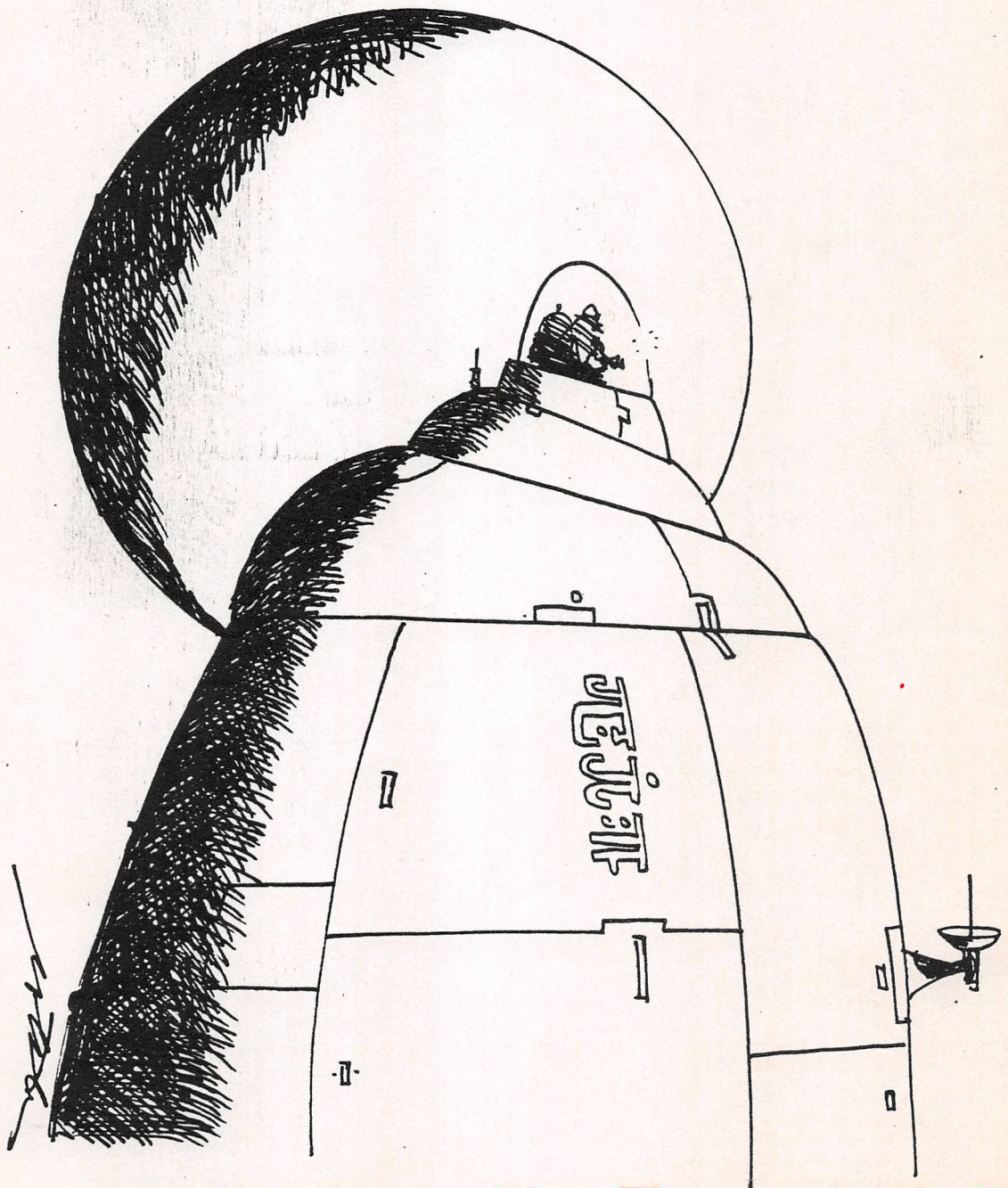


EXCLUSIVE!
THIS ISSUE...NO DOT MATRIX!

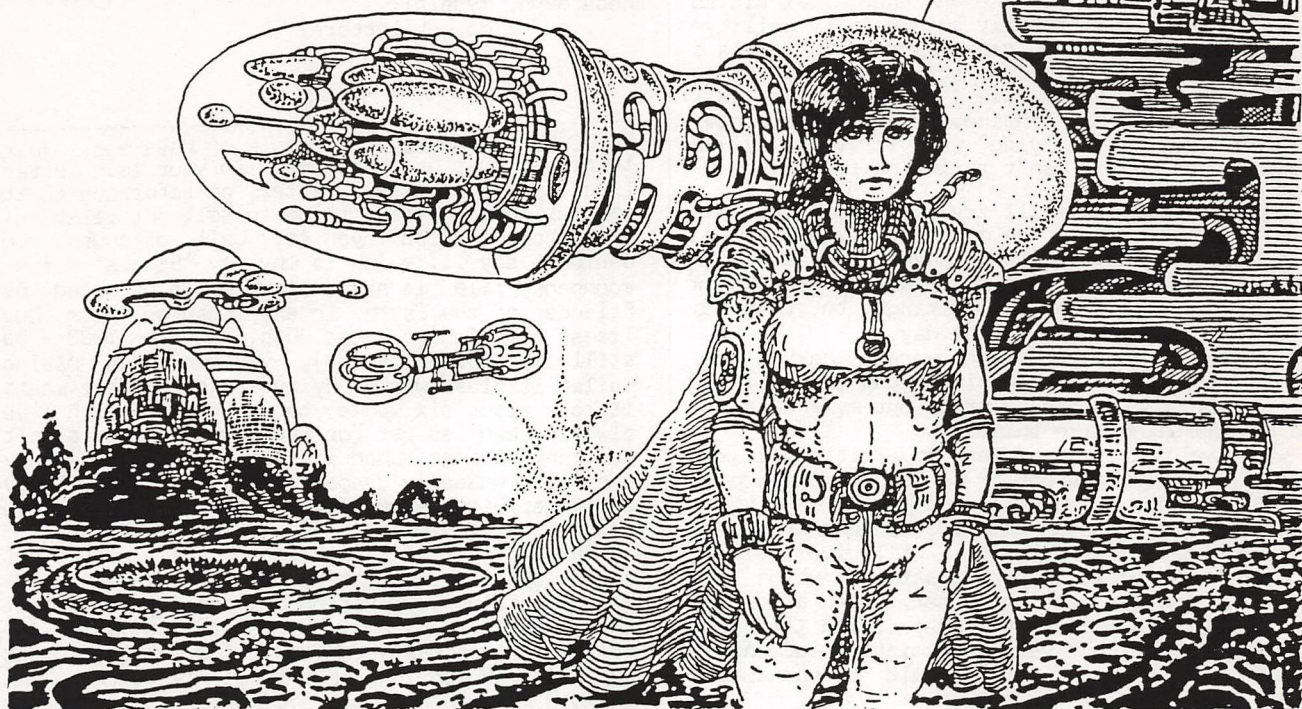


Outworlds 56



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Outworlds 56



BILL BOWERS 1874 SUNSET AVE. #56 CINCINNATI OH 45238

ARTWORLDS: Covers by WILLIAM ROTSLER & STEVEN FOX: 1815 & DAVID R. HAUGH: 1824; 1827; 1832
ALAN HUNTER: 1818; 1820 & TERRY JEEVES: 1837 & WILLIAM ROTSLER: 1817; 1830; 1835

Outworlds is Available by Editorial Whim; for published material & letters; or:
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This is My Publication #159 & Dated: 6/18/88

...suddenly, a wave of new participants, which is neat. Which also necessitates a trimming of old-wood.
"X's" on mailing envelopes are easily overlooked.

Therefore: If there is a colored dot here [], Please Do Something...if you are still interested!

4/9/88: ...and the surprising thing is not that I managed to get the bulk of OW55 mailed out before the postal hike (that was a matter of simple economics), but that I did all that before handing out the majority of the local copies. The normal sequence is that I get the bulk of the domestic and overseas copies out fairly quickly in clumps, make a concentrated effort to get the locals theirs--and then.... Well the factors that went into opting for a [primarily] First Class mode are several: In addition to the relative speed in delivery, there is a slightly better chance of the copy actually getting to you and, at least under the old structure, it was actually cheaper -- the first three or four ounces -- to mail something First Class rather than Third.... (Nobody, least of all the postal clerks, seems clear enough on the nuances of the new rates for me to know if this exercise in logic holds true still, but I'm presuming it does. I can't prove it, but there is no doubt in my mind that the postal rates are codified by the same people who took a break from their eternal quest to make the transmission of printed matter obsolete, to bless us with the Simplified Income Tax Code.)

...but the bonus of First Class is that, providing I'm not hard up against an ounce cap, I am able to add notes, tear sheets, what notes, to selected copies. This saves the outlay of additional postage (and we all know how thrifty I am) as well as time spent addressing additional envelopes (and we all know how efficient I am in the area of time management). Still, just as I am somewhat proficient in dashing off notes and paying bills -- but put off writing to those who are important to me until I can Do It Right -- the copies of OW that I want to add notes, etc. to...tend to go out a week...two...three... later, and these are, by and large, the contributor's copies. ~~PERHAPS THAT IS WHY AS I INITIATE THIS ISSUE I HAVE ONLY ONE NOTICE FROM CONTRIBUTOR ON MAILING THAT A LETTER?~~

Ah, well... I do try. And, beginning with this issue, any overseas readers who are represented in a given issue (by words or art) will be sent their copies printed matter Airmail. I wish I could afford to send all your copies that way, but.... Unless perchance, you should all come through at once -- ~~WHAT WE WORRY ABOUT THE IMPOSSIBLE?~~

There's no doubt in my mind that, were I to limit myself to one or two outings a year, I could put

forth a clever facsimile of the Perfect Fanzine. You may/may not know this as FanTruth, but it is. And while I do believe perversity in fanzine layout is a trait to aspire to (even though I have never intentionally set out to make an issue difficult to read), and while I am totally secure in my ability-combined-with-experience capability to put forth a good fanzine, and while I do strive toward perfection in all things--and while I can admire the hell out of a meaty annual fanzine, my own nature precludes me from "identifying" with it ...and my own needs are such that I can't thrive on feedback generated on that schedule.

I suppose what I'm still trying to do is, a year later, "answer" some of the questions Dave asked me in the Live OUTWORLDS. (I will never ever be as coherent with an unscripted verbal answer, as with my most convoluted self-serving writings, but that was -- even for me, an inarticulate day.)

I imagine if, today, someone were to ask me what my goals were, for this fanzine, and were they to offer me the opportunity to write out my answer, it would go something like this:

--whenever you create something, written, drawn, or any combination thereof -- of which you are particularly proud... you will send it to me without hesitation. Before even thinking of another zine.

...and then: if I like it, I will give it, your work, the best possible presentation of which I am capable (...and I'm getting better, even after all these years, each and every issue) ...and I'll send it out to a small, but very appreciative audience.

There... that wasn't so difficult to enunciate, was it? ...Bill?

Perhaps it's my own biased perceptions, but I was more disappointed by the way OW55 "came out"...than I've been disappointed by anything fannishly since the deafening silence that greeted the appearance of the printed OW50.

I worked on that issue, getting down and dirty to darken in (on the masters) virtually every illustration, every title...even portions of the borders, where they had faded-out on my tabletop copier, before trundling off to the quickprint center which had, I thought, done a good job on OW53.

You'll have to take my word for it, unless you stop by (and I'll show you) but on my masters, the lettercolumn was quite readable.

I went the quickcopy route for two reasons: 1) in the end, it's not that much more expensive than I can manage on the Canon PC-25; and, believe me, producing a genzine at 8-copies-per-minute-per-page can get real old, real fast. Secondly, I knew I couldn't "hold" the blacks on some of the art, nor the borders.

No, I wasn't thrilled with the textual appearance of last issue.

...but, God!, I love the way the illos came out.

--count it yet another learning experience. Now to apply it....

This issue.... Well, it's time for a nice linear number, with a simplistic layout. You know: start at the beginning, and just keep going until I a) run out of material; b) run over an allotted page limit; or, c) run out of time necessary to maintain the 'schedule'.

C. The "schedule" says that this issue should be out for MidWestCon, the end of June. Of course that same schedule said that last issue was to be "out" for Corflu 5... which is still almost three weeks in the future, as I write....

B. By all that is rational, this issue should be held to the 2-ounce-including-envelope, or 18-20 page range. By all that is rational....

A. The only formal written "material" I have in hand is Lon's article. Now I could twist arms -- I have; I will -- but not this time. We'll see what comes in. Besides, I'm feeling particularly chatty these days, myself!

...and I do get letters:

SKEL

OUTWORLDS 54 arrived a couple of days ago, just to prove that God hates me. In your last letter (I call it your 'last' letter as referring to it as your 'only' letter tends to sell our relationship short, wouldn't you say? Well, of course you wouldn't say ... which is why my 'Bowers' correspondence file is never likely to be cited by Friends of the Earth in any Future 'Save Our Trees' campaign), dated 30th. January (1988 - be still my foolish heart!), you mentioned having mailed it "last week". By my reckoning that means it took about six weeks to get here, which I've always seen as par for the course. God didn't pull any strings when it came to getting my copy over with unseemly despatch, like he did for Terry and Roger with issue 52. I wonder if it was something I said.

