

OUTWORLDS 53

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During the final cut made to mold OW52 into an even-number of pages, one of the things that 'fell off' -- and probably shouldn't have -- was this postscript from PATTY PETERS:

"Explain to Frank that one reason you have time for projects is that you never answer letters!"

The omission was not intentional, at least on a conscious level. I recognize enough of the validity in that statement to, while not being particularly 'pleased' with it, at the least acknowledge said truth.

Perhaps, on a different level, I 'purposely' saved the Pattycism so that it could serve as a lead-in to this, My Abjectly Humble Catch-Up Issue. When I finished *OUTWORLDS* 48, at the midnight hour of 1985, I had no plans to go away for more than a year. But I did. And when I "came back", other things--such as Corflu--took precedence. Still, we all knew that, eventually, I'd get around to it, didn't we? Here -- for the contributors and respondents to the 1985 issues -- is some delayed egoboo. (Don't lose sight of that in the rush to substantiate Patty's observation!)

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## TERRY CARR

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Thanks for *OUTWORLDS 46*, which as usual I enjoyed. Brad Foster didn't exactly get much hardware-sf into his cover drawing, but it's attractive anyhow: so many of us have "out-grown" interest in sf but never in cheesecake. Seems to me that woman's left breast is badly skewed to the right, but that's the most hard-science comment I can make.

I was amused at one remove by your editorial about your supposed interest in newly nubile females (Carol calls them upwardly nubile). It caused me to reflect that during my whole life I've never been sexually involved with anyone younger than age 20; there were just three of those, one of whom I married when I was just 21 myself. But as to why, well, isn't it one of our cultural clichés for couples to consist of a man and a woman who's a bit younger? No doubt because traditionally if not recently men were supposed to be Dominant, and being older was for men one way of establishing that dominance, in his head if not in hers. I've been involved with a few women older than I -- I really don't card women--and I haven't seen any particular difference: what difference there was was always one of personality, not age.

Dave Locke's column was a disappointment this time, being based on one of the most boring of subjects, the inability of a columnist to think of anything interesting to write about. Dave writes well, but there's still something to be said for content, and his content here is very hackneyed. Personally, my response to his question, "How long will you stare at a blank sheet of paper before suspecting that 'Fanwriter's Block' is your best topic?" is, quite simply, "Forever." I think the closest I ever got to writing about that so-called subject was yea many decades ago when I was a teenager, and as I recall it, not even then did I ever write anything explaining about how I didn't have anything to write about.

The rest of the contents were, inevitably, better, but none of the formal entries was triff. The main appeal of yer fanzine remains the lettercol, at least when Doc Lowndes and Tucker are absent and Dave Locke is examining his empty navel. Bring back Lowndes and Tucker! we cry, and *Suggest a topic to Locke!* [9/16/85]

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## JOEL ZAKEM

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I was a little surprised to find *OUTWORLDS 46* in my mailbox. I hadn't responded to the last few issues, and I figured I'd have to purchase a copy the next time I saw you. Then I read "*The Annotated Bowers*".

Well, it's one way to insure a letter from me.

I have no doubt that your recollection of the events at the CFG picnic is a correct (more than a month later the day seems a little fuzzy to me) and I have no doubt that I am responsible for the remark attributed to me. It sounds like something I'd say but, believe me, I would not have said it if I thought you would take offense.

I apologize for the remark, even though, as you concluded, it was simply an attempt to be "cute". I would have apologized at the picnic if I had been aware of your displeasure at my attempt at "cuteness". Since you chose (if my recollection is correct) to say nothing at the picnic, although you had ample opportunity, either publicly or privately to tell me how you felt, this apology may be somewhat late. Nevertheless, I hope you realize that I intended no maliciousness.

However, since you used my remark as a basis for your editorial, I would like to attempt to explain some of the reasons behind the remark.

Although I was an *OUTWORLDS* subscriber and may have talked with you at a con somewhere, the first time I "met" you was on the day you moved to Cincinnati. Since then, although we were never what you could call great friends, we have spent some time together ... at CFG meetings, parties, driving to and from cons, etc. During that time, however, I never felt as if I really "knew" Bill Bowers, at least from personal contact.

But combining the fact that we live in the same area with what I read in your publications gave me what I thought was a certain familiarity with the individual named Bill Bowers. In fact, sometimes I felt that I may have had an advantage, as living in the Cincinnati area allowed me to interpret some of your more esoteric references, especially those concerning some of your "mystery women". You were right, however, in alleging that I don't "know" you.

The same thing can also be said in reverse, though. I don't think Bill Bowers "knows" Joel Zakem. And unlike you, I don't publish a fanzine to help make things clearer.

My fannish experiences are a lot different from yours. I've generally kept on the sidelines rather than entering the center of the arena. Still, I don't see myself giving up my fannish lifestyle, such as it is. If nothing else, I've met some of my closest friends through fandom and I've had a few, as you put it, involvements directly attributed to fandom (although not Ellison-numbers, or even Bowers-numbers -- sorry, being "cute" again). I've also met a large number of people who I would like to know better, but because of my shyness or insecurity, I've never really gotten to know.

One of these people is Bill Bowers.

I think some of my previous letters might have mentioned this, but I have always admired Bill Bowers, the Fan. He has accomplished many things that I would have liked to do. On a more personal note, as you might have noticed, I've had more than a passing interest in some of your "mystery women". And I guess, what I'm trying to say is, I've always been a bit jealous of you, Bill.

In many ways, I guess the "cute" remark grew out of this jealousy. It probably does not change things, but I felt that an explanation was in order. Once again, I meant no offense, at least on a conscious level, and I'll try to watch myself in the future.



At the same time, I found myself feeling a little hurt after reading the editorial. It's not that it was unfair to me, or even unwarranted. Maybe I'm too sensitive, but I don't want to lose what friendship we have. Not that I'm suggesting that you never use me as a starting point in your ramblings again. At the risk of sounding cute, it may be one of the few ways I could become a fannish legend or something. [9/17/85]

A lot of the Burning Issues of *OUTWORLDS*, circa 1985, are no longer even embers. Given that, and in a effort to generate this issue in a pitch large enough for you to read it, the Editorial Commentary will probably be minimal.

All of which is prelude to acknowledging that I have as of this moment had exactly two years and two months since the date on Joel's letter... to figure out just "how" to "answer" him...

Eh, Joel... can I get back to you a bit later...?

I just reread that 'editorial' for the first time in two years; it's not my best work, but it seems to say still what I was trying to say at the time. I used you, Joel (and your 'comment'), as a set-up to something I probably would have tried to say anyway; it just made it simpler for me.

The fact that it elicited such an open letter from you was an unexpected result, but that was not the intent of the exercise; nor was it meant to embarrass you--if I hadn't thought you still be speaking to me afterward, I wouldn't have used your name, but would have concocted some other gambit.

Thanks for your response Joel... and I really don't think you need me to help you become a "fannish legend or something"! The speech you came up with in such a short span of time to fulfill your GoHship at CORFLU was certainly better than anything I've ever done in a timeframe that condensed. [I still hope it sees print someday. Irony, isn't it, that it is being 'held up' in the household of someone who was specifically referenced--but not by name--in that long ago OW46 editorial...!]

Lynda asked a while back if I was ever going to mention her in my fanzine. I really don't think she's read enough back issues, including the one under discussion here, to understand the ramifications such 'mentions' sometimes entail... or the *why* of why I no longer name names. Most times...

### RICHARD BRANDT

Well, what is one to do when none of your five entries in the Press Club awards takes the nod; and your two dates have dropped you off at your apartment (I'm having brunch with the older one tomorrow; and her sister is all of 18, if it's any of your concern), but sit down to try out the first loc to be composed on my (relatively) new Commodore Exec 64 with the nifty dot-matrix printer (\$512 from COMB, shipping & handling included); and, by gum, what better zine to loc under those circumstances than *OW46*.

First off, nice Brad Foster cover...not his best, I'd add, and I remember better cheese-cake from the days when Grant Canfield wasn't so busy earning a living. (Why does Brad have this Martian-joke fixation, however?)

One thing Dave doesn't address in his column is his namesake, the loc. If one can't dig up a topic for discussion after browsing through a fanzine, it's time to become a convention fan, think about doing a Perszine and trading with the hapless letter, or entering the Harry Warner Famous Locsmiths School. (I doubt Harry has ever read a single COLUMN in a fanzine, let alone the fanzine itself, without discovering valid comment hooks.) Coming up with topics for discussion doesn't seem to be my problem; my troubles relate to my current efforts to produce a regular Perszine to showcase my non-LOC writing. (This would serve as my response also to the discussion of fanediting situations elsewhere in *OW46*.)

Well, only one of Joe's limericks this time absolutely refuses to scan no matter how I look at it; but I do get the idea that, once having got hold of the idea, he was reluctant to quit long after the point he should have realized he had exhausted the idea's potential (or his own cleverness).

Good to see Jodie in Print again; the Offutts were nice enough to invite the ex and I to the Funny Farm on our way to ConStellation; in fact nicer folk are hard to find...

The good news IS that Lowndes will have another column, yessir...

I love Hania's idea for the Info Exchange; maybe she should sell that idea to those fellas for some big bucks; maybe I should send a copy of my zine to HER address...

In the meantime, I'll be trying to convince "Hey, Eighteen"'s sister that she really could realize her lifelong dream of visiting the British Isles as soon as Labor Day after next ... and convince myself it would leave me enough capital to bring a copy of a succeeding ish to Cincinnati... [9/14/85]

Gee, aren't these 'old references' nostalgic, Richard? (Hopefully more so than embarrassing!) ...so, how old does that make "Hey, Eighteen" now, anyway? (Sorry; just reflex.) [Besides, the Proper Steely Dan reference is "Hey Nineteen"!]

### JOHN A. CORTIS

It is time once again to clear the great clutter from my desk to make room for the next clutter, so here is a thank you for *OW46* before it takes its place of honor in the closet...

Wow! That is some cover you got there. I'd seen lots of Brad Foster's funny little filler cartoons before, but this (and the cover to the ConFederation Progress Report 1) is the first "serious" thing of his I've seen. I understand he has done lots of this in the past -- I hope I'll see LOTS more in the future.

I kinda liked Bill Breiding's musical letter of comment. I've heard most of that music, and I did read *OW44/45*, but there was zero connection between the music and the prose for me. His is about as abstract as a comment can get, though. I wonder if anyone other than Mr. Breiding is able to feel the connection? Wonderful idea though. [9/17/85]

I didn't "get" a lot of the connections either; but it certainly was an Unique LoC!



## SKEL

This letter, from '25 Bowland',  
comes from Skel of course, not from Roland -  
who lives in Offerton, not Murmansk,  
which is in Stockport you fool, not Gdansk,  
which of course is in England, not Poland.

2nd. November 1985.

Bill,

"And that's the news from Eastern Kentucky....",  
But might there be more, if we're lucky?  
Tales of a horse's peccadillos  
with cows (not armadillos!)...  
and wasn't the foal/calf just ducky?

But as to the limericks, I blush.  
They seem to have been written in a rush,  
with but little thought for meter  
and the rhymes could have been sweeter -  
to be kind, is the author a lush?

"But after your address," you beseech,  
"How dare you presume to so teach?"  
Well I don't give a fuck  
about appearing a schmuck  
and see no reason to practise what I preach.

And as to the subject Dave Locke mastered,  
well he didn't mention my name, the bastard!  
There can be no excuse  
for ethics so loose.....  
makes me wonder why his reputation has lasted.

And I suppose I shall always be a debtor  
to Mike, for the sentiments in his letter,  
but then - what the hell -  
I'd rather have a Nobel,  
well you've got to admit it pays better.

Well I'd like to continue, yes dearly,  
but with so much to comment on, well clearly  
your zine's made such a dent  
in my resources, which are spent,  
so I guess I must remain.....'yours sincerely'

WALT WILLIS

I thought Jodie Offutt's column was fascinating and I much admired Naomi Cowan's letter, but yes, BRING BACK DOC LOWNDES. I must admit though that in reading OW45 I for a split second took the title of his book to be THE GERNSBACK BRA. Obviously the old bean is not what it was, as Wodehouse would have put it, but it was still fast enough to unreel a series of image starting with one of Abi Frost and Arthur Thomson in a compromising position, proceeding to reminiscence of Hugo showing Forry Ackerman and me the cover of the latest issue of *Sexology* in Los Angeles and ending with the speculation that it might have contained "My Life as a Transvestite". The mental picture of HG in drag was enough to bring my train of thought crashing into the buffers of reality, but it was fun while it lasted. Like OW46. [11/11/85]

TONY CVETKO

The cover by Foster is rather intriguing. Mama. Fuck the Hugos, Mr. Foster deserves to be exceedingly rich. His stuff's good.

You just aren't going to come straight out with the gossip, are you?



Your annotations are, I admit, interesting (otherwise why would I be writing, eh?-- especially to such a big name fantype such as you), so keep sending them and I'll keep reading them. Some of Christopher's limerick's were cute. Interesting to read Ms. Offutt's jury duty exploits. While I've never had the pleasure, one of our very own--Brian "Earl" Brown--recently did, and both seem parallel--hurry up and wait.

I don't think Al and I will be pushing the motherfuckers into the pit--we'll be operating the earthmovers that'll do the pushing. It's a lot easier, and the screams of those slipping and getting oh so totally squished under the steely treads will really make it Miller Time. Hey, I've got a card that says I'm a member of the 1985 Republican National Committee, along with the several million other people they mailed it blindly to. At least I'm on the politically correct mailing lists. OK, so maybe I'm not a yuppie in spirit, but at least my BMW lets me live the fantasy.

Gosh, Bill, I had driven that awful Rivercon weekend memory from my pathetic little brain cells, but you just had to rekindle the old nightmares. Can I not have any peace? Will the burning pain of fandom always puree my internal organs with its piercing swizzle stick of torture? It's like trying to unravel a sweater that someone keeps knitting and knitting and knitting and KNITTING AND KNITTING AND KNITTING AND KNITTING AND KNITTING AND KNITTING!!!!!! Really, Bill, don't do this to me.

And for god's sake please stop using all those capital letters! They're driving me crazy! And vowels! God, you use so many goddamn vowels! I won't even think about the prepositions!

So, like, I guess that's about it. Nine years is too long a time for me to think about. And *you* got to cons. I tag along with somebody once every few years. At least that's my rationalization... [9/10/85]

### BRIAN EARL BROWN

At first I thought this was a fanzine from David Schlosser because of the neon-green paper on the covers. And later I used it for a nightlight, and quite successfully, too. The Foster cover is interesting not for its erotic qualities but because it's interesting to see Brad doing realistic types of art instead of his usual cartoons. Dare I say he's a better cartoonist? Not that this is a bad cover. Far from it, this is better artwork than found on a lot of fanzines. Brad just seems more at home drawing his strange creatures...and I seem to be digging myself into a hole here. OK, so the woman's fingers look more like rods than real fingers. Let's talk about something safer, like your editorial on page 1554. No, let's not. I don't want to know who you were chasing 11 years ago 'cause I probably know them and this is something that I don't feel right knowing.

The thought of you actively playing a game of volleyball is one that boggles my mind since at conventions you look like you don't have energy enough to stir out of whatever armchair you've sat yourself down in and in fact rarely seem to be out of said chair during an evening. But I guess there must be a reason for why you stay so skinny and I don't think that it's because you don't eat so you'll have more time to work on your fanzines.

You have some nice art from Jim Shull in this issue. The guy is good.

One of the things Dave doesn't mention in regards to Writer's Block is that it is a lot easier to write for one's self than it is to write for another. Either we don't hold as high an editorial standard for our own material, or maybe we exaggerate the expectations of the other faned so that we try to write the perfect article and freeze at the thought of such perfection. (Perhaps it's not paranoia. What I thought was the best thing I've written was returned with the comment that it was a bit, ah "slow". Showed it to another friend who agreed that it was "slow". I'm going to have to get a better set of friends.)

