isn't worth doing well, as my dear old mother used to say, let Bowers do it instead...

Yeah, *Close Encounters* was a good SF film. Not a great SF film, but the special effects were neat. I still like *Star Wars* though because I think it succeeds better in what it sets out to do. It entertains without pretending to do anything more than that. *Close Encounters* tries to be more serious, and in that I think it fails. The Mack truck sized gaps in plot we can overlook in space-operish *Star Wars* are a more serious fault in CE. But I'm delighted to see both films doing so well and I thoroughly enjoyed them both. And will again.

1/23

You didn't respond to the first issue? I really hadn't noticed... Stand on a chair and use a quavering voice to introduce Ro, eh? (...and who's this Marla you know?!)

GEORGE FLYNN The first time I sat down to write this loc, I got sidetracked into compiling a list of the cons I've been to; I came up with 45 to your 59. I

could say you started earlier, except that as of Discon II we were even. The interesting thing is that we have only 9 cons in common (4 of them Worldcons); sure are a lot of the damn things, aren't there?

Again a nice little zine, though as Leah says, "so little of it to comment on". Being a middle-sized person, I don't really feel like making any tall or short jokes. And as for the "Father William" bit, I wouldn't want to call attention to the fact that I'm older than you are. (Got less hair too. At both ends of my head.)

Harry Warner certainly has a point about how many fans never make fanzine appearances. I'd estimate about 90% of Boston fandom would fit in this category (though they do at least get mentioned regularly in *Instant Message*); hadn't realized it was true in Cincinnati too--but then, except for the existence of Midwestcons, I was hardly aware there was a Cincinnati fandom. From that map you seem to be fairly well dispersed over the metropolitan area. In NESFA lately we've been talking about the similar situation (relatively recent here), and whether it discourages the involvement of new people, especially those who don't have cars.

No, you're not alone: I've still only seen *Star Wars* once (and that was for free). As for *Close Encounters*, I'm afraid my reaction is dominated by horror at the aid and comfort it gives to those "cultists"; and there are so many illogical things in it... (I know, they're alien, so their actions aren't supposed to make sense to us; but there are limits.

To steal a line from Sarah, this has been a small irrelevant loc. 2/9

DAVE VERESCHAGIN The cover for *Xenolith 2* is really something else. I had this strange idea that you once published a classy zine called *Outworlds*. But that must have been a different Bill Bowers. Certainly he wouldn't have published such a, uh, different cover.

I'm sorry I don't know any tall jokes. I do know some short jokes, though, since I am the recipient of many of them. I am keeping these in storage in hopes that I will one day meet someone I can use them on. (How would you like to have the lead role in a remake of *The Incredible Shrinking Fan*?)

Gee whiz. Of course the Big Alien in *Close Encounters* was a female. I mean, besides being able to tell from just looking at her, I must point out that she did come from the Mother Ship.

You did like *Star Wars*, so I suppose there is still hope for you even though you liked *Close Encounters*, too. I have met a number of people with the same affliction. But, with some help, I have managed to cure a number of them of the delusion that *Close Encounters* is a good movie. You science fiction fans are all alike, you see a few half-decent special effects and you think you've seen a masterpiece. (You know what might have been a novel idea? Finding an actor who could speak English to play Truffaut's part. But modern movie makers are seldom anxious to take innovative steps.)

Well, I don't know what more I can do to whimmerize (whimivate?) you. It is nice to see, that despite your height, *Xenolith* proves that you are Thinking Small. 1/28

...some would say I was thinking small when I moved down here.

Doug Barbour ah me, out & alas. i only cottoned onto *Outworlds* around issue 18 or 19 & so stepped into a moiling boiling swarm of ongoing activity. getting *Xenolith 2* isnt quite so bad, but Harry Warner's letter gave to miss having seen (& perhaps read) #1. ...anyway, enjoyed yr commentary, tho i am not a con goer i appreciate the mood upon you. i would like to suggest that the problem with the perception of *Close Encounters* within the closely knit sf world (Ellison's outrage at it, etc) has to do with the fact that so many people expect it to be sf, or at least 'real ufo' when in fact it's an almost straight religious awakening film--the lights on the road to damascus & all that. it's a film about revelation & the glory that will be visited upon the true believer if s/he will just persist in trusting his/her vision. those last 40 minutes are a version of the second coming, man, pure uplift--& they are also fucking gorgeous!

i found it slow in places but acceptable in these terms as i dont think it is as sf. loved the hippotophers & think that Curry fellow can curry favour in fanzines far & wide with such nifty cartoons (well yr last line said...). 2/28

i did send you #1, doug; apparently it was a victim. ill send another...

