

Very clever, passing yourself off as Bill Bowers, I must say. But no one will believe that this thing is really Outworlds 31. No one! But I'll play along with the gag... Whoever you are, I found O31 of great interest, in any case & I thank you for sending it. As you may know, I hold the real BB in high regard -- I must or I wouldn't be writing this when I should be writing to John Brunner or Darrell Schweitzer or Jack Williamson or Dick Geis or a whole gob of others I desperately need to get back to... But enuff name dropping.

NEAL WILGUS | BOX 25771 | ALBUQUERQUE | NM | 87125

That's really a rather personal question, you know -- and everyone knows I don't discuss those kind of things in print.

The instant "answer" is that I am the end product of everything I've done...and of everything that's been done to me...for me...or through me. And all of that would be a "true" answer, but not necessarily a real one.

And now that you have graciously accepted the fact that I am indeed BILL BOWERS, that I live at 2468 Harrison Ave., Cincinnati, Ohio 45211, and that this is the 2nd Spring 1983 issue of my fanzine *Outswords*--that is my 126th Publication...and that it is available by Editorial Whim, or for US\$1.00 per issue--well, now perhaps we can get on with it...?

[illegible]

Certainly there will be those among your readership who will remark on its--er--return to more basic, more fannish, reproduction values. The aforementioned gloom affects more than the world's economy, eh? In this case I applaud the simplification; the fuzzier it feels, the more fannish it is (hmm. That could be applied to many aspects of our microcosmos, come to think of it).

That brings up a minor quibble--y'see, except for Dave Locke's article, almost nothing in this issue is new besides your editorial commentary for those, admittedly a limited number, of your readership who read Xenolith and/or attend Confusion. I realize that to a goodly number of readers this will all be N*E*W and sparkling fresh, but in some cases this is my third re-reading. (Housing a mimeo can have its drawbacks.

I'm afeared.) But I'll try, Bill, I'll really try to dredge up something...

In your opening remarks, you say as a fill-in for those who may have missed hearing of or seeing you since OW 28/29: "In the six plus years intervening, I've attended over 75 conventions, quit a job with 16 years seniority, moved 200 miles downstate [...] formed relationships (some "worked", some didn't--but all have been "interesting"), have raised fiscal irresponsibility to a new artform..." Having myself "quit" a job with "16 years seniority", moved some 2000 miles to L.A. and back again (after an abortive trip some 500 miles to the East and back), and ending up in the same area you have, it took me aback to realize this much similar difference had occurred in both of our lives, and in only six-plus years. *Gulp* The number of conventions I've attended in that interval don't come anywhere near your total of 75 (maybe 20) but except for that, there's a lot of correlation in our recent histories. As with all such superficial similarities, the closer one looks the less analogous they become, but at first sight, I found them striking. Not that I see any significance to the juxtapositioning, I only note it for amusement's sake...

The view-from-within of Midwestern Fandom that you gave in the article originally slated for Leah Zeldes' Imp was involved, convoluted, and drenched in esoterica. Even so, it wasn't what I'd call a "typical" Bowers piece. You worked on that one; the sweat stains still show. I'm still not sure just what you were intending to convey to your readers (I know, I know. Different things to different ones), but I garnered a heavy dose of wistfulness. Not nostalgia for the dear old, fun old days of yore, but for people who aren't here anymore. Some because they've moved on, some because they never "were", really, and more than a few who stayed, but...changed. One fact of life not grasped until post-puberty is that human growth is a never-ending cycle. I guess you are still examining that fact--or were in 1981--and were perhaps trying to point to your hard-won knowledge to others who might have missed it. I dunno, but in any case, it was a good read.

The closing piece--another "reprint"--was the most recent, but, still and again, I'd "read" it three times already. The first was the day before Confusion 101. You had run off this issue of OW and given me a "contributors" copy (it may be your silk-screen, but it's my mimeo) with explicit instructions NOT to read the last 3 pages since they covered your speech to be given at the con. But when the call didn't come by Wednesday night, telling me I had a ride to Ann Arbor, curiosity won out and I read it the next morning. That afternoon you phoned to say you had room in your car and I could go after all. *Sigh*

Then of course I heard the speech--it reads better than it listens, by the way (but you know your public speaking delivery isn't what it could be)--and I explained some of the more muddled parts to Martha Beck who I'd ~~dragged into service~~ asked to sit with me during the Opening Ceremonies. I still think it one of your best ideas--visually ideal for presentation to an audience--and a well-written one. I could "hear" your voice while reading it and, even if the actuality didn't match the fantasy, that's a good sign in my book. Now if you'd only learn to rehearse...

