



Outworlds 39

...a letter from Skel

Issue thirty-seven has to be the best issue of *Outworlds* since...oh, strike the 'since'. Make that simply "the best issue of *Outworlds*". For me, at any rate. It relates to me. It doesn't usually. Like Roger Weddall, I can appreciate it without really feeling involved. It's a bit like 'Dallas', I just don't know the people. Hell, it's not really like 'Dallas'--I don't really want to know those people.

But, this issue is coming directly at me in so many ways. There are so many points I want to take up, but the more I think about it the more I realize that it is really only a single point, or rather many different aspects and ramifications of a central 'core'. Take that quote of Donn Brazier's:-

"I know the audience and the audience knows me; I am not writing for strangers who don't give a damn who I am. My fan friends know when I'm being serious and when I'm being facetious...."

I think some of us would go further than that first sentence. You and I, I would say, are not simply "...not writing for strangers..." but positively writing for our friends. However, I think that we both perceive 'writing for our friends' in an entirely different light. To me it simply means that there are, oh, about a dozen 'core' people who I often think about as I write a particular piece. 'I wonder what Eric will think of this?', 'I bet Mike will get a charge out of that', and thoughts like that. I am writing with a few specific fans in mind, but I am not excluding anybody, simply not including them at the moment of creation. I know that the people I've been thinking about are already in this piece with me, but anyone else can come in too, when they read it--there are no barriers.

It seems to me that much of your writing recently has taken a very different approach. You are writing for your friends in a very different manner. Your subject matter and approach appear to create a barrier between this central core of 'friends' and we mere 'acquaintances'. The pieces in recent *Outworlds* have built a fence around the inner-circle. It's as if the friends that you were writing for, the ones who were inside at the time of writing, are the only ones who can ever get in, and that the best the rest of us can hope for is to come along and look through the windows.

There is too much "...those who know the names are all my real buddies and those of you who don't simply don't need to know..." in recent issues. In effect you are saying that there are two categories of *Outworlds* readers; First Class and Second Class. You are mixing your fanzine socialising and your in-person social life in such a way that we are told, in effect, "No matter how hard you try, no matter what your ability, there are some parts of this fanzine forever closed to you because you simply aren't one of the in-crowd." The 'everybody's equal, but some are more equal than others' approach seems to me to be a mistake when it is applied to publishing a fanzine. Of course some of us are more equal than others, but that depends entirely upon on own abilities and responses, not surely upon some pre-determined criteria in an entirely unrelated area. Bowers isn't *Outworlds*. There may be some overlap, but it is up to you to make sure that the deck is not stacked against those of us who can only relate to you through the agency of your fanzine. In your private life, some of us may mean absolutely nothing to you, but when you're wearing your editorial hat, we should all at least start off on an even footing. Too often it seems that your 'in-group' writing denies us even this basic courtesy. Beware, lest we oppressed rise up and ignore you!

The only place this approach is really evident in *Outworlds* 37 is in the text of your speech at ConFusion. Here you really were 'talking to your friends' but immediately you choose to print the thing, to present it to a wider audience, you immediately begin to short-change that part of your fanzine audience who you are shutting out. And there's no denying that much of your speech was closed to me. I had no idea what was going on most of the time. There was obviously so much meaning contained within the things you didn't say, or conveyed to those who truly know you by the way you chose to say things, but it was all taking place below the surface; below a surface completely opaque to non-insiders.

That such needn't be the case is born out by the other speeches. Presumably these people too were also 'speaking to their friends', but in doing so the content of their speech was left open in such a way that I have no feeling of having missed some vital part of it by not being present when the speech was delivered. Perhaps this is a fault, in so much that, as a speech, maybe there ought to be an essence that can't be reproduced in any subsequent 'reprinting', but as a fanzine piece, the only way many of us can approach it, it is a vital factor in its favour.

Oddly, the 'cloudyness' of your speech did not in any way detract from the convention report itself, for it obviously perfectly represented your style of fanac, and in doing so enabled the report to 'realise' the convention in a way that few reports ever manage to do, presenting both the programme and the social aspects of the convention in a highly satisfying manner. The originality of the approach obviously was in no small way responsible, but you really did put it together very well indeed. You really do have an awesome talent for instinctively knowing how things fit together and of selecting just the right element from somewhere else to slot in and complete the mosaic. The Donn Brazier quote that started me off is a perfect case in point.

You placed it at the end of the Locke-Willis dialogue, and obviously it relates to that too. In fact, it acts as an interface between *Outworlds* 37 and my own experiences in so many areas that it becomes, for me, the fulcrum for the zine to apply its leverage upon me and my perceptions and, less interactively, the axis or central point around which the issue revolves. You see it ties me rather personally into something Walt says too, particularly the second sentence:-

"My fan friends know when I'm being serious and when I'm being facetious..."

You see, it's that assumption of friendship again. I assume that everyone to whom I send my fanzine is my friend. I do not write for acquaintances. I may never have met most of them and in fact may never meet them, and our written interactions may be very slight, but notwithstanding all that, they are friends rather than acquaintances. Obviously not a close friendship, but a friendship nevertheless. You see, the unspoken assumption that underlies this distinction is that, as I care about them, they also care about me. In some cases I may not care for them, but I do care about them and, assuming that this caring is a two-way thing, then I consider all my readers to be my friends in some degree.