DAVE ROWE Curse you, Bill Bowers...I saw that X on my mailing address! It's all a plot to get rid of your overseas readers isn't it, a varitable mastermind of a scheme, send off two editions during a long-shoreman's strike then when you don't get replies strike 'em off your mailing list, well I can see thru that Mr. Bowers, and I can point unerringly to the dastardly truth of your masterplan--you've started printing on a nearly regular basis haven't you?

It'll be interesting to see what the next evil little step in your plan will take, probably something to cut off the rest of North American fandom, till you're just publishing for the highly exclusive elite of Cincinnati fandom, and what then my dear William, what then? Lord knows what the stage after that will be, after all you've been publishing exclusively for Bill Bowers alone for sometime.

All in jest of course, Bill, as I'd be the first to say that those who don't put up shouldn't be kept on, but the editor should take note of known postal delays, after all one can not reply to a zine before one has received it.

For the record:

Xenolith One	Posted Oct/Nov? '77	Rec'd 18-Jan-78
Xenolith Two	" 7-Jan-78	" 20-Mar-78

As to Two (did my loc on One arrive in time to keep me on the mailing list? Signed Worried Blue Eyes Of Wickford); I luvd Marla Gold's crusty Hippotopher jokes, which no doubt gained immensely from the presentation.

And apart from your closing piece 'Local Politics' those are the only compliments I have on Two. Hell! if this had been a neo zine I would have passed it by, Bill. A loccol should be alive, not full of glib praises from close friends, and maybe your piece on *Close Encounters* would have been more interesting if I'd seen the film, but I haven't and that doesn't leave much else for the zine to stand on.

I've got this odd idea X2 was the great Bill Bowers' attempt to show he too could produce a crudzine; it just did not have enough life and content.

A couple of Saturdays ago I went to Trafalgar Square to join the protest about the Canadian Seal Kill; because of fears of almost certain violence resulting from the march of a neo-nazi party there was a month's ban on all marches, so ours had to be call off but we got round it, by each signing a duplicated letter to Beaver House and delivering it by hand, en masse. Did the papers cover it? No they did not. So much for the free press.. Last year the *Mail* especially launched an anti-kill campaign which failed, so this year no word. The slaughter has been bigger this year than before, the protestors are now totally impotent thanks to the Canadian protection to the furriers. At least your congress has condemned the trade and in the process of banning the resulting furs, which is more than this nation of animal lovers has done. A sorry note to end on. 3/24

Actually, the overseas copies of X1 were mailed Dec. 3, so the delay was expected... And, unless I've mis-sorted, most of the remaining comments will be on X3:

STEVE LEIGH This is more than passing strange. I'm typing a letter to someone I could drive to see, or phone--not that I'd ever do either of those two things, ya unnerstan. But, nothing ventured... and besides, I need to practice my typing; it's been so long since I've written anything...

Xenolith. Did it begin as an evil glint in your rum-crazed eyes, an idea to silence all the local (and un-named) cynics who burbled and giggled every time this pontifical voice came down from the blue clouds of a Cavincon and declared "I SHALL PUBLISH AGAIN!?" Hmmm? But then you always have been known for making rash statements--a dangerous thing for someone brought up in a fundamentalist religion, no? "And the Word shall be made

flesh." Rash words... you see, you're being punished.