The third time was as I read OW 31 in order to write this LoC, and by then I felt enough was enough. It was time to call it quits, which coincidentally, brings me to the end of this letter. Handy timing, eh what?

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The one thing that this incarnation of Outworlds will have in common with Xenolith (other than a vague physical resemblance) is that its appearance will be tied to cons that I plan on attending. Not one for every con, I fear...but it's always nice to have something new along; people talk to me that way, you see. Realizing that it would be a long time until the Midwestcon/Westercon/Rivercon/Spacecon June/July freakout, I determined to do something for InConsequential .5555, the second weekend in March. It wouldn't be much--but I had paper & stencils and 12 pages would go for first class. So I called up Dave and asked if he had any response to his copy of Patrick's letter. At that time he didn't--nor to Rich's letter, which he had received and I hadn't--but said he'd whip me up something in keeping with the brevity of the issue at hand...

The Fan Lobby

It's a year of political theater and the plays are all bad, but it would be appropriate to devote at least one short topic to something of a political nature, U.S.A. style.

I don't think we should form a party and put someone up for president, though it might not be too unreasonable to view fandom as a special-interest group and establish a fan lobby in Washington D.C. All such groups have lobbyists, and we wouldn't want to be left out.

The fan lobby, probably chosen from our supply of the more ~~little~~ politically oriented smof-types, would represent our interests in the big world out there. You know: Mundania, U.S.A.

What would they do? Well, for one thing they would be Hell-On-Wheels toward the postal budget. On the one hand they would jump through rings of fire to kill any projected postage increases, and on the other they would work like beavers to get postage exemptions for fanzines. But on what basis? Whatever sounds like it might work, of course. Maybe they could just do some logrolling with other special interest groups, or bribe political figures, or work it out in some other American Way.

Definitely forest management is something they should keep an eye on. Practices like exporting logs are suspect in times when we're riding the pendulum in and out of paper shortages and high prices. Our lobby would have a finger on the pulse for the sake of protecting our interests in mimeo paper, fanzine mailing envelopes, and apa jet-packs. Plus maybe science fiction and fantasy books, if they have the time.

Skyrocketing hotel room rates are not being adequately discounted for conventions of non-profit, education-oriented people such as ourselves. We should receive increased incentive to get together and do our thing for the greater glory.

Our lobby should push for additional three-day weekends to allow an increase in the number of major science fiction conventions. They can support energy consumption rate incentives for people who use electric mimeos instead of watching television all day, and even better incentives for the owners of hand-crank jobs. Our lobby would press for cheaper and faster transit to ease the accessibility and cost of attending conventions and fan parties, and would work to repeal the Mann Act and any other legislation that discourages travel.

As you can see from just these few examples, fandom's interests are as far-ranging as they are important. It's time that we speak up and be heard so that we can maintain our rightful position in the scheme of things. Why should we be content to hunch over our typewriters and our BarCon drinks, horsewhipped and disgruntled with our lot in life, when the means are there to achieve our ends? Let us achieve our ends with the beginnings of our awareness that we, we who are the science fiction fans in this ~~great~~ ~~additately good~~ ~~okay~~ active country, the United States of America, we who want to be ~~left alone~~ heard, we *can* have a voice. Yes, my friends, we can. And we should. We must, because it is our responsibility not to be deadasses to our own wants and needs. We must do our part to guide the hands that control our destiny.

Thank you. Thank you, my friends.

First Contact Story

"Take me to your leader."

"You mean host? She passed out an hour ago. Those are her heels showing from behind the chair over there."

"I must determine Earth's suitability for entry to the Galactic Federation."

"Heavy. Here, you want a hit? Take a beer, anyway."

"Do you consider yourselves a warlike people?"

"Only when we're bidding for conventions. Can I try on your chicken suit?"

"Do you look upon yourselves with excessive pride in comparison to other living things?"

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says, it's no big deal, then why is it such a big deal--to Dave, who went to the trouble of writing this?

Well, ingenuousness aside, probably because it's a big deal, if not a Really Big Deal. (Watch as I make with the refined technical terms.) Half the sport in fandom is what D. West calls the "devious, manipulative" side: making of reputations, exploding of myths--illusions, wires and mirrors. What does it mean to be a BNF? Talent, surely; skill at a sort of gentle social manipulation, as well. Fun for all, until the egos start screaming.