Cas reckons it was because their copies got caught up in the Christmas mail, and in the Postal Authorities' understandable desire to just get that flood of mail out -- anywhere, anyway! I recall now that Marty Cantor twice managed to get copies of HOLIER THAN THOU to me via Surface Mail in much less than a week. Like I said, God hates me.

Oh, it's not just the way he steers my copies of OUTWORLDS into postal backwaters whilst arranging to hire concorde for deliveries to Terry Jeeves and Roger Weddall. No, he's much more subtle and sadistic than that. He waits while I'm all caught up on my LoCing responsibilities; then comes in below the belt with four fanzines in as many days. Now in days of yore, days of fond memory, this would have been a paucity. Ah, those halcyon days when I'd be pissed off if a day failed to bring more than a single piece of fan-nish mail. Nowadays, as the plate tectonics of inertia cause me to drift ever further from active fandom, I'm lucky to get a piece of fannish mail in any particular week. Needless to say I bemoan this situation, though equally needless to say, I never do anything about it, other than try to LoC the few remaining zines that still find their way here. So, I bemoan the lack of zines, and God just chuckles...and I bemoan it some more and he keeps on chuckling...and I keep on bemoaning, and he suddenly takes me by surprise with four fanzines in four days. The Bastard!

When does he do it? That's the most sadistic part. He does it early in March, which just goes to show how much he hates me. LoCing fanzines takes time. The company I work for has a 'holiday year' which ends on the last day of February. That means that any holiday entitlement not taken by the end of February is forfeited. This has always struck me as a bizarre situation, having years that run January to December, but holiday years that run from March to February seems unnecessarily perverse. However, when you live in a country whose Tax Year ends (or begins, I've never been clear which) on the 6th of April, you are supposed to be able to take such things in your stride. I think my stride must have fallen off the back of a lorry. Anyway, what this means with the holiday year, is that if you're careful and hold back some of your holiday entitlement for

unforeseen emergencies, then come February you have lots of holidays to use up. Being somewhat more anally retentive than most, more careful, I invariably find that I have a week's holiday entitlement remaining when February steps in over the stoop, which I generally resolve by working a series of three or four day weeks, with four or three day weekends. Great for catching up on my LoCing responsibilities ... if there'd been any LoCing responsibilities to catch up on that is. Of course there weren't. Now though it's March, and now my 'spare' holidays are all used up. Now he buries me under an avalanche of zines-which-must-be-LoCed. Oh well, I suppose there's always this weekend, be it ever so short. Or is there? Today is Saturday. This morning we had to go shopping, which I guess leaves this afternoon, except that I wouldn't make such a stupid guess as I know damn well it doesn't. Cas and I are soccer fans. We follow the fortunes of Manchester United. In fact we have 'season' tickets. When they play a home match, we are there. Today, for reasons which even Einstein couldn't explain, is their first home match for several weeks. We will be there, which rules this afternoon out for fan-ac. Never mind, there's always Sunday.

The tides of history wait for no man. I brew my own beer. The tides of home-brewing don't do much waiting either. Tomorrow morning I have five gallons of bitter to bottle. Not to worry, that still leaves Sunday afternoon for LoC writing. Well, it would, except that this particular Sunday afternoon there's live television coverage of a FA Cup soccer match between the other Manchester team, Manchester City, and the runaway League leaders Liverpool. Which I guess just leaves Sunday evening. What about that? Well provisionally I've got that penciled in for a bath, wash my hair, prepare things for work the following week, and generally come to terms with the fact that the weekend is virtually over. LoCs will not come into the reckoning.

So as you can see, God really stuck it to me but good by ensuring that all these fanzines arrived immediately prior to this particular weekend. Like I said, a Bastard!

Anyway, I'm sure you'll therefore understand why I won't be LoCing OUTWORLDS 54, good as it was. I suspect OUTWORLDS 55 will be primarily a 'letters' issue, particularly as my piece will be in it. I've noticed this. You seem to isolate my stuff in otherwise strictly 'letter' issues, almost as if you were afraid I'll contaminate your other regular contributors. Of course, were the day more advanced and I more filled with confidence and homebrew (curiously synonymous) I could take this as a compliment. I can see you now, surrounded by piles of mss, all top-notch articles, all vying for space on your next issue. You are tormented by indecision. Which shall they be? The Martin, the Leigh, and the Locke perhaps? Maybe the Willis, the Warner, and the Lowndes? Your hand reaches tentatively forward and then is withdrawn... the Benford perhaps, and the Brandt, and the Yoder and even (because you're feeling particularly charitable) the Glicksohn? Then it hits you and a look of triumphant satisfaction replaces your usual 'Just Popped Out, Back In 10 Minutes' expression. "Christ!" you exclaim, brushing aside with disdain the piles of mss. "I don't need any of these. I've got a Skel article. What more could I want? Just bung a few ~~handwritten~~ letters in with it and it'll be a classic issue."

Then again, I don't think there's enough homebrew in the whole world for me to get that scenario off the ground. [3/12/88]

4/11/88: Learning WordStar, 101 -- One cannot lead off an unindented line with an ellipsis. (Apparently it is read as a particularly esoteric 'dot' command; the line simply does not print, although it sits there on the screen, pretty as can be.) Am I correct in the presumption that I alone, in the entire history of wordprocessing, find this a pain?

[Now that I take time to look it up, I see that two dots (..) initiates a "comment / do not print" textline. Damn silly, say I!]

TERRY JEEVES

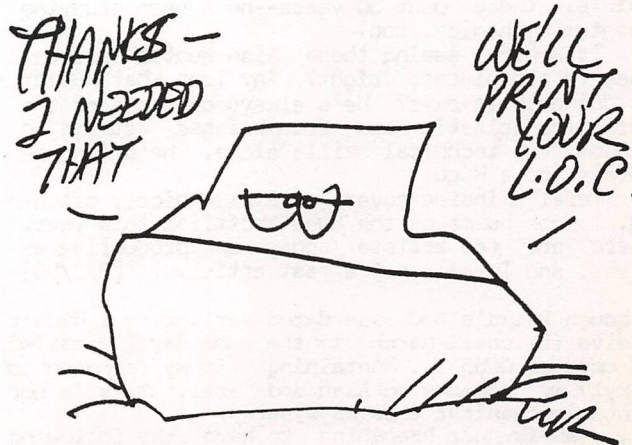
[on 54] ...it's a toss up which is best, the back or the front cover. Superlative work by Hunter. The interior art didn't grab me as much, apart from that of Jim McLeod. As for cartoons (?) well too many fanartists draw whatever comes to mind and then try to think of something witty to write across it in the hope it will prove funny... sometimes it is, but not very often. Instead it's akin to the Monty Python skits that fall flat.

Letters, good, but that typeface is too jammed up for easy reading...makes it as tempting as a phone book at first glance. Tell your micro to increase the line spacing next time huh?

Enjoyed Stephen Leigh's piece, but still don't feel like taking up Martial Arts ... heck, at 65 and with 5 operations still nagging my tummy, I concentrate on slow breathing.

ERG 102 is currently being mailed out, and I'm looking forward to using the STOP PRESS system and control 'mouse' I just bought ... WHEN I can find someone selling an expansion ROM board to allow me to plug in the extra chips. I have still not received a reply from Watford Electronics having written to them (and enclosing a S.A.E.) some three weeks ago. I fancy they DO have what I want--at a further £40 on top of the £80 STOP PRESS. Computing can get expensive...but it is fun.

NOW IT CAN BE TOLD time...remember those days when I used to hold sub lolly for you and send books? Well in the early days, Val and I were so strapped for money, we would often borrow from "Bill Bowers' tin" to tide us over until pay day ... and it had such little IOUs as "I owe Bill Bowers £5.00" as reminders. Happily those days are now way behind us, but Val still bows to the East when she hears your name. [rec'd 3/17/88]





BRIAN EARL BROWN

I seem to have taken a vacation from fanac over the past couple months. I'm sure this is only the second LoC I've written since Confusion and the other LoC was written only last week. Just one of those things, I guess. Haven't read many fanzines, either, except FILE 770. Mostly I've been reading books on Quantum mechanics and evolution -- not Real Books on those subjects, just popular accounts by John Gribbin and Paul Davies. Quantum mechanics is a lot of fun for people who think consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds. According to the Copenhagen interpretation until I get an OUTWORLDS back WAHfing or printing my letter you don't really exist. There's just a probability that a Bill Bowers exists, but until we exchange communications of some sort there's no way to prove you really exist. True, some people have had doubts about your existence all along, but not, I fear, from a rigorous analysis of the probability wave function marked B. Bowers.

Of course from your point of view I don't exist until I LoC OUTWORLDS, and some would argue that this LoC doesn't prove I exist, only that someone is sending you letters that claim I exist. In fact, every time I blink my eyes the universe ceases to exist in any real and knowable function. Without someone to observe it the universe is just a complicated mathematical equation. Which suggests what has happened to Heinlein these past 30 years--he's been studying Quantum mechanics, too.

It's nice seeing these Alan Hunter covers. They're old pieces, right? Any idea what Hunter is doing these days? He's always been one of the more iconoclastic and accomplished artists in fandom. On technical skills alone, he's long overdue for a Hugo.

Taral's inside covers were also nicely matched. I hope he makes the Hugo shortlist this year. There are few artists today as productive as Taral, and Taral's not a fast artist. [3/3/88]

Although Brian's LoC was dated earlier -- I didn't receive it until March 31--the same day I'd mailed his copy of OW55 ... containing (in my response to Sheryl) my comments on Alan and Taral. This is not Quantum mechanics; this is synergy.

... as is just happening to have the following letter to insert here:

ALAN HUNTER

Wow! It is just as well you wrote and warned me. OW54 dropping unannounced through my letter-slot would have been just too much. Many thanks for the grand display.

So, Buck Coulson has exposed my little secret. How I worked for fanzines and prozines (NEBULA, NEW WORLDS & SCIENCE-FANTASY) back in the 50's and currently fanzines and prozines (PROTEUS, WHITE DWARF & FANTASY TALES) without ever having gained any 'recognition'. I did disappear for around 10 years when I started my own newsagency and stationary shop (or whatever you call it in the US) which left me no time for drawing. When I gave that up, I had to fight my way back through comics fandom (when I produced numerous strips for fanzines) through fantasy, sword-and-sorcery and role-playing, without ever quite making it back to good old science-fiction. Despite this, science-fiction has always remained my true love.

Regarding your suggestion that I write an article -- I hesitate for two reasons. First, I do not much like writing about myself, and second, I have never participated much in active fandom. I only ever attended three conventions--two in the 50's, and one Fantasycon in the 80's when I was artist GoH. My son has a bookshop called 'FANTASY' and I have helped him on numerous occasions when he had a table at a Comic Mart. Apart from that, my sole activity has been contributing artwork. I like reading about the wiles and antics of acti-fans, with a sprinkling of nostalgia, but feel I have little of interest to contribute in that direction. If anything occurs to me, which I feel might fascinate your readers, I will send it along. But please do not hold your breath.

[3/29/88]

...many thanks for the latest "care package" Alan. As you can see (up there...), I've already begun to put it to good use. But I will try to exercise restraint and save some for the next few issues also!

4/23/88: I knew going in that the entry pattern of this issue, while (basically) sequential, would be episodic. I have the distinct feeling that the episodes are going to be slightly more spaced-out than originally thought.

On Monday, April 11th, I applied for unemployment compensation; the theory: by the time I got the resumes mailed out, and then returned from Corflu, the wheels would be in motion...and I'd have a large portion of this issue done, also.

Ah, well... Two days later (as I was really giving some serious consideration to mailing out resumes), I received a call from an agency. I drove out to the Far East for an interview Thursday the 14th, and started work this past Monday --the 18th. I had "temped" from the time I moved to Cincinnati in mid-1977, until I 'went direct' with Kenner, after returning from Denvention 2, in 1981. ...and it still has the same advantages (higher direct pay; very little office politics) and disadvantages (no benefits; no 'security') that it had then. I'm not really planning on temping long-range, this time around (I'm getting to the age that some sense of security--no matter how fleeting -- in at least one area of my life would be nice), but we'll see: After a week, I like this job, and the people...but it's too soon to see how I fit in with their plans past the current hot project...

...and yes, I can say that I got a job without sending out a resume. Almost. Naomi had gotten a job through this agency immediately after our exit

from Kenner; they queried her on who was available for some slightly higher-powered jobs. She gave them my name & number, and I ran up a rough-draft copy of my resume the end of December. They called me a couple of times, but I expressed a decided lack of interest in driving to Dayton or other exotic locales in the dead of winter, so nothing ever worked out. (In the meantime I'd spent about six weeks free-lancing at the company Namoi was at... making half what she was. But at last the Natural Order is restored and not only is my 'rate' more than Naomi's but, should I get any overtime, it will round out to what Don Carter makes an hour. And I don't have to drive to Indianapolis!)