Xenolith is not *Outworlds* (Yes, and red isn't green, except, of course, to Bowers. Well, try another metaphor: and an A above middle C isn't an F, except of course...) -- by that tautology, I suppose I mean that "X", oddly enough, doesn't strike me as any more "personal" than OW did. It's a little less, ahh, pretentious (aka expensive) than the better known zine, but still... I find that the *Gravel* section is the only thing I really read with any anticipation. Oddly enough, there are some of us out here who confess to being interested in how you feel about odd topics, and -- this is not meant as an insult -- you sometimes talk more freely on paper than in person. Good. Expand that section. Ramble some more. Wolfenbarger's pieces I can take or leave. I read them and find them only moderately interesting. Too damned esoteric/personal--and little of the emotions of the writer come through to me. Jodie's writing is always far more lively... and that brings up another point. It'll be interesting to see 'whither "X"?'. You seem to be using old OW things to fill out the zine. What'll happen when that backlog is expended? Will you be doing all the material yourself with help from the letters you receive? Or will you be running other things from various people? And, lastly, how long will you be satisfied with a small and conservatively laid-out personal-zine?

And when are you going to tell the world about the night those two strange girls knocked on your door, and what happened after that with the ripe pear and the jar of vaseline?

In any case, fandom can only be awed (background music begins to swell, something melodic with a large string section) by the sight of an active Bill Bowers, those animated eyes rolling languidly in their sockets as he searches for new ~~depths/to/ply~~ heights to scale. The cynics have been defeated; they can be heard squawking with delight only when you say "OW isn't dead, just resting."

To end then, I'm sorry that you don't like Cincinnati winters. Really, this is unusual. Just because we're supposed to get four to six inches tonight...

By the way, did I beat Ric?

2/29, 3/1 & 3/3

...I suppose I really should have advised Cincinnati's Very Own An-Lab Winner to practice on *Laughing Osiris* or *Quantum*...before he embarrassed himself thusly, by attempting to loc one of the biggies. I mean, really, Steve is no George Wagner as a writer...but he's every bit the equal of Mike Banks. Still, maybe if he gave up all this "playing around" on weekends, he might make something of himself...and if he's really lucky, he may sell to F&SF before Al Curry does...and become the younger generation's Mike Resnick in the process, before going to the dogs. (And now, having alienated half of the CFG, without fazing Steve...) ## You know, it's strange that you had to put that "this is not meant as an insult" in there, Steve, but I know why. And the fact that you did hurts; my fault, not yours. Sometimes the constant bantering is fun, sometimes not. I get what I ask for...but, just for a few fleeting moments, you understand, I do wish that I could communicate to those I care about without having to hide behind the insult routine. (But then I dig out my complete run of Larry Downes' fanzines, and immediately feel better...) [There's enough esoteric Cincy references in here that I felt I owed Michigan equal time.] ## "Wither 'X'?", indeed! Can't you see, just from the first four issues, that the future of this Bowers-work is as tightly plotted as a Lou Tabakow argument? ## Of course, your letter beat Ric's. In fact, I'm still waiting...I'm probably as likely to get a loc from Bill Cavin as I am Ric Bergman; two of a kind, there. I suppose that the only thing that would shock me more than getting a loc from either of those two, would be getting one from Denise. I mean, she talks a good insult, but that's as far as it goes (something she has in common with Lynn Parks & Paula).

RANDY MOHR Good lord, he's gone mimeo! F'rgoshsakesalive! Even tho it is mimeo, coming from the Grand Old Master of Offset, it looks bitchin' and has a very fannish atmosphere, something that almost seems expected of ~~yourself~~ yourself. X#3 was an uplifting break in a week-long-no-mail streak. Your con-going life never ceases

to amaze and bedazzle me (having gone to as many cons as can be counted on the ends of one hand *sigh*), plus the fun and frivolity of getting there and back!

Jodie Offutt writes her usual, but by no means boring, personal anecdote (good grammar? Why, I'm only a senior in coolege!) as does Bill Wolfenbarger.

A note on *Close Encounters*--I loved it. The sensawonder and awe was moving throughout the film; besides I like Dreyfuss, and the kid that played Barry was marvelous!