At the risk of sounding Good-Old-Days, I can't resist theorizing that this sort of underhanding mythic jousting probably worked better when fandom was smaller and more people knew each other; as it is US fandom seems in the process of splitting up into several mutually suspicious frames of reference, everybody afraid for their status should Those Fuggheads over there gain fascist control of the entire discourse. To a certain extent these fears are well-founded, in that given fandom's current size ain't no one gonna attain the sort of secure & universally respected BNFdom achieved fairly frequently by talented fans some decades ago. Doesn't matter how good you are & how hard you try when half the audience hasn't even noticed you exist in the first place, is thus unaware of your close relationship to Ghu Himself, and therefore isn't afraid to stomp on your instep when your rifleshot gunks up their lawn. Sad, sad. On behalf of our decadent age, however, I'd point to the fact that no one else can be such a big shot either, so there's little reason to get seriously twisted about it.

Enough caveats. Funny stuff. There's a therapeutic maxim to the effect that the meaning of communication is the response that it gets--communicator's intentions notwithstanding. Given the increasing frequency of this sort of response to the "standards" approach, it's to be hoped that those of us who've been browbeating fandom will now realize it's time to do something else. I'll probably still write fanzine reviews (sorry, Dave), but these days it's more the understructure of the show itself which fascinates me--the acting quality and production values seem, within an up-and-down range of variation, fine.

.....02563 14337 15TH NE #411 SEATTLE WA 98105.....

Editing a lettercolumn is an area of the fanzine discipline that I came to late; the one in *Double:Bill* was Mallardi's domain, and my previous solo-efforts rarely had to worry about handling more than a couple of letters at a time. Still, response is very important to me: I invite it, angle for it, play to it...and to a large degree I even demand it (at least if you wish to continue receiving what I do). Still, somethings get a bit out of hand--I still have boxes of LoCs in response to OW 25 thru 28/29 that remain to be printed. This time, now, I'm not going to get behind. I'm not. I'm not!

Everybody has their own way of doing these things: one of my quirks is that I often do not rise to implicit gambits, nor answer direct questions...even those contained in the portions of letters that I do print. This is not to construe that I either agree or disagree with the unanswered gambits, nor to indicate that I am unaware of the direct questions. It's simply the way I do things...for my own amusement; just a quirk...

Not as much now as in days past, I sometimes run across my name in other fanzines. Sometimes flatteringly; sometimes attributating stances and actions to me that don't correlate to my self-vision of the circumstances--assuming I recognized them--that provoked such obvious wrong-thinking. In the beginning it was probably shyness mixed with a firm inferiority complex that has since graduated into sheer laziness--I think brilliant & witty rejoinders, but never get them written down--but for whatever reason, I rarely respond to comments made to me/about me in the fanzines of others.

...though I do sometimes have t-shirts made up. Or made for me by others...

Probably just another quirk.

Not that I don't notice...and hurt from...the slights and misstatements. Particularly when, for a change, I have been a completely innocent bystander:

At Pacificon II, in 1964, having just completed the three-part serialization of "The Double:Bill Symposium" in D:B, Mallardi and I threw a party for the contributors, simply by way of saying thanks. An impressive number of "name" pros showed up, and I

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suppose it was a good party, even though in those days I was just as uncomfortable and out-of-place at my "own" parties, as at any other(s).

A couple of weeks after a rather incredible return drive 'cross country, I received a note from a fanned---saying that, since Mallardi had denied him access to our party when there were people in there he wanted to see, that he was entitled to see, and that since our having a closed party with a previously invited guest list was terribly unfannish, he didn't want to have anything to do with either one of us. Therefore, also, my subscription to his fanzine was unwelcome, and he was sending a check refunding the unused portion of said subscription--less than a dollar, as I recall.

Had I been a different person, I could either have written back protesting that it was unfair that I suffer because of an action of my co-editor's...or I could have made a "thing" about the incident in the fannish press of the day.

That fact that I did neither was not preplanned, but now comes in handy because, although I've not seen a copy of *Anna* since 1964, and although George Scithers still doesn't send me his other fanzines--I can now show rich brown that I can hold a grudge longer than he can...

rich brown Rather labyrinthine editorial material you contribute (front & back) to *Outworlds* 31.

It occurs to me, though, that reading Bowers must be something of an acquired taste and people eventually get used to tripping through all those ellipses, skipping over some of those empty but pretentious-sounding power word beginnings ("Pride; Integrity; Guts... nonetheless, a short digression." --that sort of thing) to get to the nitty gritty, and dipping in and out of timelines as you quote from something you said in 1981, which quotes something else you said in 1979, referring back to something you may or may not have done in 1974. Whew! The mind bobbles.