Lensmen limericks. Who would have thought? The "alien money" by Rotsler fitted the material perfectly, being small enough that it could fit in and around the limericks and fit the theme of the Galactic Patrol, too. I think I liked the "Epilogue" best tho some of the limerick cycles were kind of fun, too. It's easy to see from just this short collection what Joe means when he says that the chronic bawdy nature of limericks quickly grows tiresome.

The older I get the less surprised I am that seemingly plain and obvious matters can be hopelessly fouled up--like the question of the twins that Jodie Offutt raises. It's a simple question of one or two placenta, but only if someone thinks to count them as they come out.

A postcard from Vatican City that says "I'm almost done." Is one of your Mystery Women trying to become a Saint?

"F.H.F." -- This is one *Xenolith* reader that never did figure that one out. Of course I wasn't trying either...

I thought Brad Foster did covers for every issue of *OUTWORLDS*. Maybe it's that you only have full page covers when Brad sends you one of his covers, so it only seems like he does every cover--because he does all the covers for issues that have covers.

Ian Covell isn't the first person to think that the complete human is a matched pair, male and female. I ran across a myth recently, must be Norse because I've been reading some Norse mythology, that held that the first humans were four legged, four armed, bisexual beings that were so near to being perfect that they had the gods worried, so one clever fellow split them down the middle and ever since the gods haven't had any worries about humanity because the men and women are too busy trying to find their "other half".

It's a cute story.

Mike Glicksohn wonders who I had in mind when I groused about the modern tendency for some fans to become famous and well known more for their socializing abilities rather than their fanzine activities. Well, naming names is never a good idea in matters like this. The named parties--and their friends--will only take offense and I need more enemies like I need dyslexia.



Tony Cvetko sorting through the piles of stuff in his apartment to make a pile of trash to throw out? I've seen Tony's apartment and I don't think he's ever thrown anything out. In fact I suspect that those 25 pounds that Tony says he lost are lying around somewhere, hiding under some pile or another. Unless he brought them over here and left them with me. Lord knows I've picked up a few extra pounds somewhere. [9/13/85]

## ..... AVEDON CAROL

I can't resist the temptation--I tried, and Ms. Cowan even supplied a nice neat (well, not really convincing, but she tried) rationalization of Mr. Covell's interesting theory, too. But I just can't do it. I keep asking myself, "Which man? Which woman? How close do they have to be? What color are they?"

It's this business about how humanity is one human female and one human male--and roughly the same age, too. Christ, and I thought there were billions. And I've always felt that "humanity" and similar words were meant to encompass us all, as high as we soar and as low as we sink, in all our variety. So Maia's explanation doesn't work either, damnit, much as I'd like it to.

A human male and a human female--of roughly the same age. What does that mean? Consenting adults? Do they know each other? What are they doing? Does that mean you're not human when your partner leaves the room? Do you have to be friends, or can this just be cheap sex? What does this mean to transexuals? Can they be human all by themselves? How about if they are halfway through the surgery? What about hermaphrodites? What if she's old enough to be his mother? What if you have to go to the bathroom? How about if you fool around on the side?

Really, no matter how I try to read Ian's remark, it looks to me like you aren't human most of the time. Or perhaps he just hasn't thought it through. I suppose it seemed like an easy rationalization for why people "should" be heterosexual or something, but given that some people have done some perfectly transcendent things without ever having found a mate of any kind, or without ever having shown any signs of heterosexuality, it seems a pretty cheap rationalization, and one that places humanity at the very lowest level.

And then of course, there's what happens if you try to figure out what his little definition means. Why, it makes no sense. If you have to have a partner of the other sex to fit Ian's definition, that still leaves troublesome questions like just how close you have to be to each other--married? In love? Or hating each other is OK if you're married? How about living together? What if you're reading a book? Must you be actively interacting? Just in the same room? Married and in love but in separate rooms? Separate buildings? Married and in love and living together but also fooling around on the side with members of your own sex? I mean, where exactly is Ian drawing the line, eh?

Anyway, since the girls outnumber the boys, that means even if we all paired up in nice heterosexual couples tomorrow there'd still be a lot of women left over who would apparently be left out in the cold by Ian's definition.

And why bother? We already have words for all these little arrangements--a man and a woman together (as in "Together") is something like "a heterosexual couple", isn't it? (In fact, "a couple" will usually do, since, as Anna Vargo put it, "The default value is heterosexual.") When we're talking about *humanity*, we're talking about something *much* bigger--like, the sum total of every human being that ever has been or will be, maybe. You don't refer to "a humanity" to mean a man and a woman, do you? "We're having six humanities for dinner tonite, so set the table for twelve." Hmmm. It seems to me Ian has come up with one hell of a useless definition.

I suppose we all succumb, at one time or another, to the temptation to define "humanity" as only people who behave in ways we approve of--"Those Nazis, what they did was so *inhuman*!" And it would be nice to be able to think that humans could be relied upon not to behave in ways you *don't* approve of--but why Ian is picking on gays I can't imagine. After all, there are numerous far more unpleasant behaviors under the sun which are more likely to do harm to both individuals and humanity as a whole. "I define humanity as anyone who does not perform or prescribe electroconvulsive therapy." Tempting, tempting... But then you're left with having to figure out what phylum they *do* belong to...

Well, I suppose it's something to do while waiting for 5:30 to come round so I can get on the tube and go home and, uh, Get Human. [11/22/85]

## ..... DAVE YODER

A direct challenge this time, eh? Don't think I can do it do you? Well, you may be right; I may not get this done in time for the next time I see you. And if it's not finished by then I'll probably never get it done before you get out another ish, which means it'll never get sent. I've got to do this too; can't allow a thrown gauntlet to go unnoticed--especially when it was thrown in print. Besides, I think perhaps I better explain myself a bit as regards the loc on Spacecon you printed in 46; it does read a bit nastier than I intended it should. (It seems that about the nicest I can be with people I like is approximately two cracks to each compliment--and it's usually worse.

Since moving to Pa. we've timed our Vacation so that it ends with Spacecon. As a result I came into that Sunday afternoon a bit tired but relaxed. While in this frame of mind Bill comes by, drops a sheet of paper in front of me, asks for a loc on the con and then wanders off again. I flip over the paper and find Bill's "rules", so--a little free association, some slightly muddled remembering and thinking ("Up a quarter") and I start laying out words.

Say something nice to start out with. Hook him with what seems to be another compliment but ends with a twist. ("I'll take two.") Take something you remember Joni Stopa saying in a fanzine somewhere, pitch it to him with a little sting on it and hope that



1) he gets the reference, 2) he doesn't take you seriously. ("Call") Should be able to do something with this third rule: make it nasty, tell him you love him -- Oh God, what if he takes this and prints it, just the sort of thing he'd do ... nah, too much sense. ("Queen high straight") Now for something silly to lighten the mood, damn the smooth segues ... hmmm doesn't even make much sense to me. Finish up brief and honest--keep him off stride. ("Shit") No time for rewrite or fixing up; he's coming back. Hand it to him and hope he gets a kick out of it--and then throws it away. ("What's the game?")

Somehow I don't think I really believed you'd print the thing despite your threats to the contrary. At least you tucked me away from all the rest of the folks who do this sort of thing well. Those last few pages have a definite "other business" look about them.

OW46 is up to your usual standards of excellence: beautiful layout, good writing, interesting lettercol, Foster and Atom covers--what more could I ask for? Well, maybe that you could have left out Joe Christopher's limericks. The accompanying text is okay, some have a good beat, some are humorous, but none quite have the quality which makes a limerick more than mediocre. However, I do applaud his gallant effort (good loc, too).

The first two adjectives that came to mind when reading Jodie's piece were "cute" and "charming". Now, while these are perfectly good adjectives I always hesitate to use them to describe someone's work because cute and charming is often not what they're striving for. The word "entertaining" can also be applied here and since that should be any writer's goal I don't suppose there can be any objections. Anyway, I hope she'll let us know what's going on with the cow, the horse, and the calf.

Oh yes, *"The Annotated Bowers"*, I have nothing to say. I always get tongue-tied when people start giving out pieces of themselves. I just wrap them up in little velvet bags and store them next to my heart. [undated]

### MIKE GLICKSOHN

When you complain, albeit gently, about the occasional ill-considered comment about your supposed sexual preferences I think you're on somewhat shaky ground. It isn't so much that you are a "Public Performer" as it is that *you* yourself have helped shape that particular image. It's a schtick that you have consciously fostered and you've been one of the largest contributors of asides/jokes/snappy remarks, etc., much as I have worked hard on building the Glicksohn=alcohol schtick. (I have my reasons and I assume you have yours, probably different from my own but equally valid to you personally.) When friends or even strangers contribute to the fannish myth I've spun about myself I can't be annoyed about it as I've deliberately brought it on myself. I think you're in the same boat. The main thing is that I know how much of the myth intersects reality in my case and *you* have a similar understanding of where you yourself stand. (This is something Doris doesn't really understand which is why she is more sensitive to "jokes" about me than I am.) If you feel that it's time to bring this particular part of the Bowers Mythos to a close then come out and say that plainly and your friends will, oblige but until you do so I'm guessing you'll have to sleep in the bed you've made yourself over the last ten years or so.

Hmmm, I note from my loc in this issue that I seem to be stuck in a rut. I was about to say what a waste of paper the limericks were (but the layout was interesting) but that merely reiterates the fact that you and I have very different ideas about what makes for good fanzine fare. So it goes and I'm glad it went that way as it gives me something to do with any mediocre stfnal poetry I might happen to get in the mail (from someone with a rather poor grasp of contemporary fanzine publishing, of course).

There are lots of us in the "Other-people's-kids-are-okay" school but unlike Richard Brandt I'm not worried about the foreseeable future *or* the out-of-sight future. Plenty of others to take up the slack, though; I hear that Ohio is a veritable hotbed of procreation lately. I guess people have to do *something* to make life in those boring midwestern dullsilles bearable! [Despite my initial comment to Joel (p. 1723) ... two years later SOME things seem to remain the same!]

Ian Covell will get lots of disagreement on his statement about the nature of humanity and it would certainly seem that statistically and from my personal experience he's on insecure ground. Let it be, though. I wonder what his "roughly the same age" translates into though? The happiest couple I know (and probably the most well-adjusted) are my father and step-mother who have just celebrated their ninth anniversary. He's 68 and she's 31; that's pretty "rough", wouldn't you say?

It was, of course, in OW that I picked up the information I used to make George Martin crawl under the banquet table at RIVERCON (although the follow-up research took me into my own comic collection). Luckily I doubt I'll ever be a GoH at a convention again so I don't run the risk of having the tables turned on me because I too had several letters published in early Marvel Comics (but I *never* once used "by gumbo" to show my admiration!). OW readers might also be amused to know that in an even *earlier* issue of *Fantastic Four* than the one containing GRRM's first published prose I ran across a letter from a young fan named Martha Beck! It might be amusing to find out how many of us once went the Marvel letters page route...

I always thought Al Sirois was respected and oft-published which would seem to indicate that he and George Martin are actually one and the same person! I enjoyed his self-appraisal as "twenty years out of style but with Politically Correct hair." I suppose this makes me just "20 years out of style."

Thanks for the kind words on my RIVERCON performance, even if the description of it as "formal programming" produced a chuckle or three. It was, I suppose, one of my small handful of truly memorable fannish moments...which makes it all the more annoying that I really don't "remember" it at all, at least not in the sense of being able to recall just



what I said, what the audience said/did, what George said and what I was feeling the whole time it was going on. I have the definite sense that the whole thing was quite a rush but I agree with you that it was a shame Larry wasn't there videotaping the whole thing. These magic moments come (to me at least) all too infrequently and it would be nice to have a way to recapture some of the magic. (Perhaps this is familiar to you, oh survivor of IGUANACON...?)

Since I've been to all seven SPACECONs I think I can safely say that I really don't expect to see any difference in your participation in #8 in comparison to the first seven. I mean, you've never actually *done* anything at a SPACECON anyway, right? Oh, you bother a few people about room rates and such but bothering people is S.O.P. for you son in '86 only the *reason* will change, not the activity (or lack thereof). Now if you really want to find out what we've been doing for the last seven years I can give you a few lessons (as an old friend you'll get the cheap rates) and you can join us at the table instead of hanging around the bar or reading comic strips! [9/10/85]

## HARRY WARNER, JR.

Shortly before reading the 44<sup>th</sup> issue, I needed to get my driver's license renewed and surprisingly, I accomplished that feat although with a restriction: wear glasses at all times while operating motor vehicles. But I feared flunking all together the vision test. There was a wait of perhaps a quarter hour until those before me in the line had been processed, but once my turn came, it took only about twenty minutes until I walked out with my new license in hand. I'm sure they must use in Maryland some sort of pictures-in-a-minute camera for the photo on the license. If New York State sends photos to the state capital for processing, I wonder if this means the use of conventional color film in order to get duplicate copies of each picture, one for the license and another for the files of law enforcement agencies.

Unfortunately, I've had next to no experience with ferrets so I can't offer specific comments on Skel's article. But I do remember a favorite fairy tale that I read often as a child, in which these animals were mentioned. The little people who were the characters in this tale lived in a forest. One of the youngest of them asked a wise old elder, Ef Dear, if it was safe to wander around away from their village. He told the youngster there was only one animal that could be dangerous: "The only thing we have to fear is ferrets, elf."

Of course, I was proud of the egoboo in the 45<sup>th</sup> issue contained in Walt Willis' comparison of me in fandom and Spencer Tracy in the movie world. But somehow, it seems unfair: I never got a Katherine Hepburn the way Spencer did.

The Dave Locke interview with Denise Parsley Leigh was interesting. I'm not comfortable with the popularity of Aikido and all the other martial arts, even though some of them insist they aren't meant for offensive purposes. I have this fear that eventually we'll reach a point at which so many people have trained in these techniques that suddenly most squabbles will escalate to the exercise of those martial arts and there will be much more serious injuries than the black eyes and skinned knuckles that normally result from unscientific brawls.

Roger Waddington's philosophizing over the accumulation of books and such things struck home hard. I try to reason with myself that I'm justified in keeping so many books because I don't live near a first-rate library where I could refer to almost any book when impulse moved me, because I'm preserving books for someone else eventually to own, because I'd love to see what happens if the police should someday obtain a search warrant and arrive at my house seeking some small object, and so on. But the bitter truth is probably a combination of selfishness and habit, two vices that are comparatively harmless when exercised in this way.

The cover of the 46<sup>th</sup> *OUTWORLDS* must have created the same question in a lot of recipients as occurred to me: is the young woman drawn from life or from imagination? I suspect the former, or at least from a photograph. It's beautifully done, in any event.

I'm too antsy for the writer's block behavior that Dave Locke describes, sitting at the typewriter with a blank piece of paper waiting for words staring at me. I would begin to perspire and quiver if inspiration didn't come immediately in that posture. Instead, I just stay away from the typewriter if I have promised something to someone and can't think of anything to write about. One advantage of my system is the possibility that I'll see or overhear something that will give me an idea for the manuscript. Staring at blank paper in a typewriter restricts sources of inspiration to mental processes.

I enjoyed the return of Jodie Offutt as a fanzine contributor. One house up the street from mine used to give me much the same impression as the tesseract dwelling at the foot of her hill: there were usually children playing around it and the children seemed to change from month to month. I attributed it to time passing so rapidly in these latter days, causing the kids to grow up before I realized what was happening. But later experiences caused me to revise my opinion and take for granted the fact that the kids were sent there by some social agency or other and periodically exchanged for other kids.

