

OUTWORLDS' INWORDS

...which is by way of being the floating Lettercolumn of Outworlds -- this time unjustifiably set-off from the parent magazine. (One of these days, it may be the parent magazine!) Edited by BILL BOWERS (and any comments by Him will be typed with this element) -- and Published in conjunction with Outworlds Eight, June, '71.

...first, comments on OUTWORLDS SIX...

Terry Carr

Ted Pauls' review of FOURTH MANSIONS is interesting particularly in that it goes a long way to proving to me that there's not much point in applying the type of intellectual criticism Pauls does to a work of, you should pardon the expression, art. Because art contradicts and confounds intellection; it operates on a higher plane. If it doesn't go beyond the normal perceptions of the logical mind, it isn't art in the first place. So while Pauls may be right, as I think he is, in just about everything he says about the construction of FOURTH MANSIONS, its themes and characters and all that English-major jazz, I can't agree with his dismissal of the novel as enjoyable but minor. The whole is greater than the sum of the parts, Mr. Pauls, and critics who limit themselves to dissecting the parts, no matter how precisely, just don't make it.

Of course, critics who react purely aesthetically, as Hank Stine did in SFR, are prone to such offputting verbiage as that line Pauls quotes from Stine: "...figures and symbols so primal and overpowering as to be nearly pre-verbal in their impact." I can see why Pauls and others wouldn't want to get into that kind of reviewing; too often you come out sounding like a pompous ass or effete snob, burbling about the ineffable. But the ineffable is what it's all about.

Which suggests, to me, that critics are a pretty useless species, and explains why I seldom read more of a review--fan or pro--than the opening and closing paragraphs, to find out whether someone liked a given book.

While speaking of the Pauls review, let me take exception to a (very) side-issue. He says, "One can pardon the back cover quotations from Poul Anderson, Roger Zelazny and Alexei Panshin, for after all blurb writing by its very nature tends to generate a certain facile vacuousness." One of the reasons I stopped putting the usual SF Specials advance-readers' quotes on the backs of the books starting late

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last year was that I found too many critics reviewing the back cover remarks rather than the books. I think Alex Panshin ably defended his remarks about FOURTH MANSIONS when someone in *Energumen* (Sandra Miesel, I think it was) called them into question, and though I think it's a wonderful thing for Ted Pauls to be so forgiving ("How do you like being forgiven by Ted Pauls?" I asked Alex not ten minutes ago on the phone after reading him the pertinent quotation, but he declined to answer), I also find it presumptuous of him. The people who made comments on the Specials were never asked to write blurbs, only comments, remarks, quotes for publication. They could be lukewarm if they wished, and some were; they were asked not to fake enthusiasm if they didn't feel it. I think the people who wrote things strongly in favor of FOURTH MANSIONS meant what they said. God knows they weren't being paid to shill, and they knew their names would accompany their remarks, so why should they lie?

So onward, to Greg Benford's column, which I enjoyed a lot; Greg is probably the most underrated writer appearing in fanzines these days. Unfortunately that doesn't mean he's also a reliable reporter, necessarily, as his writeup of a phone conversation with me re cynicism in sf shows.

Greg may not have believed me that we didn't use the novelette version of DEEPER THAN THE DARKNESS in WORLD'S BEST SF: 1970 because it would conflict with the novel version that we were also publishing, but that was the simple truth. Lord knows I wanted to use the novelette, and I think it was much better than Harlan's novelette which we used in its place (*A Boy and His Dog*, in case you don't care to go to the trouble of looking it up), but commercial considerations do sometimes have to intrude, it seems. A few years ago we passed up using Frank Herbert's *Green-slaves* because he'd since expanded it into a novel for Ace (*THE GREEN BRAIN*) and we didn't want conflict, so Greg's case is by no means isolated. Ironically, just last year I figured enough time had elapsed that there'd be no conflict if I put *Green-slaves* in a new anthology--since I felt the novelette version was much superior to the novel--and due to faulty communication between editors that novelette came out in my anthology ON OUR WAY TO THE FUTURE just a month or three before Don rereleased the novel. Sigh.

Anyway, back to the Harlan story. I didn't tell Greg that neither Don nor I thought it was much good. What happened went like this: About the time *A Boy and His Dog* first came out in *New Worlds*, Don said to me, "Have you read this Ellison story?" I said no. He said, "Well, it's the usual Harlan pyrotechnics, only filled with more dirty words than usual--he seems to be trying to be disgusting with this one." I said I'd read it and see what I thought. Some months later I did read it, and had very mixed feelings about it. On one hand there's no denying that it's an absolutely imbecilic story judged by logical standards, that the prose is more hype than art, that a number of plot elements are unnecessary or contradictory. On the other hand, the story really moves along; it has better narrative drive than 99% of other sf stories of most any year, and it also has some new twists on the usual after-the-Deluge-or-bomb formula. And Greg is right in one respect: We did have a 15,000 word hole remaining in the book came deadline time. So Don said, "You know, I kind of think that Ellison story is going to win a Nebula this year, it's getting so much talk from people. Maybe we should use it in the book; it does have something." "Oh, there must've been something better than that to use," I said, but after surveying all the possibilities I had to admit that it had been a bad year and the rest of the novelettes were garbage. (Except Greg's.) So we used Harlan's story, and it won a Nebula, and Greg, who had a vested interest since his novelette had been left out, got cynical about it. Well, the selection of the story wasn't done, as you can see from this account, from totally idealistic reasons; but it wasn't as bad as Greg reports it.