But, as I tried to imply above, this could just be My Problem. Judging by the numerous quotations here of what you've said in years gone by, it does not appear your writing style has changed all that much. I therefore deduce most of your readers should not only be used to it by now but perhaps have even been bombed by it all so far back into the stone age they have expressed appreciation. (I assume, perhaps without good reason, that a steady stream of criticism aimed at you by those whose opinions matter to you on this score may have moved you to attempt some change; and, under the somewhat more arguable assumption that you could have changed had you wanted to, I also assume either (a) they like it or (b) you are immune to criticism by your friends, or perhaps a bit of (a) and (b) together.

Part (if not all) of the underlying reasons for my feeling this way may simply be because I Hold Grudges far too long. This is, perhaps, regrettable. I got thoroughly pissed at you about a dozen years ago over what I considered your shabby treatment of some relatively new fans who were publishing special issues of their fanzines to benefit the Bob Shaw Fund; I wrote it up in *beardmutterings* 2 but it never got a rise out of you, either because you never received it (although I did send it), never read far enough to come across it or just didn't think it worthy of reply. I suppose calling you a "cheap schmuck" in print should have been catharsis enough--but, no, the mere mention of "Bill Bowers" continued to narrow my eye-slits and bring a sneer to my lips at least into the mid-70s. When and if I received copies of *Outworlds* during that time, I enjoyed them well enough--particularly Benford and Lowndes--but I didn't bother to read any of your stuff and never (to the best of my cast-iron sieve of a memory) wrote to comment on any of them. I kept you on my mailing list for trade purposes but can't honestly say my opinion ever underwent any radical change--I still thought your treatment of those fans was shabby and still thought you were a cheap schmuck--but by 1976 I could at least be objective enough to say in "The Club House" that *Outworlds* was a good fanzine, and even recommend it over *Mota* and *Algo* because of its "balance" between serious and fannish material. And now, nearly six years later, I'm perhaps even willing to concede it doesn't really matter. Perhaps your treatment of those fans was really gracious in the extreme and you are really generous to a fault; perhaps it actually was shabby and you actually are a cheap schmuck. But--does any of this really matter? Not to me; I should have shrugged it off long ago.

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So now I'm free to trip, skip and dip through your editorials along with everyone else, and I may even acquire a taste for them after a while.

But...I wonder. Should I now go back and read the ones I skipped, or just wait until you quote them all again in some subsequent issue of *Outworlds*?

While I strongly disagree with the thrust of the polemic in "S.A.F.E. 1984", I nonetheless found parts of it quite amusing--and while some of this amusement of mine is "laughing at," some of it is also "laughing with," if you follow me.

I knew a guy in the Air Force who weighed about 120 pounds dripping wet; he was enlisted, waiting to finish up his 20 years of service (he'd had a battlefield commission during WWII) so he could retire. His rank kept fluctuating between Airman Basic and Airman Third Class because, every time he got a stripe, he go to town to celebrate, get a snootful at the roughest bar he could find, pick an argument and take on everyone. Not just the biggest guy there. and not just all the civilians--after working his way through them he'd even turn on his friends. I heard once that it took three 200-pound APs to bring him back to base. The point is, after being reduced in grade for having gotten into these fights, he would be okay, work really hard, not touch a drink until they gave him back a stripe--at which point he would repeat the process.

I mention this not because I see an exact parallel but because Dave, at least fictionally, seems to see himself in something of the same light in which I viewed this character. "Give me a drink, bighod, and just watch the devastating way I tell those bastards off!" Is that what it takes? How he cares to depict himself, even in a fictional way, is his concern and not mine, of course, but I found that aspect of his piece rather funny, in an unintentional and perhaps sad sort of way. But I also laughed uproariously when I reached the end--where he's sitting in the bar with Meeny and discovering how the S.A.F.E.rs would've "coerced" him, had they been allowed the opportunity. This has a certain almost universal appeal--because there are damned few of us who do not have similar skeletons in our fannish closet. It was so good that, after laughing, I sighed with relief because (even though I had suspected it might not be) it provided the reward necessary to make reading the piece all the way through worthwhile. Even though I "strongly disagreed with the thrust of the polemic."

What may or may not turn out to be amusing to either of you is that I have a somewhat similar piece slated for my editorial in *bm 4*, which, although it takes the opposite point of view, makes many of the same points as "S.A.F.E. 1984". Mine is an "expose" of the SBOF--Society of Boring Old Farts, a.k.a., the Secret Bastards Of Fandom. It'll be interesting to see what you think of it. I won't further preview any of it here--I mention it only because, since we really aren't far apart on some of the points we make, we may not be so far apart in other ways. It could all be simple miscommunication or a matter of perspective. And that's where I'll address my remarks.