And yes, my friends usually know when I am being serious or facetious--and if they don't, well, being friends they give me the benefit of the doubt. And maybe I rely a little too much on being given the benefit of the doubt and this is evinced by the way I choose to write and publish my own fanzine in a generally 'first draft' fashion. Now sometimes I am not particularly adept at getting my meaning across. I'm bashing the keys, putting my thoughts directly onto stencil and I know what I mean. But sometimes the way I say a particular thing is very much dependent upon my frame of mind, my mood and, too often, by how much beer I've gotten down my neck during that typing session. That last is not an excuse, but it is a fact that sometimes a surfeit of beer will take me that half step further away from what I think I've said. The trouble is that even if I've gotten everything right in all other respects, if I've failed to convey my mood and frame of mind to my readers then they can read what I've written in a completely different light, putting a completely false interpretation on my intentions. In this way I am too often guilty of presuming upon our friendship, the friendship between me and my reader. But that's OK. Sometimes that's what friendships are for. It is inherent in the concept of 'friendship' that sometimes a friendship will be presumed upon, and furthermore that this presumption will be OK.

This of course links back into my earlier comments in so much as it seems to me that you are writing for both friends and acquaintances--you are making the assumption that only your existing friends are 'friends', and that the rest of us are just acquaintances. In your writing you never presume upon our friendship because you never let me be your friend--you keep me on the outside of that barrier. I think this is a mistake. Some time ago now I wrote a piece in SFD in which I responded to some of your remarks in an earlier fanzine. It was conceivable that my remarks might have caused you some offense--unlikely, but possible. I gave the matter some thought, but went ahead anyway. Not because I didn't care, but rather because I did. I assumed our friendship, and was prepared to presume upon it. I think I detect in this the basic difference between our two approaches. I assume that my readers care about me, that they are in fact my friends. You either assume that they don't care about you, or that the act of caring doesn't constitute the threshold between acquaintanceship and friendship.

Of course this means that you are far less likely to risk abusing one of your readers. You see, here the key word is 'usually'. My friends usually know when I am being serious. My friends usually can define my frame of mind. My friends usually will be able to give me the benefit of the doubt. But what I can't take into consideration are certain background facts about the reader of which I'm simply not aware. Thus, when Walt sends me a pocsacrd telling me he enjoyed my zine, but somehow never managed to respond in a way he felt adequate, I toss off a quick comeback. I say that receiving a response from Walt Willis isn't all that Sixth Fandom led me to expect. I know what I meant by this. I know that what I am trying to do is flippantly mock my own expectations. I am aware that Walt Willis owes me nothing, that in order to make some adequate recompense for the sheer enjoyment that I've had from *Warhoon* 28, I should try and write things that Walt enjoys for the rest of my days...and it wouldn't be enough. What I'm trying to say is, "Look, it's OK. To hell with the rest of fandom--with what fandom's done for you and what you've done for fandom. On a personal basis, your writing has brought me so much pleasure that simply knowing that my writing has brought you some pleasure is enough. It's the old adage about what it is that the vintners can buy that will give them anything like the pleasure of the thing they sell. It's not a debt, Walt. I don't owe you. What you gave me was freely given. I was not in fandom when you were writing those pieces, but I can still enjoy the gift. The knowledge that I have too a gift that I can in my turn give to you, however small, is a satisfaction in itself. I count myself fortunate. So many people could only accept your gift and enjoy it. It isn't the gift itself, but the giving and I'm glad that I have something to give to you. So don't worry that my zines don't stimulate a response. You're still a part of SFD, see, here you are, and it's OK."

But, bloody hell, that's a bit heavy, you know, so I back off from saying all this and try to get by on a lighter level. But what I don't know is that Walt is under con-

stant medication. I don't know, though maybe his postcard should have tipped me off, that Walt's failure to respond to certain things is bothering him, causing him some anxiety. So Walt may not find himself in any position, either because of chemical or psychological factors, to give me the benefit of the doubt. Quite possibly my remarks might have had an effect entirely opposite to that intended, actually aggravating his anxieties. So now this bothers me.

The thing about writing certain pieces with specific fans in mind, the core fans who are in my mind whilst I am actually writing the piece, is that I also tend to re-read the piece from their points of view, or at least as near to their points of view as I can conjecture. I not only write for my friends, I read for my friends. Just like Walt, when I am mailing out a copy of my fanzine to one of these 'core' readers, I find myself flipping through it and trying to read it afresh from their point of view. But even this 'core' isn't fixed. People drift in and out depending upon the piece I'm writing at the time.

For instance, some people are better friends than others. This is a fact of life. Some people have been receiving my fanzine for many issues and yet, by their responses, the tone and content, they remain just within the bounds of friendship. Others have only recently come onto my mailing list and yet, because of the tone of their response, the way they respond, what they choose to respond to, I sense immediately a kindred spirit. One such friend is Mal Ashworth. He may (and does) disagree with many of my opinions. So what? I'm not trying to convert people to my ways of thinking. But, because he first of all responds to the particular things he responds to, and does it in a specific way, I feel a closer bond. There is a degree of correspondence that isn't always present. So now, sometimes when I write, one of the people I write for is Mal Ashworth.

You see, I'm writing for my friends, and it bothers me that the friends I'm writing for might not actually see what I write. Dave Locke's comments are particularly germane here:-

"Right, it doesn't take long in fandom to realize that you are no longer just writing for yourself. The more you know your audience, the more you write to share what it is that you're writing." And, later, "...you could at least count on visualizing the same core readership."

The thing is, nowadays you can't count on visualizing the same core readership. Some of the things I write, with Mal in mind, Mal may never see. The thing is, the core isn't constant. People drift in and out depending upon what I'm writing at the time. For instance, I recently had a piece published in Marty Cantor's *Holier Than Thou* entitled 'I Remember Gerald Lawrence...Vaguely'. Now one of the people I wrote this for was Dave Rowe, who is a good friend of Gerald's. And yet, I have a strong suspicion that Dave never read that piece.