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Hell, if Greg wants cynical inside stories about science fiction, I'll give him cynical inside stories about science fiction. But not today, when I feel all sweetness and light.

Greg is also wrong in intimating that George Ernsberger at Avon bought Piers Anthony's *MACROSCOPE* despite thinking it was "crap". George did have mixed feelings about the novel, and once when we had lunch and I told him my own opinion of it ("crap") he didn't argue with me. That doesn't mean he agreed with me, though. Actually, George enjoyed the novel. Don't ask me what he enjoyed about it; I'm no authority on its virtues, being unable to find any worth noting. But George thought it was a fun book and he bought it and published it, and that's why we have different editors. God forbid that any one editor should have the opportunity to say *This* gets published, but *This* we tear up.

[March 8]

Jonh Ingham

With reference to Greg Benford's remarks that the general sf reader and public doesn't remember Sturgeon, it's helpful to remember that Ted hasn't done anything to put him before the public eye in a long time. Before about 1965-66 Sturgeon was right up there with Bradbury in terms of whom the public knew of (even if they couldn't name a single book by either man). But in 1965-67 *STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND* became a national best seller, in 1968 *2001* hit the screens and the public conscious, and for the past year or so Asimov has been filling the pages of almost every man and woman's magazine with articles on will we make it to the 21st century?, women should be astronauts, and other topics vital to the American middle class. For now, Ted is not prominent, but about one hundred years from now I am quite sure that Ted Sturgeon will be just as well remembered as Arthur Clarke or Robert Heinlein.

[March 14]

David William Hulvey

Ted Pauls has the ability to show his great talent with stylistic charm. I'm glad he didn't mince words with the pretentious philosophizing that had gone on far too long with regard to Lafferty's opus. If Mr. Eisenstein and Mr. Stine are looking for a novel to wax heady, heavy self-admiration-for-understanding-cosmic-significance, then there's always James Joyce's *FINNEGANS WAKE*. Yes, there is a work that truly delves into the depths of Universal Truth. It is a bit mindboggling, yet quite simple if one wants to be impersonally verbose and A Delap Tough, Uncompromising Critic. Here is the mold that defeats good sf literary critics from becoming great ones. Either they decide to contrive iconoclasm for the sake of its own heroic aura--as Delap--or intellectualize in a piquant fit of pretty phrases sandwiched together so, hopefully, we'll not notice the dearth of straightforward, direct statements relevant to the actual work under consideration--not the critic's personal ego-trip prose. These are simplistic methods of attaining pseudo-positions as sf literary giants. Ted Pauls, it seems, in delightful contradiction of these others, captures the essence of critical appraisal as primarily concerned with reviewing, per se, and not using the most references or Big Names to back up one's claim to Awareness of Significance. He, I believe, is the only sf reviewer who ever persuaded me, through his open eloquence and frank, service-like manner, to buy a certain sf work. The others are as the comics section of the local paper--as ikon-smashing posturers to the brickbat wielding crowd (that helps add to their Fearless Stature; of course, my very negative mention of one such example only helps his cause--I recognize that, sophistry fans) or the editorial page filled with pomposity rivaled only by our alliterative illiterate called Spirometer by those who knew him.

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Next to Ted Pauls' excellent reviews, the porny pictures swelled my imagination the most. I certainly enjoyed the young ladies looks', and couldn't help admiring their superb teeth. I must know the name of such finely chisled whiteness's dentist. Also, a minor quibble, I being a foot fetish fan, was disappointed that I didn't get to see everything. Of course, I recognize the basic immorality of even mentioning such words as "teeth" and "foot", that's heavy stuff to make note of in a fanzine. Larry Propp, please forgive me!

Mae Strelkov is really a beautiful loc writer. In fact, her letter interested me more than most of the rest of the zine (excluding Ted Pauls' critiques and the erotica). She has the politics of rational leftism, a lost alternative in these Grant Park Days of Chicago Sevens and Panther Elevens. Still, she can be gentle-tongued, if ever polemics enter her letter. I wish it could be so with me, are you listening, Black Traveler? Besides, its really quite a trip to see someone among an older, excuse the media made expression, "generation" be so alive with ideas and hopes and pineapple parrot dreams of a better tomorrow. The blue-coated bombers may drop napalm-bummers on our dreams, but they'll never lock our minds up in prisons as long as there are such as Mae. [March 25]

Harry Warner, Jr.