I think Dave is battling a straw man in some places, himself in others. A case in point: "Don't drop the standards...Just stop the crusade, and put some effort into setting your own standards. And use them, don't just talk about them." I can think of several more-or-less "pro-standards" fanzine fans. Ted White. Richard Bergeron. The Nielsen Haydens. Myself. Perhaps Dan Steffan.

Dave doesn't Name Names, of course--perhaps because he realizes how obviously his comments could be labelled pure bullshit if he did. If he doesn't think he's battling a straw man, he might have the guts to say specifically which of these individuals are not "using" but just "talking about" standards. Even with my acknowledged dislike of you, Bill, which might be thought to prejudice me in your behalf, and even though *Outworlds* is not published rigidly to my standards (if it were, it would be called *beardmutterings*), I can recognize and appreciate *Outworlds* as a good fanzine. Is Dave saying he can't recognize that *Gambit*, *Warhoon*, *Izzard*, *beardmutterings* or *Boonfark* are good fanzines? Each of them (and I would definitely include *Outworlds*) is, in my opinion at least, an outstanding fanzine. Whether they are acclaimed so universally is irrelevant; I think we could get a general consensus on the question, and it's obvious they are all published to the standards of their individual editors. On the other hand, if Dave Locke ever published a fanzine, I don't recall the title. Was it a good fanzine? An outstanding fanzine? And is it being published now? If the answer to any of these is

"no", then who, of all these named individuals, is "talking" about standards but not "using" them? Hmm?

Dave made one rather astute point, although he tossed it off like he thought it only worthy of passing mention: "You're...generally referred to as The Standards Bunch. Not...to be confused with The Critics Crew, although there's a lot of overlap." Very good. In fact, I think the "overlap" is even greater than he does.

What's the difference between a reviewer and a critic? There are probably quite a number--but the most important is that a reviewer need not express any standards whereas a critic, at least by implication, must. If I said, THE LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS is a good [or bad] book.--that would constitute a "review". You can have no idea of what I mean when I say it is a "good" or "bad" book, so the review can have no value for you unless you can deduce my standards in some other way. Say I told you THE LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS was a bad book, but then said RUBBER SUITSMAN OF GOR was just fabulous. If your tastes run to John Norman, you might decide our standards were similar enough to forego reading THE LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS; if not, you might not automatically assume THE LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS was good but at least that our standards were sufficiently far apart so you could not disregard it simply because I had labelled it bad. A critic, on the other hand, must say, "THE LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS is a good [or bad] book because...." and then go on to say why he or she believes that to be the case. In both instances, they are expressing a subjective opinion--the critic is just being a bit more articulate about it and giving you a broader base upon which to conclude if his or her standards coincide with yours. And that opinion, whether by a reviewer or critic, is based on that reviewer or critic's "standards"--what they believe is "good" or "bad".

Critics are frequently criticized by non-critics because they state their opinions forcefully, without a lot of "I think" and "in my opinion", so that it's possible (at least for those with an IQ somewhere between that of a bean and a doormat) to believe they think they are Moses bringing down the Ten Commandments or Zeus handing down proclamations from Mount Olympus. For the rest of us, it's rather obvious than an article "by Ted White" or "by Richard Bergeron" or "by Bill Bowers" or "by Dave Locke" represents the opinion of Ted White, Richard Bergeron, Bill Bowers and Dave Locke, respectively, and no more. And to the extent that the personal subjective "standards" they bring to bear on the criticism they have to offer agrees with one's own, one will agree or disagree with those expressed opinions.

While I see nothing wrong with articulating the standards by which one makes judgments, Dave obviously does--that seems to be the basis of what has him in such a huff. Some of us have actually dared to come right out and say we like certain kinds of fanzines and not others. We say we think some kinds of fanzines "are good because..." and other kinds "are bad because..." Now Dave rushes forward to reveal that--tah dahl!--no one can enforce or impose their standards on anyone else in fandom and "fanzine fandom consists of a lot of individuals and almost as many approaches." Or, putting it another way, there are no objective standards, only subjective individual ones. No doubt all the beans and doormats who read Outworlds will be knocked off their collective asses by this astounding revelation.

For the rest of us, let's get right on out there and confirm the obvious: There are no "objective" standards. Shakespeare has been cited as one of the best writers in the English language--but it has not always been believed so, because standards of excellence have changed, and thus Shakespeare's popularity has waxed and waned and waxed and waned again over the years. So even if Dave and I happened to agree on a few points of what might be "good" or "bad", that would not be an "objective" standard--it would simply mean we shared a particular "subjective" standard.

For example, we might agree that a totally illegible fanzine is a waste of time, since if it can't be read, it can't be enjoyed. We both might find little enjoyment in an illiterate fanzine--if we could agree on what was or was not "illiterate". Neither of us can prevent another fan from mailing out his or her illegible and/or illiterate fanzine.