Complaints by some fans about Bjo's recent ventures aren't exactly the same as complaining about making "extra cash out of our involvement with science fiction" as Mike Glicksohn puts it. Fans normally rejoice when one of their number becomes a pro author or a pro editor or produces anthologies. What is at issue here is manipulating fannish impulses for cash, trying to build up enthusiasm for this or that professional venture. Bjo isn't the only one doing it but she has been quite active in fandom in the past so she gets more blame. It's akin to the uneasiness opera enthusiasts feel with the claques members in the big opera houses who are paid by certain singers to lead the applause and to the dislike baseball fans experience when a high tech scoreboard flashes "APPLAUSE!" or "NOISE!" as a signal to the audience to react. [12/26/85]



and not just go ahead and vote for whatever it is they have seen / read / ~~heard~~ written. Enough to be silly awards. The best news contained in #46 was in regard to explanation of why you decided not to stand for PFF this year. Does that mean that in 1987...? You'd be more than welcome, if only so that Autodesk fanboym could collectively pick your brains for some gut-level skill at lay out. Outworlds is consistently the best laid out I see, and I think I see most of the non-American stuff.... Anyway, yeah - Bonds in '87. Good idea.

At this point I was going to write and tell you  
all about what I've been doing with myself these days.

but it gives lots as I write, and I want to  
finish this card now so that it will get to

you before Christmas; if I leave it, and put the card  
in the box, it will be all right. I will  
make the Christmas card - so forgive the name (if  
inconvenient) matter that makes it all right for  
Christmas and New Year. Perhaps to find  
it, I could wish you a Merry Christmas - That?  
I have just started learning Thai, so here goes: Dear Bill,

[illegible]

and all the best for the New Year,  
Regularly, Roger.

where his work has appeared regularly

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

and to wish you a strong and happy new year, wishing that in  
so much that I would go around its withing again together

emerged the special effects; let's get down to business and my  
best (that's) 'lineal'

who, being a bit of a dill

Printed sexiest linerings

About women taking trucks

Because he had more space to fill. I wasn't sad,

Harry composed this ditty off the top of my head, that I in fact quite liked most of the

himself, and did not actually object to any of them. The layout was lovely, by the way.

although I really do wonder about Potbel-tsometimes... "Alien Money"? Sigh. He should

have left the wheels of reuse, as Christmas decorations, or just simple ornamental bits.

they look quite nice. Daisy told that my six were given me when we first married and she said that I had started a second brood about the

A feeling I had when I saw a man - a poor, downcast, D  
 a that I saw - "id." | 41.2 "Pete's" Hols are nice - just as Hols: And as the

|                           |            |          |                                  |
|---------------------------|------------|----------|----------------------------------|
| adventures of that class: | my father: | must say | Paul and Mike Glickson's remarks |
|---------------------------|------------|----------|----------------------------------|

subject of news - 0, I mean, a work, -  
 1st: B. I like it - all in this year's Hua for fan that lovely woman,

on 10/10/10 Data for 10/10/10 was 10/10/10

and also a bit less. I was in good pressure & meaning, I was

7. I'm happy for flux when I won the Hugo, even though I might stress work.

1. Chlorophyll - green pigment in plants that captures light energy for photosynthesis.

1. What is a word used to describe a person who is not a citizen of the United States but who is living in the United States?  
 Answer: Immigrant

the respective members of  
the community (W. &  
J. 1990) about how many people will  
be involved in the project.

... publication ... as SF Review, but so ahead and vote anyway. The worst

Smallen this is the fact that Steven Fox received less votes than No Hard in two years

His race. Mike Clay's reaction to his being won the fourth Hugo twice in a row.

(He's withdrawn F-40 from further construction, he says), while well-intentioned, is an

and why he won a dozen more awards, but at the same time just with that people's appropriate reaction to the problem of your winning: *Good man, I say, & honest,*

Where going to vote would try to see the work of the people up for nomination,



## BUCK COULSON

Boucher not only wrote science-fictional limericks, he wrote a science fiction story based on a limerick. "*Pelagic Spark*", *Astounding*, June 1943. The limerick was one by de Camp, tossed off as a parody of Nostradamus (de Camp insisting that the limerick form was more suitable to modern prophets than the outmoded quatrain). De Camp claimed that by 2342 his "prophecy" would have "come true" according to the true believers of prophetic non-sense, because it didn't really mean anything, and thus was open to wide interpretation. Boucher then made a story out of the "foretold" events.

I like Christopher's "hyperlimericks" -- a new verse form?

My opinion on fraternal/identical twins is, what difference does it make? But I'm interested in that cow/horse family; maybe Jodie has identified a new species. A corse? A how? Keep us up to date...?

I think the basic reason for "fanwriter's block" is that so few subjects are worth writing an article about. A paragraph covers them. Lots of fans go on to write the article anyway, which leads either to (a) very humorous writing, or (b) very dull fanzines. [9/12/85]

## DAVE D'AMMASSA

Salutations from someone you haven't met. In a large pile of my father's "recently received" fanzines, the cover caught my eye (the color and the girl) that read *OUTWORLDS* #46; and I hadn't read it yet! So I grabbed it and flipped through it.

Read your opening article with interest; people my age haven't yet mastered the art of "being cute" without at time being malicious, so I can identify with the dull hurt you must have felt from Ro. Even if the subject matter is...er...ahead of my time (cough).

Enjoyed Dave Locke's article. This loc will be largely on Locke (say it ten times, fast). I don't have a lot of trouble coming up with material for fanac. I'm active in two apas and do a fanzine, and so far have not had any major problems finding stuff to write about. *Fiction*, on the other hand, gives me plenty headaches.

...what else? Oh, Jodie Offutt's stuff was fun, too. ...hmm...(flip flip flip)...your repro is excellent. I don't get along with our mimeo at all; I find it an aggravating machine. Just like this typewriter, which wants to advance its carriage at random.

Anyway, I liked w h=(goddamn typer)...like what I read. ...scuse me while I smash my typewriter. [rec'd 11/22/85]

## LARRY DOWNES

Yeah, I'm still out here.

In my new capacity as the boss, I get to spend a lot less time at the places I go, and go to more of them. This summer I spent most of the time commuting between New York and Seattle, a truly bi-coastal experience, with occasional stops in St. Louis, Cincinnati (sorry, never for more than a day!) and even Chicago. Once I got used to the red eye flight back, I didn't mind the cross-country stuff. New York and Seattle are both cities I love dearly, but they are complete opposites. In New York I can't decide whether to look at the skyscrapers or the bridges, the parks or the avenues, and I always find the urban landscape enchanting. In Seattle, the skyline, which isn't bad or anything, is the least important visual attraction. The Olympics, the Cascades, Mt. Ranier, and the high cliffs and weaving waters of the Sound make the entire place one big vista; a friend has an apartment with a balcony; the fact that it has a perfect view of downtown is almost irrelevant. You can see the water on the other side.

As a midwesterner, I can't do anything but get excited by mountains (what do you do with them on the weekends, I ask not sarcastically?), and there's no doubt I feel more at home in New York than the Northwest. In fact, to me Cincinnati is ideal: downtown isn't ugly or crowded, there's lot's of places to have lunch, people are friendly and unpretentious, and you have more than your fair share of superb bridges and wacky old skyscrapers. You even have some hills, with cheap rent (or so I'm told).

Jesus, I'm glad I left Detroit. For years I was trying to remember to call Chicago "home", (as in the sentence, I'm going to my parents' for the weekend), but now I really feel that it is. There's a map of it in my head, there are few parts of it I haven't been to or can't describe, I don't think about am I safe at this time in this place--I know. And when I walk out of my apartment, I don't think first about what I'm wearing, or how I act outside; to me, that's a place you call home.

It isn't coming as a shock to anybody except the people I work for that I've gotten rather tired of the company and have turned in my notice. As of September 30 (I'm in London that week--through no scheduling coup of my own), in fact, I am unemployed. I prefer to think of it as "retired". Yes, Bill, I'm going to retire before you, so you can imagine how much this job has aged me in just 4 1/2 years. I'm not even planning to look for another job for six months. The partners think I'm crazy. I've never felt more certain and more elated by a decision in my life (well, a few others, but none professional). I've given lots of different reasons to lots of different people for this decision ("overpaid" is one that doesn't go over especially well, so I dropped it), but the truth is that I never considered not quitting; it was only a matter of when. To me this job has been like an extension of college--it's fun, but it has to end sometime. I'm sorry, on the one hand, that it hasn't left me any time to think about what I want to do next but, on the other hand, it's also given me the financial freedom to do that after the fact, on my own terms. The prospects seem almost infinite.

The first thing I want to do is find out what kinds of things people get paid to do, and make a list of ones that I'd like to try. I'll keep you posted.

P.S. Thanks for OW 44-46!

[9/11/85]



...regarding **OUTWORLDS 46**, I Also Heard From:  
**SHERYL BIRKHEAD**: "Brad Foster is indeed a happening. The cover he did for you is beautiful--I'm not certain how much of there is in it, but on its own, it is just lovely. I had just sort of assumed he WAS a Hugo winner since I've seen his work everywhere, but I gather from what is said in **OW** that this is not the case. That in itself is a shame." [That particular inequity was corrected in England, this year!] • **MIKE BRACKEN** • **CAROLYN DOYLE** • **BRAD FOSTER** • **BRAD WESTERVELT** • and • **GENE WOLFE**: "I'm sorry Ruth and I made Hania Wojtowicz mad. Hania, I went to Edgar Allan Poe Elementary School. My favorite color is white, and I'm a wronger. But we do so retain our buoyant and boyish curiosity, love of adventure, sense of fun, and so forth. It's what you call nonsense. ¶ Remember?"

## EDD VICK

It strikes me that I haven't responded to the last hundred and fifty pages of **OUTWORLDS**--that being about what you've put out this year (so far!). Well okay. a hundred forty-five, but who's counting. I decided that a brief excursion into locs that might have been was in order...

**OUTWORLDS 43**: The 15<sup>th</sup> *Annish* found me deep in the throes of divorcal (or something like that), but I wasn't going to build on that theme, since I'd mentioned it in the letter before which you would print in number 45. No, I would have started my letter "Dere Mr Bower'ses," and gone downhill from there, for that was the issue in which you chided Mr. Shull and myself for apostrophizing the 's' at the end of your name. Oh, I'd'a been nice about it, and would've said complimentary things about the Foster cover 'n' illetters. Or cuvver and letter's. Nice words would also have been thrown Sirois' way. I would've mentioned the scads of really bad Martin stories in early comics fanzines. I think I even had a particular one in mind, but it slips my memory after all these many moons. It would all have been very much tongue in cheek, and would have been topped off with an appreciation for his current work. I would've gushed about the illo on page 1500--exactly as I'd planned--since it's only the second one of mine you've accepted. We must get together someday on just what exactly it is that you prefer that I ain't doing.

**OUTWORLDS 44** arrived several months later right in the middle of my trip to California. I didn't really intend responding to it, since I had several deadlines, apa and otherwise, staring me in the fingers.

I believe that any letter to that issue would have been terribly mundane-sounding, grounded as much of it was in neep-neepery, which am my life, sort. I would've ook-ooked at Eric Lindsay's letter. I woulda talked about the allergy scratch test; I woulds talked about ferrets and England. Yep. Terribly, terribly mundane. Good thing I didn't write it.

**OUTWORLDS 45** had my letter in it from six months before, and most of it seemed to have been written by someone else. There 'I' was, moaning about divorce, when it obviously was one of the better things to happen to me. There 'I' was talking about going to the NASFiC, when it should have been obvious I wouldn't have been able to go. My hook for a loc on **OW45** would've been the changes in my life since writing that letter. Not a bad hook, but I doubt I'd been able to write a very long letter with it.

Boy, locs sure are easier to write in retrospect!

My letter to **OUTWORLDS 46** would have been my masterpiece. I had a title for it, and everything. I was going to call it 'The Circumstances Surrounding My Reading of *Outworlds 46*'. Catchy, huh? Y'see, the drive from the Radio Shack where I used to work to my house goes through countryside, and right in the middle of the most ghuforsaken stretch of countryside I had a flat tire. Now, I knew from trying once before that the jack that had come with my van couldn't get the front end far enough off the ground to change said tire, but I tried anyway. Several times. Such tricks as putting a flat stone under the jack and placing the jack in different places didn't work, so I hiked the five miles or so (What? Hitch a ride? I tried; nobody would even slow down) to a housing development and knocked on a dozen or more doors until I found somebody who was both home and had a phone. Some people had been waiting six months for the new! phone co. to come install their instruments (sounds a bit pornographic, no?). I found a very nice man who let me call the AAA and who drove me back to my van, where I sat in the back seat and had most of **OW46** read by the time their tow truck arrived. We used their jack to put my spare on in no time flat (what a weird phrase; of course it wasn't flat). Well, I'd've prettied up the bare bones of the story considerably, but it would have been something. Take my word for it.

You'll have to. Heh, heh.

And then before I could start on said masterpiece, along come **OUTWORLDS 47**. Whew. What a shame. **OW47** was ... elegant. If your speaking manner comes across even half as well as your speech read, I'd have been very impressed. [11/6/85]

## WALT WILLIS

It was interesting to see your speech all written out like that, but I keep wondering what you actually do during all those Significant Pauses .....I mean do you fix the audience with a glassy stare like Jack Benny....or grin and blow cigar smoke over them like George Burns.....or perhaps you juggle plates? The problem arises even more acutely in ones mind when one reads of your telephone conversation with Teresa Nielsen Hayden...an encounter which deserves to rank in history with that between Christopher Columbus and the West Indians; one feels you are so completely different in styles that you might get on very well together and I'm glad that seems to be the case. But how did she know you hadn't hung up? Maybe you emit a little ticking noise at regular intervals.....like a bomb? [12/9/85]



## MIKE GLICKSOHN

...it was fun to read yet another rambling fannish discourse masquerading as a program presentation. I think it's a damn shame you went to all that work for such a small audience but I also think that was a perfectly predictable scenario. A midwest fanzine fan could hardly expect to be a big draw at a media con in the heart of Texas, right? Still, I expect you really knew that all along and were merely getting another issue of OW ready when you claimed to be writing your "speech".

Despite the traditional melange of misrepresentation, deliberate obscurity, veiled innuendo, restricted comprehensibility and personal esoterica which makes up the heart of every Bowers public performance I thought this one had more of an underlying thread to it than many you've done and I think it worked well because of that. The fact that I probably didn't understand more than a half of the references myself couldn't stop me enjoying reading it (as it never has in the past). And as far as I could tell your mentions of me were mostly historically accurate so perhaps the rest of what you said can be taken as valid also. (But I still think the topic might deserve a more linear investigation someday, either by you or by someone more concerned with fan history in general rather than in particular.)

No matter what you say I still believe there's a big difference between a NASFiC and a small fannish party. The Wapakoneta thing wasn't advertised, didn't offer any inducements to fans to attend, and only charged enough to cover costs. Hell, it was so unconventional it didn't even have a name with the letters CON in it! I've no objections to that sort of "traditional" fannish "non-con". I still do object to the very idea of the NASFiC (if overseas fans can wait years or even decades for an accessible worldcon sure US fans can hold on for one year until the next one arrives) and I won't go to one. I realize that has no effect whatsoever on anything but it's the way I feel and I'll stick to it. [10/23/85]

...so Mike, what if...just What If...a future NASFiC were to ask you to be its Fan GoH? I know we all have our stubbornness, I mean Points of Honor...but were a Columbus con to ask ME...I'd probably accept... A free convention...is a free convention...is a free convention!

## BOB WEBBER

Well, here it is at last, the LoC on *OUTWORLDS 47*. Just for you, I'm going to change the ribbon in the printer before I print it. You may even be able to read it. Hmm, suddenly I find myself reminded of Langford's reference to the Glicksohn School of Letterhacking or some such in *Nothing Left to the Imagination but Punctuation and Grammar* lettercol.

The first paragraph is supposed to be absolutely vacant of meaning. The second paragraph is supposed to comment on the vacuity of the first paragraph. Personally, I still need some practice before I get to the exams; hard to get rid of some sort of content when you're sitting in front of the same machine you use to write term papers and thesis. It's sort of Pavlovian response, like drooling on your typewriter when the margin bell rings.

That same issue of *NLTTI* had a comment from Eric Lindsay on the need to know you to get anything out of your fanzines. Is this true? I hadn't noticed it in reading this OW, but maybe you're improving.