The only fault I can find with this issue is its failure to fit the only empty space within seeing distance of this typewriter. Everything is badly piled up as a result of this latest fafiation and the slow falling-behind that has preceded it, but I've faithfully kept one clear area on the typing stand just large enough for placing the fanzine on which I'm writing a loc. Maybe rotating everything through the fourth dimension would permit this *Outworlds* to conform, but I'm not yet strong enough to make the effort. But even when I look at them sideways, the pictures are splendid, particularly the Fabian group, and I'm probably not prejudiced in this judgment by the way they look upright under the existing circumstances. You and Steve should have made Isaac Asimov very happy to compensate for some of the fanzine items that have annoyed him in the past year or two. The Rotsler photographs appear to have lost some separation of darker tones in the engraving process but they're still quite effective. Do I really recognize the Dollens style as the background for the double-exposure which makes up the first of these photo pages?

Mae Strelkov's letters seem out of place in a loc section; they're closer to being columns of the *Thoughts While Typing...* variety. But maybe it's best to keep them in the letter section, on the theory that their presence there might inspire a batch of other fans to write comments of similar style and diversity. The most interesting portions of this particular loc to me were those about the city problems in Argentina. It's a comfort to know that a nation which I picture as something like the 18th century American West really has some of the headaches that are epidemic in the United States.

It's nice to find someone else, Bruce Gillespie, admitting complete lack of visual arts skills having an effect on his fanzine's format. I'd always thought I was the only person in fandom with this affliction, and when I'd receive something like Bruce's fanzines, I'd assume that he used the formatless format I utilize in FAPA publications for other reasons, a symbol of serious intent or utter unavailability of artwork in his part of Down Under or whatever. But I think that this is an important matter that fanzine editors should consider carefully. There's not the slightest doubt about the ability of you, Jay Zaremba, Ted White, and dozens of other people to do magical things with format, pictures, type, and so on, and a few of

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us obviously have no skill at all in these matters. Inbetween are the vast majority of fanzine editors with limited powers and I suspect that some of them are trying to go beyond their capabilities, adding to their work without providing satisfactory amounts of delight for the reader's eye and the best utilization of art. More conservative formats might be in order for some of the semi-skilled.

I'd say to Mike Glicksohn that the best fanzine writers a decade or so ago weren't much better than the best ones today. But they wrote so much more than the finest fanzine writers do today. They were incredibly prolific, most of them also published fanzines, some of them could illustrate their own work, and the quantity of their output seemed to have no real harm on its quality. Today only a few reviewers seem capable of producing stuff in great quantities. Alva Rogers deserves a fan writing Hugo for such articles as the one a few years back on *Astounding's* golden days and his more recent reminiscences of Los Angeles fandom in the 1940's, but how many other fanzine contributions has he turned in in the past few years? Alexei Panshin wrote so well about Heinlein that he won a Hugo, and he has been almost totally absent since from fanzines. Terry Carr is undisputedly the equal of a Willis or a Grennell in fanzine contributions, but you can find him only in two or three fanzines and occasionally in FAPA. Jay Kay Klein writes an occasional conreport that is a masterpiece and rarely contributes any other kind of fanzine material. So it goes.

It would be nice if NASA or Russia or someone would send an unmanned spacecraft out toward the nearest stars as soon as possible. I know that it wouldn't get within spitting distance of new discoveries during my lifetime but I'd be happy to know before I die that exploration beyond the solar system has begun. And if present-day technology could get a small unmanned craft out of the solar system, I can imagine it providing important information within a year or two, even if it seemed obvious that science back here on earth would progress fast enough to create better and faster probes which would eventually reach other stars before this first one. Meanwhile, I'm not as convinced as Greg Benford that Mars will prove as uninteresting as we're now led to believe and I even have some faint hopes for the largest moons of Jupiter as the source of exciting discoveries. [March 17]

Jim Cawthorn

Mike Gilbert takes the honours for artwork in the current issue. I particularly liked the spaceship on the cover, which has the quality of the architecture in Tim Kirk's illos, a look of having been grown rather than built. Having arranged the layout in a way that made vertical compositions possible, it's a pity that equally good use wasn't made of the centre-spread. Liked the Canfield illos and the Faddis cartoon, but I can't help feeling that Steve Fabian has pursued his present style to the limit; it begins to seem sterile and inflexible, too painstaking to be expressive. Are the three Rotsler nudes fair samples of his work? They look less alive than his cartoon figures.

No wonder Hannes Bok never became a runaway commercial success, if he used the technique described by Jack Gaughan. It must have required an infinite amount of patience and dedication. As for Jack's own artwork, I've admired it ever since it induced me to buy the *Dragon Masters* issue of *Galaxy*, a magazine I normally wouldn't touch with a barge-pole.

It may be that Greg Benford didn't intend that all of his warnings about money-grabbing editors should apply to *New Worlds*, but as this is the only title he

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quotes, he inevitably creates that impression. I've known the editor, Mike Moorcock, from the beginning of his writing career and have followed the bumpy progress of *New Worlds* since long before he took it over. The time and energy he devoted to the magazine could have gone, much more profitably, into his own writings; a great deal of the money which kept it going during the last few years came, not from defrauded contributors, but from his own earnings, from novels written for other publishers. So "People generally care more about something they pay for"? Well, a lot of people cared about *New Worlds*--readers, authors and illustrators cared and because of this the magazine survived. I'm not defending the economics of the venture, and I certainly wouldn't disagree with Greg's advice to sell your stuff to the most profitable market; I merely wish to set the record straight, as you colonials say.