The difference between us is what we do once this has been done. Dave has a "live and let live" attitude--if these fans find other fans who enjoy illegible and/or illiterate fanzines, that's fine. I agree with this to a certain limited extent--

people should do what they want to do. I sincerely hope they enjoy themselves, and provided their fanzines go to other fans who enjoy this fare, that's fine with me too. But at the same time I'm also liable to write letters to these fans, or review their fanzines, if they send them to me, and say I think their fanzine is illegible and/or illiterate. I will try to tell them why I think this is so. They remain free to agree or disagree with any or all of my assessments--even to tell me I can stick it in my ear.

What's perhaps most amusing about all this is that, when you come right down to it, we're arguing a difference between Dave's personal subjective standards and mine. By his standards, one should just ignore these people; by mine, one should say what one thinks--and let the chips fall where they may. Taking a lesson from "S.A.F.E. 1984", however, I would say it's obvious that I certainly can't enforce my standards on Dave--but, by the same token, he can't enforce his standards on me.

And I can live with it--if he can.

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...I'd actually made some "notes" with which to defend Dave, and to "cite" his fairly substantial list of credentials--but the hell with it: Dave's a big enough fan to take care of himself. (rich might be amused to learn though, that Dave is not among the biggest fans of my writing "style"...which does prove that he is not without faults.) Curiosity does lead me to ask if fans who lower-case their names, as well as those who operate from behind assumed names, march to a different set of standards than the rest of us...who tend to capitalize on our assigned self-identification labels?

DAVE "Support Your Local Fanzine" LOCKE: You asked if I had comments to Patrick and rich, each of whom copied me on their letters to you. Well, yeah, I guess I do.

Before you asked, I had located Izzard #5 and in an aside told Patrick: "I appreciate your kind words about the article, and was quite interested in the additional commentary. I was more than a little puzzled, at first, when you say '...what puzzles me is how Ted White in Falls Church can get so far under [your skin]'. In rereading my piece it occurs to me that, by name, the Snow White character might be to blame. Nope, wasn't thinking of Ted."

My original thought about responding to rich was to send him a copy of Patrick's letter. After all, why should you work the mimeo so I can say something to rich brown? Then I realized that any fan who writes three pages responding to a piece of faan fiction deserves encouragement from fanwriters and faneditors everywhere. So, yeah, let me chat with rich a minute, bearing in mind this Outworlds is targeted for twelve pages.

I have no argument about reviewing and critiquing and articulating the standards one uses to make judgements. "Dave obviously does--that seems to be the basis of what has him in such a huff." Obviously? Huff? Did I have trouble articulating my standards to you, rich? I guess I did. No doubt about it. "We really aren't far apart on some of the points we make," and "we may not be so far apart in other ways." It would be good to assume so, so let's try again.

What you should bear in mind, rich, is that the story is fiction. It's of the 'if this goes on' type and if there's any moral, it's tolerance. My motive for writing the story was to get a little more experience writing fiction, and to see if I could write palatable faan fiction at the same time. Upon finishing it I couldn't help suspecting that most comments would direct themselves to what was viewed as political elements of the story. Just physic, I guess.

The difference is in approach, rich. Like Patrick says, "it's time to give the bludgeon a rest." Or like Teresa says in Izzard #5: "...somehow I never stumbled across the idea that the Nature of the Good consists of sitting around arguing about the Nature of the Good." I appreciate your kind words about the story as a story, but such lengthy attention to the story-as-a-message is unfortunate if I can't convey that the message is tolerance. My guilt is that I don't always practice the message I put in there. But then, tolerance in all things, except maybe tolerance.

And let's not forget what Charles Fort said about standards: "It's uncanny--or it's not uncanny at all, but universal--if you don't take something for a standard of

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opinion, you can't have any opinion at all: but, if you do take a standard, in some of its applications it must be preposterous."

Sorry that a story gave you an image of me as the fellow who says "Give me a drink, bighod, and just watch the devastating way I tell those bastards off!" During the normal course of events there's usually a drink at hand, so in this piece of faan fiction I was hoping that 1984 would be normal that way. In other words, the drink is a constant. The variable is what falls out of my mouth when I speak.

Credentials. You want credentials, to see who is talking about standards and not using them. "Hmm?", indeed. What would serve? Lists of fanzines (*Away, Shambles, The Works, Pelf*, and... my, the titles do pile up over the decades), and articles (I've averaged six a year over the last fifteen years since I started keeping track), together with quoted endorsements and award nominations? I know you tell Bill and I that your zine *beardmutterings*, "is, in my opinion at least, an outstanding zine," and I'm sure this is attributable to a lack of false modesty, but of what value to you is my expression concerning the quality of my works which you haven't seen? No, I guess what I can do is lay "S.A.F.E. 1984" before you, partly as an example of talking about standards (among other things), but primarily as an example of trying to use them. Also, I can hope to see you around fandom more often from now on. Where you been, Loguacio?