In fact, I suspect that this tends to be the norm--that for most of the pieces I have published outside my own fanzine, a fair proportion of the people I write it for never get to see it. In the past this hasn't been much of a problem for me as my writing appeared almost exclusively in SFD, but of late I have been attempting to write more structured pieces and placing them with other faneds...and yet the only way I can ensure that the people I'm writing for get to read a particular piece is to publish it myself. I am becoming increasingly concerned over this problem, this conflict of interests. On the one hand I want the people I'm writing for to read the stuff I'm writing, whilst on the other I'm trying to develop and broaden my abilities, producing in the process pieces that aren't particularly suitable for the type of fanzine I'm currently publishing.

I am seriously considering a complete cessation of material published outside my own fanzine. However, if I do adopt this approach then there seems little doubt that the type of fanzine I publish will have to change drastically, which would mean kicking SFD into touch, which is not something I want to do. Whilst I'm doing all this 'soul-searching' though I'm holding off starting on the next issue of SFD. I don't have any clear picture at the moment of what shape any replacement fanzine might take, excepting that in some ways it might be rather similar to the current *Outworlds* with the current

SFD-style material (letters and editorial reaction/interaction) being written interstitially around the more formally presented pieces. It's all vaguely perceived options at the moment. Doubtless it will all shake down into something more concrete over the next few months.