I managed to miss your speech at the NASFiC, but was real glad 'cause the prospect of writing one of my rare LoCs on something I'd seen before and maybe commented on in person is real daunting. It reads well though; I hope everybody could hear it. \*Tap\* \*Tap\* \*Tap\* was that thing on?

I remember BadgeCon happening at Autoclave 1, 'though I missed it through the needs of pressing personal business. Reading about the ongoing attempt to program it reminds me of a creeb I have with you and a bunch of other people, though: do you have to refer to your requests for the use of the Corflu name as bids? For that matter, do you have to go on holding them by the same name?

Every time I hear the term "bid" in this connection I think of Worldcons and all the SMOFfing associated with them. I think of SMOFlike conversations I've been on the edge of, which frequently displaced more interesting topic trends. I think of all those people who get up on their hind legs and tell me who's going to win the bid in which year, or how such and so is unqualified to shine shoes for someone on another bid committee. I think of all the squabbling associated with the Bermuda Triangle bid, and the people who aren't content just to have fun. I'd really hate to see Corflu, or "conventions for fanzine fans" go the same way.

Why does it even have to be called "Corflu"? Would nobody attend if you told them, announced in your fanzine, that you were holding a con intended primarily for active fanzine fans in Cincinnati? Sure, a name can be part of a tradition, but surely there's enough room on the continent to have more than one convention aimed at the same audience.

...that'll have to be enough LoC for now. You don't want pages of, "Yes, of course, I agree with you utterly", or, "My, what an astute observation", do you? [7/12/86]

...of course not, Bob; mere paragraphs will do nicely!

## CRAIG MILLER

With regard to Criusecon, I have to disagree. Yes, there is magic in the idea of a convention on a cruise ship. I really like the idea. I just think it's a bad idea for a Worldcon.

It's true, I do think Cruisecon (as presented) is really an Eastern Zone bid, not a Non-North American one, and therefore should be in the race for 1989, 1992, or any other



Eastern Zone year. But that objection is minimal. [And we can debate at some other time if "following the rules" is actually necessary if you "go to all the trouble of filing".]

I really believe, deep down in my fannish heart of hearts, that the Worldcon should be for all science fiction fans--fans from all over the world, and from all the worlds of science fiction. That's what I said in the Chairman's Message printed in the LAcon II program book, and I mean it.

Any other con can limit size, acceptable program subjects, or anything else it cares to. But not the Worldcon.

Worldcons move around North America and around the world, primarily and historically, to give people in varying parts of the world the opportunity to attend. It may be hard for the Aussies and Brits et al to attend when the Worldcon is in Poughkeepsie, but they have an easier opportunity when it's in Melbourne or Brighton. Who is given the opportunity to attend a local Worldcon when it's held on a cruise ship? The crew?

In this day and age, when the previously hardcore unemployables of fandom are making \$40 grand a year or more as computer programmers, we still have people attending Worldcons by getting crowded rides cross country, sharing a single room with 6 or 8 people, and eating one meal a day at a Fast Food Franchise. Not long ago (well, maybe a while ago) that was us, you and me. As far as I can determine, it will cost around \$1,000+ to attend Cruisecon, at best. Cruisecon doesn't allow for people with low incomes (like students) to attend.

Many people have stiff work schedules. Projects due. Limited vacation time. Etcetera. So, sometimes they work through Friday and then catch a late afternoon/evening flight out. They can still attend Saturday, Sunday, and Monday of Worldcon. Cruisecon will require each attendee to attend the entire 7 days of the convention.

North American Worldcons have had attendances of around 6,000 of late (with LAcon II drawing over 8,000). Brighton in 1979 had around 3,000. The ship being proposed for Cruisecon hold 1800. Maximum. It's not big enough for a modern Worldcon (nor does it really have function space to hold even an 1800 person science fiction convention).

I suppose you can argue that the cost in time and money will limit attendance to the size that will fit on the boat, but so would a localized plague allow a Worldcon to be held in a 200 room Holiday Inn. A bit overly dramatic, perhaps, but it makes my point. Two unfair limitations do not make a third unfair limitation palatable.

So yes, I guess I do think that Cruisecon is elitist.

[11/1/85]

...a Subject that is definitely moot; but I felt I owed Craig His Say. [It is my considered opinion still, however, that the 'failure' of Cruisecon simply demonstrated the hopelessly conservative nature of 'modern-day' science fiction fandom, that I've noted a time or two before. It is also my considered opinion that the sheer size of the Cruisecon vote demonstrated a glimmer of hope that the Bigger Is Better/More of the Same Syndrome is not as universal as I'd feared.]

#### WAYNE ALAN BRENNER

I've found a way that I would loc  
a fanzine, were I Mr. Spock:  
I'd say, "The Zine I'm contemplating  
is truly, Captain, fascinating."  
And Bones would make a snide remark,  
and Jim would nod & wink & laugh  
and cause his hairpiece to unpark  
(and we'd auction it off for TAFF).

Although it has much too little to do with the above bit of nonsense, I must mention that I, too, am a proponent of the BERMUDA IN '88 bid. Now the amount of "pull", as they say, that I have in fandom is roughly equal to the gravity produced by one of those little styrofoam mushroom-caps that are used to cushion fragile items which are sometimes sent across great distances because someone needs the item or items to be someplace else for whatever reason, ghod only knows, and they'd break into tiny pieces at the worst or develop cracks at the best, the items, if it weren't for those opportune pieces of styrofoam which my amount of "pull" in fandom roughly equals the gravity produced by one...

...but: please add, if it would be at all helpful, my name to any petition or You-And-Who-Else rebuttal or whatever, because a cruisecon has got to be the most fannish idea since Tucker invented himself--did I read that somewhere?--and I'd vote for it even if I couldn't go, for chrissakes!

"Over the sea, let's go, fen," as Daffy Duck once sang. Yes, by Roscoe!

[10/27/85]

#### JOHN A. CORTIS

Actually stand in front of a group of people and give a speech... I'd be doing brownies in my britches. You are a better man than I, Mr. Bowers. Public speaking ranks right up there with bomb disposal and an afternoon at the DMV on my list of Fun Things To Do. However, I love to listen to people give talks at conventions--one of my many character flaws. Nice speech, but as I've never heard your voice before, reading it proved to be a little difficult; the style requires that it be read in your voice (if you know what I mean).

The most interesting bit was your "Fanposal". Where I find the Bermuda Triangle bid an interesting idea, it does fly in the face of Tradition, does it not? A very long and established tradition--that a Worldcon not be an exclusive event. With only 1750 spots available and (going by LAcon attendance) a possible 8300 takers, the fact remains that perhaps four times as many people than the SS Norway could handle would want to attend.



No Worldcon bid could win if it could only offer 875 hotel rooms. That is why I am puzzled by the behind the scenes maneuvering you hint at on page 1590. Just because someone turns against tradition is no reason to resort to dirty tricks (if that is indeed what has happened--I know nothing of the facts and have only your Fanposal to guide my comments) to retain the status quo. I am not of the opinion that just because a thing has never been done it *should* be done, but conversely new ideas should not be rejected for that same reason.

But you were vague and unclear on the status of the bid and the reason for the disqualification. I guess I'll read about it in *File 770* soon...

Recent advances on the computer front--Borland has released something called *Turbo Lightning*. What it does is sit in your computer's memory while you are running some other program and watch your spelling as you type. Whenever it sees a word it does not know it jumps in and offers you a list of words to replace the offending one with. (Now if they could only write something like that which jumps in and tells me when I'm doing something stupid. There's an application I could use!) [10/28/85]

It's really weird to be rereading all this neep-neep talk generated in the days when the possibility I'd be rekeyboarding the comments was the furthestest thing from my mind. Sorta like being videotaped at Iggy five years before I could spell VCR...

### RICHARD BRANDT

At last, I have seen one of your speeches in person before it appears in print. Of course, this leaves me with no comment to make on the bulk of *OW47*...except that your speech seemed an eminently reasonable commentary on current fannish developments from an Elder Statesman Who Has Seen It All.

I thought the most interesting part of your Boat-Bid discussion was your suggestion that previous Worldcon committees subsidize a bid which is unable on its own to keep costs to members down to an affordable level. Could this be considered a bail-out in advance? (I'll admit "bail-out" is an unfortunate choice of phrasing...) [postmarked 11/16/85]

### BILL BREIDING

Got *OUTWORLDS 47* yesterday. I picked it up during lunch at the POBox and ferried it to a Chinese restaurant. I was *completely* absorbed. You really are an entertaining, witty type fellow, aren't you? Your round-about, delay-as-long-as-possible style is starting to grow on me. I kept missing my mouth during lunch. And those wonderful morsels of Chinese sausage & broccoli over rice kept falling onto *OW*. Riveting stuff. (stains)

Finally isolated that Thread of Tension that's rippled through our relationship lo these many years. I mean--hey!--you're totally right. If you're rich enough to *know* about and get to conventions then you should damn well be able to pay the registration fees. So. You've secretly harbored ill-feelings towards me all these years because I've rarely registered at *Westercons*. Shoulda known it would come down to something like this. It's the little things like *Westercons* that cause these tensions. But I have to admit that you are a shining example of your own beliefs. You mention "hanging" your name on to your life. Well, I'd say you're a bit hyperactive in this sport. Considering you came all the way to an obscure town like Napa (via Dublin, no less!) California to make proof out of the pudding. Pretty damned shining example: Not only did you make me pay that steep price for Corflu 2 registration (and made me sit through that absurd requisite banquet), but you FORCED me to share a room with you--and--gads! I can barely stand the thought--*FAY* half the cost of the room at California prices while Chris Sherman gets to loaf about and steal my room key and act in general negligence like I used to be able to. But no. Somehow you taken it upon yourself to be my conscience. I hope it was worth it, Bill. Because I'm sure I'm going to be able to find a way to "hang" my name on you. It'll be there someday. In cold print.

Meanwhile I think you owe me a drink. ... You're making my hair fall out! [10/24/85]

...on the subject of *OUTWORLDS 47*, I Also Heard From...  
**BRIAN EARL BROWN** • **JOE CHRISTOPHER**: "I want to thank you for the marvellous layout you did for *"Galactic Patrol"* in *OW46*. My only regret, in light of Rotsler's delightful Alien Coins, is that there were no limericks about prostitution. The coins should be being used for *something*." • **BRAD FOSTER** • **MIKE GLYER**: "Hm. Are any of the prejudices reflected in my pages, that you mention on p. 1585, something you think I should get rid of? Or should I simply acquire more subtle ones? Or should I go back and erase this question because I don't really want to hear the answer?" • **ERIC MAYER** • and • **NEIL REST**: "It's funny... Last night was Bid Meeting Night, and one of the items was putting all the miscellaneous decisions of certain scope into a list called Policy. Though I'd never heard the specific attribution, the consensus for #1 was only a slight (i.e., more dignified) paraphrase of, 'If it ain't fun--fuck it.'"

DEAR BILL,

YOU FORGOT TO MENTION THAT I AM ALSO A  
PART TIME STUDENT. AS YOU KNOW I THOROUGHLY  
ENJOY YOUR WIT AND WISDOM AND SO I  
PROMISE TO LOC *OUTWORLDS*-REAL SOON NOW.

SINCERELY,  
NAOMI COWAN



# The Ferret Papers, Revisited

In a note dated December 13<sup>th</sup>, 1985, SKEL advised:

"The enclosed is simply to keep you au fait with the latest developments on the ferret front."

[The 'exchange' is between ERIC MAYER and SKEL.]

Eric,

Shame, I didn't think that the 'Ferret' law synopsis could be quite genuine - life isn't that obliging. However, I assumed that you had tackled it in the same manner as you would a genuine synopsis, and thus just because this particular example of your craft is published outside an accepted legal journal cannot surely have any bearing on the correctness of the work. The law is still the law, no matter what its context. Just think, perhaps someday Outworlds Mumbley-mump may be de-riguer in every law office, being the definitive summarisation of ferret litigation, should that branch of law ever achieve its due pre-eminence.

Don't laugh! There's a fair chance. Two recently rerun episodes of 'Last of the Summer Wine' have made mention of Compo's ferrets, and in one such mention it was made clear that his ferret had bitten a man's nose. Surely here is a wide open field for unscrupulous lawyers? Ferret litigation is almost an untapped resource. And what scope there is, what with the existing Ferret Laws being such a shambles.

Take for instance the Ohio law you quoted, "Place a ferret in any hole or opening in the ground, stone wall, log or elsewhere outside a building in which a hare or rabbit might be confined..." Now it is perfectly true that one interpretation is that it is 'the hole' in which the rabbit might be confined, but it is by no means the only interpretation. Another interpretation is that it is the 'building' in which the rabbit is confined. In fact, if one reads the law with an open mind, I posit that it is far more likely that that particular sentence, the way it has been constructed, implies that it is the 'building' in which the rabbit might be confined. This puts a whole new light on things. Obviously it thus becomes illegal to put a ferret into any hole outside because any outside hole must ipso facto be outside a building in which a rabbit might be confined. There isn't even any room for uncertainty. A building in which a rabbit might be confined is a petshop. A hole that is outside is not only outside a particular petshop, it is outside all petshops. Thus we have the miscreant.

Here perhaps is the perfect opportunity for the law to take SP to its heart, for surely only in SP can there be any defence against the Ohio Ferret Law, surely one of the most pernicious laws ever framed. First attempts at a defence will undoubtedly be in the realms of philosophical cosmogony. After all, if the universe can be viewed as a mega-spatial Klein bottle, and surely it can, then every spatial referent will be both simultaneously within and without every other spatial referent. However, simplistic elegance notwithstanding, this argument will not hold water, thus indicating that the legal universe is more like a mega-spatial cullender than a Klein bottle. No, for a point to be simultaneously 'inside' and 'outside' it must of course be 'outside' (and 'inside' too of course), but this latter is if not irrelevant in fact, certainly irrelevant in law. Yes, in proving that a thing is simultaneously 'inside' and 'outside' you are of course doing the prosecuting counsel's job in proving that it is 'outside'.

Obviously it is not the concept of 'space' we must call into question, in order to make a successful defence against the Ohio Ferret Law, but the very concept of 'time'. It is the concept of 'placing' the ferret in the hole that must be called into question. It is the concept of time flowing onwards and 'forwards' that must be questioned. Obviously in order to place a ferret in a hole there must be a point when the ferret was without the hole, a time when the ferret was introduced into the hole, and a time when the ferret was within the hole. However, it is only our own viewpoint that insists upon this sequence. If all time exists at any one time then it would be equally possible to view the events in reverse, namely that the ferret was taken out of the hole 'before' it was already in there. Thus it can be argued that the appearance of 'flow' of time is the application of human logic in naming asynchronic phenomena on the graph of time. We created them this way because it is logical from our viewpoint, at time, if it exists (and surely it does otherwise time have been slipping us off for years) must surely exist irrespective of our viewpoint, and our viewpoints are irrelevant to time itself, then it follows that any laws based upon causality, upon our own viewpoints of the sequentiality of time, must ipso facto be as unreal as that perception.

The truly amazing thing is that the general human awareness of this way of looking at time will come from the scientists, but from the lawyers, and with the improved breadth of human awareness and understanding will come further breakthroughs. These breakthroughs will advance human thought and humanity of the universe. These breakthroughs will lead to TL travel, the colonisation by humanity of the universe, instantaneous matter transmittal, and possibly even ball-point pens that don't stop writing even though they're still more than half-full...and all this will be directly attributable to lawyers rather than to scientists.

So, in the future, lawyers will cease to be 'ambulance chasers' and become instead 'ferret chasers', and at the same time finally become useful and respected for their contributions to human advancement.

I'm glad Bill is going to run your 'laws' and my response to them. I didn't really intend it as an article. I rewrote my response to you slightly, included your original response (ie. xerox of your response), and turned it into a sort of LOC from both of us to my article in Bill's forum. I did think it all worked rather well though, and am glad he apparently intends to share it with a wider audience. In closing this subject I will I think work up a copy of the relevant portions of our last two letters for Bill. I fully realise that there isn't any similar mileage for OUTWORLDERS in this material, but as Bill is one of the three founder members of APF Ferret, I wouldn't feel right not copying him with the last of The Ferret Papers.