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MIKE GLICKSOHN ...even though much of the issue is repeat material, it was an enjoyable read, and certainly an unexpected one. Your publication of OW30 in a smaller format brought to mind Grant Canfield's habit of printing a xerox reduction of the first page of the previous issue as part of each cover page of his perszine *Hot Shit*. Naturally, each exerox reduction also included a reduction of the reduction that had been a part of the previous page so we were treated to a long series of ever smaller copies of the very first page of each issue. Is this your plan for future issues of *Outworlds*? Will each contain a reduced copy of the reduced copy of #30, until you have a postage stamp sized micro-reduction along with a powerful magnifying glass, followed by a tiny scrap of paper you can merely claim contains a copy of OW30? Well, I didn't really think so: that'd be machiavellian and we all know you're not that!

The concept behind Dave's "preprint" is divinely inspired and utterly brilliant and Locke is one of the few people who could have thought of it and almost pulled it off. I say "almost" because I think Dave handled his subject matter in a slightly heavy-handed fashion and exaggerated the attitude of the "standards" crowd a bit too much. However, he made his anarchistic point and while I don't entirely agree with him I think I understand where he's coming from. And if even a majority of fanwriters had the sort of self-imposed standards that Dave Locke lives by there would not be any need for some of today's fanzine fans to write lengthy diatribes on the need for standards in fanac. Since few fans ever achieve Dave's quality of output--even if it represents less than his best--I think there's a call for the occasional article about what fan writing should or could be. To the best of my knowledge there's no holy crusade being waged to coerce fans into following The One True Path, though, and that's why I feel Dave's jabs fall short of a non-existent mark. Damn Fine piece, though, and one I enjoyed reading ...despite giving it less than my best attention...

There's something to be said for brevity in these Friday night speeches, you know. More time for parting, less time for being lost amidst a sea of restricted comprehensibility, etc., etc. Of course, if you pack the same number of esoteric references into a speech one third the usual length it can get pretty dense at times, as with the paragraph about the Ticktockman and the Aardvark from which I gleaned less than half the hints and allusions. This is the price I have to pay for having a relatively happy life of late, I guess: without serious problems to talk over with you I lose track of what's going on in the hectic game show you call a life and can no longer understand your fanzines! What the hell, it's a price I'll just have to pay...

But as with many short things, it was very good. Also quite insightful behind its glib exterior. But I only tell you things you already know so let me end this non-loc and get back to making up tests for my would-be graduates.

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...an "update" for readers of our longest running serial, *Language At Midnight* (29 chapters, from *Outworlds* 19, 1974...thru *Xenolith Three*, January, 1980):

BILLY RAY WOLFENBARGER *Outworlds*. It retains a solid memory. "And how many issues, Mr. Bowers, do you plan bringing out during 1983?" asked the wonder-eyed young fan.

Me-&-mine? Whow. When was the last time??? Living in Oregon still at the same old address, in the old house in the country that's falling down. This October I'll be 40 years old. Before then I will have my horror novel finished. And last year...a new child was born. On November 17th (1982) came Catherine Grace Wolfenbarger. She's beautiful. Mellow. Very loving already. And Sara, she's such a big girl now, she's 12 years old.....yipes, almost a teenager.

Rarely do I write for fanzines these days. Who sends me their zines these days anyway? These nights I have other languages, mostly fiction up for sale. And poetry, always the poetry. Coffee in the late evenings and the pounding of the keys. I rarely go out anymore; been a semi-recluse for years. At the moment don't even recall the last flick I saw. I was working a seasonal graveyard shift in Eugene. Now I mostly write & babysit, and retain my dreams. And reading a wild variety of things from people like John Varley & J.G. Ballard, Ramsey Campbell & Peter Straub, Fritz Leiber & Stephen Gresham, Albert Goldbarth & Tanith Lee... And sinking into dreamy visions of San Francisco, eternal Venice West, Chicago, Hanalos, & cities not even named as yet. Oh, I know, I've never been the usual "fan", and I never (really) have minded.

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...and this July I will be 40 years old. And I suppose that I've always been the "typical" fan...but I haven't (much) minded, I guess... Still I retain my dreams also!