Anyway Bill, all that scurrying around inside me, stemmed from how one particular piece in *Outworlds* 37 affected me. It's a very personal response, because those are the bits that grabbed me the hardest. I enjoyed practically all the issue but, Jeezuz, I've gone on four pages already! Cas is waiting. We are going shopping. What an exciting morning is in prospect. I can hardly contain myself. Hoping you are the same... 3/17
 ~~~~~

7/13/84

Dear Dave,

...I mentioned that I got this letter from Skel. It came in plenty of time for lastish, but I put it off till this time...and just having finished stencilling it, I'm again reminded of WHY I did it that way...

It's not an unkind or unjust letter, but it is upsetting to find out that someone who has been getting my fanzines for years...still doesn't know where I'm coming from. And I feel that I should answer him...hell, I WANT to answer him, but any 'answer' I come up with will be longer than Skel's letter...and considerably less coherent. So, while I'm dithering about, I thought I'd run a few things past you. Just thinking out loud while postponing the inevitable time when I have to fill in the gap I've left in an issue already otherwise stencilled. If you don't mind...

Why am I picking on you?

Because you are my friend.

And "friends/friendship" seem to be the key word(s) in Skel's missive.

You are my friend...and yet, Jackie is a 'closer' friend (and it's not simply because I've known her longer--~~after all, I never gave up England for you!~~), and we all know and accept that and don't worry or wonder overmuch about it. Do we?

One thing that Jackie and I have in common, that you and I by & large don't, is conventions. Therefore, in the course of reading my little stories, it's only natural that she may pick up on some of my references that might not mean a thing to you. But then, she can always explain it to you, if you're curious enough. It's not that I'm writing to include Jackie and exclude you...any more than if, in some alternate fandom, I were to write a SF story encompassing FTL-travel...without bothering to spell out in words exactly what the acronym meant. Nor do I consider it terribly unfair or even esoteric to lead off this issue with the Edd Vick cartoon, without giving also a footnote to 'explain' those weird groupings of letters he employs. Some commonality of background has to be assumed when writing a science fiction story, drawing a fannish cartoon, or casting a Bowers 'article/speech'.

I know that you, sir, are not the biggest fan of my 'style' of fanwriting (you've proffered lessons in 'fair' esotericism, and chided me to explain off-the-wall statements, and doubtlessly just ignored a lot of my ramblings). But I provide a regular outlet for your own writings, I bring up a six pack, and I get mimeo ink all over your bedroom--so you put up with me even though it's always 'late' when I invade your home-life. In return I probably provide a source of occasional amusement to you, and that's fine, and that's part and parcel of friendship.

I really thought I'd been getting 'better' recently. I've put some effort into it, you know, but now, given Skel's reaction I'm not sure. Take for example the tale of my 'askew friend' in OW35: it's not everything I'd planned or wanted--nothing ever is--but overall I was rather pleased with it. And furthermore, I made a conscious effort to play it 'fair': all the facts are there if you're willing to look for them--her age, nationality, where she lives...even the name of her fanzine, who she works for, and the Worldcon she inadvertantly named. (And if Jerry Kaufman didn't know who I was talking about, it wasn't because he hasn't been in the Midwest recently; it simply shows that he wasn't paying attention at last year's Westercon.) For once, everything you really needed to know was all there...everything except her name.



I guess that's what bothers people the most: they can't accept a 'story' without having a label to hang onto it. But that I can understand--I'm always curious myself. I'm a fan...it goes with the territory.

I used names at one point; but once, about six years ago, it backfired. By the time my enthusiastic musings were published...the relationship was over. So now I don't use names. I'm not trying to 'hide' anything; it's simply self-preservation.

But still I WILL write about these things. As I've pointed out before, *Outworlds* (at least in this incarnation) may pose as a fanzine, but in reality it is simply my journal, my diary, my record of my own timeline. Therefore, unless you have at least a minimal interest in me, and what interests me, you're not going to stick around.

I'm really glad you & Bob write regularly for me; I'm glad that Steve at least thinks about it and that Denise mutters about reviving *Greymalkin*; I'm glad that Brad Foster, ATom and others send me neat art...and that some people like what I do, and tell me about it. I'm disappointed that others don't, or could care less, but I can live with that.

"Bowers isn't *Outworlds*", Skel says. Well, maybe not. But what *Outworlds* is...is what Bowers WANTS it to be more than any other fanzine he's ever done, with the possible exception of the First Series of *Xenoliths*. This time 'round he's publishing not for awards or acclaim, not for circulation or status, and not even really 'for' his friends...but simply to have fun, to occasionally talk about what's important to him, to publish the works of people who intrigue/amuse him, to surprise people, and to, in the end, amuse himself.

Not a philosophy for the ages, but one that's kept me going nineteen months now. (Despite occasional setbacks like the last issue...and occasional, rare, mutterings.)

I suppose I could tell Skel that while the basic 'core' readership of OW is around a hundred...and that the sum total of my "friends" over 41 years doesn't approach even that number by several orders of magnitude (and furthermore, several of my closest friends don't get it at all)...and while the distribution of 'freebies' is controlled and the axe sometimes falls swiftly--I am not consciously excluding anyone who wants to gain access to OW and who is willing to play by the rules: give me feedback or money.

'Friend' (as with 'Love') is one of the most overused words about. I too overuse them, and then, when I catch myself doing so, I become reluctant to use either word (even in cases where they DO apply) at all. Just another of my quirks, I presume.

From what I've read of him, and from his fanzines over the years, I think I'd like Skel a lot. But I don't correspond, I haven't met him...and the fact that he's a friend of Glicksohn's automatically makes him suspect.

I did LOVE the little skit he wrote about me in SFD several years ago: I was amused, flattered, and totally enjoyed it. I tried to reciprocate a bit (perhaps awkwardly in comparison) by labelling a skit in a later *Xenolith* "A Bedtime Story for Cas", but maybe that issue got lost in the mails, or simply failed to amuse him in return... As he didn't follow up on it, neither did I.

I do identify very much with his 'soul searching'--for much the same reasons Skel cites, I am reluctant to send stuff out to other fanzines. (Yes, given my incestuous midwestern esoteric bent, even I get requests; faneds must be a desperate lot.) There are certain people I want to see what I do, whether they ever respond or not, and so it's simpler to publish it myself...and send it to them.

But I'm puzzled by the one example he recounts. You know that, if you want someone to see something of yours I publish, someone who's not on my mailing list, all you have to do is mention it and give me an address and I'll send 'em a copy or at least tear sheets. And I'm reasonably sure that Marty would have made sure Dave Rowe got a copy of that article if Skel had only asked. Most faneds who've been around a bit at least try to be accomodating to their contributors...more so than to subbers, traders...etc.

Perhaps the biggest thing in all of this is that I simply can't relate to more than a handful of people at anyone time...and yet I keep trying to...and then I cut everyone out...and then I start all over again. I'm not an easy person to know...part of that is intentional; part not...and I'm constantly amazed that the number who do put up with me. In fact, I was just the other day telling... Damn, there goes the phone; back later....



## CLOSE CALL

Hello?

Is this Mr. Bill?

Hi, Dave.

Listen, this thing that Jerry Kaufman said about me. You know, the bit about "He gets to be more interesting all the time, despite occasional lapses of sense (none this issue) and strenuous efforts to be tasteless."

If this is a complaint, go talk to Jerry.

Well, yes, of course I resent the truth of his remarks, but what I called about is to tell you I agree 100% that this is the teeshirt quote I've been looking for: DAVE LOCKE: "strenuous efforts to be tasteless."  
-- Jerry Kaufman.

Like I said: "by golly, I think we've got it."

Yes, absolutely. And that's just for the back of the shirt. By the way, I take a large; it's too long, but at least it fits the shoulders, you know?

Wait a minute. You have something else for the front of the shirt?

Yes.

All right, what is it?

"Wild Beard Rides -- 50¢" Blue on white would be quite tasteful, don't you think?

Excuse me, I think my typewriter is burning. Talk to you later.

Okay, and thanks for the great idea.

Bye.

Later.



## Close Enough for Fanwriting □ a Column by DAVE LOCKE □

### GREAT MOMENTS IN SCIENCE FICTION

"...the high-pitched clicks of robots torquing each other's nuts to full tolerance."

-- DRAMOCLES, by Robert Sheckley

### STRANGE TRANSMISSIONS IN THE ETHER

By now it is known that the "Cincinnati in '88" Worldcon bid is a Columbus venture, fraught with the problems of retaining suitable local frontmen, and facing a 1988 Cincinnati Bicentennial year with a giant Labor Day Weekend Riverfest and--according to what I was told by the bidding committee's contact, the Director of Sales at the Convention and Visitors Bureau--no way of obtaining enough skywalk-connected hotel rooms based on winning the bid in 1986.

That's a lot to know.

We talk about such things here in Cincity. It serves to fulfill the needs of casual conversation, and even spirited conversation. It seems to be generally known that Cincinnati fans are not foolish enough to bid for a convention in their Bicentennial year, seems to be generally granted that any group has the right to bid for anywhere, generally felt that this bid has little chance of succeeding, and generally opined that if it did it would be a bad worldcon irrespective of the truism that people can have a good time no matter what.

What appears to be left, after all this, is that--given a bad convention--the history wouldn't read that was a bad con that Columbus threw in Cincinnati in 1988. It would read that was a bad Worldcon there in Cincinnati. If such a scenario came to pass, it would be even more dismaying to Cincinnati fans that the title for their 1949 Worldcon, Cinvention, would have been taken and used in this manner. Those not dismayed might generally prove rankled.



Do not look for Cincinnati fans, or for that matter any fans who have been watching this bid unfold and noting the machinations, to be of the opinion that "Cincinnati in '88" is a good idea for fandom, let alone for Cincinnati.

My own feeling is to be intrigued at the idea of any reasonably good Worldcon at my own back door. This, of course, is why this particular Cincinnati fan does not endorse this particular bid.