Nov 18.

Dear Skel,

Nope, Ferret Law wasn't real. What I did was look up "ferret" in the NY legal encyclopaedia (which I do write) and in the New York statutory set and in the New York case digest set and xeroxed what I found. Amazing what there are laws on, isn't it? I've come across some doozies...For instance, we still carry federal cases which inform any practicing attorney who's vitally interested that oxen are considered "munitions of war". Don't ask me what that means. Who cares? Then there was the Ohio law I came across while rewriting the Highways article which had to do with private toll bridges and regulated how much the owner could charge (how many pennies) for each goat, cow, sheep etc that crossed it. Sadly that law had been repealed so I had to take it out.

The ferret episode is hilarious. Bill Bowers wrote that you'd sent him the article on it and asked me for a better copy of the laws, which I supplied. Does that make it a joint work?

I note that Ohio also has prohibitions against ferrets...however the owner of a nursery or orchard can use ferrets if rabbits are doing actual damage to his trees. But, get this...No person shall take a hare or rabbit through the use of a ferret or..." this is the good part..."place a ferret in any hole or opening in the ground, stone wall, log or elsewhere outside a building in which a hare or rabbit might be confined..." Now, supposing one enjoys putting ferrets in holes...we all have our own hobbies...how do you distinguish a hole in which a rabbit might be confined from a hole where a rabbit isn't confined...or is it safe to say that there might be a rabbit in any hole outside? (God, I never thought of that before. Kind of gives you the creeps doesn't it?) Conversely, its OK to put a ferret in a hole inside a building, but is this fair to any rabbits which might be inside? How about a laboratory? Or, I can imagine an abandoned building, just a wall left standing. (Or is that a "stone wall") These legislatures should think out important stuff like this. Also, it all strikes me as rather vague. Maybe we have a constitutional right to stuff ferrets into holes. Maybe it is an artistic statement. Freedom of speech. I may not agree with your proclivities but I will defend to the death your right to stuff ferrets in holes.

At any rate, your article shows you have a fine, analytical legal mind. (analyzable too no doubt)

Then too, why would one want to just possess ferrets...some house pet, right. Makes no sense,

The Webster's dictionary isn't that clear on "fitch" its either a European carnivorous animal of which the ferret is the domesticated variety or a skunk. Hmmm. Ferrets and wild ferrets. I doubt they mean you can't hunt rabbits with skunks. Do skunks hunt rabbits.



# Ferrets find a following

Some say they're a perfect cross between cats and dogs. Some say they're cross and smell.

By Michael Leccese

In the past decade, a new type of pet has weasled its way into 3.2 million homes, and probably that many hearts, in the USA. It's the sleek, furry European ferret, a 20-inch-long, three-pound member of the weasel family.

Ferret fans say the popularity is justified.

"They have strong personalities," says Sharlene Wood, supervisor of breeding at Path Valley Farm in Willow Hill, Pa. "They're very affectionate."

And some argue that they're superior to the two most common house pets.

"They combine the best attributes of a dog and a cat," says manager Chuck Morton, who annually sells about 15,000 ferrets (from \$100 to \$170 a head) from Path Valley Farm. Ferrets are affectionate, can walk on a leash, and use a litter box, but before you rush out and buy one, heed the warnings. Not everyone wants to cuddle with them.

Many veterinarians and the Humane Society oppose keeping ferrets as pets.

"They're nesty little animals," says society vice president John Grandy. "They're very quick, they dart when they move, and they have strong jaws meant to kill. I've watched them bite. It doesn't appear to be angry, but then it opens its mouth and you're bit."

Health officials agree. "They smell bad, too," says Faith Schottenfeld, an official for the New York State Health Department. "Why they're so popular beats me. It's a fad."

Schottenfeld keeps a "ferret file" with records of about 50 mutilating ferret attacks in the past three years in the USA and 45 bite incidents in New York state.

Most of the attacks have been on children, particularly infants. "They'll have to wait until their teens for reconstructive surgery," says Schottenfeld. In London, a child actually was killed by two ferrets.

Ferret advocates counter that any domestic animal can be dangerous to children. "The only good pet for an infant is a teddy bear," says Curt Wenzel of Path Valley.

Steven King of the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council in Washington, D.C., notes that New York City reported 9,809 dog bites in 1985, compared to five ferret bites on record there. More than one million dog bites are reported in the USA each year, King adds.

He and others contend that tame ferrets are being confused with the wilder Fitch ferret, an animal raised for its fur. Some unscrupulous dealers do sell this variety. "It's like selling wolves for dogs," says Morton.

The European ferret was domesticated in Egypt in 3000 B.C. and brought to the USA in 1690 to control rats. Hunters in the 19th century used them to flush out small game.

States have been drawn into the ferret fray. At least four states, New York City and the District of Columbia have banned the animals, and several localities require licensing. Schottenfeld points out that only Alaska and West Virginia do not consider ferrets wild animals. On the other hand, legal

challenges in Maine, Alaska and Pennsylvania have lifted restrictions on ferret ownership.

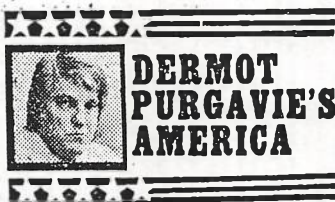
If you're interested in buying a ferret, check a pet store or call Path Valley Farms (717-349-7818). They'll tell you of a distributor in your area.

By David Hathcock



PITTER-PATTER OF LITTLE FEET: Sharlene Wood says her ferrets are intelligent. "They know when to go to bed and to stand and beg at the refrigerator."

Daily Mail, Tuesday, December 17, 1985



## Burrowed time

THE black-footed ferret is the rarest mammal in North America, so rare that what may be the last six healthy ones left in the world are having to be protected from the hazards of nature and are now under guard indoors in the hope that they will breed their way out of extinction.

Man's intervention in the destiny of the black-footed ferret is a matter of some controversy—in the only other attempt to breed them in captivity they all died and as a result a colony was wiped out—but those responsible say they had no other choice.

"When you are dealing with an endangered species, you have to imagine the worst-case scenario, which is that they might all be lost if we don't get them out of there," says Dick Randall, who works for Defenders of Wildlife, the conservation group, in Wyoming.

The six, captured last month and now in cosy isolation at the University of Wyoming, were the only survivors from the once-flourishing last-known colony. It had grown from fewer than ten in 1981 to more than 120 last year, but was found to be in critical decline this summer after plague-carrying fleas destroyed the ferrets' major source of food, a rodent called the prairie dog.

As part of the ferret emergency, the state of Wyoming pumped six tons of flea powder down more than 100,000 prairie dog holes and the only six ferrets that could be found were brought in to their debatable safety.

Apart from the discouraging fact that no black-footed ferret has ever been born in captivity, the two males and four females at the university may be from the same litter and thus have a too-shallow pool of genes for successful long-term breeding. But the watch on America's rarest animals goes on. There's nothing else to do.



### Ways of the weasels

Ferret fans say the animals are:

■ Good mixers: "I have four and they all four play together. And they play chase back and forth with the dog," says Sharlene Wood of Willow Hill, Pa.

■ Easy to feed. They're not big eaters. Feeding them on high-protein cat food costs about \$20 a year.

■ Quick to train. When young, ferrets can be taught to come to a name, walk on a leash, and live in a cage.

■ Healthy: They need a distemper vaccine and, if desired, scent glands can be removed. Their average lifespan is nine to 11 years.

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## SECOND FRONT PAGE

# 6 kits join ferret caboodle

Population of the world's rarest mammal grows to 24

By Margaret Whitmer  
USA TODAY

The black-footed ferret population has grown by a full one-third — to 24.

A litter of six — the first in captivity — was born Saturday to Becky, an adolescent female of the world's rarest mammal, said Larry Kruckenberg of the Wildlife Research Center near Wheatland, Wyo.

The young — called kits — each measured about an inch

long and weighed less than two-tenths of an ounce.

Researchers hope for more births by July 4. Nine of 11 females were bred this year, but officials said there's no way to know if they are pregnant.

"We're optimistic that we could at least double the population," Kruckenberg said.

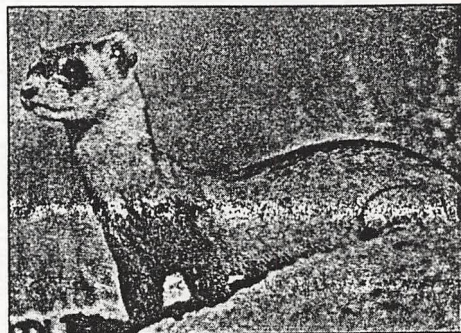
The ferrets grow to 14 inches long and have black feet and raccoon-like masks. They are fed white-tailed prairie dogs and hamsters in their separate

4-foot by 8-foot cages.

They were thought extinct until 1981 when a colony was found near Meeteetse in north-west Wyoming. The colony was almost wiped out in 1985 by canine distemper.

Survivors were captured in hopes they would breed in captivity. A key to the program — Scarface — was the last.

"He was an experienced adult male," Kruckenberg said. "The juvenile males were not prepared."



RARE MAMMAL: Black-footed ferret has a 'mask' around eyes. National Geographic Society photo



# ~~~~~ Add Vance, And Be Recognized ~~~~~ by SKEL

*Being excerpts from the Sixth 'Demon Princes' novel -- an Outworlds first!!!*

• 1 •

From *LAWS OF THE OIKUMENE*, by Mayer and Family; seventy-third edition: The laws of the Oikumene are as varied as the peoples that comprise it. On Sarkovy for instance, the single planet of Phi Ophiuchi, poisoning one's fellow citizen is taken as a matter of course, but selling poisons at a discount to offworlders is a capital offence. On old Earth too for instance, liberal and decadent as it is, only two laws carry the ultimate penalty. The one of course we all know, but the other, 'Standing For TAFF', is unique to the motherworld. No one is quite sure anymore just what this crime entails, but apparently it was an activity which caused so much trouble and strife in earlier eras that it became one of only two crimes on Earth so outrageous and indefensible that it carries the death penalty. The other of course is the 'Ohio State Ferret Law'.

The more one thinks about it, the more one comes to realise that the truly amazing circumstance is not that more laws are not universal throughout the civilisation of the Oikumene, but that even one law is universal. Every first-year Law Student of course knows the background behind the commonality of the 'Ohio State Ferret Law', of how the old generation starships left old Earth with all the accumulated laws and wisdom stored in the memory banks of the ships' computers, and how a mischievously drunken programmer caused the software to obliterate every law that did not contain the character string 'Ohio State Ferret'.

From that moment in time the development was both logical and predictable. As the only crime that was common to every civilised world it became ipso facto self-evident that the crime of putting ferrets down holes must therefore be the most heinous crime in the civilised galaxy, and hence the one crime incurring the ultimate censure on every world. So 'ultimate' was the nature of this crime that the citizen will notice that not once did any of the five Demon Princes, for all their depravity, even contemplate breaking it.

Rape, arson, looting and pillage were as nothing to them. They didn't even think twice about trafficking in drugs or slavery. Murder and mayhem were second nature to them, but they quaked at the thought of the Ultimate Transgression. They balked at breaking the 'Ohio State Ferret Law'.

Let us just reiterate the main points of this law--:

"No person shall take a hare or rabbit through the use of a ferret or..." and this is the good part, "place a ferret in any hole or opening in the ground, stone wall, log or elsewhere outside a building in which a hare or rabbit *might* be confined..."

Such sound percepts for an ordered universe.

From *Cosmopolis* magazine's 'The Galaxy Today' column: All across the world of Billiardball, box office records are being smashed by the touring exhibition of Ignatz Wurm's meisterwork hologramerie, 'The Hole'. Because of the tidal and stellar pressures in the Billiardball stellar system this is of course the only chance the inhabitants of the planet are ever likely to have of seeing a 'hole', or 'opening in the ground'. The breaking of all records for box office receipts is all the more remarkable for the fact that, because the concept of 'holes in the ground' are simultaneously pornographic and anti-social, they have not been granted a 'pg' certificate, and hence are off limits to fully half the population of Billiardball.

.....

The trial, on Billiardball, of Oral Extractor (the Dentifrice) was the occasion for the greatest concentration of journalists ever seen throughout the Oikumene. Within a few short years of his coming to the attention of mankind, here he was getting his jurisprudential comeuppance. Or was he? The fact of the matter was that the most demoniacal of the Demon Princes was not to be brought to book so easily. He had engaged the services of the galaxy-wide firm of White, Bergeron, Carol, and Locke, Defenders of the Faith all, and







point outside was simultaneously outside and inside, then every point inside, must likewise be outside. Thus all holes, whether inside or outside a building 'which might contain rabbits', must effectively be 'outside' in some frame of reference, and therefore always against the law.

The fact that each hole was also inside the building, and therefore within the law, was irrelevant. The Law, said the Judge, cannot concern itself with that which is within the law, only with that which is without the law.

"A building which *might* contain rabbits," said the Judge, "is a pet-shop. It matters not if the hole is within a pet shop, because if it is within one pet shop then it must, ipso-facto, be without all the other pet shops--if it is inside one, then it is outside all the others. The Bastard is guilty, and the Law is served.

• 3 •

From 'The Avatar's Apprentice', in *SCROLL FROM THE NINTH DIMENSION*:  
I often think, Marmeduke, said the EMINENCE from around the edges of a well-gnawed Honey-fowl drumstick, that knowledge is like a meal. Some must make do with bread and cheese whilst others, and here the EMINENCE made a subtle but sweeping gesture which encompassed not only the remains of the sumptuous repast scattered about the table before them, like the aftermath of some particular inconclusive battle, but also concepts and realities not otherwise contained and confined by the tapestry and stone which surrounded them. Facts, facts are the raw material, but to turn facts into knowledge requires a consummate skill comparable to that of only the best of chefs. He placed the stripped bone fastidiously across the centre of his cleared plate and, still not having learned enough, reached for the port with one hand and for a particularly succulent bunch of grapes with the other.

Ah REVEREND GRAY, you are so perceptive. I must admit I had never previously seen wisdom in just such a light.

Wisdom, Marmeduke? Bah, I speak of knowledge, not wisdom. Knowledge, said the EMINENCE, repeating his earlier gesture, I can give you. Here, and he pulled a grape which he flicked almost contemptuously across the table to Marmeduke. Knowledge, yes, there it is, but wisdom, that's a far, far trickier commodity. He struggled somewhat unsteadily to his feet. Here, he said, leaning forward and pushing his plate of inedible remains towards his guest.

You want wisdom? asked the EMINENCE. Here's wisdom!

• • • • •

Kirth Gersen squirmed in his seat. Justice grinds slow. There was more than an even chance that Oral Extractor would escape him. If he was found guilty he would be 'smoothed' according to the percepts of Billiardball justice. If he was found 'not guilty' he would depart the planet with his life. Either way, Gersen would not get to stomp the piss out of him. This would really screw up the natural flow of the series. It was bad enough having a sixth book thrust at one out of left field, so to speak, without being simultaneously hamstrung by jurisprudential procedure.

Suddenly the court was hushed. White, the defence counsel, had fallen back on another ploy. "Time we sorted this out," he said.

• 4 •

From *THE LAWYERS OF NULL A*, by A. E. Vance Fogged:  
Defence Counsel Gosseyn sensed, in that merest flux of time, approximately twenty-nine things, the seventeenth of which was, most importantly, that the first sixteen had been used in the previous novel, whilst the last eleven would have to wait until Piers Anthony invented The Trilogy. This left only his eighteenth awareness which was, fortunately complex and confusing enough to stitch together any number of previously unconnected novellettes and short stories.

The Judge was about to bring down his gavel. Gosseyn reached down inside himself, to that level of awareness and reality that was beyond royalties, and gave the fabric of reality a subtle tweak. Nothing happened. He tweaked harder and there was a sudden wrench. Would this get his client off? Would this get rid of those nasty green tendrils in his hair? Would this screw the Rull, but good? Or had he gone too far? Had he \*gulp\* invented Bill Bowers? No, some things are too horrible for even a mental superman to contemplate.