--a minor side-benefit is that I got a chance to see how the agency had rewritten my resume before sending it out to client companies. My God! I mean, I already thought I was Hot Stuff...but even I was impressed by this masterwork of overstated prose!

...I said, up there, the 'Far East'. On a map, the place where I'm working appears to be straight across the city, at a guess maybe fifteen miles distant. However, Cincinnati's road system basically spokes out from downtown... and a lot of the cross-straits never were built... or fell off over the years. What it boils down to is that it is more time-efficient for me to drive downtown and catch the by-pass in Kentucky, rather than try tacking across in a more-or-less direct path.

27 miles. One Way. I'll let you know next time if that's Too Many...

[The jury is still out, but as a result of the first week, the Tabakow-Causgrove/Locke-Bowers Buick --odometering at 121,000+ spent this afternoon in the shop. *sigh*]

I haven't been entirely idle since the last dated entry. Lon's article has been inputted, outputted--and pasted-up. And I've received a number of neat letters in response to 55 already, as well as an unexpected package of art from one of my favorite artists of the 70's OW's (the one positive feedback from Buck's review in the COMICS BUYER'S GUIDE last year). In the meantime, Ian will take us up to Lon -- and probably until I get back from Corflu...

IAN COVELL

My apologies for the delayed reply to the last couple of OUTWORLDS--you really don't have to ask for an address correction; I'm still here, just sleeping. Or rather, doing everything except sleeping. The thing is that OUTWORLDS tends to make me think -- and it tends to make me think of things to write, sometimes so many that I simply don't write anything. Still make sense?

I must admit that Avedon Carol's insertion of the word 'Nazis' into a comment on my comments (53; 1726) was worrying enough for me not to answer her; indeed I have to say I found myself very angry, too much to cool down for a while. A pity because I wanted to say that Skel's homage (rather than attack) to Vance was masterly.

54: I don't know what it is about me and 'free verse', but I just can't get into it. Some phrases are striking, others beautiful, still others cut to the heart of an issue with speed and accuracy; but overall, I can't get past the feeling that it's just structured prose, which would be better done as prose. I remember coming across a few paragraphs in Sturgeon which were disguised poetry (real verse), and someone proved by analysis than an immensely long sentence in Delany was also a rhyming, structured poem (I can't read him either), but this business of 'free verse' eludes me, so Billy Wolfenbarger's work remains empty

for me. (And instantly to confound this, Joe Christopher's verse fails--for me--because it's too structured, inserting words [sometimes, sometimes] for the rhyme rather than the point. That's the way I used to do it, though today I restrict my verse to inserts for solstice cards, birthday cards, and love poems.)

And so you see, I trust,
My poetry's a bust,
(a phrase to hearten
fans of Parton).

I thank Lowndes for his answers to my queries. (Isn't that a dreadful word?) Your own thought about the different perception in the 'majority' of modern fans echoes my own thoughts; sf has become so wide a field, & the magazines so small a part of it, that just on percentages, fandom has altered. I entered fandom in the early '70s, long after most sf mags had gone. I've got friends who mention how many they used to get, and who was published in them (and what), but I suppose I really can't understand that period. There was a time when the number of sf books was finite; you could probably have added together all the books printed and come up with a reasonable number... and that was, what, forty years ago? Say the late '40s? Now, try to guess the number of books published each day -- and understand that the prevalence of sf is universal. I also think many people are now actively incapable of appreciating such magazines; we've always known the novel was more popular than the collection which was more popular than the anthology (and the series more popular than all!)--and the magazines will never, I assert, achieve the predominance they once held. Nothing to do with cost or content, simply to do with attention spans, and reader expectations. (As for FANTASTIC UNIVERSE: I recently obtained an anth. of stories from it [1960] -- gods, the mags weren't all this bitter, were they?) And of course, you must remember that Britain had a different pattern of obtaining magazines -- I wonder how many of the myriad titles made it here in the first place??

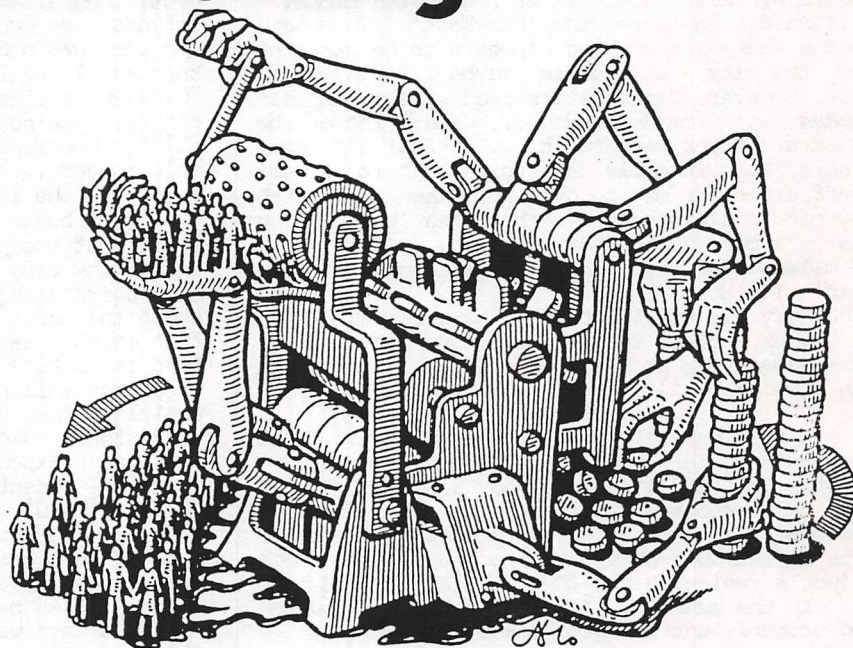
OW55 arrived airmail, a strangely prevalent thing over the last couple of months. I quite like the nuttiness of Bob Tucker's old story -- lords help us if fiction had to justify every coincidence or action; of course a story is better if it makes sense, but I don't see that as a major part, do you?

'Listmania' was as awesome, as usual. You watch (average) a new film every two days, which at least shows dedication. I think I'd occasionally like more idea of which ones you liked, but in a way, there are so many reasons to like or dislike a film, that you'd have to explain yourself, and I suspect that would increase the pages in OW roughly tenfold. (As for films on TV in the UK, the majority are now cut more than ever--even those on for a third or more time; the TV companies have announced they prefer the 'clean' versions and would buy them in preference to any other offered. So Ghostbusters was shown with over forty cuts, Christine with over fifty, the nude scene in Sheena was removed, and so on. Jaws, of course, remains intact. It's only about bloody death: family viewing.)

I'm afraid I couldn't do the x-word on the inside bacover (and wouldn't want to clip it out anyway) and I do wonder what Pepe Lew Pew is doing on the bacover (apart from the obvious)--but it does remind me to ask: why do some people buy bikinis for girl children under puberty? This is one of those mysteries that periodically gets my brain working.

[4/9/88]

The Alabama Kid Meets the Art of Plotting



by Lon Atkins

[Last weekend I was talking on the phone to an old friend from my native land, which is Etowah County in the hill country of north Alabama. As my friend and I both claim to be aspiring writers, and as neither of us has yet won a Nobel nor sold a screenrights deal, we could natter about the hopeful side of the trade. I babbled about this snazzy writing class I was taking. My teacher, I said, had read my first efforts and told me to put style behind and concentrate on form and plot. Most especially plot. "Ah, plot..." said my friend. "If you learn anything about the art of plotting, please pass it on." OK, I replied, I'll try, barefoot mountain boy and rank novice at the art that I am. Writing it down might help solidify my own understanding. Here's what I wrote.]

> > > > ACT TWO [COMPLICATION] < < < <

MIDPOINT: Imagine a phonograph record revolving on the spindle. At the midpoint scene of your novel, what has gone down revolves in equal balance against what will yet occur. The midpoint is the balance point. It need not be an action scene, but it must reflect the theme of your book. This is a propitious place for metaphoric symbolism. Grab your back thoughts. Twist them into an outpouring. The three ghosts in Dicken's "A Christmas Carol" could meld, in effect, into the perfect midpoint scene, but you have to accomplish it within the confines of the reality you've defined in the first half. After the midpoint, it must be all a coherent fast-paced knitting together of threads already scattered on the driving wind of your plot.

PLOT POINT TWO: The importance of PP2 lies in its relationship to act three, the resolution. PP2 is a slingshot. It strikes with force and accuracy at the building anticipations of the reader. It smacks, dead on, against the hinge-point of the plot. It drives the protagonist into an all or nothing decision, striking down the false options offered earlier as red herrings.

> > > > ACT THREE [RESOLUTION] < < < <

DRAMATIC CLIMAX: Before resolving actions can be undertaken, the protagonist must make a decision, an internal resolution to accept the possible consequences, as it were. This scene is the dramatic climax, for within it the final conflict is prepared. From a plot linkage viewpoint, the dramatic climax can be seen as a dramatic consequence of PP2's triggering effect. This is where the psychological profile you've been building for your protagonist falls into place, and a permanent change occurs.

NARRATIVE CLIMAX: Within this action sequence the protagonist takes action to resolve the concrete issues that illuminate the plot (and theme) of the book. Climax is attained. It's not uncommon for a series of narrative climaxes to address multiple plot lines. In this case, the sequencing of many resolutions (usually interrelated) becomes a separate art in itself.