HARRY WARNER, JR. You deserve congratulations for getting past the jinx issue for fanzines. You should also be criticized for excessive modesty, since you don't seem to mention the feat anywhere in the new *Outworlds*. If anyone claims fandom never changes its basics, you can issue a rebuttal by pointing to the calm way you went ahead and published the 31st issue which represents the never-published next issue for a lot of prominent fanzines down through the years.

There's another way in which fandom has changed. Many of its fanzines now publish little or nothing about topics other than cons. The last loc I wrote was concerned with a wonderful little story written by a fan in Oklahoma about a semi-fictional fan attending her first con. This loc involves *Outworlds*, every page of which is connected in one way or another with cons: the text of a speech given at a con or a description of con-related liaisons, or whatever. Tomorrow, I have no doubt, my loc will be written about the new issue of *Warhoon* in which Dick Bergeron will devote 84 pages to a detailed account of his experiences at his first con in the past quarter-century. I'm not complaining, as long as the writing is good: it's exceptionally fine in the fanzine from Norman and if you have this excessive modesty which I mentioned in the first paragraph, I don't dare distress you by firing off a volley of favorable adjectives about the contents of *Outworlds*. But you must realize how unsettling it is for the fraction of one per cent of the people in fandom who rarely go to cons to find fanzines, which once printed material about every conceivable topic, tending more and more to deal with con matters, wholly or in large part. Fortunately, you behaved beautifully in this *Outworlds* in the sense that you rarely committed the most grievous sin involved in con-oriented fanzines, referring to friends and acquaintances only by their first names and assuming that most of the readers will be able to guess which of the several dozen possessors of each given name in fandom was meant through knowledge of whom you pal around with most of the time.

I liked Dave Locke's contribution. But I fear there is a current tendency to create a non-existent intent and behavior for those who want higher standards in fanzine publishing along the same lines as those drawn by some of the feminists who have alleged awful habits and attitudes on the part of male fans toward female fans years ago. I'm more interested in naturalness and informality in fanzines than in superlative

layout, pro-quality art and impeccable grammar. But I don't think those who are propagandizing for less hectic fanzines have any thoughts about regimenting fanzines, any more than the male fans years ago maintained the ignominious treatment of female fans that they're now described as having done in the more extreme writing moods of certain feminists.

Your frankness about your romantic problems is commendable. But here again the con element is too much for my rigid and antiquated synapses to cope with. I keep wondering why your group needs the elaborate environment and expensive lifestyle of cons almost every weekend to get together and be friendly around each other. Isn't it something like one of those semi-fictional NFFF projects that complicate inordinately what could be a very simple and easy undertaking?

And I keep wondering something else that is undoubtedly irrelevant and not applicable to you at all: if your failure to find permanent satisfaction so far since your marriage broke up could be blamed on monogamous instincts interfering too much with the liberal lifestyle which the Up To Date Sexual Revolution has supposedly guaranteed. I've been reading a lot of Robert Louis Stevenson, who believed that the individual inherits a very slight but perceptible legacy from the behaviour of even the most remote ancestors. Stevenson liked to fancy his ultra-strict, fundamentalist, deeply religious grandfather suffered too from occasional twinges inherited from the behaviour of ancestors who lived before tails had vanished and trees had lost favor to caves for housing. It could work the other way around, too.

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...probably.

"Monogamous instincts" do enter in, certainly. ...but then I think of myself as not promiscuous, but serially-monogamous. True, the length of chapters fluctuates wildly, and some ~~chaps~~ issues have more than one serial running concurrently. I'd go into this further, but a new edition is scheduled to arrive this weekend, and...

Would any of "(my) group" care to comment on Harry's equating our wonderful cons with the N3F? Perhaps Dave Locke, since he's had the most tenure as a Neffer...?

BACKTALKING THE FANZINE (with sudden apologies to Davel): In an otherwise excellent spiel on the effects of cons on fanzine publishing, MIKE GLYER says this: "I also speculate about talented fanwriters only seen in apas who probably would have tried a genzine if their talents hadn't been snatched up for local conventions, in Atlanta, Baltimore, Cincinnati, Toronto, Vancouver, Seattle." (Holier Than Thou #15, pg. 34)

...Cincinnati...!

Who? Steve Leigh just sold his third novel, but only dabbled briefly in apas. Bill Cavin "runs" Midwestcon & Octocon--and has written 3 LoCs to zines in ten years. Dave Locke not only doesn't "run" cons...he doesn't go to them much either. Who then?

...excuse me; I'll be right back after whipping up a Spacecon flyer. ---Bill 3/18/83

Outworlds 32

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* SPACECON 5 : Wapakoneta, OH : Neil Armstrong Air & Space Museum : July 22-24, 1983 *