• • • • •

Gersen looked around the packed public gallery. The trial had drawn an immense crowd, all gazing with rapt attention at the Defence Counsel as he began to develop his main line of defence.

"It is a scientific fact that Time does not flow, and that it is only our puny human perceptions that make it appear to do so. Time is merely an aggregation of chronules slopping to and fro in the jar of the Universe--or perhaps the Universe is slopping about in the jar of Time, like the last pickled gherkin, alone in the vinegar." He glanced at the Judge, C. J. Ironfist, to see how he was taking this line of argument. The Judge seemed, did he, a mite impatient? He hurried on with his defence. "Once we accept the principles of Simultaneity, as accept them we must, we find ourselves taken right outside the constraints of cause and effect. All Time is 'Now', all events simultaneous in that 'Now'. It is only our inability to handle such concepts which make us seek to impose a spurious temporal sequentiality. Of a surety the Law cannot insist that the Universe should be constrained by our own inabilities, and by defects in our spectrum of perception! The Law cannot take such a parochial view!" On this ringing note he surveyed the court. Yes, he could see it quite clearly--he had them. His arguments, his rhetoric held them, as he knew they would. Surely now he would win. It had been a brilliant defence, and one which would see him honoured by all his profession, for once Cause and Effect had been declared legally inadmissible, what point to prove that a particular finger had been on a specific trigger, or that a certain hand had held a certain dagger at the time of death? Lawyers would now be able to argue every case until the end of time. Of course there was now the problem of obtaining their fees, because having proved that time did not flow, the clients might insist that, despite the fact that their cases had *appeared* to take years, they need only pay for a single instant.

But this was for the future. He snapped back from his musings and looked around. The court was becoming restive, he was in danger of losing them. He must finish the job. All he needed now was a perfect summing up, and they were home and dry.

"My client is charged with a specific sequence of events. Remember that, a Sequence of Events. We do not seek to deny the Events. We do however refute the Sequence. For if there is no temporal progression, then there can be no Sequence, and if no Sequence, then there can be no Sequence of Events."

The crowd cheered as one voice. It was the ultimate defence, and the glory was his and his alone. He looked to the Judge, now standing in apoplectic fury, and saw his victory turn to the ashes of defeat in that briefest instant.

"I didn't get where I am today," roared the Judge, "without recognizing a Sequence of Events when I see one!"

Sensing that the tide had turned against them, Oral snatched forth a blaster that he had concealed about his person and, firing wildly left and right, dashed for the confusion of the crowded public gallery. He might have made it but as chance would have it (chance, you will note, not having been declared to have no legal validity) his path took him straight at Gersen. Calling upon his years of martial training Gersen stepped in close and struck down savagely at the wrist holding the blaster. The deadly blow, known to the orientals who had developed that system of fighting as a *tasti-kabanos*, smashed bone and sinew. Then, using *The Hand of Doom* Gersen smashed up into Oral's abdomen. Knowing he was doomed Extractor looked for the first time into the eyes of his nemesis.

"Remember Mount Pleasant?" asked Gersen. "Remember the pitiful victims who begged you for subsidized dental treatment as they were marched into the holds of the slaveships? This is for them!" So saying he brought up his knee in the deadly *knud-krakker* of the kneefighters of New Sweden, and then smashed the steel-hard edge of his foot forward in the terminal *ippi-ippi-shek* of the assassins of Disco IV. "I did not get where I am today," he mused quietly to himself as he adjusted his sleeves and cuffs, "without stomping the piss out of people." Quickly he turned to his companion and helped her to her feet so that they could melt back into the frenzied crowd. As they made their way out of the courtroom, a thought struck him and he turned towards her.

"Tell me, Zap 210," he asked, "aren't you in the wrong series?"

--Skel • December, 1985



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...for the Discerning Reader, previous installments in **THE FERRET PAPERS CANON** include:

A SOPPY'S FOIBLES or AN AMERICAN WEREFERRET IN CLEETHORPES
by SKEL • [OUTWORLDS 44; Pages 1523-26]
MAYER'S NEW YORK STATE FERRET LAW IN A NUTSHELL
compiled by ERIC MAYER • annotated by SKEL • [OUTWORLDS 48; Pages 1596-98]

...forthcoming:

TURNABOUT; A FOUR-LETTERED BRITISH WEREFERRET IN CLEEVEES, OHIO
BUFFALOED; LAWFULLY SHELLING FERRET NUTS IN UPSTATE NEW YORK
PAUL SKELTON; HARE-A-FERRET TO THE THRONE
THE FERRETS OF IF
THE MANY COLORS OF TRAVIS McFERRET [as related to His Friend Mayer]
DANGEROUS FERRETS [an anthology]
AGAIN, DANGEROUS FERRETS [another anthology]
THE LAST DANGEROUS FERRET [an allegorical tale; someday, Real Soon Now]

...soon:

The Ferret Papers Fan Club • Ferretopoly: The Bored Game
A Special Ferret Writer's of the Future Contest
The interactive Ferret Papers Video Game [requires rabbit ears on your television]
Energiferret • the intermittent Official Organ