Cincinnati in '88! It's a Bad Idea!

## WERDS

Have you ever had the inability to remember the right word? Of course you have. That's lethologica, and if you time the interval between occurrences you may discover that you also have loganamosis, a mania for trying to recall forgotten words. Possibly also a touch of enosiophobia, which is the fear of having committed an unpardonable sin, and in itself this can bring on ophthalmophobia, the fear of being stared at.

Yes, that's right, we're back to culling through \$2.50 words which are preposterous, unusual, and potentially useful in a vaguely fannish context. For example, a fanwriter might create copy while in entheomania, an abnormal state in which one thinks one is inspired. After a process of diaskeuasis, or editorial revision, the material is evulgated or pervulgated or published based on the faned's publishing schedule (Lee Hoffman's is penteteric, recurring every five years, which leaves ample time for inspiration. It even allows time for recension, which is scholarly editorial revision).

Convention circuit fans are into dromomania, which is compulsive travelling; dicacity, which is oral playfulness and talkativeness; and thanatism, which is the belief in life before death, not after it. Bob Tucker, of course, goes because he is mulierose.

One who gafiates finds himself in a state of oligoria, with a disinterest in former friends or hobbies.

Surely someone in Lovecraft fandom has used *Nefadous* as a title. The word means unmentionable, unspeakable, and seems incredibly apt.

Fans are Slans is a phrase you'll hear on occasion, most always tongue-in-cheek. Anyone using it seriously is guilty of 1. ethnocentrism, the attitude that one's race or tribe is superior, 2. sophomania, a delusion of exceptional intelligence, and 3. not looking around.

Satisdiction: enough said.

## SKIFFY SOURCE MATERIAL

With astronomy just climbing into puberty and heading for its golden age, the universe seems to take on a facelift almost daily. We're now seeing into the far reaches and hidden depths of the electromagnetic spectrum. Most of this radiation is dropkicked by the thick mantle of gas surrounding the Earth, and by getting above the atmosphere it's like suddenly opening a second set of eyelids.

What are we seeing? Oh, things like a third Magellenic Cloud, overlapping the other two. IRAS, the Infrared Astronomical Satellite, which is a Dutch-British-US endeavor, has alone turned up five previously unknown comets, four new asteroids, an intriguing cometlike object apparently responsible for the yearly Geminid meteor shower, a ring of material around Vega, a collection of matter surrounding Formalhaut, signs of active star formation, and, most significant of all so far: the discovery that dust is everywhere, some major collections being clouds of interstellar rock and dust--tiny graphite particles making the infrared universe aglow with emissions from these clouds. So much dust and debris that astronomers may be forced to recalibrate cosmological distance scales. (Estimated distances are based in part on brightness; the dimmer, the farther away. With considerable dimming caused by otherwise invisible dust, the things we see are much closer than we knew.) The universe didn't get smaller, but our view of it just did. This is what we're seeing just with IRAS, and we've only analyzed 1% of its recorded data.

In the next decade a series of orbiting observatories, hundreds and thousands of times more powerful than anything we have now, will scan the wavelengths from long to



short: infrared, visual and ultraviolet, x-ray and gamma ray. Astronomers are discovering the visual universe to often be the least interesting when it comes to an awareness of dynamic change. "There's been a revolution in our understanding," said Dr. Riccardo Giacconi, head of the space agency's Space Science Telescope Institute at John Hopkins University. "We now are starting to see all the explosive events, some which happen in less than a day. The universe is popping all over the place. Violent processes are now seen to be the norm rather than the exception. The universe is much more alive than we ever thought."

A quantum leap in clarity for our view of the universe. More quantum leaps to follow. As we begin what must surely become the golden age of astronomy, the much smaller universe of science fiction will be met with new challenges. Gone will be the excessively familiar sf trappings and backgrounds and frameworks, which were and are generated out of an earthbound vision of the universe and have become almost a stasis field of orthodoxy. Present will be the challenges to keep pace, not just technically but imaginatively, with an age of discovery which has everything to do with the major property on which science fiction has a right-of-way: the rest of the universe.

Science fiction may well enter a new golden age, itself, or become largely and perhaps generically ludicrous for the duration or until things settle down. Doesn't that sound like a challenge? Sounds like one to me.

And it's coming up Real Soon Now.

## A QUOTE FOR ALL TIMES

"Reason is the horse we ride after we have decided which direction we want to go."

-- Alfred North Whitehead

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...a letter from Mike Resnick

I am a little trepidatious about replying to George R.R. Martin's letter in *Outworlds* #38. George (no fool, he) asks, in essence, how can such a good writer as Resnick like the works of such a poor writer as Malzberg? You see my problem, of course: if I discredit the second half of that statement and show that Malzberg is a good writer, your readers will have to wonder if George is also wrong about the first half, with which I am of course in total agreement. (Tricky guy, my friend George.) Besides, I'm not in the business of *defending* Malzberg, which I'm sure he is competent to do himself if he hasn't gotten tired of it after so many years and so many attacks; all I did was *praise* him in an interview that was theoretically about my own work (though one would never know that from the lettercol). Finally, I have to assume that if I didn't win George over to my viewpoint the first time around, I'm not going to do it with a brief rebuttal.

Therefore, I'll confine myself to what I think are some very basic misinterpretations in his letter.

GALAXIES, as should be obvious to anyone reading the book or the interview, is a critique of science fiction, disguised as "Notes Toward a Novel". In it, Malzberg makes the point that the novel cannot be written the way he would like because it must compete on the stands against THE RAMMERS OF ARCTURUS, a properly generic title representing the type of science fiction to which GALAXIES is opposed. I likened GALAXIES' bookstore competition to books by John Norman, Lin Carter, and that whole crowd, and George jumped on this, claiming in essence that any writer of ambition should realize that he's competing with Ursula LeGuin, Gene Wolfe, Jack Vance, and Michael Bishop. Heady company, I'll admit, and I'm sure that Barry--or any of us--would be more than content to be considered in that noble little group. George has unquestionably made a forceful moral argument here, but unfortunately it has nothing to do with the real world. I would be very surprised (and I hope I'm wrong, but doubt that I am) to discover that John Norman sells less than 500,000 copies of each title; I would be pleasantly flabbergasted (and I hope I'm wrong, but doubt that I am) to discover that, say, Michael Bishop sells 15% of that total. "Smith, Cordwainer must inevitably compete with Smith, E.E. 'Doc'", says George. True enough--but which Smith has gone through 30 printings? Barry would like



to compete with CATACOMB YEARS and DYING OF THE LIGHT--hell, George, we all would--but the fact of the matter is that Sturgeon's Law was never more apparent than when you wander over to the science fiction rack in your local bookstore. The unhappy fact is that today's science fiction writer doesn't have to buck heads with DYING INSIDE or NO ENEMY BUT TIME or CAMP CONCENTRATION to keep getting those lucrative contracts we all read about in *Locus*; he's got to acquit himself in battle with John Norman and Sharon Green and Lin Carter if he expects to live above the poverty level. This doesn't mean that Norman et al constitute his artistic competition, but in a very real sense they are his commercial competition. George himself seems to lead a charmed professional life; I suspect that if he fell face-first into a pile of horseshit he could come up with a rose in his teeth; but while I am truly happy for him, historically this isn't the case for most writers, and it certainly wasn't so for Malzberg.

Maggie Moneyeyes and Dan Weinrab move George, while Herovit does not. Well and good, and he is certainly entitled to his opinion, but I do not think he is entitled to the broad conclusions about Malzberg's competence as a writer that he draws from this. After all, Herovit's plight moved and fascinated me, while I must confess to not giving a tinker's damn about Maggie and Dan. I suspect this may be the reason why we have more than one work of fiction on the stands at a time.

I have a feeling that all my other arguments with George are totally subjective, and while I have every intention of cornering him at a convention one of these days and showing him the error of his ways while he reciprocates in kind, I don't think *Outworlds* is exactly the proper place for this kind of dialog--especially since you're on record as being sick of typing "Ridgefield Park, New Jersey".

One other comment, this about Ian Covell's letter: he remarks that he hasn't read my writing, but has a feeling that since I like Malzberg's work and he doesn't, he probably won't like my stuff either. It may very well be that at such time as he finally gets around to reading me he'll dislike what I write--though I hope not--but if it comes to pass, it won't be because I admire HEROVIT'S WORLD and GALAXIES. I must confess (and I trust that this won't be taken for excessive egomania) that to my subjective way of thinking, no one writes Resnick books better than Resnick. The writers I admire are those who tackle stories or write in styles that would never occur to me; the closer they come to my thematic material or my mode of expression, the more I have to fight the urge to start scribbling editorial corrections in the margins to turn their work into perfect Resnick stories. So not to worry, Ian--I also love the sport of horse-racing with an all-consuming passion, and yet I have never once desired to be a horse.

Bill made a comment on Page 1364 that requires some explanation, even though he was being facetious. The "movement" that he claims denied him his best shot at a Hugo was when Camille Cazedessus, Jr., editor of *ERB-dom*, sent out Hugo ballots to all his subscribers in 1966. *ERB-dom* won. Whether it actually cost Bill a Hugo is debatable; what is not debatable is that the ballots were mailed out by Cazedessus without consulting his editorial staff, of which I was a minor and youthful member. If that constitutes a Movement, then it was a Movement of One. (And if that was truly what I was best known for by anyone except maybe Bowers, or even 100th on the list, I think I would walk forthwith to the bathroom and quietly open a vein.) [...received 7/3/84]