...got to get back to studying. I'm giving a demonstration in the Ceramics class I assist in on the Raku technique of glazing and firing pottery Monday morning. It's a fascinating subject involving Eastern aesthetics, Zen, and a way of approaching the philosophy of pottery that has been influencing my own approach to the craft. Fascinating! I must write to you in depth on the subject sometime. But, not tonite... 2/25

LARRY DOWNES Well, well, Bowers fanzines. Or, to quote Mike Glicksohn (and therefore keep this letter out of print) "remember fanzines, articles, locs, reviews, and all that neat stuff from your youth, Larry?" How could I forget with such good teachers --and lookie, lookie, one of them (three guesses, now) even publishes.

Ahh, yes, my youth, I think scratching my beard (I've let it grow now for four days). Now I am nineteen, and young no more. I'm past my sexual prime. I can legally drink beer and wine in Illinois. Alice Cooper doesn't sing about me and I don't even have a magazine whose title is my age.

Ahh, yes, old age. My doctor tells me I'll decrease the risk of hardening arteries and heart failure if I exercise, so I bought a gray sweat suit and am jogging with the other retirees here at the Iowa State Rest Farm and Dope Pad. The nurses are wonderful and so muscular!!! They're really good to us here--they even let us take classes so our brains won't atrophy as quickly as our bodies are. Adult education is a wonderful thing.

Birthdays, however, are not. They're too trivial to celebrate, but your parents send you checks anyway. Your roommates find out and everybody wishes you a happy one, reminding you how unhappy you are. Alex insists you take nineteen hits (hit--a small quantity of marijuana smoked through a bong) (bong--a device which allows the user to bubble smoke through water from burning marijuana which causes a high) (high--...) to celebrate. This reminds you of your past and all the people who you wish had wished you a happy birthday and if they were around you think it would be though actually you realize it probably wouldn't and Carson McCullers knows her shit.

Oh, yes, the fanzine. It arrived in my box together with the above-quoted Glicksohn (rhymes with Nixon) letter. Such juxtaposition you wouldn't believe I tell you.

Why do you write so much, Bill? I've been telling you for years now that your forté is art. Show, don't tell.

I didn't read Jodie Offutt's article because my dentist doesn't want me to get cavities. We old folks have to hold on to every part of our decaying bodies that we have left.

Close Encounters--sucks. In fact, it does worse than suck--it bites, and leaves permanent, ugly scars.

Say, I just noticed that this "Stephanie Oberembt" lives in Iowa City. Hey, so do I! Maybe I'll look her up. 3/1

Gee, Larry, not only did you "Make It"--but age has definitely mellowed you!

BOB TUCKER Once upon a time, somewhere, someplace, there was a fanzine called *Procrastination* and I thought it an ideal title...it was so very apt for so very many fans, including me. I am still finding letters and fanzines dated 1976 and 1977 piled up around this desk waiting to be answered or acknowledged.

But I always liked time-binding.

I read with envy your accounts of visiting other fans, having them visiting you, and in particular the many New Year's parties you attended. I miss things like that! My trusty car died a couple of years ago (after eleven years faithful service) and so now I can only sit home and read about you going to parties. Jacksonville is blessed with one (1) bus which runs, sometimes, between here and Springfield where I can catch, sometimes,

a Greyhound to Chicago or St. Louis. It isn't fun.

The Jacksonville bus is a strange thing. It doesn't run on weekends, it doesn't run when the rains come and the slough east of town rises to cover the highway, it doesn't run when it snows, it doesn't run when the only driver is sick. Once a week (Wednesday) it runs north to Peoria, if I have the itch to visit Larry Propp on a Wednesday; and once a week (on Mondays) it runs to St. Louis if I have the itch to visit the fans there just after they have ended a weekend party or con. Small life life is chockful of excitement.

My son's van, the notorious truck-like van which did not carry us to Hippotocon last August, is back in the shop again for an overhaul. I've learned not to leave town with that van, and it is something of an adventure to drive it to the grocery five blocks away!

DAVE VERESCHAGIN: I don't know if it is the mimeo, or what, but X3 seems to be a much more open and friendly zine than the first two issues were. I like it. Of course, the increasingly personal nature of "X" doesn't make it much easier for me to comment on your own writing in it, but it does make me more comfortable.