Looking forward to *Outworlds* 7...the fanzine that has something to be pretentious about. [April 6]

Jerry Lapidus

"With this issue, *Outworlds* is the best fanzine in the world." Well, maybe not really, but this paraphrased Budrys quote does indicate my feelings toward *Outworlds* in general, and the sixth issue in particular. In the areas in which I'm interested--artwork, layout, graphics, competent and interesting writing--this is one of the best single issues of any fanzine I've seen in a long, long time. The artwork, layout, and graphics are by far the best in years--probably since the last *Trumpet*, possibly even longer than that. As we've said all along, the writing does lag a bit; it is merely competent, whereas everything else is definitely inspired.

There is, however, one definite problem, and it's in the same area that Jay Zaremba missed in the third issue of *The Essence*. The horizontal fold-out layout is not in and of itself "wrong"--we were considering the same sort of thing with TA. But Bill, the combination of horizontal and vertical layout in the same magazine, and in alternating sections, is a definite mistake. The necessity of turning the magazine from the cover (horizontal) to the title page and Rotslers (vertical) to Ted Pauls (h) to Fabian (v) to Alexis (h)--all this is just a bit much, I think, and isn't really worth the effort.

I also have a slight quibble with the title page, a bit too busy and crowded to fit in, but except for that, I must retire in amazement at the excellence of the layout and design, choice of artwork, etc., etc. Would that more faneditors would take one tenth the effort in the physical productions of their magazines as you seem to in one issue of yours.

Needless to say, the artwork itself is also excellent, but special notice to: Mike Gilbert's cover, especially well chosen since Mike doesn't often fit well into a cover format; the Fabian theme work on Asimov, beyond a doubt--one would like to see more artists working within some kind of specific areas, at least one occasion--as Steve has done here several times; and Mike's excellent 204/205 spread, twin handlings of a similar idea. Very, very nice allover, really.

Ted's discussion of *Beastchild*, and especially of how much better it is than most of Dean Koontz's other recent fiction, brings up a topic I recently discussed via letter with Andy Offutt. This is the question of the relatively new writer approaching reviews. For the established writer, in his forties or late thirties, say, who's been writing and selling for some ten or fifteen + years, a review is no great shakes; he's pretty much established a reputation, a writing style, a generally

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standard and easily noted ability. Most, if not all, of his work comes out at at least a minimum level of quality, and you don't really expect a great deal of variation. Oh, there are exceptions--as with the "blooming" in the last half-dozen years of Bob Silverberg and John Brunner from very competent hacks to the top of the field. But I think we can pretty much accept this as a fair generalization. But in the case of the new writer, the writer in the very process of learning his craft, the process can be very different. The fiction Dean Koontz--picking a handy example--is writing now is certainly considerably different and considerably better than what he was writing a year ago, as a year ago's work was better than a year before that. Etc. However, the catch is that work that such a writer wrote a year or even two years ago is just appearing now. It takes a number of months minimum for a magazine sale to appear, often years (especially for the relatively unknown writer) for a sold novel to be published. And after the tale is published, a couple of months often pass before the professional and fan critics get at the book for review purposes. So what happens? The reviewer is discussing a work that can very easily be two years old, a work at a level the new writer has probably long since risen beyond and above. This process must be damnably frustrating for the new writer, constantly being castigated for work far inferior to his current output.

It's a very sad commentary on the state of the visual aspect of fanzines that Mike O'Brien can say "It just hadn't occurred to me that illos might be arranged so as to have something to do with the surrounding material." With so many outstanding artists currently working in the field, this sort of callous disregard for overall fanzine appearance is nothing less than criminal. An illustration CAN do so much more than simply show off the artist and break up the monotony of the printed word--if only a few more people would take the time and consideration necessary. True, the placement of artwork with absolutely ideal written material is in itself an art, and the only perfect way to do that is to play Richard Bergeron, and do your own illos. But too many people don't even make that effort.

Exactly. Jim Cawthorn isn't talked of much because he doesn't appear that much. *Yandro* has a very limited circulation (and really, when you come right down to it, Jim's work doesn't show off the best in traced mimeo), and so does *Outworlds*. And though *Amra* has a large circulation, it goes to many people who seem to receive few other fanzines--and comes out so infrequently. If Jim were to appear in other fanzines over here, I'm sure he'd be receiving the accolades he deserves. Ditto for Ivor Latto.

I guess Harry will feel guilty about tearing through this issue, with the offset return, but that is the price you must pay for beauty. But while we talk about that -- MY COVER IS SHRIVELING UP ALREADY!

Harry also mentions the need for someone writing a good long article on the basics of fan art and reproduction, and I heartily agree. The little I know I've picked up more or less by accident, and there's still far too much I have wrong. Is someone who really knows this information willing to go to the work such an article would entail?

Accept this as definitely NOT an attempt to get into an argument with Greg over writers and artists, but simply to clarify the situation. Greg states "Every other Hugo [except fan writer]...has at one time or another been awarded to some dullard or second-rate." I hate to differ, but the fanartist winners, since the award was instituted in 1967: Jack Gaughan, George Barr, Vaughan Bodé, Tim Kirk. Dullards and second-rates, Greg?