~~~~~  
...have you heard that the Ghost of Larry Propp, tiring in his efforts to persuade Dick Smith to bid for *CHICON V* in '88, has been seen talking, persuasively, to Ken Keller re *BIG MAC 2*? Inquires to 1131 White, K.C., MO 64126. [PS: ...don't tell Terry, please.]

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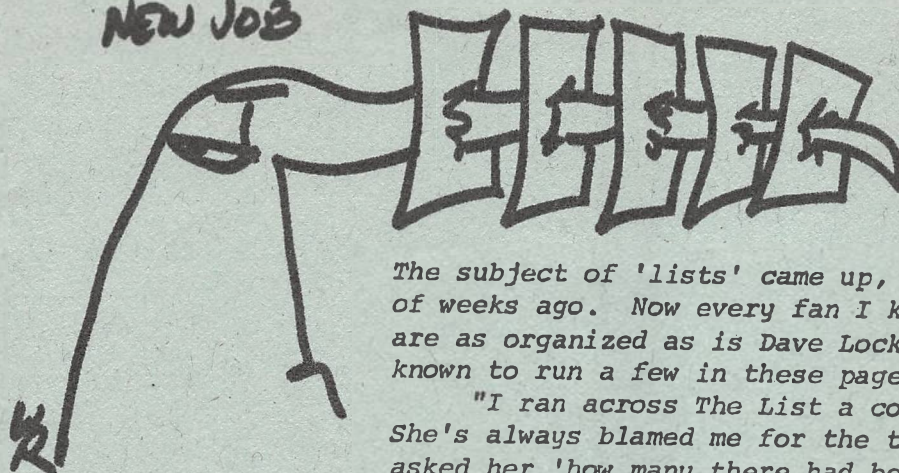
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I HATE MY
NEW JOB



LISTmania

The subject of 'lists' came up, again, at Midwestcon a couple of weeks ago. Now every fan I know keeps lists--though few are as organized as is Dave Locke's binders--and I've been known to run a few in these pages.