Churchill may have enjoyed painting as a hobby, but one wonders just how much he may have learned/gained from it. Egad, he left orders for his portrait to be destroyed, just because it didn't cater to the image he wanted to project to the world. Just how much appreciation of art did Churchill learn if he couldn't abide by a painter's own impressions and interpretations? *Hmph*

3/19

TERRY MATZ ...you are very persistent. Sometimes I think that you think that if you send them out enough people will soon accept them and stop buggin you for letters. (By the way I don't really believe your note that you will write me but that's o.k., it's the thought that counts. I guess there are two types of writers: fanzine writers and letter writers, who only meet in locs.)

I'm writing this in a break from painting, not the aesthetic kind described by Churchill and Jodi Offutt, but the practical wall and ceiling kind. And let me tell you, it got so bad I almost wished I was tall. But then I came back to my senses. Who wants to sacrifice charm and grace for a few extra feet (I have two left ones anyway--change that to inches). Besides I'm afraid of heights so if I were as tall as you I'd probably be down crawling on the floor anyway.

It sounds to me like you are having a great time--it's like rubbing salt in my wound, seeing how I'm stuck down here and all of my friends are stuck up there. Steph may feel she doesn't need cons as long as she can go to parties to see her friends and keep the old insults sharpened but I have to rely on cons to give me the excuses to go see my friends now that everyone is that much farther away. (You want to hear my why-don't-you-come-live-in-K.C.? speech. I give it to all my friends.)

Bill, I can sympathize with your problem of being mistaken for Wally but I'm sorry, all you tall people look alike to me. Of course, all I can see are your stomachs...

I always enjoy reading Jodi Offutt's articles and this one really struck a chord (or nerve). I'm afraid I'm not as organized as she is when it comes to hobbies. My mother's garage and every spare corner and closet in my house can testify with that. They're full of all necessary materials and half-finished projects in silkscreening, batik, terrariums and plants, andlemaking, furniture finishing, decoupage, neddlepoint, and so on. Ken's been very good about it--he's actually given up and asked for a pillow and wallhanging--but I think if I lovingly design and execute one more one-of-a-kind T-shirt for him he may throw the whole mess out. Sometimes I think that I spend so much time using my brain "in different ways than usual" I'm not sure what usual is for my brain. Actually the trouble is that as long as I'm doing something creative I feel I'm accomplishing something (even if it is only making a mess) and this gives me a wonderful excuse not to write.

Right now at least I'm involved in the more useful mess-making of getting this old house into livable shape. Painting improves things 100% even though I hate it, and it is the only "decorating" we can afford so... I mean I get tired of looking at patchy, half-spackled (from the previous owner), and brownishOpink walls. The cardboard boxes we're

using for bookshelves are bad enough...

I didn't read *Language at Midnight* because it sounded like he was asleep at midnight when he wrote it; it sounded about as esoteric and incoherent as a dream.

Hmmm...it says here about us meeting your activity rules. Sounds like physical education to me, too much like, I was always last in line. Unless of course you had some other "activity" in mind. Hmm, Bill, you DYM? (I decided to be nice and not say DOM.)

Keep sending *Xenolith* so I know my friends are still alive. And I'll say this, it does keep me writing letters even if it is to a strange printer. 2/25

I'll listen to your "why-don't-you-come-live-in-K.C.?" speech...if you'll listen to my why-don't-you-come-live-in-Cincinnati? routine...fair enough? (After all, I did live near K.C. for two years--and you've never lived in Cincinnati!) Given your distance, and my poverty, it doesn't seem likely that I'll see you before Midwestcon. ...a year's gap: sometimes close-knit Midwestern fandom seems as distant as either of the coasts, not to mention those furrin countries. *sigh* You meant to tell me that I never did write...? Now would I do a thing like that?

GIL GAIER I'm thoroughly enjoying "X". No striving for WEIGHT or CONTROVERSY here--just interesting people, openly presented. And you're one of them. Thank you for that.

I enjoy the letter-response format, too. I know you've been practicing a long time, but you do do it so well. 2/24

The above is dedicated to Dave Rowe.

RON SALOMON X2/3 arrived yesterday. Do I have a collector's item or did others get a doubleish too? [Actually it wasn't until I was making up the mailing list for X3 that I realized I'd somehow missed sending you #2, so I just combined them. Sorry!]