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...and on to SEVEN...

Sandra Miesel

...it wasn't really up to our (by now exceedingly high) expectations. Something about the layout just didn't make it for us. Repeating the writer and artist's name three times per page was one of them. With the simple typed headings of articles it was hard to mentally break the writing into the right size pieces. Example of this being the last two pages of my own article which ought to have run as a solid single page since the last paragraph has all those boldfaced titles in it and the final quote. It looks too patchy and busy. The artwork was undistinguished, no luxurious Fabian stuff, etc., and I personally thought the execution (not the conception) of the bacover was poor. The lines wobble. The front cover struck a most familiar note however. Thought for a moment I was looking into a mirror, except Chirp's hair is short. [April 5]

Before someone rightfully complains that their Tarot pack contains no such card as "The Drowned Phoenician Sailor", I hasten to cover my flanks with T. S. Eliot's *Waste Land*, the twentieth century Grail poem. I made the identification on the basis of Eliot's footnote to line #46 of *The Waste Land* in which the poet admits his departure from tradition. But since Tarot designs have historically varied and continue to do so (Delany's cards fit his future world) Eliot's introduction of new titles seems permissible.

In NOVA, Dan and another supporting character named Leo together constitute the Lion member of the Four Living Creatures quartet. (Katin=Eagle, Mouse=Man, Sebastian=Ox/Bull). Lafferty doesn't hold an exclusive patent on the symbols.

Juanita Coulson brought her Tarot deck to the last ISFA meeting and gave readings. Mine was quite appropriate, Lee Lavell's wildly inappropriate, and for John two readings gave absolutely contradictory results. As Juanita said, "This proves the Tarot always tells the absolute truth!" Personally, I think the cards couldn't cope with John's wereplatypusity. We refrained from reading for the Lavell's cat (there are Things Man Was Not Meant to Know), confining ourselves to considering his horoscope.

Verry interesting--Greg Benford's description of Delany's personal habits. But not surprising since his characters are so often radically detached from possessions. Remember the hero of EMPIRE STAR, who starts off owning nothing but boots and gloves? And the richest are as detached as the poorest--implausible for either group. I'd propose a theory that Good Old Chip is secretly the last mendicant friar, wandered in from Middle Ages through a ripple in time, but he just hasn't the raunchiness. [April 15]

Earl Evers

I enjoyed *Outworlds* #7 a lot more than any previous issue; you're finally getting a wide variety of good written material to match your excellent art-work and repro. The zine is still a little dry and heavy for my taste, but then that's just my own personal taste and there's no accounting for it. If I decide to join the Worldcon so I can, I think I'll vote for Ow for the Hugo. (Actually, I'd like to see *Focal Point* or *Metanoia* or *Microcosm* get it, but they don't have a chance, really: FP is too informal and fannish, even though it does serve as a fannish "Focal Point" and help our little hobby group run smoother, as well as printing a good deal of

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excellent fan-writing; and of course META and MICRO just don't reach enough of the fans who join conventions.)

As Alpajpuri points out in the #7 lettercol, fannish fanzines these days usually concentrate on written contents or very informal art (cartoons and the like) rather than on artistic or professional appearance. This is quite true, and just a matter of taste. Some fannish zines of the past (*Void* for example), have combined a "Fannish" editorial slant with high-quality art and repro. But today's fashion in fannish fanzines seems to be to minimize effort on production and appearance and concentrate on contents. The result is a very informal, easy-going zine that doesn't appear at all "professional". The sort of zine, in other words, that one simply "enjoys" rather than "takes pride in". My own explanation for this is the increasing trend for casualness all over society.

But sloppily-produced fanzines still don't win Hugos, regardless of the quality of the written material. I think the major factor responsible for this is the nature of the electorate: namely the fans who join Worldcons. Most of these are fringe-fans of one kind or another, and a lot of them simply don't get many casual fanzines because of the circulation limits. (*Microcosm*, for example, had a circulation of only 50.) Also, they tend to judge a zine by how "professional" its appearance is, or by how many pros contribute to it. So the Hugos go to expensively produced fanzines with large circulations. If the zine is serious enough so a lot of SF pros contribute, that gives it even a better chance of winning.

Oh well, who cares about Hugos anyway?

I've noticed something lately about fanzine lettercols: they've got more independent existence than they used to have, meaning they aren't as much comments on the formal material in the last issue as answers to letters in the last issue's lettercol. I suppose this is because so many fans nowadays belong to discussion-type apas, or are used to doing mailing comments for regular apas. (Even FAPA has been running more to MC's than formal material the last few years, though there may be a swing in the other direction just recently.) Whatever the cause, the average fanzine lettercol looks like a section from a letterzine rather than a series of "regular" loc's. Oh well, I find this kind of letter more interesting than the "I liked this, I didn't like that" type of loc. And I notice that the Ow #7 lettercol has elements of both styles, which is better yet... [April 24]

Jerry Kaufman

I'm very glad to see that you got a nomination. I will admit I don't know whether to vote for you or for the bearded person in Toronto. Wherein your total vision is more clearly developed, Michael had better and more varied written material. Maybe you this year and he the next, or opposed, but more important, a continued loyalty and friendship for both of you every year. You both have an energy of creation that derives from your own lives and experiences, not from fanzines that were excellent twenty years ago. Even if we assume that fanzines were great, then, and have not been so good since, we won't get good again through imitation. You and Michael keep improving in your own ways, and perhaps we'll do something different and better. (By "we" I mean all fandom...not you, Mike, and me.)