DENOUEMENT: In the denouement, we "knit up the loose ends" of the plot and account for the floating threads we set upon the wind during our novel. After the narrative climax comes the authors final words. Perhaps we bury these annoying loose ends as Mysteries of Life, or perhaps we explain them separately. Either way, we can resolve quandaries for the reader and project forward, into greener fields, protagonist and romantic partner. The denouement is the graceful end to your novel.

~~~~~

How do you build a tangible plot? These seven mystical points may be sacrosanct concepts, but how do they relate to the ideas bouncing around in your skull? Fredric Brown says that plots are created by the slow accumulation of ideas, which graft recursively onto the basic plot tree. Phyllis Whitney says that a plot "is something that grows painstakingly, a bit at a time, often through periods of despair and drought." Max Byrd uses a method where he just sketches scenes, in no particular order, that might happen in his book. The scenes later coalesce, of course. Syd Field suggests writing the highlights of your scenes on 3x5 cards so that you can flip through them to judge pace, vary the sequence, and determine what's missing or what is not needed.

When I started my novel, I didn't have much more than the seed of a plot. I had a situation in mind that might bear fruit. Then Bob Ray said to turn in ten pages for the class, so I sat down at my trusty word processor and wrote an opening chapter. I focused on creating some interesting characters, but I had only the haziest



of notions concerning what was going to happen. The assortment of characters I'd created all belonged to different plots, so they fought each other for dominance every time I tried to advance my storyline. I became hopelessly muddled. When the course was over, I had failed to produce an outline.

Between quarters I threw out everything I had written. I returned to my original idea and examined it carefully. How could murder best be introduced? This produced a stream of ideas. Eventually one locked into the notion I'd had and a plot was born. Using a word processor, I built an outline with Bob's seven key story points as headings and mapped in my embryonic plot.

Almost immediately, new scenes began to appear. They could be as simple as a notation to myself or as developed as a long dialog. The only rule was that each scene was one paragraph, no matter how long the paragraph might become. With a word processor, I could rearrange my paragraphs as easily as shuffling Syd Field's 3x5 cards. I wrote scenes in summary form, sometimes building up a section of dialog or description to support the flavor I wanted to evoke. It didn't matter if the scene was one I would eventually use or if it was correctly positioned, what mattered was that I was getting the feel of my book in a very fluid format. The more I built an intuitive understanding of where the novel wanted to go, the better I could guide it.

The plot outline I had started corresponded to the form of the book I planned to write. It was written from the point of view (POV) of my detective, big Mike Bennigan. A first person POV limits the reader to seeing only what the protagonist sees. The author can find this hampering. As I outlined, I realized that I needed to look closely at my villains, the crimes, and how it all came to pass. I wrote a long scenario that started years before the time-frame of the novel and then came forward to define the crimes and the context in which they were committed. This exercise was enormously productive, causing me to rethink the plot structure I'd begun to outline.

In writing the villains' story I tried to observe the principle of Occam's Razor --the simplest explanation that accounts for all factors is to be preferred. From the first crime come ripples of consequence, causing additional murders. Nothing is gratuitous, although in the telling some things may at first appear so. I believe in plot linkage through cause and effect. As you get to know your characters, you know what they will do under varying circumstances. The things that your characters would actually do are the things they must do in your book.

After I'd done all these things, but before I had the plot fully developed, I wrote the first chapter. (As a matter of fact, I had big holes in the middle of my outline at the time.) this activity helped to verify that I was on a viable track. That first effort will need revision before it's useable, but it will not be discarded like my early efforts at Chapter One.

Remember that I'm a mere novice, but my advice is to keep at it. Bob Ray says that persistence is more important than any other trait. Keep working your plot outline. Review your plot for the way in which important things are revealed. Discovery is a major factor in any novel, and the way in which vital facts are disclosed can determine the emotional significance placed upon them by the reader. Think about the reader always. Rework your plot until you're certain it can be read and enjoyed.

Good Luck!

--- LON ATKINS ---

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--from fan ordinaire #36; in the Fannish Little Amateur Press; Mlg. #50; Feb., 1988  
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Lon asked me to mention that Robert J. Ray is the author of BLOODY MURDOCH and MURDOCH FOR HIRE (both in paperback from Penguin) and of THE HITMAN COMETH, in hardback from St. Martin's Press. ...so...how's the novel coming, Lon?



IT MUST HAVE  
BEEN SOMETHING  
I READ!  
URP



...the next Edition of  
The Convention For Fanzine Fans:

CORFLU 6

...will be in Minneapolis  
the weekend of April 28-30, 1989

MEMBERSHIPS [including the  
Traditional Sunday buffet]

|                            |      |
|----------------------------|------|
| Attending [til 6/30/88]    | \$29 |
| Attending [7/1 - 11/30/88] | \$34 |
| Supporting [...anytime]    | \$5  |

The COMMITTEE:

FRED HASKELL -- Crank  
GERI SULLIVAN -- Silkscreen  
KEN FLETCHER -- Stylus  
JON SINGER -- Waver Rollers

Write to: GERI SULLIVAN  
Toad Hall  
3444 Blaisdell Avenue South  
Minneapolis, MN 55408-4315

5/21/88: I said--a few pages...and six weeks back--that I wasn't going to "twist arms" for material for this issue...and I haven't. Not really! But halfway through typing Lon's article, I had this brilliant Editorial Insight; so I sent off a print-out of The Alabama Kid... to Cincinnati's "most-published" (at least I suspect Mike is) author ... and asked if he had any reaction to Lon's article.

## MIKE RESNICK

Thanks for the advance look at Lon's article on plotting. Unfortunately, if it was as easy and mechanical as he seems to think it is, everyone would be selling novels galore.

There are a number of false assumptions at the outset. For example, Syd Field, whoever he is, says that the Setup is 25%, the Confrontation is 50%, and the Resolution is 25%. Well, write a mystery with no Resolution, and every reader around will agree that the Resolution is 100%. Or, if he's speaking in terms of wordage rather than import, how does he explain the phenomenal popularity of Robert Ludlum, who spends 20 pages setting up a book, 20 pages resolving it, and 700 pages of Confrontation?

The problems with the "standard graphic formats" that Bob Ray uses is that he tries to boil down what is essentially an art into what is essentially a mechanical exercise in mediocrity. New novelists may grasp at the promise of such easy solutions, but there are NO easy solutions to a writer of any literary ambition. Even the bit about the Hook is debatable. What about the False Hook -- never mentioned -- which is a favorite of Dashiell Hammett? I defy anyone who has never read THE MALTESE FALCON to tell me what the mystery is about on Page 4, or even Page 40.

Try applying these 7 points to most works of literary excellence and ambition, and you'll find they simply don't apply -- and the reason they don't apply is because they have nothing to do with excellence and ambition. They are wonderful shortcuts for unambitious writers who want to grind out the 1980s equivalent to pulp sagas, and they doubtless bring in some much-needed lecture fees to whoever codified them...but if you stick to them come hell or high water, you may produce salable copy but the odds are that you won't produce a hell of a lot of copy worth re-reading or remembering.

Ever since Aristotle, self-appointed critics and pundits have been trying to codify and mechanize Art. This is just another well meaning failure -- not because the plot structure is necessarily wrong, but because it is necessarily mechanical.

[postmarked: 4/21/88]

--when Lon's article originally ran in FLAP, he had asked Bob Tucker for response, so I presumed he was open for other feedback as well. However, when Lon was in Cinsanity last week (on a business trip; the side-result of a promotion that has also put the novel on hold), I didn't mention Mike's response. So he's reading it here, for the first time, along with the rest of you.

I am fascinated with the "process" by which writers create, which is why I asked Lon for permission to reprint his article. Lon wants to sell his first novel; Mike makes his living by his writings. So, what I see here is a dichotomy: Not only between beginner and pro, but between the two philosophies of "Plot" as essential vs. "Plot" as mere device.

Perhaps, once Denise ~~plots~~ has their son, Steve Leigh can be ~~involved~~ involved ...and maybe Tucker (who is as well-versed as a mystery novelist as he is in science fiction) may have a go. I'd also be interested in what Doc Lowndes, as an editor/author thinks of all this...

Of course, the rest of you are welcome to jump in; I just know that you will!

Yes, by the way, I made it to and from Corflu 5 safely (though the flight back was a bit bumpy), and enjoyed myself totally! Corflu is the one con a year I'd be the most reluctant to miss; if MidwestCon and Octocon weren't so close (~~Octocon will be close this year! won't it?~~) even they might be eliminated first, were it to come down to that. I'll undoubtedly have more commentary as I go along. In the meantime, while I'm most reluctant to see Corflu get BIG, if there's any possibility you can get to Minneapolis next year ...send in your membership (at the least, a supporting one) now---before you forget!



The one "bad" thing to come out at Corflu was...

Well, although I never really formalized it, the "plan" was to keep this issue tight & small, get it out well before MidWestCon ... and then concentrate on a Bigger & Fancier OUTWORLDS 57 to take with me up to Ditto, the end of July.

...but Ditto [the other convention for fanzine fans], through no apparent fault of the committee, lost its hotel the week before Corflu -- and is in the process of being rescheduled for later in the year. I'm still looking forward to it; I just don't know "when"....

[Incidentally, Patty Peters and Gary Mattingly have announced a "bid" for Ditto 2, to be held in San Francisco, the fall of 1989. I think this is an Incredibly Neat Idea -- any excuse to visit the Bay Area--and urge your support for them at Ditto 1, in Toronto...whenever! ## Also, after consulting with my Committee (me), and with the presumption that everything holds together for a couple more years (this plethora of fanzine cons; and me!) -- I have decided to launch a preemptive "bid" for Ditto IV. Simply to have a "matched set", don't you know...?]

In the meantime, what with the lack of a "deadline" to fix OW57 against, and with the multitude of letters in hand, and other material unexpectedly coming in, this issue will probably be an ounce over the initial projected page count.

But enough of such weighty matters.

I know you are turning the pages with anticipation, just waiting to find out what I've been up to since returning from Corflu, two and a half weeks ago.

1) Recovering.

2) Still phasing into the New-But-Temporary Job: I like it, and it seems to be going well, but since I'm wrapping the initial project I was brought in for.... I hope it lasts for a while; but given the nature of the game....

3) "Publishing" a 5000 word self-written apazine.

4) Watching few movies... but watching a lot of the NBA playoffs. It happens every year, about this time; my one sports 'weakness'.

5) Living.

...including the ironies, that cluster (if only in my own mind).

Yesterday afternoon, I called Jackie from work. "Guess what we can do," she said, before I could announce the reason for my call.

Now I know from long experience (over a year, now) that when Jackie uses "we" in this manner ... it's usually indicative of some Amstrad perversion. I waited.

"We can do fannish cross-outs!" she announced, proudly.

"I know," I said, smirking to myself. "There's an apazine in the back of my car, that I'm bringing by after work...that will tell you all about it.

"...and we can do quasi-quotes, also," I said, piling it on....

It's probably just as well that this revelation took place over the phone; I'm still living to tell you about it.

(It's interesting--at least to us--to note that Jackie made her "discovery" from reading the manual [I know, I know; nobody does that; but Jackie does] -- while I made my "find" by calling up one of the reference "docs" supplied on the new software disks acquired early this year.)

Then today, Lynda and I both discovered that we'd bought pairs of tickets, to surprise the other ...to the same concert. Fortunately we have three months to figure out who scored the better seats, and to dispense of the extra set.

Also, today.... In an earlier issue of my FLAP-zine, I chided Bob Tucker about neglecting his columnistly "duties"; the column that ran in OW55 showed up that day after that issue was delivered to the OEs. Yesterday, in the issue delivered to the Causgrove/Locke micro-apartment, I (gently) chided Young Mr. Eric Lindsay about the lack of response to the last several issues of this title. Today....

All of this is thoroughly circumstantial, simply fortuitous chance events adaptable to segueing. So, though it's "Last In", arguably because it is about older issues -- and not totally ignoring the fact it's handy ... the Rest of The Issue starts with:

## ERIC LINDSAY

Jean says I have to clean up the living room table... You know what the largest pile of material there is? That's right; an assorted collection of OUTWORLDS, awaiting reply. While various other fanzines have arrived, been put aside for locs, and then (much later) been filed (without any sign of a loc), OW stuck to the table ...I have a nasty feeling that some of them are over a year old by now... And I hope you appreciate the number of spare ellipses I'm supplying in this paragraph.

On a different topic (to ellipses), I notice you complaining because I sent an Amstrad magazine to Jackie. Well, for your edification, I recently spotted the addresses of two UK Amstrad User groups, who sell CP/M software for the Amstrad. I think they are "general" Amstrad groups, so you'd have to tell them which model you are interested in. Probably be a good idea to enclose an International Reply Coupon (if the US post office sells them), or maybe you have some UK postage stamps:

CP/M User Group, 72 Mill Road, Hawley, Dartford, Kent, DA2 7RZ, UK;

and: ANWUC, 41 Millwall Close, Gorton, Manchester, UK.

... I was somewhat confused when I realised that OW49 was also a fanzine for Corflu IV. Dave Locke's look at the future was, as always, entertaining. I love the idea of a faan channel, but, of course, we probably wouldn't be able to get it here (no cable), and, as with Uncle Albert's Video, it wouldn't run on our players. I also felt more than slightly sympathetic about Chris Offutt's reaction to technobabble, and especially to Mac babble.

I was amazed to find that you had spent over a decade in Cincinnati. Seems to me I can remember when you moved. I feel old. ...and look older. And then you persuade Denise to write an article. How about persuading her to edit another GRAYMALKIN? I think we need a proper forum for all the obligatory Bill Bowers insults.... It's a pity to see Stephen Leigh confirming that teaching doesn't pay well. It also often seems that those who'd be most conscientious about teaching are treated the worst. Couldn't resist the figure of speech pun, could he? I'm not moving: NEVER. I looked at all the books, magazines and fanzines, and I'm not moving. I may have to extend the house, but that is a different problem.