Liked *Tall People*. Have you heard the single of the same name on Midgit Records by (think it's) Wee Willie Small? Very close to it.

60 cons!? Fantastic! Guess BNF's like you have more stamina than us WAHF types. I've only been to 4 in the past year (must've been the 4 you didn't get to in '77) but I have yet to grow accustomed to being up 'til 4 or even 2 am which is when things begin to happen, right? Going to sleep at 10 pm so I can get up at 6:45 to get ready for work leads me to suspect that work and cons don't mix. Or is there a fannish elixir that I don't yet about know?

Anyway, look forward to ~~glove~~ meeting you at Iggycon or at least seeing you and wondering why you're not wearing one of those "No But I Look Like Him" T/sweat-shirts.

On to Phoenix!

For a while on Saturdays one of the local cinemas ran *Star Wars* and CE3k as a \$3.-- daytime double-feature. What a croggling combination that was! Both were good but I wouldn't compare 'em as to likeability as one is fantasy and the other SF. And as for the tall alien in CE3k, the audience around me were heard to mutter things like "look at her", "doesn't she have gorgeous eyes?"--the female contingent, while I heard nary a sound from the male portion of the crowd--I also saw "it" as a neuter-type.

I've found that I enjoy SF (or other, for that matter, types) movies much more at cons because the audience is less inhibited and clap-yell-boo at the screen (so do I). Both SW and CE3k were exceptions in the mundane as the audience of both films did vent their feelings vocally. And now to beat the horse even deader...

Saw *Quark* on TV. Phtooie! Richard Benjamin should hang his head in shame and Buck Henry should be forced to read every Laser Book. Show him no mercy!

Hope that X4 is in process as I like what I've read and I'm greedy for more. I can't wait until I get to the Big Time, i.e., fit to wear a Bill Bowers Badge. S*i*g*h. 2/25

...we'll have to make sure you sit next to Sid Altus at future con-film-showings!

BRIAN EARL BROWN I play no favorites. I'll send a handwritten letter to Andy Porter or Dick Geis or any of you big-time publishing giants.

It seems like only last month I was reading and Locing #2. In fact, checking the calender, I see that it was only a month ago. If you keep publishing this often I'll have to end up sending you infrequent postcards of deranged mutterings. I'm rapidly being drained of intelligent things to say.

Turning to this special no-illos issue of "X", what is there to say? I could ask if you did make it to Wally Franke's Birthday Party. I could have asked you at Sandi Lopez's party & avoid this whole paragraph, only then I didn't know about Wally's party, etc. etc.

14.3 inches of snow on the ground. Ha! When Mishawaka's blizzard was finished, we had 41! inches of snow, plus drifts. Of course, we don't have a mayor who can play the tuba, either.

On a recent *Carol Burnett* show there was a short--er, brief--skit/song about Tall People, but as I listened to the words, I found them to be inferior to Marla Gold's.

Actually, Bill, I never thot you'd be a *Rocky Horror* fan. You seem so... so... I don't know; I just didn't expect to see you running around with an 8-track recording of the film's audio-track. I could expect that from Denise Mattingly, but not anybody else.

I keep wondering if *Xenolith* #5 will be your big *Fireball XL-5* issue complete with life-like puppets. You remember *Fireball XL-5* don't you? The puppet show brought to you by the same people who did *Space: 1999*, only *XL-5* was better.

Jodie's article was particularly enjoyable. Mom has been filling the hose with plants lately, and my sleep has been troubled by dreams of Triffids. But I've never been much interested in anything myself beyond printing. I'm quite fascinated by the whole thing and feel that I do a better job of it than most, tho not as well as I'd like. Perhaps someday I'll develop some other hobby.

Wrapping it all up in one nutshell... I find that I enjoy a well-done personalzine better than a well-done genzine. And *Xenolith* is definitely a well-done personalzine. I enjoy it more than OW, which was a well-done genzine. There's more of you in "X" & more of your friends, too. It's small size and frequent appearances seem ably suited to you & it.