"I ran across The List a couple of days ago," she said. She's always blamed me for the thing, simply because I'd idly asked her 'how many there had been before me'--and that was years ago, anyway. She should have known better; she was surrounded by friends. Once the subject matter of 'The List' was established, one brave soul asked if the list were up to four digits yet... [He was a much higher number, and therefore still brash.]

"Not for lack of trying," I volunteered. ...and ran for cover.

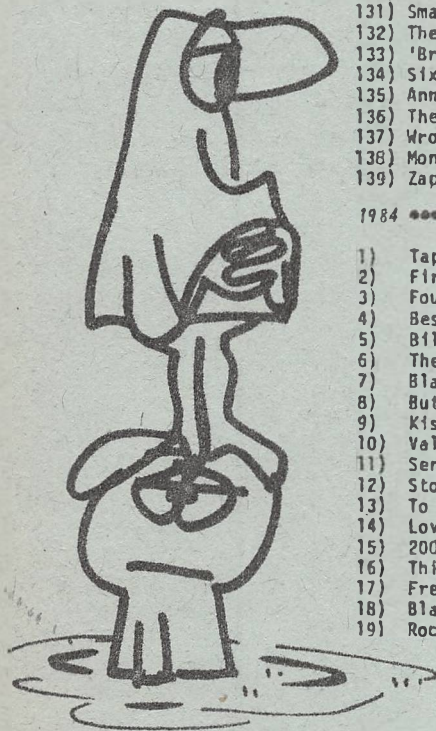
What follows is not nearly as exciting as my version of that list, but it is slightly longer. It is simply a type-out of the movies I've made it through over the past few years--presented without rationalization, explanation, or justification. Amuse yourself.

1982

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1) Raiders of the Lost Ark (3) | 8) Rocky Horror Picture Show (14) | 61) Summer Lovers |
| 2) Body Heat (2) | 9) Barbarosa (2) | 62) Sitting Ducks |
| 3) Reds | 10) Shock Treatment (2) | 63) The Kids Are Alright |
| 4) Fantastic Invasion of Planet Earth (3-d) | 11) Lipstick | 64) Breathless |
| 5) The French Lieutenant's Woman (2) | 12) Max Dugan Returns | 65) Watiz Across Texas |
| 6) Somewhere in Time | 13) E.T. (2) | 66) The Beach Girls |
| 7) Ragtime | 14) Quest for Fire (2) | 67) East of Elephant Rock |
| 8) Sharkey's Machine | 15) Body Heat (3) | 68) Night Shift |
| 9) Private Lessons | 16) A Little Sex | 69) Heartaches |
| 10) The Amateur | 17) Cat People (2) | 70) Come Back to the Five and Dime,
Jimmy Dean, Jimmy Dean |
| 11) Conan the Barbarian | 18) Somewhere in Time (2) | 71) Firefox |
| 12) Cat People | 19) Tarzan the Apeman (2) | 72) Tattoo |
| 13) Silent Running (2) | 20) Ordinary People (2) | 73) The Secret of NIMH |
| 14) Fame (2) | 21) The Black Stallion Returns | 74) The Man From Snowy River |
| 15) Dragonslayer | 22) Frances | 75) Flesh Gordon (2) |
| 16) Bad Timing - A Sensual Obsession | 23) Soup For One | 76) Cannery Row |
| 17) Lady Chatterley's Lover | 24) Blow Out | 77) On Golden Pond |
| 18) Quest for Fire | 25) The Year of Living Dangerously | 78) Rent A Dick |
| 19) Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan | 26) Lovers and Liars | 79) The Ultimate Warrior |
| 20) Montenegro | 27) The Sword and The Sorcerer | 80) Tempest |
| 21) The Loved One (2) | 28) Honkytonk Freeway | 81) Dragonslayer (2) |
| 22) Tommy | 29) The Man Who Fell to Earth (3) | 82) The Best Little Whorehouse
in Texas |
| 23) Blade Runner | 30) The Secret Policeman's Other Ball | 83) Gimme Shelter |
| 24) Tron (2) | 31) National Lampoon's Movie Madness | 84) Yanks |
| 25) Shock Treatment | 32) Rich and Famous | 85) Time Rider |
| 26) Diner | 33) Days of Heaven | 86) Mad Max |
| 27) A Midsummer Night's Sex Comedy | 34) Something Wicked This Way Comes | 87) The Draughtsman's Contract |
| 28) The World According to Garp | 35) Southern Comfort | 88) I, the Jury |
| 29) An Officer and A Gentleman | 36) Meatballs | 89) Resurrection |
| 30) The Road Warrior | 37) Personal Best (2) | 90) Eating Raoul |
| 31) Manhattan (2) | 38) Paradise | 91) Jinxed |
| 32) My Favorite Year | 39) Blue Thunder | 92) Swinging Cheerleaders |
| 33) The Last Unicorn | 40) Continental Divide | 93) The Front |
| 34) Fast Times At Ridgemont High | 41) Fighting Back | 94) Brainstorm |
| 35) The Chosen | 42) The Night the Lights
Went Out in Georgia | 95) Kentucky Fried Movie |
| 36) Still Of the Night | 43) Missing | 96) Love Child |
| 37) Time Bandits (3) | 44) Dead Men Don't Wear Plaid | 97) Smithereens |
| 38) E.T. | 45) Saturday the 14th | 98) Prince of the City |
| 39) The Dark Crystal | 46) Whose Life Is It Anyway? | 99) Goodbye Porkpie |
| 40) Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back (3) | 47) Stripes | 100) Goin' South |
| 41) Tootsie (2) | 48) The Postman Always Rings Twice (2) | 101) I Never Promised You a Rose Garden |
| 42) Personal Best | 49) Star Wars: Revenge of the Jedi (3) | 102) The First Time |
| 43) The Verdict | 50) Atlantic City (2) | 103) Sex With the Stars |
| | 51) The Dark Crystal (2) | 104) Paternity |
| | 52) Flashdance | 105) Richard Pryor Live on Sunset Strip |
| | 53) Poltergeist | 106) La Ronde |
| | 54) Partners | 107) The Little Shop of Horrors |
| | 55) Caveman | 108) Amber Waves |
| | 56) Some Kind of Hero | 109) Sooner or Later |
| | 57) The Next One | 110) The Verdict (2) |
| | 58) Dog Day Afternoon | 111) Rabiid |
| | 59) Raggedy Man | |
| | 60) Twilight Zone: The Movie (2) | |