Moving right along to OW52, we discover thick and thin columns, and (I assume) the joys of pasteup. Better copying also, from yet another New Toy. Jean and I now have a copier, a Ricoh 4060, which spends the majority of its time playing dead. We are expecting the serviceman to visit today (Sunday), to tell what is wrong.



I was nodding my head sagely while reading Patty Peters' comments on technological change, and (as I'm temperamentally an anarchistic libertarian [they throw good parties]) her comment "Somebody's got to want it badly enough to pay for development ...". However, I then realised that I see a couple of electronic fanzines. One is Chuq's "Electronic Other Realms", and the other is a local one that goes Australia wide on the ACSNET. So did someone pay? Well, most of the technology behind the networks I'm tapped into came from the US Dept of Defence, while the Australian sf zine originated from someone at the defence forces academy. The communication links I use are paid for by a variety of academic organisations ... and if you think the people who hold the purse strings have any idea what's going over the net, I have a wonderful bridge to sell you...

[5/8/88]

I know what "Mac babble" is: it's still rehashing MidAmeriCon after all these years. An activity that I seem to be abetting ~~much to my chagrin~~ ...hang my head, & all that! ## Actually OWS2, along with 53, were the only two issues out of the eight (counting thish) in this incarnation ...that weren't "pasted-up" (except for headings/illos/inserts). 53 was a 'straight' print-out but, as I believe I mentioned before, 52 was formatted in its entirety in the two column widths, basically one 'file' for each--well, it would have been, had the Amstrad a decent memory -- and the columns were staggered on successive pages of the file. Then I printed out the totality of the wide columns, detached the continuous paper, and (with the aid of a lead-in page, I must admit) re-fed the same paper through the printer, to pick up the narrow columns. Not exactly desk-top publishing, as we've already come to understand the term, but.... ## Obviously not a "successful" experiment, but one that is done. I still retain a curiosity about grids and variable-width columnar layout (look at the past two issues, plus this...) -- but you can rest assured that the one variation even I won't attempt is a four-column format: I've never seen it "work" (even professionally) on any page size remotely approximating 8 1/2 x 11.

## WM. [BILL] BREIDING

I wanted to let you know that I'm alive for myself, rather than through Patty, and that I got 53 & 54 from her, and today I went to the PO Box & picked up 55 (of which I've read most already).

Glicksohn's comment in 53 about identity building was interesting and a tad amusing, and since I happened to receive 53 & 54 at the same time, I happened to glance up while I was reading Mike's comment and looked at Hunter's cover on 54 with a man spiraling downward from the sky and I just had to laugh. It just worked. Or maybe you had to be there.

I've seen 132 of the movies you've seen, but I've seen 98% of them on the big screen. I love your lists. Keep printing them! What about books? (Recent, that is!) You do read don't you? What magazines do you read/subscribe to?

Oooooo! Nastyl!

[4/5/88]

I've been reading 53, 54 & 55, and you know what you're to blame for? The reemergence of the desire to do a genzine (remember STARFIRE?! Gads! I even looked through my current address list for possible contributors. But found mostly artists (you know: pen, ink, lines, dots; visuals?) and few writers. Put a damper on me, please! I can't afford this, Bill!

Maybe the people involved with OW are getting

dull, but I thought it was a damned shame that primarily only Mike Glicksohn noted anything about the beauty of OW54. And it was beautiful.

Like Billy Wolfenbarger, OW is the only [oh yeah: MYTHOLOGIES] fanzine I now receive. To think I used to live & breathe fanzines & locs. Question about Corflus: Did you really expect them to perk interest in publishing? And how many on your mailing list put their ish? What is the state of the fanzine these days, anyway? Are there lots of them? Are they any good? Or am I really just a gafiate with a sudden urge?

[4/7/88]

Well I've not heard from you for over a month now, Bill. ~~Have you come to your senses?~~ ## Had I remembered you had so damn many questions--I might've put your letter(s) off til later! ## I do read, incessantly, but not that many books, so you probably won't see that list here. (I admit it: I'm ashamed of how few books I read in a year.) I do go through both daily newspapers fairly thoroughly; I didn't set out to read two newspapers, but since one has "Bloom County" and the other runs "Doonesbury"--and as I collect both strips...I really have no choice. And, since I buy both, I might as well read them. I used to sub to a dozen or more magazines, but the list has shrunk to Rolling Stone and National Geographic ...and, naturally FESF (I've [basically] a complete run). I've managed to remain on the freebie list for a couple of graphics magazines. And as you might suspect, if you've been paying attention, much of my reading over the past year has been computer related: manuals, etc. [As one of the trade-offs for talking me into the Kaypro Don Carter gave me a run of the first couple of years of ProFiles, the 'official' magazine for Kaypro users...and I've been working my way through them; slowly. It's really weird to be reading an '83 or '84 computer mag and encounter a loc from Anne McCaffrey...an Alexis Gilliland cartoon ...a column by David Gerrold...!] Of course there's the fanzines (not as many as used to be...here...either). Yes, Bill, I do read: not in the volume I did (I do, still, watch too much TV) or want to ... and not in such a manner that it can be as neatly 'listed' as 'Movies Watched'.

Rashly assuming I've answered that query...

The only reason I'd "expect" Corflus to "perk interest in publishing"...is the postoon enthusiasm taken away from something as one-subject orientated as Corflu is ~~in theory~~. But (I can testify) translating that enthusiasm into paper fanac, isn't as easy ~~as when we were all younger~~ as it used to be. I'm just agitating here, because I do genuinely enjoy the oons and want them to continue. I think the strength of Corflu, the one advantage it has over Autoclave, is that it is rotational...and each year brings not so much a new location -- as a new group with new enthusiasms...and new ideas of what a Corflu "should be". Naturally, I won't agree with all these changes (the fact that it may become too 'in' -- too big, is my biggest "worry" ...he said, as he endlessly promotes the next Edition). And there'll never be another Corflu quite like "my" Corflu. Not even if I were to "do" another one in Cinsanity. To me, that is what makes them fun!

Actually I'm not dedicated to furthering the publication of a whole host of new fanzines ~~I don't need the competition~~ ... but rather inspiring continuing contributions to my own fanzines.

Of course I remember STARFIRE, Bill. How could I forget the one fanzine that had more typoses than my own?!

Nobody can afford it. Do it...if it is what you really want to do. You'll find a way to get it out; I do.... Who knows, maybe it'll end up on a list of "Bowers-inspired-fanzines" at some future date!



# David Singer

165 Westchester Drive

Los Gatos, California 95032

(408) 356-3428

Dear Bill,

May 3, 1988

I know one reason you're always so confident that I'm not going to LoC the *Outworlds* I buy at cons: five issues is a lot to read at one time, much less comment upon. (Of course, you used to have another reason to be confident, since I'd never really gotten around to locking before -- but this Corflu inspired me, and I've turned over a new leaf.) But I've outsmarted you this time; I'm going to LoC OW 55 before I finish reading the others (and, maybe, before you publish OW 56).

But first, a couple of comments on OW 52. I realize that you enjoy experimenting with layout and typefaces (how many Selectric typeballs do you still have, anyway?), but I think OW 52 was one of your less successful experiments. Even though Rotsler is a little extreme in his condemnation of dot matrix printing (after all, almost all contemporary typesetting is dot matrix, though the dots are very, very small), there's acceptable dot matrix and there's ugly dot matrix. The printer you used for OW 52 falls into the latter category. And the 2-column unbalanced layout was very distracting. But the only way to find out if an idea works is to try it, right?

I've never been a list maker, at least not a compulsive lister. Back in 8th grade, my school wanted us to keep track of the books that we read during the year, and they issued us a card on which to list them. After I filled the third card (probably still in September), I decided it would be more interesting to sort the books by author and have a separate card for each letter of the alphabet. That scheme fell apart on three letters: A, C, and H, since one card wasn't enough for certain prolific authors. So I made a few special cases and pressed on; at the end of the year, I had quite an impressive stack of cards, which I turned in and never saw again.

Since then, I've tried keeping other lists; several times, I've tried to list all the books I own (it's embarrassing to buy the same book more than once, at least when it's not deliberate!). But I've never gotten more than 20% of the way through the task.

Oh, yes; at Corflu, you said that you keep track of the number of copies you get from your toner cartridges. When can we expect to see that list in OW?

I'm not sure how much the Corflu "Magic" does for fanpubbing; I can tell you that this is the fourth LoC I've written since returning yesterday, and that's four times as many LoCs as I'd written so far this year. Not only that, but the other three LoCs have already been consigned to the maw of the Postal Service. And I've been jotting down things to go into the next issue of *Defenestration*; if this burst of enthusiasm really lasts, you should expect an issue this month.

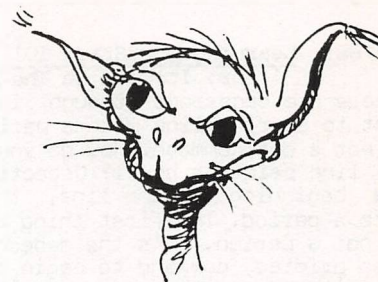
Gee, I remember when electric typewriters were the ones which removed the human touch from typing; times have changed a bit. (I still see manual typewriters from time to time; most recently was in the office of one of the purchasing people at work. I plan to ask him whether he actually used it, or whether he's preserving it until it becomes an antique, but I think I'll wait until he wants a favor from me!) I like Jodie's explanation of the computer terms; I wish she'd explained the physics terms, too, since I don't know them as well. For anyone who wants to become more familiar with the scientific manner of writing, let me recommend the *Journal of Irreproducible Results*; some of the papers there are almost as dense as those in more reputable journals, but it's usually possible to figure out some of the jokes.

I wish I'd thought of the Skelton Electronic Biowriter. First, it'd have a better name ("Singer Electronic Biowriter," of course); more to the point, it would have offered me a socially redeeming way of disposing of the frogs which frolic in the creek behind my house. Do you think Skel would be interested in a cross-licensing agreement? I can offer the Singer Box Accumulation System in exchange.

I find Ian Covell's comment about George R. R. Martin interesting; I remember the first few Martin pieces I read as being very upbeat. But I just thumbed through my *Analog* collection, and almost all the Martin I found was dark; the only real exceptions were the Haviland Tuf stories. I wonder why my memory of Martin's stories doesn't match the reality.

I seem to remember *F&SF* running double-sided subscription coupons back in the mid '60s. Unfortunately, I didn't keep any of those issues, so I can't check. These days, of course, the coupons come stuffed into the magazines in all sorts of interesting places; I wonder if next century's collectors will consider a magazine without its full quota of inserts to be less than perfect?

And speaking of perfect condition, I'll have to wait until I get to a copier before I try the Phantom Phan's puzzle. You will be printing another one next time, no?



6/4/88: Now, normally I envision myself as the person who is always being "picked upon..." *DAVE SKELETON! WHOSE OF YOU WHO'VE THE STRANGE PERCEPT THAT THIS IS NOT A VALID OBSERVATION!* But I must admit that I do, on occasion rare, practice the artform myself. And the person who brings out this tendency in me the most.... No, I don't know why I pick on David Singer so much, the few times I see him. He, and Diane, are two of the most delightful, genial people in fandom ... and I like them both, but every time I run into David at a con.... (Ah, well...I presume he knows it's not malicious; after all, he still talks to me. David...? David...?)

Thanks for the LoC, David; I am impressed. But I am fairly confident that I won't hear from you again, even after you get this, until I sell you the next 3 or 4 issues...in Minneapolis, next April!

[Incidentally, David kindly provided a wordcount for his LoC --but since I've had to cut it--literally; with x-acto blade--to fit...the column nextdoor is not included in the total for this issue.]

No, David ...the Phantom Phan has not struck again...but, presuming you did get to that copier--the "answer" to last issue's treat is provided ... below:

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
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| S | E | O | U | L |   | P | L | A | N | E | T |
| S | E | C | T | O | R |   | D |   | C | H | A |
| R | R |   | W | A | I | S | T | C | O | A | T |
|   |   |   | Y | O | K | O |   | R |   | D | B |
| A | F | T | R | S | T | T | I | M | E |   |   |
| K | E | E | L |   | S | E | C | O | R | D |   |
| W | E | L | D | S |   | A | K | A |   | E | N |
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|   | E | D | I | T | O | R | I | A | L | S |   |



5/24/88: Learning WordStar; 101 -- Release 2;

or: It Came In The Mail Yesterday...

"There are occasions--though infrequent--when you want to start a line with a period ...and the line is not a dot command. How do you make WordStar let the line print as usual? Deception. Type ^PB^PB at the beginning of the line, then begin the line with a period. The first thing WordStar encounters is not a period, it's the embedded (and invisible when printed) command to begin boldface. The line doesn't begin with a dot, so it's not a dot command. The second thing encountered on the line is the command to turn off boldface. Nothing has happened to the text. The line will print as though it began with a period, and WordStar is none the wiser."

---Steve Gilliland: A First Session

With WordStar Dot Commands; PROFILES; June, 1988

...and, as the Information Updates faster than I can type it in: Steve Leigh called this evening: Denise had their son--Devon Michael--last night. 10 pounds 13 ounces; a small one this time....! Congratulations--I'm looking forward to watching Megen and Devon grow into the matching t-shirts Steve and Denise used to wear to conventions (before we all learned how to pronounce the surname)....!

## RICHARD BRANDT

April 14, 1988

(I hope you appreciate this, Bill, it's the first time I've dated in months...)

In keeping with my tradition of public service, that inexplicably unanthologized Gardner R. Dubious story you mention was "Dissenting", in the February 1975 FANTASTIC. Ha, I say, to those who say fan fiction can't be published professionally; this one didn't even pass through a fanzine on the way. (You don't know how lucky you are, you and your bookshelves; my old prozines are arranged in towering vertical stacks in my linen closet...But I am not dissuaded. Yes, none of you who wrote old letters to prozines are safe now...)