It was quite a pleasure seeing you at Sandi's party since it's been a while since I've seen you at a convention. It's strange to think that 40 years ago people thought it strange to cross the country for a World's SF Convention. And today a fan can throw a party and fans from 2 and 3 hundred miles away will show up. How can the future be more fantastic than that?

2/13

...Brian has finally made "his" move: 16711 Burt Rd., #207, Detroit, MI 48219. And I'm really sorry I didn't get up to yours & Denice's housewarming. Be happy, you both!

MIKE GLICKSOHN ...how does an old fart like you get off publishing your fanzine without my loc in it? Eh? You trying to show me up by printing two locs from Stephanie and none from me? You want people to think I don't love you any more? You trying to create the impression that I no longer have time for fanac? Or was my letter a little late?

Really there isn't much to say about this issue. I always enjoy a little personal fan history especially if I participated myself but a description of cons attended and weekends spent with friends isn't likely to generate loads of comments.

Another lettercolumn filled with people saying they have nothing to say. What is it about your fanzines that inspires such non-response, Bill? And what ever happened to those twelve single-spaced typed pages of replies to the last *Outworlds* that I sent you?

Considering how long it's been since Jodie wrote her article she's probably been through three different new diversions since then but it's still an interesting piece. (I can understand why she'd be chagrined at not being able to find a replacement for "into"; the spouse of any writer ought to be chagrined at forgetting words like "interested" and "involved"...Tsk, tsk, what's the large country to the south of us coming to?) When I think of it, I guess I've had very few real hobbies that fit the criteria Jodie

offers. SF and fandom, obviously, and possibly badminton, poker and similar card and board games, pirball, and that's about it. Fandom, I find, can take up rather a lot of one's time if one is so inclined...

Liked the way you broke up the letters with the two articles. It's innovative layout like this that's needed in a moribund fandom!

In Brian Earl Brown's travesty of a letter the subject "anything small" does not match properly with the verb "have" (which doesn't match with "their"); it should be something like "anyone small has their his/her" in order to be reasonably grammatical. This, Father William, is known as "editing" and is one of the functions of an "editor". Some people think the functions of an editor include only taking a shit when necessary and throwing up on the masters but this isn't really so. However, anyone who'd publish this compendium of cretinous crapola that purports to be a loc isn't likely to spot a few mere mistakes in writing, eh wot? I refer, of course, to this puerile, pusilanimous and preposterous payload of poppycock about Fave Locke being slightly taller than I am. Even Dave himself admits that I'm not simply fractionally taller than he is but am actually quite a bit better endowed in the height department. To possibly the extent of a full half inch or more. Jackie herself admits this, after sodium pentathol is slipped into her Southern Comfort of course. So let's lay these scurrilous rumours once and for all to rest, shall we? Anyone who thinks Dave Locke is taller than I bring Dave Locke and a hundred dollars to bet on the matter to a con I'm at and they'll end up a poorer but wiser fan. That's fair, don't you agree? I'll even give Dave a couple of bucks for chewing-gum to munch as he hitch-hikes home.

3/7

...and that's it for this time! I also heard from SUSAN WOOD, and from TIM KYGER-- who quotes Newsweek as saying that short people "are the wavelet of the future"...

...for those of you still waiting with bated breath, yes, we did make it up to Wally's *Surprise* Birthday Party. We left Friday nite (after Black Beauty...naturally), and managed to see Barb Nagey, and Jon Singer, in addition to Wally & Paula. One of these years, Wally is going to catch on. The following weekend, Bill Cavin financed a trip up to Sid's, and Saturday nite Cavin & I went over to A² for Sandi Lopez's party: very, very crowded, but fun. Wally & Paula came down here for Easter, and Marla & I sent them out to dinner for their anniversary. There was a Cavin party, and I ended up spending most of the rest of the weekend at Al & Tanya's. Other than that...I think I've finally beat an infection that has thoroughly wiped me out for about two months: I made it to work but anything more was a definite effort. (And before I forget, thanks to Brian Earl Brown & Bob Tucker for stamp-donations.) Now then, it is Sunday afternoon, and I have a "speech" to make Friday I haven't started on (typical)... Enuf for this one & Thanks All! 4/9/78

from: BILL BOWERS
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