KIDS! Be the first in your school to release a live ferret in the locker room shower!!!
But you SHOULD NOT attempt this dangerous feat at home with Mom & Dad!
[However, little sisters are fair targets.]

~~~~~  
**NORMAN HOLLYN**  
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One of the very real problems in allowing the issues of **OUTWORLDS** to stack up the way I always seem to let them stack up is that when it comes time when I feel the urge, no--the NEED, to LoC them I have to decide whether I should do them in order or in reverse chronology. With the wealth of material I have here in front of me (pages 1455 through 1590; or, for the uninformed, issues 43 through 47) I can only feel that some issues will get short shrift. Which shall they be?

Let me roll these dice I have handily left sitting here by computer-side. One... two... three. OOOOHHHH! Ah ha, I've just rolled a... forty-seven. It seems inevitable then.
OUTWORLDS 47, it is.

The trouble is, after going over that issue twice, I don't have all that much to say about it. I'm sure the whole thing played a lot less disjointed than it reads. I'm also sure that everybody thought you were making very important points and shook their heads up and down at the proper points and laughed at the proper points. But, as for me, sitting here half past midnight, sipping on a glass of pear brandy, I think that you've written far more intelligible and far more thinking pieces. Perhaps it's just that I'm so damned tired reading about all of the in-fighting for the one-millionth time. Perhaps it's that I really failed to get your point about traditions. Perhaps it's that you couldn't really prepare the speech the way you would have liked. For whatever reason, I had a hard time relating to it as much as I did to your "editorial" in issue 46.

I really enjoyed the beginning of that self-revelatory story about your dating habits. I say "beginning" not because I didn't enjoy the later part of the editorial, but because I felt that you held yourself back from talking about the later part. Yeah, it is a real drag when you start to see things in yourself that you wish weren't there. There's a character in a t.v. show that I'm working on now who says to another character--"I don't like myself very much right now. I used to, but I don't anymore." That is one of the saddest things I can think of someone saying.

I'm sure you are not alone in struggling to build up your self-image. I know that I went through, am still going through, that struggle myself. It is so easy to find that self-respect slipping away when the smallest thing pops up to remind you of your past. And that's not just sexually (though that certainly is one way in which it can manifest itself) but in feeling good about stating your own opinions. Or in choosing a particular clothes color combination. Or in trying to play a game of sports in which you were never particularly good. Or in any one of a million ways. The point is that it is hard to overcome the kind of self-doubt that is programmed into you as a child. I know that I was told that I was a smart child, but that I was not good in sports, or with girls, or in the arts. It is a continual source of joy when I find myself excelling in any of those areas. And it is a hard job not to slip back into the old "I'm not good at this" patterns after one failure.

Dave Locke is wrong. Fans often sit down to write without having the foggiest notion of what it is that they are going to write about. I can't even count the number of times that I have read fanzine editorials or articles talking about how little there is to talk about. You can usually tell these articles because they often involve an exhaustive discussion of some ridiculously minute detail in the writer's daily life. Ed Cox had a talent for writing (or doodling) his way out of writer's block jams. Most writers are not so lucky.

Perhaps it's all the nostalgia and time-binding in these issues of **OW**, but reading the letters from Mike Glicksohn in **OW46** made me miss the Good Ole Days. I got this flash of when Mike and I used to write to each other on a fairly regular basis (locs mostly, but both of us were publishing a bit more in those days). I remember eagerly opening each of

those white-papared missives from North of the Border. I remember a set of lie-swapping stories from Ed Cagle's *Kwalihqua*. I remember a whole bunch of stuff. And then I realize that I know very little about what the man is doing today aside from the scurrilous rumors you propagate in the pages of *OUTWORLDS*. It all seems so long ago. Do you think I'm getting old? Couldn't be, because then Mike would be getting old. And if he's getting old, then you're getting old! And if you are getting old, then--gasp--Jon Singer must be getting old, and that I just couldn't live with.

I always knew I liked Terry Jeeves, and now I find out why. "The real point of all such [fannish] activity is ... to have FUN," he says. Actually, I could go even further and say that one of the best purposes in life is to have fun while doing it. It's just so much easier to do in fandom than in the rest of life. And, as a codicil to that, let me add that when it becomes as difficult to do that in fandom as in the rest of the world, then it is Time To Rethink.

====> SPECIAL ADDED ATTRACTION!! LOC ON OW48!! <====

(These buggers do keep on coming don't they?)

Buck's comment that "No fan or group of fans is/are typically human. Or close to it." sparked a bit of interest in me. I tried to think of all of my friends and their friends and the people who I work with and my relatives etc. etc. ad nauseum. And I'm damned if I can figure out what "human" is, at least figure it out enough to differentiate between fans and non-fans. (Just so you don't think I'm crazy; yes, I know that Buck was joking around mostly. Well, so am I.) I mean, I'm not sure that I would consider my Aunt Frieda any more human than most fans. Unless I'm considering as human, anything with two arms, two legs, a nose, two eyes and over 175 pounds. And that doesn't rule out a lot of fans.

As I'm sure everybody and his/her uncle has pointed out to Skel by now, both of the following are illegal in New York State:

- + owning a ferret, either for the purpose of killing rabbits or for fun and games, and

- + owning a handgun, including a Saturday Night Special, pistol, automatic, etc. etc.

It's not true, as he states, that owning any old handgun is legal. In fact, it is most definitely illegal. Now, owning a bazooka, I can't testify to its legality. Owning a small nuclear weapon? That's probably legal, so long as it doesn't violate any local Environmental Protection laws. Ah yes, it is a tangled mess of lies, uh I mean *laws*, that we weave.

Speaking of Eureka ("my-ree-ka" and "you're-ree-ka") as Jeanne Bowman was, that reminds me of something that's been bothering me during all of the coverage of the Uranus fly-by. Did Ronald Reagan change the pronunciation of that planet this year or has every radio and television news commentator developed an overdeveloped sense of prim-itis? No one seems to think that Uranus is pronounced "your-anus" anymore. It's now "your-ah-nus". It certainly takes something away from the joke about Uranus being worse than the armpit of the universe, doesn't it?

Jodie Offutt's column (re: naming inanimate objects) brings up a horrible thought. What if that horrible Cabbage Patch Doll phase started catching on in all phases of our lives. We'd go out and buy an IBM Selectric and it would come in a big cellophane box with giant letters across the front cover--"IBM PATCH TYPERS. Every one different. No two alike!" Upon opening up the package we would find that the typewriter came with its own cute little birth certificate and that the machine had been given its own name. Something like "Buffy" or "Skip" or maybe "William Seatrump III". It's a dangerous tradition. Watch out Jodie!

Just thinking about Don D'Amassa sitting in front of his television, watching one movie, getting ready to tape another, while typing locs to fanzines (and perhaps, book reviews and other items of interest) is enough to make me positively exhausted. He's a one man media machine. I can't even conceive of having enough energy to do it all. And, let me ask, how can he devote his time and thoughts fully to all of them? Sigh. The man will be awesome if he gets a word processor.

Well, that's all I'm going to be able to handle for the moment. There are some advantages to sitting down and loccing a bunch of *OUTWORLDS* all at one time. I can eliminate some of the comments that I would have made since other people have already made them. I can eliminate commenting on some topics because when I read other people's responses to those topics I can say to myself "You dumb shit, why didn't you see what that person meant, like loccer number one did." Of course, loccing them this way means that they pile up unmercifully since you seem to be putting them out more frequently than I am off in between jobs, but...

[rec'd 3/10/86]

MIKE GLICKSOHN

When I was reading through #48 two thoughts crossed my mind: (a) that I really *must* be getting older as it seemed harder to read than usual, and (b) the issue must have been typed by Brian Earl Brown. Every page was liberally mistyped as if the typist's fingers were wandering over the keyboard in that style of Brownian motion that makes *Nad Scientist's Digest* the national organ of creative typists. To check (a) I dug out OW47 and, lo and behold, it *did* seem easier to read. What did you do this time, use a 12 pitch element on a 14 pitch setting? The words all seem to be crowding in on themselves as if the individual letters suffered from agoraphobia! Whatever you tired here's one vote for not doing it again. It produces an annoying ugly appearance to the printed page and reminds me too strongly of the impending approach of my middle age! [As for (b) I can only suggest that for future issues you stop typing stencils while watching your complete collection of Electric Blue videos. I can't recall seeing a Bowers fanzine with so many badly typed words and phrases in it.]

Well, so much for the good parts of #48...

Wayne Alan Brenner really needn't worry about the long-term effects of Skel's idiosyncratic syntax. There won't be any. Now that I'm typing up a new *Xenium* (but don't hold

your breath just yet) I had cause to return to the notes I took on my 1979 trip to Britain and I found there that I had written down an observation that the younger lither Paul Skelton of that day used the words "pour some ----- down me neck" at least eight times a day (the blank usually being either "beer" or "scotch" depending on the time of day and state of wallet). However, the '85 Skel never used that phrase even once, despite having fifteen or twenty opportunities every day to do so! I think it's pretty safe to conclude that "as they say in Cleethorpes" will likewise have a brief if brilliant existence, soon to be replaced by something else as equally quaint and Skel-like. (After all, the man's mind has all the retentiveness of a bottomless beer stein.)

When I read the New York State Ferret Laws I wondered why you'd bothered to publish them. Oh, they were unusual and certainly intriguing but hardly worth two pages in a major fanzine. Or even in OW. Then I read Paul's letter and it all made sense! Paul's page definitely deserves space in a major fanzine (in fact, it could have had two or three pages if it had wanted extra breathing room) and without the laws it wouldn't have made much sense. I think this letter typifies why I consider Paul Skelton to be one of the best damn fanwriters around. I read those laws and thought, "How bizarre." Paul read them and created a page of devastating extrapolation. It's a perfect demonstration of why some of us ask "Where do you get your ideas?" while others, like Paul, are writers.

Oddly enough, I almost met a ferret today. (I've long thought they would be ideal pets if they didn't smell and maybe someday I'll get one and have it deodorised.) I was supposed to visit Taral and apparently his family has a pet ferret. I could have read it Skel's article and done an in-depth analysis of its responses. But alas, a big blizzard blew in so I'm staying home loccing fanzines instead. Just have to grin and ferret, I suppose....

Good personal column by Jodie. (And readable too! Each letter afforded its own private space just like the constitution requires! I hope this expansiveness on your part is a sign of stencils to come.) Probably enjoyed it because it resonated with me strongly. Next to liquor stores and bookstores I enjoy browsing in a good stationary store more than any other form of window shopping. I rarely actually buy anything but I've always been fascinated by all the delightful and specialised items there are to look at. And half the fun can be in trying to figure out what they might be used for!

If I didn't like Don D'Amassa I'd probably hate him. Just reading about what he's done lately tired me out. Surely the man must live on amphetamines? (It would explain why he's so unfannishly skinny too.)

Al Sirois shouldn't feel too bad about misreading Curry's cartoons. I frequently mistake his self-portraits for pictures of me as well and have to check the caption to see who it might be. (Another good clue is his tendency to draw me in my Aussie hat, even though I only rarely wear it nowadays.) I guess if you've seen one short, shaggy, bearded, pudgy, drunken fan you've seen us all.

Covell certainly has an unusual writing style. Why...he's almost the Bill Bowers of Britain! I bet he accounts for at least a third of the parentheses and apostrophes used in British fan circles in any given year. And he's cornered the market on digressions! (What the hell, he *is* the Bill Bowers of Britain.) Joseph the N used to write the longest most rambling and difficult-to-follow sentences in fandom but Ian has the magical gift of making any sentence seem like a Joe Nicholas sentence! Lucky for us he usually has a few interesting things to say. [2/1/86]

IAN COVELL

What a strange letter Steve Green wrote; sort of a 'sorry to insult you, but you wouldn't want to be *totally* ignored, would you?' (Somewhere, in the back of my mind, I have the feeling Groucho Marx said it better...)

Lowndes' letter is, oddly, relevant to a project I'm completing. I'm part of a trio of people creating a three-tier fanzine under the aegis of a well-known UK fan. One of my 'essays' (it's lucky that also means 'tries') is about fandom, which I visualise as an ocean containing a number of species of inhabitants, from bottom-dwellers to amphibians (and those who evolve into mammals, turncoat bastards). I start by (trying to) imagine how a fan of early sf times compares with a fan of today; they have different perceptions of the world, different needs from the genre, different backgrounds of experience; why are we surprised feuds blow up--anyone would think fandom was homogenous! It *should* be tolerant, it shouldn't be anything else. The early sf fan I created was a teenager in 1935, and I'm glad to say that much of how Lowndes describes it is how (I hope) I wrote it...

Buck Coulson almost has my definition of 'human' correct, but his ratio of 1.2:0.8 (which is strange--does he mean 1.2:1 or 1:0.8?) is an *average* human, not a *typical* one. A human must contain all of the available sexual material; male and female. I still think it's obvious...

Amusing to note--1596.7--that Mayer can write just as confusingly outside fandom as he can write clearly inside it. Maybe we should train the professions in fan writing. Couldn't hurt. (I know he didn't write it, but that shouldn't stop remarks like mine. Facts are the thorns on the rose of life.)

Don't ask me why, but when I read [1600] Lichtman's phrase, "separate countries connected by a national tax code" I had a sudden vision. I was way out in space, and in front of me was a circle mottled with blue and brown patches. It struck me that I couldn't work out whether the oceans were bracketted by the land, or the land by the oceans; and I was trying to set boundaries, identifiable, concrete boundaries, around things; and then it struck me that the blue patches were spread like veins into the brown, that the blue contained the brown; that the entire globe I could see was interconnected in a million million ways, and I could go from anywhere, to anywhere else by tracing a thin blue line. There were no boundaries. There are none. There is the world and the life on it, and all

the rest is pure imagination...

("You are birthed in me, you grow in me, you draw substance from me, and when you are dead, I cradle your bones and disperse you to further tasks; you are my children, and I am always with you. I am water, I am you...")

It's only recently I can appreciate Jodie Offutt's article on machines; like cars, which are boxes which transport me from here to there, I've always seen typewriters as the clumsy interface between me and the page. Except for this one, this Olympia Traveller; I'm in love; its slim compact shape, its ribbon flaunting itself in jerks before my eyes, its swift and eager response to the caress of my fingertips... excuse me a sec...

Speaking of toys [1603] I am minded to pass on, as I tend to pass on a lot of half-formed ideas, that I realised recently why my society was increasing in 'crime' among the teenage young. Their development is arrested, their perception of the world has not yet evolved past childhood. The world is full of toys: cars, tv's, videos, shops, houses, bus-stops--it doesn't matter who the toy belongs to (which child ever cared?), so the idea that something they steal or damage might be of consequence to someone never enters their mind. Looked at in this way, the police are merely obstacles to their game-playing; they represent nothing except something which must be circumvented so the game can go on. They are not doing 'wrong' in their eyes. Any of that make sense?

Actually, we sent back our videorecorder. Judging the rent against the number of programmes we recorded, we decided against. And bought Cable TV. Not as many channels as a US version, but certainly enough. My gods, the amount of trash the US system produced--*Charleys Angels*, *Husky and Starch*, *Vague-as*, *Please Woman*--which, when viewed almost one after the other produces a numb sensation in the brain. Did I see that in that programme, or in this, what I am watching now, and does it matter? On the other hand, intriguing to see how kitsch badness can be enjoyable (*Lost In Space*) and how original and downright surreal (*Green Acres*) some others are.

Surrealism reminds me of what I think *Rocky Horror* is; a mishmash dream of reality and parareality put on screen.

I find it bleakly amusing that Mr Richard Brandt, who admits his inability to sustain a relationship is lecturing me that 'mixed sex couples' aren't typical. While I feel this argument should have run its course by now, Mr Brandt's annoying arrogance urges me to say yet again that I said that 'human' must be a pair of different sexes, because no other combination contains the total possibilities of the human form. I discount anomalies, because as I've said, they are anomalies. I have never (check it out, sucker) said anything about social possibilities of coupling-as-a-fact (homosexuality, troilism), merely the fact of human-ness.

Mr Brandt, I wouldn't clean up my act if you paid to watch me do it.

1607-8: dear Skel, my Martian friend says hi. Hse also asks why hir name isn't included in that insult? Why--hse asks me as a halfway typical human--do people accept metaphor in fiction, but never in life? My answer, being metaphorical, cannot be printed.

Ahdemi. *OUTWORLDS* was invigorating as ever. I won't stay angry at anyone, though I suppose I should learn to; it's never worth it, though & think of all the good stuff we'd miss in fandom (as opposed to fiction) if we stopped listening to parts of something because we disliked other parts.

[4/16/86]

STEVE GREEN

Many thanks for *OUTWORLDS* 48, especially since my letter last September seems to have given you the impression that I wanted off your mailing list. Far from it; it's just that I felt you were missing an opportunity to interact more fully with your readership, both to your own benefit and to ours. Yes, I did receive earlier issues, but my closing comment (which was, I confess, ambiguous in retrospect) aimed to question whether this particular issue was 'representative' of your future plans for OW rather than past efforts.

Personally, I'm the reverse of Don D'Amassa with regard to VCRs. I've had one for some years now (I understand Britain has the highest per capita VCR audience in the world, which says a great deal about the crying need for choice beyond the UK's current four--count 'em and weep--teevee channels) and I find it almost impossible to work and watch movies at the same time. I mean, either you devote your energy to your writing (if you aren't, that implies lack of commitment) or you give your interest to the film (if not, maybe it ain't worth watching in the first place). However, I can work to music, and often find it either sets the tone for my thoughts (Eno's ambient tracks, for instance) or provides a background beat, as Tom Petty is providing right now (I have an audio tap from the teevee straight into my tuner, thence into the wall-mounted speakers--hell, it's almost as good as the concert I caught back in the spring of '80). On the other hand, Shaun Hutson told me once he watches video horror flix for hours on end, which probably has a lot to do with the quality of his fiction and certainly fuels his sick imagination. [4/12/86]

DON D'AMASSA

Well, reading my comments on VCR's in *OUTWORLDS* shows how fast your remarks can become outdated. It also demonstrates my inability to resist collecting. Instead of 200 movies, I now have somewhere around 525, plus maybe 100 short subjects. The local educational station has been showing the old Monty Python show, and I've already taped 24 episodes, plus 12 episodes of John Cleese's *Fawlty Towers*.

I only have 14 Woody Allen's but I'm working on the rest. I have 15 Hitchcocks, only one of which (*Frenzy*) is edited. There are a few actors I collect as well. Gene Wilder, Sissy Spacek (I have the episode she did of the Waltons), the Marx brothers, and others. It's surprising how quickly you can pick up a large chunk of whatever you're looking for.

[3/15/86]

HARRY WARNER, JR.

After all this time, I no longer remember what inspired Buck Coulson's comments on the derivation of fout. But I seem to recall having included in one of my fan history books a summary of someone's theory that the term comes from the French verb foutre, which turns up in such exclamations as "Je m'en foute." However, the French would pronounce their word with the oo sound found in food and I doubt if many fans in the old days knew the French language, so that theory may be shaky.

I once caused a law to be wiped from the Maryland annotated code. Leafing through the heavy volumes that contain the state's laws one day, I discovered some pages involving the operation of establishments which offer pool and billiards to the public. The provisions of that law made it plain that the Hagerstown YMCA had been operating in violation of the law for many years, thanks to the fact that any of its youthful members had the right to use the pool tables. I wrote a column about it and the next session of the Maryland Legislature produced a revision of that particular regulation.

Jodie Offutt's nostalgia for her Big Red Machine was splendid to read about. However, I can't luxuriate in similar thoughts about the typewriter I used so long and which served me so faithfully and which I'm now sorry I replaced. I've been using this one for virtually all of my fanac since some time in the mid-1940s and after four decades of use it gives every indication of being sturdier and longer-lived than me. I did feel regret when it supplanted the typewriter I used in my earliest fanac, the elite machine which cut the *Spaceways* stencils. But I hadn't used it enough years to make it part of my life.

Incidentally, the habit of naming inanimate things used to be widely practised in fandom and it seems to have become almost obsolete by now. If I could find the first edition of the *Fancyclopedia*, which is around here somewhere although I last saw it about a dozen years ago, it would confirm my memory that Jack Speer ran lots of items about the names fans gave their autos, their homes, and various other items. I ran off *Spaceways* and early issues of *Horizons* on the Doubledoubletoilandtrouble Mimeograph and made that fact known in print at every opportunity. I called my typewriter Macbeth because it made a good bit of noise when I was in full flight of fanac and Shakespeare told us how Macbeth doth murder sleep. Also forgotten is the fact that some early fanzines had nicknames, usually derived from women's names. *Imagination!* was known as *Nadge*, for instance, and once FAPA had a temporary new name, the Phantasy Amateur Press Association, in honor of the fact that an official, Olon Wiggins, had just become a father.

Brian Earl Brown shouldn't expect too much from a word processor with respect to freeing his prose from typos. My observation is that most fans who have acquired the things make just about as many mistakes in their fanzines as they did when they used ordinary typewriters, with the obvious exception of strikeovers which most word processors can't create. Computer programs that correct misspellings of commonly used words might be more helpful. But they don't function properly in some frequent types of errors in fanzines. Confusion between its and it's, for instance, or the frequent use of climatic instead of climactic: whenever the fan misspells a word but thereby creates a perfectly good word in its place.