There you go again, with those lists of yours. Of course, you have cable, which explains why I have seen so few of the films on your list. Home video shall have to serve my purposes. Of course, if my own past experience serves me right, you're turning yourself into ...a video zombie! Get out of the house once in a while, Bill. Go look for a job, or something... (Did you really watch THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR twice in one year?)

I'm not sure Taral can't win a fanartist Hugo sometime; his work has gained immensely in polish over the years, and I personally find it rather appealing. (I really like his bacover this issue, as an example.) He's also pretty visible in a wide range of fanzines these days. Rumor has it your comment on the unsung ATom has already instigated a campaign to win him his Hugo; I don't know if that translates to a campaign to take the Worldcon to Britain again....

Regardless of what I don't know about the CFG, Bill, "deadly local fan politics" are the same all over.

Speaking of which, I'll be working on a local con while some people I know are enjoying themselves in Seattle. Presumably I'll at least be able to publish again by next year's Corflu...

6/5/88: ...I certainly hope so, Richard! ## I really doubt Britain'll get another Worldcon Real Soon ...not if, as I've heard, others like me who'd paid an attending membership ...and couldn't... haven't received their Program Book 9 months after the con ...are the voters; hell, that's worse than my correspondence record! ## ...so, Richard ...just how long were those "old letters" aged before they were sent to the prozines? ~~Sorry! Thought you were David Singer. That's not a word!!~~ I'll give you a challenge, Richard: chronicle my prozine letterhacking career! [I'll even make it easy: it consisted of two letters published in prozines, and two published in "associated publications".] If you should decide to Accept This Mission, Richard, please send me copies; the books are up ...but the prozines are still in boxes in the storage closet!

...well, nobody's mentioned for ages now, Mr. Brandt, that you should have been in APA-50, but that doesn't prevent me from segueing thusly: Last Issue we had the Annual Larry Downes Update. Logically, therefore, this time we should have the Bi-Annual Chris Sherman Update.... And, by golly, we do: Release 3.0:

## CHRIS SHERMAN

Things have Changed, of course--after Stanford I returned to San Diego and started a consulting business which was moderately successful. In January one of my clients decided to expand heavily into the interactive video/CD ROM arena and offered me tools, resources, an R & D budget and freedom to set the direction for the company, so I joined them full time. It's quite different from anything else I've done. Part of my responsibilities include customer "support" (installing videodisc or CD ROM software), and my first customer was the CIA! Bizarre....

Glad to see you've taken a fancy to microcomputers. Next step: request those who can to submit floppy discs with locs, so you don't have to retype them. Or convince one of your friends to buy a \$1000 scanner (a scanner is essentially a photocopy machine that creates a digital copy which can then be used by word processing or desktop publishing software). Follow that with artificial intelligence--I've heard rumors of a program Larry Downes is writing called the "Faned's Automated Ultimate Genzine Helper" -- and we'll make you obsolete yet, Bill.

I like your lists. No further comment.

Fandom needs more people like Sheryl Birkhead. Such a gentle, caring soul... Behind her words I sense hurt, both from things experienced directly and from her powerful sense of empathy. Cruel things are said and done in fandom, damnit. Sometimes out of deliberate malice, but I suspect far more often out of stupid, insensitive ignorance. Many, many fans I've met are so self-absorbed that they simply don't perceive that their actions or words may injure others. The irony of this situation is that many of these people are nursing wounds from exactly the same kind of insensitive, intolerant behavior, often from "mundanes" who "just don't understand".

Take heart, Sheryl. We can maintain our own upright stance and hope to positively influence others by example. We can't be naively optimistic, though. A valuable lesson I've learned this year comes from M. Scott Peck, in his book PEOPLE OF THE LIE. This book forced me to consider the notion that there are genuinely evil people living on this planet, and because we live here too we'll ultimately have to deal with them. Their actions can hurt us, but only if we allow it. It's



hard not to be affected by bad people or events, but when possible I suck the proverbial deep breath and take comfort from Nietzsche's statement "That which does not kill me, strengthens me."

Harry Warner's comments about Shakespeare and dictionaries reminded me of two excellent books. The first is NOTHING LIKE THE SUN, by Anthony Burgess. I don't have a copy on hand but I believe it was written just prior to A CLOCKWORK ORANGE. Burgess, like Shakespeare, makes up words when it pleases him--but he also has a phenomenal vocabulary of "legitimate" English words. Burgess's book is an "intimate biography" of the Upstart Crow, and one of my favorite "historical" novels. The other book was Boswell's LIFE OF JOHNSON which describes the life and times of the man generally credited with compiling the first comprehensive English dictionary. Johnson and Shakespeare are probably the two most significant individuals in the early history of our language. Incidentally, one of Johnson's other projects was the first "correct" edition of Shakespeare -- a project completely dwarfed by the later Dictionary.

Warning: Jargon about to commence. Regarding Don D'Amassa's letter: this letter was printed with a Toshiba P321 24-pin dot-matrix printer. It's good, yes, but I'm reasonably certain it can be identified as dot matrix. The "really good" part about it, though, is that it cost less than \$500, and prints single-sheets as easily as tractor-feed, has a bunch of different fonts built in and has cartridge slots for additional fonts. It also prints high resolution graphics that truly are the equivalent of laser-printed graphics. It's also very fast. I'd highly recommend this printer.

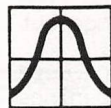
Talk about time-lag--Don has a letter I wrote four years ago that may surface in the letter column of MYTHOLOGIES. I'm still not certain if he got the letter, but I still have it on disk, and can easily print a new copy -- that's one of the true benefits of computers.

Don talks about fanzines in computer-based format. CD ROM technology--particularly a hybrid format like the GE/RCA DVI format--will not only make electronic distribution a reality but will add the benefit of true multimedia format. Imagine: 1 CD disc, just like the ordinary CD audio discs found in stores. Now for the science-fictional aspects: 220,000 pages of text/graphics; 74 minutes of full stereo sound and full motion video; up to 8000 hours of "telephone-quality" audio; 150,000 still video or photographic slide images. All available through an "information appliance" rather than a personal computer as we now know it. All of OUTWORLDS, forever, in print, live, on video, would fill only a fractional portion of one disc. Postage for one disc (first class) will be about the same as a bulky genzine. We'll need artificial intelligence then just to cope with the abundance of information offered by this medium.

Yes, this is an indirect plug for my new book: THE CD ROM HANDBOOK, published by McGraw-Hill this spring. It's exciting, heady stuff, though, if you can see past the specifications to potential applications.

(Aside: as far as spelling, it is magnetic disk and optical disc.)

So Larry Downes works for Arthur Andersen, eh? They have a couple of copies of "my" program--the Situational Leadership videodisc. It's not really cool AI software, but it's what I get my jollies from these days.... [4/16/88]



CHRIS SHERMAN  
Director--Technology Applications

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Patricia A. Peters  
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Computer Applications Department

-----  
There you have it; Business Cards from the "APA-50 Set"! Larry...? ...Leah? [By the way: Does anyone know if APA-50 is still 'alive'?]  
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## SHERYL BIRKHEAD

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The talk before the state committee went fairly well. An opponent had planted some questions that I tried to answer. This guy is a veterinarian and "can't" come right out and say he is against the bill--how would it look if it became known he was against allowing the humane society to keep cats alive for three days? The bill passed the committee vote and now goes before the full house and senate for the state. We'll see.

Brad Foster's cover is mighty nice -- as per usual.

I've written several letters recently to Britain and in one or two of them asked if I am supposed to be getting anything by being a supporting member of Conspiracy--I still haven't gotten anything since the con. Not that I'm being pushy mind you, but it has been...uh seven months since the con.

I just pulled out the box I have on the shelf with some zines in it and leafed through to see which illos I liked--Ken Fletcher, Taral, McLeod, Mel. White, Alan White, Ray Allard --I don't know (except in a few cases) how long these have been around fandom -- but longevity is not the main criterion anyway--although for repeat nominees it might help!

I listed the fanartist winners and was surprised at the multiple winners in some cases -- I had no idea Alexis had won that often or that Poyser had won more than once. I think, now that you've brought it to my attention, it is clearly time to launch an ATom campaign. I'll have to start mentioning it in my letters.

Jodie's offspring certainly are successful at keeping her guessing. Somewhere along the line I "thought" we all spoke English, but perhaps there has been a parting of the ways. Something similar



has been happening with acronyms if you happen to dabble in more than one "in-language" and find overlaps -- it takes a minute to sort things out and make sure you have the right reference.

Billy Wolfenbarger does manage to paint word pictures of even the most everyday of happenings -- so eloquently.

Tara's back cover is nice too -- his work is very nice! ATom, I think we've already covered-- always a delight. Foster is, well, Foster (which sounds a bit obvious I know) -- Rotsler, Hunter, Gilliland, Jeeves--what kind of comment fits when everything is super--just that I guess--super.

[4/2/88]

6/10/88: ...err, Sheryl, I'd hardly characterize that which prompted Billy's last "word picture" ... as being "the most everyday of happenings"! Then again....

### MARK MANNING

Since I spend several hours a day doing slice and dice with verbiage found in recent issues of NATURE, trying to create rubber science for science fiction stories, Jodie Offutt's piece went down like smooth bourbon.

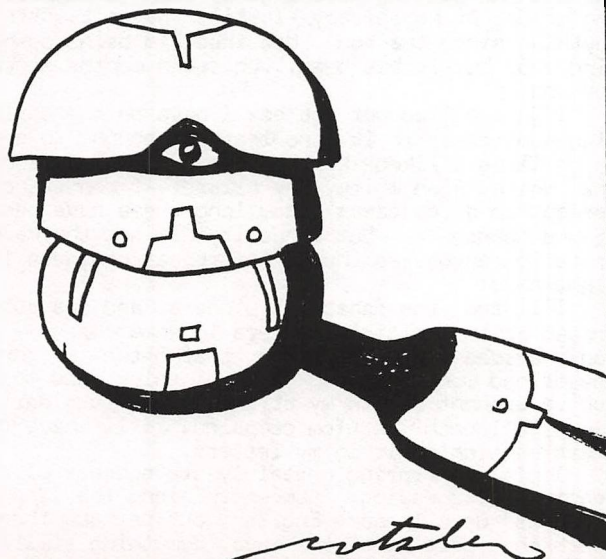
A few weeks ago, I was conversing with a friend, an electrical engineer, about some NATURE article on tachyons and quantum physics that I thought I understood. Soon I realized that I did not really understand QM, any more than an ant-eater understands situation ethics. And that I did understand what it must feel like to be torn to ribbons by a hungry shark.

Skel's article makes me wonder if anyone's going to do a 1988 Fanthology; I'm in awe.

The day after reading OUTWORLDS 55, and Billy Wolfenbarger's "Moondreams", with its vivid and elegant impressions built around, of all things, the painful aftermath of hernia surgery, I had, of all things, hernia surgery. "Moondreams" was not the kind of reading to make me feel confident on the eve of the procedure, no sir!

Truth to tell, the only really intolerable thing about my operation came when the painkiller -- a form of artificial morphine -- kept making me black out when I'd try to stand up. I switched to aspirin, which worked like the miracle drug it really is. No dreamatched moondreams with either drug.

The moral? A person in pretty good shape just gets somewhat inconvenienced by hernia surgery.



There's no romantically beautiful suffering involved at all, just a great glob of leisure, during which to read or to be phoned and visited by friends. Sorry to relate with such flat fact to Wolfenbarger's florid imagery, but that's the way it goes. [6/7/88]

### DAVID THAYER

OUTWORLDS 55 was most entertaining. I particularly liked the art by Steve Stiles and Brad Foster [1783]. Steve's clearly illustrates the delicate balance between trees, fanzine fans, and letter carriers. Brad's space scene seems to be inviting you to step inside.

I'm undecided about your segregation of art and text in separate columns. The pleasing expanses of white space do nothing to break up the solid blocks of text. And the art seems a little cramped.

Your lament about the attendees of Corflu corroborate my own experiences. My best loccers are those that have no other fanac. Faneds, after publishing their own ish, have little time or energy left to respond to others! [5/23/88]

### HARRY WARNER, JR.

I'm feeling much better now and only an ingrown eyeball remains as proof that I actually read even the smallest typefaces in the most recent OUTWORLDS. What I don't understand is how the typefaces can be growing smaller when scientists tell us that the universe is expanding.

If I'd written this loc promptly, I wouldn't be able to supply information about the colors of skies on other worlds, because I didn't know it until it appeared in a Sunday supplement to the local newspaper this week. An article by Carl Sagan says that the skies are black on Mercury, our Moon, and all other moons in the solar system except Titan and Triton. Venus has orange skies. Mars' are "something between ochre and pink". The big planets have such thick atmospheres that sunlight can't reach the surface, but higher in the atmosphere Jupiter has blue-black skies with multicolored clouds high up and red-brown skies further down. Saturn has similar skies but with more muted colors. Uranus has blue-green skies and so does Neptune. Sagan seems to have forgotten Pluto. I don't understand how the mixup occurred when the first pictures of the sky were taken from the Viking on Mars' surface. The color chart would have given false colors when photographed because the light striking it had a different hue from normal outdoor light on Earth. If the technicians could calculate the false colors from this chart to get the true color of the sky, why couldn't they have calculated the color of the sky correctly in the first place? Incidentally, I think it was Paul whose covers on the Gernsback prozines introduced the rainbow assortment of skies to the magazine world, and other prozines just imitated him.

I'm glad Jodie Offutt can understand some of the words in a thesis. I have trouble understanding words meant for the general public. For instance, "classics". I always thought that referred to longhair music but now record stores are using it to peddle rock recordings that were made four or five years ago and have just been reissued in compact disc format. "Top Twenty" is another baffler. One local record store had a wall covered with 45s, with "Top Twenty" signs under about fifty of the racks containing those 45s. Then there's "funky". One of the high fidel-



ity magazines surveyed a lot of people in the pop music industry, asking them to define funky, and got about nine different definitions for each ten individuals responding, most of which were contradictory definitions.

Skel's splendid article caused me to wonder about something he didn't include in his reasoning. Fanzines seem to be biodegradable, even when not typed with frogs and celery mechanisms. But after the ink fades and the paper crumbles, won't the staples survive? I've seen rust spots on a few extremely old and large fanzines whose staples are the wide variety, but the thin staples used on 99.9% of all fanzines seem uncorrupted by fifty years of existence on my oldest fanzines. Will the time come when nothing remains of giant fanzine collections but a scattering of staples? Will fanarcheologists of the distant future try to deduce basic facts about fanzines by the position in which those surviving staples are found, the way they are bent, microscopic marks on them through which those emerging from the same stapler can be identified?