1983

- 1) Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore
- 2) Victor/Victoria
- 3) Annie Hall (3)
- 4) An Officer and A Gentleman (3)
- 5) XICA
- 6) Conan the Barbarian (3)
- 7) Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan (2)



- 112) Mondo Cane
- 113) Forever Emmanuelle
- 114) First Love
- 115) The Seduction
- 116) Terms of Endearment
- 117) Starcrash
- 118) Dr. Strangelove (3)
- 119) The Big Chill
- 120) Porky's
- 121) Knightriders
- 122) Creepshow
- 123) The Blue Lagoon (1940; orig.)
- 124) Yentl
- 125) Goodbye, Emmanuelle
- 126) The Next Man
- 127) Savage Messiah
- 128) Moonshine County Express
- 129) Vice Squad (1982)
- 130) Clash of the Titans
- 131) Smash Palace
- 132) The Outlaw Josey Wales
- 133) 'Breaker' Morant
- 134) Six Weeks
- 135) Annie
- 136) The Long Riders
- 137) Wrong Is Right
- 138) Monsignor
- 139) Zapped!

1984 ***** (1/1 thru 6/30)

- 1) Taps
- 2) First Blood
- 3) Four Friends
- 4) Best Friends
- 5) Billitis
- 6) The Beast Master (2)
- 7) Black Beauty (British; 71)
- 8) Butterfly
- 9) Kiss Me Goodbye
- 10) Valley Girl
- 11) Seniors
- 12) Stolen Kisses
- 13) To Catch a King
- 14) Lovesick
- 15) 200 Motels
- 16) Things Are Tough All Over
- 17) Freedom
- 18) Black Emmanuelle
- 19) Rock 'n' Roll High School

- 20) In Praise of Older Women
- 21) Sophie's Choice
- 22) Losin' It
- 23) Kitty and The Bagman
- 24) Hanover Street
- 25) 48 Hours
- 26) Spaceship
- 27) Hardcore
- 28) Airplane II: The Sequel
- 29) Fiona
- 30) Star 80
- 31) The Outsiders
- 32) Independence Day
- 33) The Lords of Discipline
- 34) Ned Kelly
- 35) High Road to China
- 36) Barbary Coast
- 37) Tender Mercies
- 38) Tough Enough
- 39) Foxtrot
- 40) Brimstone and Treacle
- 41) The Wizard of Oz
- 42) Providence
- 43) Bad Boys
- 44) The Best
- 45) Up the Academy
- 46) Witche's Brew
- 47) Warlords of the 21st Century
- 48) Broadway Danny Rose
- 49) Superman III
- 50) The Cold Room
- 51) Harry Tracy
- 52) Embryo
- 53) Nana
- 54) Rataplan
- 55) How I Won the War
- 56) Touched
- 57) Exposed
- 58) The Lady in Red
- 59) The Dark Crystal (3)
- 60) Raiders of the Lost Ark (4)
- 61) The Personals
- 62) Heaven's Gate
- 63) The Jungle Book (1942)
- 64) By Design
- 65) Honktonk Man
- 66) Adam's Woman
- 67) Emmanuelle on Taboo Island
- 68) The Odd Job

- 69) The Godfather
- 70) Love and Death
- 71) Pink Motel
- 72) Tim
- 73) Deathtrap
- 74) Romancing the Stone
- 75) The Happy Hooker Goes to Washington
- 76) The End of August
- 77) Manhattan (3)
- 78) Young Lady Chatterly
- 79) Welcome to L.A.
- 80) The Garden of the Finzi-Continis
- 81) A Dangerous Summer
- 82) Chilly Scenes of Winter
- 83) Tootsie (3)
- 84) The Hunger
- 85) Wargames
- 86) Last Tango in Paris
- 87) The Promise
- 88) Carry on Emmanuelle
- 89) Bring Me the Head of Alfredo Garcia
- 90) The King of Comedy
- 91) Intimate Moments
- 92) Betrayal
- 93) The Innocent
- 94) The Riddle of the Sands
- 95) Stardust Memories (2)
- 96) The Hollywood Knights
- 97) Footloose
- 98) Prom Night
- 99) Q
- 100) Looker
- 101) The Grey Fox
- 102) Star Trek II: The Search for Spock
- 103) Puberty Blues
- 104) Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom
- 105) Felicity
- 106) Spacehunter: Adventures in the Forbidden Zone
- 107) Boarding School
- 108) Mistress Pamela
- 109) Race For the Yankee Zephyr
- 110) David & Lisa
- 111) Playbirds
- 112) Emily (6/28/84)

Outworlds is seemingly published every time BILL BOWERS [2468 Harrison Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45211] goes to a convention. This one is for SPACECON 6, #134 on that list, and is My Publication #136. \$1. or Editorial Whim. • Thanks as always, to Jackie Causgrove & Dave Locke, without whom-- and someday we'll explain why lastish was the most expensive OW since 28/29. • 7/10/84.

Outworlds 39

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