It's a relief to find someone else, Doc Lowndes, who likes a space between initials in a series, the way I do. Now if I could just find another fan who likes to put a comma at the end of each line of an address except the last line and likes to put a period there, I wouldn't feel so much like a freak. The worst thing about my three years of using a computer terminal at the newspaper company was the need to conform to the newspaper style sheet when I wrote stories. Space between initials was one no-no for newspaper purposes and I even had to remember to space only once after the period at the end of a sentence because that's the way it's done in printed stuff and I wonder who was the courageous person who flouted tradition and introduced the custom of spacing twice after the period when writing a sentence on the typewriter?

[5/19/86]

AL CURRY

At the risk of continuing the beating of a dead and rotted horse ... what's all the shit about ferrets? I mean, I realize that I have a tendency to be more than a little spacey at times, to be forgetful, to miss entire sections of existence due to sheer absentmindedness. But exactly where did all this ferret business start?

I've always thought that they are physically beautiful animals with nasty tendencies, although I, too, have heard that they can be easily domesticated. Yet, this, somehow, would not seem to be enough to make them fanzine fodder.

Ah well, I am a simple man, easily confused by the world around me. Perhaps I shouldn't bother my fuzzy brain with such things as ferret profundities.

I have to admit to a great deal of weariness with fandom's computer infatuation. Having worked with them off and on for some twelve years, I find them nearly as exciting as a barbituate. Now, I will be the first to admit that this is predominantly just a matter of one person's interests in comparison to another's.

At the same time, I can't resist the temptation to toss in one parallel.

Fandom's seeming obsession with computers and word processors is not dissimilar to the thought of being in a group of architects and finding them totally engrossed in a discussion about different types of hammers and saws. I mean, really, folks! The tools are useful, but certainly of no value beyond the function of production.

If your computer or word processor helps you write better or more easily, great. But if you promise not to bore the rest of us with computer-nauseum, I promise not to bore you with comparative studies on felt-tips vs. rolling ball vs. fountain pens.

[undated]

CHRIS SHERMAN

Well, yes, hem haw, I've been busy, and I've had writers cramp, block, and linguistic constipation, and and and... you know, all that stuff. Thanks for continuing the flow of *OUTWORLDS* without the deadly X on the mailing label.

I see that my ramblings on the advantages of using computers have been construed as messianic preaching by some of your readers. I don't mind, but I would like to set the record straight and mention that I cuss the damn things as much as I praise them. In an earlier version of this letter, I was also going to express astonishment at the seeming ignorance bordering on Luddite reactions of certain of your readers.

The one point I'd like to make is simply that a computer is a blameless tool. The worst possible attitude toward a computer is often adopted by banks, airlines, and utility companies, namely that the computer is somehow sentient and can be held to blame for bad events, incorrect statements, or faulty writing. In response to Mike Glicksohn, and others, poor writing is poor writing, and it doesn't make a whit of difference whether it was perpetrated on a word processor or an ancient Underwood manual (Harry Warner pierced right to the heart of the matter there, and I see John Cortis also enhances the point). My bad writing is my bad writing, pure and simple. I find that the word processor helps clarify my thoughts and ease the writing process. If some of your readers find my writing incoherent or unpleasant, I encourage them to place the blame where it belongs, on the writer, not the tool.

I respond strongly to the "machine is to blame" arguments because they're often used, by people who should know better, in attempt to strengthen their own position by shifting focus from a vital issue to the trivial matter of hardware or software reliability. For example, the argument that SDI is a bad thing because the hardware couldn't possibly be made reliable with existing technology. This completely ignores the more fundamental issue of whether SDI is a bad idea in moral, legal, and ethical terms. Dangerous. But the "hardware approach" is much easier to state and then argue about--after all, mechanical specifications are mechanical specifications.

Excuse me while I put away my soap box.

Steve Green's remark about my being "...enraptured by the superficial dialogue..." Wow. Tell that to APA-50. It's really amazing how powerful the printed word is, particularly within fandom. You fuck around with the language a bit, tossing off ideas, clichés, and so on, just messing around, and a Reputation slowly develops. The fact that you may not recognize your own writing a month or two later, and may even disagree with it, is irrelevant. It's In Print, therefore it is a public display of something You Are. Fandom seems to have become a lot more serious lately. Hmmm.

Since Robert A. W. Lowndes seems willing to respond to direct inquiry, I have one for him, about Hugo Gernsback. It seems that Mr. Gernsback was quite a renaissance person. In addition to being a "founding father" of science fiction, he is also in a direct way a founder of yet another modern genre of the arts, namely Rock 'n Roll. How, you ask?

Gernsback, in 1926, invented the first polyphonic music synthesizer, the *pianorad*. (Footnote for finicky historians--the key word in the above phrase is *polyphonic*). The same kind of instrument used by nearly every rock and jazz band in the world today. In fact, I'd go so far as to suggest that without the synthesizer, rock would have never become a multibillion dollar industry (all issues of art placed conveniently aside).

So the question(s): what, if anything, does Doc Lowndes know about this aspect of Gernsback's life? How was it related to his interest in scientification? How many other interests did this amazing (uh, sorry) man realize in his lifetime that now have tangible effects on our lives? If Doc isn't aware of this particular part of Gernsback's life, I suppose you, Bill, could talk me into researching and writing an article about it, if you're interested. (By the way, does Mr. Lowndes object to being referred to as "Doc" by strangers? If so, my sincerest apologies.)

A common "naming" phenomenon that neither you nor Jodie mentioned was the naming of sexual organs. Among the names for penises (peni?) I've heard are "Hydraulic Jack" and "The Master Cylinder". One woman I knew called her period "Irving", announcing that "Irving had arrived to stay for a few days" in much the same manner that she would announce a visit by her mother. Another fellow, involuntarily celibate, called his right hand "Juice". Do you have pet names for any of your bodily parts, Bill?

[rec'd 2/22/86]

BILL BREIDING

...I do remember being amused and pleased sometime ago when you were paring down the list, that I had *nothing* on my mailing label. Patty and I compared notes and giggled. Gafiates we may be, but somehow Bowers keeps us afloat in the fannish tide. I even got dropped from APA-50! (Leah, who else, dropped me!) 11 years of my soul and guts into that apa and in 1985 I let it go. You know 1985 had to have been some sort of year! I suppose some things must pass. Just didn't think APA-50 would be one of them.

And speaking of such things, I received and read *OUTWORLDS* 48 today and the thing that struck me most was HOW DID RICHARD BRANDT stay out of the APA-50 flux? He's the right age: 28 (or 29, depending on his date of birth). He discovered prozines only a year before I trucked up to Elkins, W.Va from the boonies and devoured *Amazing*, and discovered Ed Cagle, Donn Brazier, Frank Balazs... And, by God, Warren Johnson...who led to Chris Sherman and the rest is better left to history and the dying memories of APA-50 and BIG MAC. If Richard's letter is any indication (and his stuff previous to this; I just didn't know how old he was/is [older, I thought]), he would have been a wonderful addition to those fun filled days in the mid to late 70's, with Father Bill presiding. At any rate, that letter in #48 struck a chord. Richard Brandt, I'm Bill Breiding; pleased to meet you....

(Remember, Terry Carr sez there's four of 'em at the end.)

Steve Green's note was hilarious! I'd say hack him off the mailing list! You are *much* too generous. Send his copies to someone more deserving. I mean, has Mike Gorra come back from football yet? Jeezus! [1/27/86]

Hey Bill! Did you ever make it back? ...the last thing I heard from you was when your car 'blew up' in Pennsylvania, back in October,...

RICHARD BRANDT

Well, here's **OW48**, and my, how I do ramble on. If I'm going to have to get used to getting quoted at such length I'll have to start getting more discreet (or a little more coherent).

I appreciate Lowndes' bit on the pulps, especially his recollection that the better markets had forsaken fantastic fiction before Gernsback came along. Nowadays, we get all sorts of denunciations of Gernsback from people who weren't alive when his *Amazing Stories* was published.

I still have the electric typewriter my mother bought me when I was about to graduate from high school. It's a Sears, of a model no longer manufactured. Most of its present problems stem from the fact that the plastic handle used to come off in my hand as I was lugging the thing through airports or bus terminals. At some point, I affixed a bumper sticker to the case promoting "The Daisy Dillman Band", a bushleague band that had passed through Fort Worth once. This led a Hare Krishna peddler to try ingratiating himself with me by saying he was a good buddy of Daisy and the boys, but no sale.

Anyway, I never use the thing nowadays; even before I had this computer, I preferred to use the sturdier Selectrics at work. I almost sold the machine, to a friend who wanted it to write term papers, but after borrowing it to do last semester's papers she decided she didn't need it anymore and borrowed it right back to me....

Even if I don't get rid of the machine, I doubt I'll ever go back to using it. Still, when I reflect that I owe my glory days in fanzine fandom to the uneven lines that spilled from its roller, I have to wonder if I'm doing the right thing.

Ian Covell makes some charming admissions in his loc: "...I really haven't managed to make myself clear..." "Since I think it perfectly clear, I will not argue further." Well, saves the trouble of trying to couch your lucid reasoning in terms the rest of us can understand, but perhaps he should have got out of the argument business a little earlier than this. [rec'd 2/5/86]

NAOMI COWAN

There I was, sitting in the kitchen, waiting to hear from either of the sick children sleeping on my couch; the third one had burrowed her way into my bed a while earlier. I was sipping brandy, relaxing and reading **OW** when what, to my wondering eyes, appears? I have written in all three years?!! Believe me Bill, this was Not My Fault.

It was good to read that others were pleased to know that Mr. Willis had saved the Magna Carta from being repealed. Magna Carta--a symbol for the civil liberties we enjoy; a way of dating legal history; a wonderful poem in grade school. (Stanzas leading up to the actual signing and then, as the Lords and Nobles became more and more impatient and more and more menacing, the print grew larger as they shouted **SIGN KING JOHN! SIGN!** until King John caved in and in Very Small Print: **AND KING JOHN SIGNED.**) It was a great poem. As I thought about it though, I realized I didn't know what the Magna Carta really says!

Your moving speech on traditions etc., in fandom inspired me to actually get a pre-membership from the Triangle Bid. To your own very good points I would like to add: Why toe ourselves up with bureaucracy? Rules can be as easily unmade as the can be made. However, I have heard that this has all become moot anyway, so now I'll have to vote...

I have no special tests for a dictionary other than whether or not it has the word I want when I want it. I use dictionaries only when unavoidably necessary. They are Venus Flytraps lurking in the corners of book collections waiting for the unwary to open them up. I merely want to find one word but am immediately ensnared by alluring words beckoning to me on pages far from the one I need. I am lost in a labyrinth of definitions, cross references, origins, roots and alternate spellings. Hours later I may be rescued by a band of starving children.

Of course, some people I know refuse to have much to do with dictionaries at all. They seem to feel that dictionaries infringe on their creative communications processes. Their freedom of speech should be uninhibited by too heavy a reliance on restrictive dictionary definitions. One can get so much use out of a word if one allows it a broad range of meaning.

Looking this letter over, I see that its tone is somewhat frivolous and not serious at all. Since Kenner-Parker Inc has seen the wisdom of laying off half its employees and working the rest of us overtime, my mind has been all a-fizz. [1/18/86]

The more some things go one, we are the same, eh, Naomi? [Esoteric employment reference.]

SKEL

48 arrived yesterday.

"48 what?" you ask with a mind as blank as most fanzine verse. Being of a charitable nature myself I put this befuddlement down to a side-effect of all the shots you've been taking, coupled with the fact that as I write this it is more than six weeks since you mailed it out--yes, I mean **OUTWORLDS 48**. Yes, it came. Finally. At last. "Bowers seems to have died..." I wrote to Locke (& Curry, & Glicksohn...but that's another story), back about

the time you were mailing issue 48 out. As they will doubtless have received my letter after they received *OUTWORLDS* 48, they will surely by now have come to the conclusion that my grip on reality is even more tenuous than yours. Always assuming of course that you actually exist.

But maybe you don't. Maybe I'm simply dreaming all these fanzines from darkest Cin-sanity? Do I have any external evidence? Well yes, but mostly negative. Well, I keep sending articles and like that, but I never hear shit. The last one for instance was back at the end of December...about ten weeks ago. That's plenty of time for even you to read half-a-dozen pages, and write back 'yes' or 'no', which would after all be merely what simple courtesy would require. I've heard of a 'laid back' approach to fanac, but if you laid back any further you'd be 'laid out'! But, if I'm simply dreaming your zines and my hopeful contributions, couldn't I also dream up a reply? Then again, maybe this omission is simply my subconscious trying to sneak a message through to me--like "Wake up blockhead! The Fnargs are about to overrun the barricades! Sod all these dreams about 'Earth', and 'Fandom'. Get out there and defend The Nest. Don't your grubs mean anything to you?"

But that would mean that I'm now dreaming about *dreaming* about Bill Bowers, and nobody should have to handle concepts like that. Far safer I think to go ahead on the basis that you, even you Bill, are real. Strange though that I should now feel so self-conscious, like someone who's just been caught talking to himself. But back to *OUTWORLDS* 48....

OUTWORLDS 48 really gave me a good feeling. Some of the letters made me feel a little like a fatuously proud father. Obviously the people who wrote them did all the work and take all the real credit...but all the same I know that had I not written my original piece, it's a pound to a pinch of shit that those particular delightful anecdotes would never have been written. I am frankly amazed that so many people have had personal experiences with ferrets. Not 'deep and meaningful relationships', I hasten to add, simply 'personal experiences'. Take Al Sirois' piece as an example. This was a tremendous comic piece, superbly constructed. If anyone really thinks that (a) that's exactly the way it happened, and (b) the raw material was funny in and of itself--they will be doing Al's skills a great disservice. At the time the experience was traumatic enough to break up a long-standing friendship. Not a bundle of laffs. However there is drama, and drama contains the seeds of laughter. Al saw in the incident the raw material for a personal response and, with skill and creativity, shaped the basic material and gave us a gift of joy and laughter. He didn't make a big deal out of it. It was a simple act of creative sharing that arose during the course of a letter, a gift that was given without thinking about it.

Wayne Alan Brenner did something similar, but without the personal experience of ferrets ('An Experience of Ferrets' sounds like either one of those strange collective nouns, or else like the title of one of that kind of book which usually finds its way onto the shortlist for those pretentious literary prizes) ...without that experience, he still managed to find a creative response, a response which brings delight strictly by its own qualities. It is this 'creative sharing' that embodies for me all that I consider best in fandom--the way one act of creativity will trigger off another, so that fandom as a whole reaps many times more than what was originally sown. The way it sometimes happens--something makes you feel so good that you can't help but brim over with joys and ideas--suddenly some past experiences have blended into something which seems worthwhile enough to share. Suddenly it is as if you are no more than a pitcher that contains the heady wine of ideas, and you have to pour it forth, so that others may savour it. I take pleasure in the thought that my article might have done this for Al and Wayne, in much the same way that Eric's response originally did exactly the same for me, blowing me away and causing that letter to spill forth.

Other bits of *OUTWORLDS* 48 were satisfying too. I like Jeanne Bowman's response (still speaking personally), as well as Brian Earl Brown's letter and Robert A. W. Lowndes' piece. This last really put a whole new complexion on things that we've always 'known'. Most of all though, I liked Jodie Offutt's "My Big Red Machine".

Oddly enough I too have just written an article about my typewriter, although you might gather from the title ("I Sing The Bloody Electric") that this was in no way the fond paean that Jodie's was. So it goes. The only piece of hardware that I ever bestowed a name upon was the first duplicator I ever owned. Sagramatholou. As all keen aficionados of Eric Frank Russell's *WASP* will tell you, Sagramatholou was the third, and whilst Saggy was the first duplicator that my co-editor Brian Robinson and I had owned, it was in fact the third which we had used to publish our first fanzine *Hell*. The name however was far too good for just a heap of rusty metal and when Cas became pregnant, with the third of the skelkids, the name was transferred to her lump. It seemed a nicely non-sexist, noncommittal name. "How's Saggy been today?" I'd ask on my return from work. "Kicking like a mule," she'd reply. "Definitely a girl then," I'd state, as we all know that males don't pick on females, never kick them, and always treat them absolutely spiffingly. I don't think we've ever told That Nunsh that she spent her first nine non-separate months being called Saggy (and as how she became 'That Nunsh', I'll have to take the Fifth). It is obvious that there is a great affection in Jodie's heart for the things that Big Red Machine symbolizes for her and therefore, by transference, in a way for the machine itself.

I was saddened though by the line:-- "Andy got a correcting Selectric and my services were needed less and less and now that he has a computer, not at all." Aw c'mon now Andy, surely you can think of something! Odd though that there have been no more Offuttspring since Andy's equipment became self-correcting.

So, not so long with the next issue, eh? Look, if being poorly interderes with the production of *OUTWORLDS*, then you'll just have to give it up...being ill that is. Extract the plumbum, Bowers!

[3/13/86]

...I know we export some weird stuff, but until now I wasn't aware that "the Fifth" was included. But in retrospect it would explain several things, such as the seeming absence of 'our' Constitution...

I Also Heard From:
BRIAN EARL BROWN • BUCK COULSON • ERIC LINDSAY • AL SIROIS
ROGER WADDINGTON • JEAN WEBER

...after living with these letters for the past month, I can only wonder at the 'conversations' that might have taken place--had I published them in the time-frame I "should" have. I won't promise it won't happen again--after all, it was never my *intention* to do so this time--but I'll try to be just a bit more prompt in the future: your letters are important to me, as well as to the Contributors.

...speaking of which, I am as "low" on material-in-hand as I've been in years, and the art file is slim also. I'm sure the "regulars" will come through...but I do so hate twisting arms! [Except locally; of course...]

For those of you who 'came aboard' this year, and are wondering what all those letters are about, I do have copies of OW 46, 47 & 48 available, for \$1, each. [I have some earlier issues, but they're not sorted out yet; if you are interested in specific pre-#46 issues, send me a list, and I'll let you know...as I delve into the boxes!]

...for those of you who were 'dropped', and are interested in acquiring the previous four 1987 issues, I have a very few (like less than 10 of most) copies of OW 47 & 52 for \$2, each; OW51--\$1.; and OW50--\$3. The print run is being held close this time around; I have no choice...

This is a test, to see how many of you have read this far...

Look, people, I don't recall ever having said that I *liked* dot matrix any better than most of you seem to! The New Toy has been a tool, and I've been utilizing it, learning it, and attempting to produce legible copy in the meantime. Nevertheless, I am not insensitive to aesthetics: I now have a Brother HR-10 daisy wheel printer. (The reason I chose that one, other than affordability, is that it takes exactly the *same* ribbons and daisy wheels...as my typewriter does.) Getting it 'on line' has not been as simple as I might have wished, so when a month ago Don Carter [who will live to rue this particular deed!] called and said he'd come up with a "printer aid", I was amenable. So NOW, sitting right beside the Amstrad is a Kaypro 1, with 2 drives (but of a standard size) -- with two new word processing systems to learn... All of this is linked together, with Don's aid, in a clever imitation of my vcr-tv-stereo-cd complex...and as soon as I begin to figure it out, you'll see a marked improvement in typefaces here. Please have as much patience as I'm likely to have to display!

In any event, that's Absolutely It for New Toys for a while....

Thanks to all included in the following list, write/draw/whatever (if you'd like to be included in 1988's "List"), and I'll see you next year... Bill [12/6/87]

DECEMBER 7, 1987 • I have made mention before that the reason I ended up in the Air Force for four years was because, after being drafted on a Friday the 13th (the week after Johnson had been elected on the "peace platform"), I was to report to the Army on December 7th--a Day of Infamy. This was in 1964, and I didn't like the odds...so I 'dodged the draft', and took four instead of two; even after all this time, that seems like one of my more sensible moves!

Everything surrounding this insert was finished yesterday, but I had a hunch...and didn't print the final draft of these last two pages.

...I made a snide comment to Naomi a few pages back. [That's probably the reason why...!] I've also spent the past year repeating to anyone who'd listen that "they" Didn't Do Me Any Favors when they kept me while laying-off a 100 employees shortly before Christmas last year..., gave me a raise twice their stated maximum, but cut out the over-time...in effect reducing my income 21%. Well, I don't have to worry about that any more: I, Naomi...and another 100 got the axe today. So much for almost seven years of my life.

I'm not thrilled, but then again, it is probably time for a Change; the past couple of years in the Wonderful World of Toys hasn't been as "wonderful" as the first several were...for a lot of reasons. I'm getting a decent severance pay, they've employed a "job placement" firm for us, and I'm not terribly worried about finding something else To Do... but I suppose I should be a bit cautious until that happens.

Ah, well, I could use a month or two (but not three!) off. And this way, maybe I can get OW54 out for ConFusion... and, perhaps, even learn 'Perfect Writer' and 'Wordstar'. Sort out the back rooms...? Well, let's hope I'm not 'out' that long! Have a Happy...! --Bill

But something good DID happen today, and since I have a few lines (there *are* advantages to word processors!), and since I find myself in the awkward position of actually agreeing with Tony Cvetko... that Brad Foster SHOULD be rich... Unless you haunt the comics shops, you may not know that Brad is doing a full-fledged 32-page bi-monthly comic titled **MECHTHINGS**. If it's not on your stands, a six-ish sub is \$13.00, from RENEGADE PRESS, 2705 E. 7th St., Long Beach CA 90804. Brad has a six-issue commitment, the first three of which I received today...and if you are a Foster fan, I think you'll like it.

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