Greg Benford opens a new world for me. I have heard for years that there are fans in the Bay area (BArea?), but outside a *Habbakuk* that came to me once like a premonition, I've heard little of a substantive nature about their lives and folk-

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ways. If I were to do the same sort of digest for Columbus, I'd have to do several. We have such a small group here that one person is a faction all to himself. In one group it is de riguer to be old enough to teach school, and then to act as though one were teaching all the time. In the other group if one is asked anything about fandom, one says, "I don't really care about that stuff." "Then why are you here at the convention?" "Oh, I just come for the booze and the girls." "What girls?" "Well, um, there's Suzy Devore."

Where else would a Galactic Observer go except to Kepler's? And afterward he went to Brahe's for luncheon over a volume by Hoyle?

Very pretty deep, Bill Wolfenbarger. In my day we would have called it "heavy", but that's been outdated so long I don't suppose anyone remembers what it means.

Water marks for art go to the cover, to Ingham, to Canfield, to Gilliland (the Galactic Observer illo is very malignant). [April 13]

Tim Kirk

Steve Fabian comes across as a very reasonable type person, and I'll look forward to seeing *Papervision* in the future. I don't think he's "dated" at all. Subject matter is only one aspect of a work of art (something many sf artists give too much consideration to); treatment is equally, if not a little more, important. A good idea is worthless if the artist can't put it across effectively. Anyway, I think Steve's achieved a pretty nice balance of both. Some of his work seems a little stiff, but at his best (as in certain of the items in his Asimov portfolio) he's great. What is this sudden proliferation of fanart columns? [May 13]

Michael [Boy Wonder] Glicksohn

Dear Joan,

Thoroughly enjoyed your latest fanzine which once again reflects the substantial I've come to expect from *Outworlds*. By the way, the other day, while browsing through a stack of ancient fanzines, I came across the name Bill Bowers; since we never hear of this fellow nowadays, I assume he's gafiated, but what I wanted to know, Joan, is why did you never tell me you had an older brother?

There's very little to add to what I've said many times about the appearance of Ow. I stand in awe of the clarity and, above all, blackness of your repro. How do you manage such superb art repro? Is it merely heavy inking, separate stencils and very, very slow hand-cranking? It must be a lot of work, but the results are well worth it; combining this excellence of appearance with the attractive and imaginative graphic design and effective layout and your much-deserved Hugo nomination is easily explained. Congratulations and best of luck.

[] Equipment: One (count 'em) antique Gestetner; and, according to the G-man, they stopped making this particular series in the early '50's. It has a badly split (an unreplacable) drum, worn rollers, and a speed-control that sometimes functions, and sometimes she don't. Pluses: Yes, it's electric, and thus far we haven't had to hand-crank anything; we also haven't run off this issue yet. One color-change kit and the blessed/blasted slip-sheeter. We also have a rather awesome wastage of more or less a third on each run. ...'a lot of work'? I'll kill him!!! ## By the way--3 of the illos in #7 were run off on separate stencils; can you name them? []

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Glad to see Paj agreed with my reactions to #6 and of course he's right about the way most fans feel towards offset fanzines. I don't know as I'd go as deeply as he does into the psychological reasons behind this feeling, but there's a definite sense of remoteness about offset. Somehow, as I sit here hacking away at the keys, I feel a bond with that distant faned who'll (perhaps) repeat my actions some day, typing the very same words, swearing occasionally and smearing on some corflu, and then hover over a mimeo gazing at the same words several hundred times to prevent fading. Kindred souls, and all that.

Paj's contention that fans are more tolerant than the average would need some justification I think. One only has to ponder the innumerable bloody fueds that fen seem eager to engage in at the drop of a fugghead to disprove it. But he may perhaps be right in intimating that there is less racial and generational intolerance in fandom than exists in the World Outside.

Egads, a fanzine such as *Ow* does strange things to my sense of perspective. I read Jodie Offutt's extremely personal reflections on a event of considerable significance and scope and all I can think of afterwards is, "He typoed 'Flordia' twice! *Bowers is fallible!*" Sheesh!

John Berry's article amused me, but again, my distorted sense of perception colored my reading of it. Not being all that familiar with *I CHING* (although I do recall once being told that one never says "the *I CHING*" merely "*I CHING*") I interpreted the lady's insistence on Wilhelm as her garbled version of Wollheim, a reference to the Ace edition. So I sat there smiling condescendingly every time she said Wilhelm, and that wasn't the point at all! Maybe I should stick to looking at the pictures?
[April 22]

[] No...NO! I will NOT sink to 'his' level and say the obvious... I will NOT put on this page the words..."Say, Mike, maybe you should stick to..." Ouch! []

Alpajpuri

OUTWORLDSeven is a beautifully-put-out fanzine. In fact every issue of *Ow* is beautifully-put-out. Don't let it worry you that everyone else is saying what an ugly, disgusting, revolting hunk of shit you publish--you and I know better, don't we?