I assume Billy Wolfenbarger's page comes out of personal experience, not imagination. It brings back some nasty memories of my own times of convalescence from hospital stays.

Since your lists were in nice big letters I read them first. They left me feeling sort of envious and with wistful thoughts about lost opportunities because I could have seen some of those movies if I'd watched my television set instead of writing locs. At a guess, I've seen about one out of every twenty movies you've watched in the past few years, but some of our mutual viewing experiences result from the fact that I saw the movies when they were first released quite a few years ago, not recently.

There doesn't seem to be any single reason why this or that person wins Hugos in the fan categories. Personal popularity plays a big part in the contests in some categories in some years but it isn't the whole reason for success. I would never have won those two fan writing Hugos if they went only to the fans with the most pleasing personalities and the greatest amount of palling around with other fans. Taral deserves a fan artist Hugo -- I know he's rubbed some fans the wrong way, but some Hugos have gone to fans who had substantial quantities of enemies. I haven't heard many rumors of behind-the-scenes bloc voting conspiracies in the Fan Hugo categories, except for the year a couple of highly specialized fanzines got nominated in an attempt to attract attention to the particular aspects of subfandoms that they catered to. I suppose the Fan Hugo results are unpredictable because the number of voters is smaller than in the pro categories and because some voters who know little or nothing about fanzine fandom make their choices almost blindly in the fan categories.

I believe the Wollheim science fiction anthology for Pocket Books was the first original science fiction paperback: that is, not an exact reprint of a hardcover book, in the new mass market paperback format. There had been science fiction published in paperback format back in the years when lots of cheap fiction was produced in that format for kids and non-intellectual adults. But "paperback" as we think of it today means the large-scale production of quality titles that Pocket Books introduced and so many other publishers soon imitated. [5/3/88]

...perhaps Sagan didn't "forget". Does Pluto have an atmosphere 'unfrozen' enough to have a "sky"?

## Ferrets Called 'Mean, Vicious'

Even though ferrets are the latest fad in pets, they are "mean, vicious little animals" that attack infants without provocation and cannot be effectively vaccinated for rabies, animal and medical experts warn.

"Until an effective rabies vaccine is available and more data regarding ferret bites are collected, we believe that health professionals should support legislation restricting the sale of pet ferrets," Dr. John Paisley and Dr. Brian Lauer wrote in the current issue of the Journal of the American Medical Assn.

The Anti-Cruelty Society concurred. "We don't recommend people keep them as pets," said Jane Alvaro, a society spokeswoman. "They are not trainable animals, they do have a horrible odor and it's really not possible to housebreak them."

Nevertheless, the popularity of pet ferrets is soaring, with an estimated 1 million now in homes and 50,000 sold annually. California, Georgia, New Hampshire, New York City and Washington, D.C., have prohibited the sale of ferrets as pets.

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...that "Update" is furnished by:

JOHN A. CORTIS

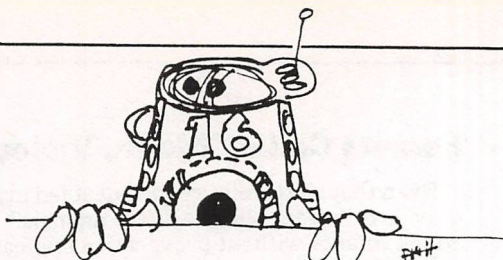
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Turning to OW55, page 1804, I discover a letter by Don D'Amassa. This is fortunate, as it gives me something to type about. Bulletin board systems.

Bulletin board systems have been around for years. Thousands of bulletin board systems are just a phone call away. Most of the boards I have called have either been places to trade pirated or public domain software or for role playing gamers. None look anything like any fanzine I've seen (not that I've seen a lot of 'zines...). Why haven't fanzine publishers taken to bbs's like ferrets to holes? Looking around at the local boards several reasons become immediately obvious. There is almost no editorial control to a bbs--it becomes whatever the users of that system make it as everything they send to it is immediately available to subsequent callers. Almost everything posted on a bbs is first draft; the content is more akin to conversation than writing. Most items posted on bbs's are one or two line responses to what was posted before.

Most bbs activity is limited to local callers. One must consider one's phone bill, after all. Even with PC Pursuit (unlimited long distance modem calling to certain area codes, \$25 per month) unless the board you want to call is in a major metropolitan area -- which are all PC Pursuit serves right now--one can rack up a mighty hefty phone bill real quick. National networks like CompuServe are not much better, bucks-wise.

The typical bbs doesn't look much like the typical fanzine, but paintings don't look much like piano recitals either. Completely different structure. I find the form most bbs take to be very dull--I've become very board with the local boards. I'd love to see someone come up with an interesting variation on the bbs concept thought. As long as they do it someplace which is a local phone call from west Los Angeles. [4/24/88]





C.S.F. BADEN

Skel's arkle was a delight as usual, a veritable slice of uk life. I've enjoyed Skel's pieces in OW and elsewhere, and look forward to future installments.

Jodie Offutt should know that computer programmers love to give cute names to projects. There's a public-domain piece of software used for transferring data from computer to computer over phone lines called KERMIT -- yes, it's named after the frog. (The software, not the phone lines.)

I've met a few imaginative programmers. Programmers, at least when I was growing up, were in it to have fun, and maybe do a little work on the side. I had the advantage of not having any work to do. Before there were laser printers and apple macs, there were computer-printed posters of Snoopy, Lincoln, Spock, nude women, and other imaginary creatures. The line printer poster may not have been a high art form, but it was an art form.

Speaking of line printers--have you ever listened to a high-speed impact line printer? Every line makes a slightly different sound. And a line of periods sounds different than a line of zeds. Cliff got the bright idea of figuring out a musical scale of sorts, based on what each character sounded like -- and was able to play music on the printer. Of course, you had to have the sound-reducing cover open, and it certainly used a lot of paper, but boy was it impressive!

I spent my formative years (11-17), that is formative computer-wise, in company of other precocious programmers, known as squirrels. (Come to think of it, those years had a great deal to do character-wise as well.) Don't ask me why we were called squirrels--I don't know. We weren't hackers, though. A hacker is someone who's trying to subvert system security. We just were into computers for the fun of it--you know, writing games and otherwise playing around. There wasn't all that much to be gained by control of the system, because school records weren't kept on that computer. (I guess the system designers figured it'd be worth the expense of having two computer systems, because then would-be hackers couldn't hack themselves into 4.0 gpas.)

No, I spent my jr. high school and high school afternoons in the company of computers and my fellow squirrels. The computer center at the local college had a 'no-games' policy, which of course meant we weren't supposed to get caught. We were considered a disruptive influence, because people were trying to slog through Business Information Science courses and we were using valuable computer time horsing around.

Our hearts were in the right place. The students figured out that if they needed any help when they got stuck, they could just ask the youngest person in the room how to log on.

They had a "library" in the computer center, actually a small room with some bookshelves, where a few video terminals were set up. It wasn't too well lit, it wasn't in clear view of the Chief Enforcer's desk, and it was for serious work only. So naturally we took it over, and it came

to be known as the Squirrel Cage. The tables on which the terminals rested were none too stable, only having one support each. When I managed to nearly knock one over, the Chief Enforcer very nearly blew his top, advising me that while they can always get more students, the terminals are expensive!

I mentioned the official no-games policy. This got me in trouble a couple of times, say about annually, when I would be banished from the computer center. Of course, there were some other terminals set up in the math lab elsewhere on campus.... As far as that goes, there was a sister campus in Huntington Beach that used the same computer system via microwave link. While it was a long bus ride away, I visited them a few times until the local Chief Enforcer got a call from the main computer center, advising him I was persona non grata.

I always came back, of course. And I was never without computing access, especially once I started actually taking classes on site. I did finally have the last laugh on the Chief Enforcer -- my first full-time job was writing software for a video game company.

But what can you expect -- my first reference book was called 101 Basic Games. [4/6/88]

...so, what do you do now? ...he said, curious? ## I appreciated your coc ~~hello there! LARRY DOWNS!~~ ...but I still haven't the faintest idea of how to "address" you ... I mean calling you "C" would be awfully presumptive, wouldn't it? ## ...I didn't ask you then, and I didn't ask Lon when he was in town... but do you two know each other? I mean, your Zip is identical to the fourth place and all. [... not that you should go out of your way, if you don't; I mean, I didn't recall having met Lon at a con in 1966 ...so he's hardly one of your more memorable characters...!]

DAVID R. HAUGH

It was great to find out that you're still alive and kicking, and that somethings do continue on. In this case OUTWORLDS! Out of curiosity I compared the latest issue, #55, against the last issue I have on hand (yes I do save everything) which is issue #26. Almost a thirty issue gap. You have been surprisingly consistent. Issue #26 had 30 pages not counting covers, #55 has thirty. You were using the same tiny type size (except that now I wear bifocals and can at least read the material). And in your editorial you talked about the conventions you had attended or were planning to attend...same for both issues.

What was most interesting though, is that at the back of #26 you had an index for all of Volume Six, and there are some of the same contributors now as then. Remember Volume 6 was for 1975, over thirteen years ago. The same contributors (in alphabetical order) are: Sheryl Birkhead, Joe Christopher, Robert Coulson, Alexis Gilliland, Alan Hunter, Terry Jeeves, Bill Rotsler, Bob Tucker, Harry Warner, Jr., and Bill Wolfenbarger. I may have missed one or two on the quick count, but ten people still with you after thirteen years isn't bad.

Now let's talk about layout. The reproduction on the artwork is as good as ever and you do leave enough space to let the drawing breath. But that type size! Most of your type sizes are eight point or smaller, almost six point in the case of some of the letters. As a general rule of thumb (and personal experience) it gets really hard for people to read a column that is more than, say,



three and a quarter to three and a half inches wide at that type size. Or roughly the width of one of your double column pages.

But, that's easy for me to say; I don't have to try and cram all that material, into a package that you can afford to produce. For someone out there who is thinking about producing a newsletter, I'd suggest they get a copy of "The Newsletter Editor's Desk Book", by Marvin Arth and Helen Ashmore, published by the Newsletter Forum, Columbus, Ohio. This is a nuts and bolts book and well worth having. [5/1/88]

6/12/88: The daisy-wheel printer I'm using on this doesn't deal with point-sizes, being basically a glorified typewriter ... but I'm curious to get the "reports" on the readability of the 15-pitch type used (exclusive of the "articles"). Some will be unhappy with the 8- (rather than 6-) lines per inch spacing...but I'm cognizant enough of column widths not to stretch it across a full page. Except, of course in Certain Ed-Specific Layout Situations (coming up in a couple of pages)! In any event -- with the exception of David Singer's letter [1827], none of the text in this issue has been reduced.

...the nature of the execution of this particular issue -- trying to get all the words in... in a readable size ...has left the art on the short end. Next issue may well be the opposite ... and the use of your work will certainly proliferate noticeably!

David is the one who "rediscovered" OW as a result of Buck Coulson's review in THE COMIC BUYER'S GUIDE. For this reason, I now forgive Buck for that bit of silliness. I'm certain he'll be relieved to hear this!

## ROBERT COULSON

Unlike Tucker, I always fill out the questionnaires sent by Contemporary Authors, International Who's Who, International Suave, Charming Gentlemen and so on. I do not, however, buy the book. The only time I was tempted was when I was informed that my biography had been included in LEADERS OF BLACK AMERICA. It seemed to be the sort of distinction that wouldn't come my way very often, but I figured I could find a copy in some library and photocopy my entry. Unfortunately, the book seems to have sold only to the people included; I've never been able to locate a copy. Maybe if I ever get to New York City.... MAN OF ACHIEVEMENT did send me a certificate saying I'd been commended by the publication for "distinguished achievement" in 1973. (I can't recall anything particularly distinguished that I achieved in 1973, but obviously I must have done something...maybe filling out the form counted.)

I've seen Ted Cogswell's entry in one of these volumes, where he is listed as "Brig. Gen. Theodore Cogswell, U.S. Podiatric Corps, Ret'd." Tucker just doesn't have the right attitude.

I'm happy to see from Tucker's column that SCIENCE FICTION FANDOM has been delivered to the publisher; I sent my article in in 1983.

The pronunciations that Brian Earl Brown mentioned aren't new; they're in my 1952 NEW CENTURY DICTIONARY. Like Brian, I learned to pronounce them differently, but presumably people finally started checking the dictionary. (I never bothered to check a dictionary about their pronunciation until tonight.)

Looking at the names of the contributors and loccers in this issue, I started to wonder if OUTWORLDS has replaced FAPA as the place old fans go to die? [4/1/88]

5/29/88: At Corflu 5 ... despite my total lack of enthusiasm for "panels" comprised of more than two participants (or, possibly, two plus a moderator), and my Absolute Rule never to agree to doing anything requiring any semblance of coherence before noon at a convention...I agreed to take my place on an 11:30 [a.m.] Saturday panel innovatively titled "How To Ruin The Perfect Fanzine". The other panelists were Robert Lichtman, Linda Bushyager, Marty Cantor, and a late-arriving John D. Berry ...and it was relatively painless and seemed to go as well as these things generally do. I opined that the title of the panel was nonsensical in that I had yet to create The Perfect Fanzine (this being after I'd already committed the opening pages of this to disk)...and Marty got off perhaps the best line, by observing that The Perfect Fanzine was, by definition, the next issue any (given) faned was planning to do.