However, m'lord, I do wish you wouldn't make *Outworlds* such a self-conscious fanzine. By that I refer to your annoying little habit of informing the reader at every opportunity (and then some) who wrote what writ and who ort what art. On every page that contains an illustration you tell us twice who executed that particular gem of artistic endeavour, although the great majority of fanartists are instantly recognizable by their styles and/or signatures, and those readers who would have a great deal of difficulty distinguishing between artists are those who haven't given enough of a shit to find out, and besides, anyone in doubt can quickly flip back to the table of contents on page...lessee...wherizit...oh yas right here on page 231... (Has anyone ever told you you have a cuh-ray-zy fanzine...?)

As for telling us who wrote the writ on each page, well, if you're ploughing through an article and by the second or third page have completely forgotten who wrote what you're reading, then either you have no business tackling a publication as difficult to comprehend as a phan-zeen, or said article/bit-of-writing has no business appearing in *Outworlds*, what with your consistently maintained reputation for stimulating, well-written material. So there.

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I hate to complain so much, I really do, but I think it would further improve the readability of *Ow* if you'd use a more noticeable (or at least more consistent) titling system. I got a quarter of the way into Greg Benford's column before I realized it wasn't more of John Berry's thing. Can't you use calligraphy or press-type like a normal fan editor??

In reply to your reply to my letter... I had Jerry Lapidus' fanzine in mind when I objected to that format, 8-1/2 x 11 typed and bound sideways. The elongated format provides opportunities for novel layouts, but I still find it a bit more awkward to hold and read than the standard mode. I think the viewing area should be as close to a square as possible, our eyes can take it in most easily, and the closest we can come to a square with sheets of 8-1/2 x 11 paper is 11 x 17, the width measurement being significantly reduced by binding and curvature. I also think such a magazine should be bound up and down the middle, not across the horizontal axis like *Ow* 6. The chances are the zine will be read by human beings, who in most cases are equipped with two arms that enter the field of operation from either side, rather than one erupting from the abdomen and one from the frontal area of the skull...

I'm happy that Jodie Offutt got such a rush off the launching of Apollo 14, though unfortunately I'm much too jaded to be able to empathize thoroughly with her experience. Partly, I suppose, because moonflights are no big deal as compared with the voyages I've taken to other stars, other galaxies and other dimensions of consciousness through science fiction over the years; partly because the U.S. space program strikes me as being 70% militaristic exploitation and 30% political vaudeville; and partly because I'm awfully pessimistic about the present world situation and what lies in the years ahead. I just can't get into the spirit of things any more, and frankly I don't anticipate doing so until we take the first starflight, which won't be in my lifetime anyway. You see, in the real world they send up nationalistic jocks who cavort and make funny faces before the colour tv cameras and wave to mom and the kids back home. In the real world it takes us decades and decades to accomplish mediocrely with plastic fanfare what the human race could achieve with sincere expertise in just a few short years, if only we could lift ourselves to a level of consciousness worthy of our intellects and apply ourselves. I'd really rather not even think about it...

Interesting, Bill, about your tvless childhood. My own book-oriented parents held off acquiring one of the abominable devices until the Stevenson/Eisenhower race of '56, when I was five or six years old. I'm therefore the product of two worlds, and my opinions on the matter are similarly divided.

Television pampers the viewer, spoils him until a book becomes too troublesome and time consuming a mode of communication to be bothered with. On the other hand, just as a picture is worth "a thousand words," so is a moving picture with sound worth a million at least. TV can provide a flow of information (to a sensitive intelligence) of absolutely incredible magnitude. Unfortunately the quality of most programming is nothing to clap hands about, but movies, even situation comedies, cartoons, soap operas, advertisements, game shows yet, not to mention the few actually worthwhile news or drama productions that come along, all contain a wealth of information about the human experience that simply wasn't available in such quantity to any previous generation. (Quality is quite another matter...)

Kids weaned on the tube pick up social roles and emotional responses at an extra early age (I think). Thousands of times they've been through the cycle of birth/growth/aging/death even before they've reached puberty. They learn (to an

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obviously limited extent) what it's like to bear a child/be born, love/be loved, reject/be rejected, steal/be robbed, chase/be chased, catch/be caught, kill/be killed, *et cetera ad nauseum*. All the permutations of human existence filter into their heads: wealth, poverty, kindness, cruelty, peacefulness, aggression, strength, weakness, health, illness... Tviewers acquire a kind of racial (or should I say, spēcial?) consciousness. Hence the recent/present generation of stoned freaks, relatively free of ignorant prejudices, demanding action on world problems, insightful to the common consciousness of all Men, all creatures, all life, all All.

Do I exaggerate? Perhaps. But I'm positive that television has played some significant role in educating the young, educating them in a radically different way than the institutionalized schooling system has tried. A television set is like a Palantir, a seeing-stone by which we might view the entire cosmos of human experience.

Excuse me if I persist in speaking in ideals. As an educatory mechanism television is controlled by the society in which it exists in an attempt to perpetuate the roles and values that make up that society. This is known as Brainwashing the Young.* No mode of information dissemination is truly objective. Every pathway to your consciousness (tv, newspapers, magazines, hearsay, even personal observation) exists in its own biased context, in a singular environment either naturally developed or consciously contrived by such energy structures as Madison Avenue, Hollywood, The Church, The Fourth Estate, or Bill Bowers.

With that in mind, then, we can look ahead. I think one of the main "problems" with television as a medium is its relative newness. If the tv experience were manipulated by personalities as sophisticated as those that have dealt with the written word for the past several millenia, amazing lights would shine. Video, if taken as an art form as seriously and with as much skill as Hemmingway or Frost or Kesey have the printed word, I think even Harry Warner, Jr. (if I may presume) would go out and buy a tube. I said if. Great times are in the offing, folks -- it'll be interesting to see how few of them we take advantage of...

*Society almost slipped up, though--it allowed the creation of the hippie pervert freak. But it's learning, have no fear. Nowadays they gear their advertisements towards the Enlightened Youth. Be a Rebel, dress like we tell you to. Be Natural, use our cosmetics. Be Where It's At, use our drugs, not yours. *Psi* [May 27]

James Shull

With all this talk about Scrolls, Holograms & Punched-cards pertaining to your future issues' graphics, I wonder whether your final fate will be that your 'fixed format' will in fact be no 'fixed format' at all. You will be predictable in your inpredictably. Admit it, you're trapped Bowers!

On the subject of concern, although number seven at first only impressed me as a rerun of the high points of number three, I found that after reading, that I was wrong. There is a simple complexity to the issue and its use of boxes both to enclose art & text which proves the format to be more than windowdressing. My own concerns are always fore-most with the presentation of the written material in the clearest manner possible, regardless of artwork and/or elaborate graphics. Considering my own position as primarily an artist, some might find it difficult to believe, but I could completely enjoy a publication which was devoid of all items, but for the human documents which, to me, the text becomes. I think that you had a rhythm going for you with this issue between the artwork and the text which will be hard to over-

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come in future attempts. You might have considered giving up here.

Running down the artwork (which has got to be a terrible selection of terms), I must employ the overused term and say that I liked everything, everything except my cover which the printer raped by removing the wash portion and Dany Frolich's title page illustration. It seemed too simple, after the type of shading and with his creature's leg running off the page and into who knows what. There is evidence as to the problem Frolich had here, and here I know, as I've gone through the same thing myself. Where do you end an illo: if you don't wish to show the entire subject? If you detail the subject to the end at which you want to cut him/her/it off, it looks strange; all that detail, then nothing. If however you cease detailing a ways before the cut-off point, then someone might inquire as to why you've drawn that large cloud close up against your main subject and of course, you've no answer, or are not willing to provide one. However, perhaps my problem is only a private one; most are.

Your back cover however has the look of a very, very old Greek illustration. The total hard, deliberate line which the illustrator used, when compared to the tooth brush effect on the stars works for good, well conceived contrast and, for me, an aesthetically pleasing piece of work.

...I must disagree with those who proclaim the great rise in fantastic fan art and the increasing number of artists. While noting that indeed there is a greater amount of material in circulation, I am unbeguiled by the majority of technical doodles, to which the majority amounts. Pieces without humor or redeeming thought in their construction and execution are finding their way into the interiors of even the prominent fan publications. I entitle such pieces as crap; they seem to embody only enough time in the creation to insure publication, be it the zillut spaceman with the melting face, the head and shoulders profile of a sailor suit, or a left-handed creature with hand to head. The methods of relatively low cost reproduction have given a number of persons a fancy that they too are artists. Furthermore, the volume of cliches enlarges as a much improved distribution enables all men to view the dregs, the space fillers, the fillos. There are those who will only see the criticism here, however be that as it may. I am able to judge only from personal experience, and it is all I have. [undated: recieved May 25]

[] ...as Jim mentioned, the (normally excellent) printer blew Jim's cover, for #7, by burning out the 'wash'... I've promised Jim that I'll rerun it properly, in the relatively near future. If you thought it was good the way it came out, I think you'll be even more pleased when it's done properly. ## Yes, Folks...sometimes it happens that even Bowers must Make Do, but it HURTS! There hasn't been a perfect issue yet...but Real Soon Now...! (Actually, I'm just trying to prove my humanity to Glicksohn... Sometimes I think the Poor Boy worships me...! Which is nice. [])

Terry Jeeves

The best thing in the issue was undoubtedly...Jodie Offutt's Moon trip... very evocative...and very enjoyable. Over here we sweated it out in the box. John Berry's bookstore browsing produced another good piece of writing, but I couldn't help feeling it a shame that it didn't end with the woman getting put down in some way...I once met a similar type...who unblushingly told me that she had loved "all Perr Gynt's music".

[] ...and on that thought-provoking note, we'll have to end this particular journey through the minds of the Outworlds' people. As always, it's been fascinating.[]