Robert and John ventured with conviction the notion that the One Absolute Way to Ruin The Perfect Fanzine ... was through the introduction of a segmented lettercol, wherein LoCs are fragmented under topical headings rather than being run in toto (or, at least as much of a given LoC a faned is prepared to run) under the letterhack's name. I agreed that this generally was a Bad Idea ... except when the faned was named Don D'Amassa.

Now, in that Mallardi had preempted the DOUBLE BILL lettercol, I came to the discipline of LoC-editing only with the advent of OUTWORLDS in 1970. It has not been an exact science under my tutelage, but I have fun with my lettercols, and I like to think I've learned a few of the nuances over the years ... even though I will never be accused of 'trimming to the bone'. I do operate under certain self-imposed guidelines: As I mentioned on the panel (and I really wish I could remember who to attribute the concept to...), a long time ago I recall someone saying that the best mode of attack was to lead off a lettercol with your second "best" LoC ... and to save the "best/strongest" one until last. There's a helluva lot of variables involved there -- and it's not always possible in practice--but that concept is generally in the back of my mind as I approach an issue.

I also like to arrange things so that LoCs lead from one into another--either by reference to person or topic, and to keep LoCs on a specific issue more-or-less together. But then, "space considerations" overshadow a lot of Neat Ideas.

Some of you were impressed with my ability to access that "first" OUTWORLDS a little while back. Yes, with a degree of effort and perseverance, I can lay my hands on virtually every fanzine I've done--though things are not all so "organized" yet that I wish to be called on that statement! So, when I say that I don't recall ever having edited an entire lettercol by topic -- I'm not going to go back through one hundred fifty plus fanzines totaling four to five thousand pages -- simply to make certain, for the purposes of this digression. If I'm wrong, and if indeed I have done this thing at one point ... I'm sure that one of you will gently correct me. That is, after all, Your Job; this is a participatory exercise ~~even if I am not paid~~....

The lettercol that dominated several years of the 70's version of this fanzine was marked by, shall we say, a certain level of acrimony. Things got a bit out of hand, and while the readers loved it and subscriptions proliferated ~~you bloodthirsty fan!~~ -- I went through hell ~~and late-night calls from Niall and Jeff Bonnell~~ and endless realms of charge and counter-charge and documentation and



counter-documentation trying to get that under control. The 80's incarnation of this fanzine is a lot lower-key, by intent. I certainly have no edict against opinion and passion; I do have a decided lack of interest of getting into endless battling of egos over things I've no interest in.

Perhaps the veterans of the "Classic" OW consider the "New" OW bland by comparison. I don't....but I'll concede an increased degree of caution before committing some things to print: Sometimes I'll go ahead anyway, against my "better judgement"; that is known as Editorial Prerogative.

One thing has remained unchanged: Generally when I stick my foot in it, it's inadvertent. (Certainly most times I've deliberately tried to be provocative...my efforts have been met by deafening avoidance!)

The following two letters are grouped here (although I'll leave their "extraneous" material intact, in context) by virtue of their response to the leadoff letter--by Charles D. Hornig--last time [OWS5; p.1792]. The third letter is a response to that letter...and to advance copies of the relevant portions of the first two.

### A. LANGLEY SEARLES

For a number of reasons I think Charlie Hornig's comment that Lowndes is a "more accurate historian" than Moskowitz is both unfair and unfortunate. First of all, THE IMMORTAL STORM's scope is entirely different from that of Doc's recollections. It's comparing apples with oranges to equate what is a history of Eastern fandom with a set of personal reminiscences. Second, if Sam's work isn't accurate, why didn't Charlie challenge it while it was being published in 1945-52? He was on the mailing list, and had every opportunity to point out errors; and I assure him that Sam as an author and I as an editor would have welcomed correcting any mistakes he found.

In fact, I'll top that. Charlie did once challenge a point. In a letter published in FANTASY COMMENTATOR #12 (Fall, 1946, p. 323), after saying that Sam was "to be congratulated for his thoroughness and detail" and showed "keen insight", Hornig offered several clarifying comments and objected to Sam's statement that publishing THE FANTASY FAN had involved "much" of his salary. Sam replied (FANTASY COMMENTATOR #14, pp. 73-74) that the source for his assertion was Charlie Hornig's own remarks in THE FANTASY FAN #15 (Nov. 1934 editorial), which he then quoted. There was no rebuttal. Today, with accumulated knowledge, we can be quantitative on this point. Charlie received \$20 a week at that time, and in his challenging letter said he spent \$2 a week on his FANTASY FAN. I'll leave to semanticists the task of deciding whether 10% is "much" -- but the facts are clear: Hornig did indeed once say it was.

This sort of thing brings up two problems that plague historians. One is that people's memories aren't as reliable as one could wish. The other is that some people like to rearrange their past in the most favorable light to explain their present, particularly to avoid admitting to mistakes. This can even verge on fantasizing and on "double-think"--simultaneously holding in mind as equally valid the belief that two plus two can be four or five (to choose an example from Orwell). Or it can cause a person simply to refuse to discuss a topic when he realizes discussion may make it necessary for him to abandon a long-cherished belief. I've seen many examples of these things, both in fandom and out of it. It is why

Sam documented (and still documents) much of what he writes, and why (as a maturing scientist) I insisted he do so rigorously for his IMMORTAL STORM.

To answer Harry Warner (p. 1797), I consider COMMENTATOR a fanzine, not a semiprozine, because I publish in it what I enjoy publishing and think worthwhile, and because I make no attempt to solicit advertising. It does get reviewed, though no editor (including me) ever gets enough, so if Harry has any ideas of who I should be sending it to for further reviews I'd be happy to hear and reply.

As to why I abandoned it in 1952, and resumed it in 1979, I have explained that in detail in 27 and #28, dated 1953 (and consisting of 1952-53 material) but not published until about a year ago. (If anyone wants these -- advertisement! -- they're available from me at the usual \$3 a throw while they last.) Fundamentally all reasons stem from an interest in the fantastic that began in childhood and could somehow never be eradicated by time.

I enjoyed all of OUTWORLDS 55, especially Bob Tucker's "Beard Mumbblings". More like that, please! [4/9/88]

### ROBERT A. W. LOWNDES

All thanks for the new OUTWORLDS, which held my interest, and something more than that in the instance of "I Sling the Bloody Electric", by Skel. I've always enjoyed Skel's offerings, but this one is a minor masterpiece -- and maybe not so minor at that! It's one of those rarities, a new idea for satire, and very well worked out. I do not believe that it will grow stale or go out of date for many years.

At the moment, I seem to have mislaid 54, but there's an item in #53 to comment upon, as well as items in #55.

Chris Sherman: I'm currently working upon a book about Hugo Gernsback as prophet of science, for my office; and while the science-fiction magazines and HG's own sf stories will be covered, the bulk of it deals with his technical magazines and his informed speculation about what was to come in electronics, as well as his criticisms of the way things were handled at the time. That project will take a number of years, and thus far I've only gotten to THE ELECTRICAL EXPERIMENTER's early years. It's a long way to 1926!

I'm haunted by the feeling that I have read about the first polyphonic music synthesizer some where in HG's magazines--but have no idea where, at the moment. (My book will not be a biography, although the opening chapters do deal with HG's early life in Luxembourg and New York before he published MODERN ELECTRICS.) So the suggestion that you ask Sam Moskowitz is a good one. Sam not only knew HG personally in 1953 but while working for him had access to many records that I do not, because they are no longer accessible.

Bob Tucker: (We're now in issue 55.) I don't remember whether you wrote me a letter of protest about the yellow background on the cover of FUTURE COMBINED WITH SCIENCE FICTION, June 1942, but I do remember your objections to red, green, and yellow skies in earlier years. I was delighted in seeing to it that a fellow fan copped a cover, but my part of it ended when the basic idea for the scene was accepted On High. It's possible that I snickered when I saw the finished job, remembering your background indignations. (We'd seen green space, red space, lovely blue space, and white space backgrounds--all supposed-



ly taking place in outer space, not in any planetary atmosphere -- but that was the first yellow space scene that I recall.)

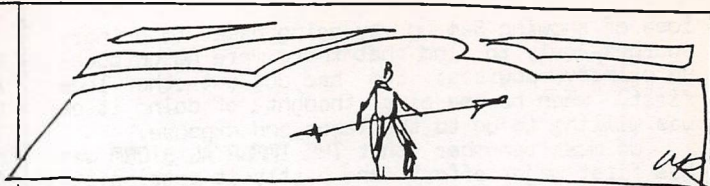
Actually I've seen red skies and yellow skies here on Earth at times, and some of the red ones -- either at dawn or sunset--that came very close to matching some of those Paul covers. But Gernsback, and Silberkleit after him, had a rotating system of background covers, and each specific cover had to fit what background cover was up now. I've seen some Paul originals (two at Sam Moskowitz's home) that show that Paul did not use the colors that you saw on the published magazines--or, at least, not always. The original for AIR WONDER STORIES, August 1929, had a gray background that was very effective; it was a cobalt blue background on the printed magazine--not bad, but nowhere near as good as the original. The original for SCIENCE WONDER QUARTERLY, Fall 1929, has a green background; on the printed magazine we have a gold overlay. Green in space does look somewhat silly, but it's more effective than the gold overlay, which gives the cover the feeling of a tapestry.

We have to remember that the Gernsback magazines used the three-color process, and that HG could not afford the very best engravers. A true black was impossible, but at times they managed to get close enough to it -- see, SCIENCE WONDER STORIES, August 1929. But what began to bother me after awhile was the fact that so many of Paul's covers looked as if they had been cut out and pasted atop a poster red (or yellow or blue) background, which just didn't jibe well with the colors in the actual picture. And, in effect, that is just what was done by the engraver. It's most painfully obvious at times when figures, etc., have thick outlines.

Actually, the fine edge of cover-copping was worn down in 1939 and 1940, in the science fiction boom, when many issues of new sf magazines appeared with covers that did not illustrate any story in the issue, or where an author was ticked off to write a short story around the cover, ex post facto, more often than not under a house name. I don't believe that much, if anything, was said about who "copped" upcoming covers in SCIENCE FICTION WEEKLY, which was pro- rather than fan-slanted.

I was unhappy about that situation, and made an effort to have covers done around stories already accepted on my Columbia magazines in 1941-43. I, myself, never "copped" a cover in the true sense. In 1941, Al Norton of Popular Publications OK'd my idea of writing stories around a couple of forthcoming covers he had in his office, with the understanding that that did not commit him to accept them. He did accept my first two attempts, but rejected a third -- which, believe it or not, was accepted by a later editor when Forry Ackerman (who had touched it up a little and tried to sell it elsewhere submitted it to Popular. It had been written around a Luos cover for SUPER SCIENCE STORIES; it appeared in the second issue of the revived SUPER SCIENCE STORIES, printed in Canada -- and a pretty shoddy-looking thing that was, compared to Popular's own printing jobs here in the USA. (After a few issues, the title was restored to Popular's American printers.)

When my titles were restored at Columbia Publications, in 1950, covers were invariably done and accepted without any relation to any story which would appear in the issue; but, at times, I did manage to get good black-and-white photos of some of them, which I sent to various "name" authors to write stories around. All such assign-



ments were accepted without difficulty because all were at least good reading, and some, like James Blish's "Testament of Andros" and "Common Time", excellent beyond the call of duty. I myself joined in the game at least twice, but I cannot assert that my efforts were especially memorable: "Intervention", by Peter Michael Sherman and "Object Lesson", by Carl Groener, the first appearing in SCIENCE FICTION QUARTERLY, the second in FUTURE.

Charles D. Hornig: Thanks for the kind words, but I can't really accept praise at the expense of Sam Moskowitz. For many years, I have found his books and magazine articles invaluable for my purposes when I wanted to achieve accuracy in my comments on Gernsback-Era science fiction, etc. The book THE GERNSBACK ERA in its present incomplete form includes 80,000 words by me on the sf magazines published in the US between March 1926 and February 1936. If I footnoted everything that I obtained from Sam (and no other source) my mss. would be loaded with Moskowitz references. As it is, I give him credit for a number of things which otherwise would have been erroneous. (I'd remembered wrongly or was misinformed to begin with.)

Had I written something on the order of THE IMMORTAL STORM at the time, my version would have been more slanted, less complete, and less accurate than Sam's book. During the great feud, I was anti-Moskowitz and said and wrote many scathing (and frequently unfair) things about him. So when I started reading TIS I expected that he would take justified revenge. He didn't; I have no objection to anything he reports me as saying or doing. (I may not agree at all times with his evaluations of why I did or said so-and-so, but being something of a critic myself, I don't quarrel with other critics' evaluation of me, unless they are rooted in positive error; then I merely correct the error itself and let the reader decide for himself or herself whether the evaluation in question can still stand up.)

Some years ago, I spent an afternoon with Sam at his home, which is where I saw the two Paul originals I described to Bob Tucker. He showed me his truly astonishing files of correspondence, and mentioned that he has been called a liar by some of those whose letters he has on file. The thing is that what he was accused of lying about is right there in those letters signed by the parties later accusing him.

I said, "Well, I don't believe you have any file of letters from me; I don't remember writing you any." "Let's see," replied Sam, going to the files and pulling out a folder with my name on it. Burn me! There it was before my eyes. In one sense, I was right; I never had any substantial correspondence with Sam, but there were a couple dozen postcards and one-page letters, none of which I remembered writing until I saw them.

That answers the charge of his lying. His evaluations may, at times, be open to question; so are mine and everybody else's. But when Sam reports a matter of fact he does so with documentary backup. That's why he is the best of science fiction historians; he has a solid background on hand before he writes--and in case after case after case, he has been the first to get that information. Later historians started out with the



idea of showing Sam up by going back to primary sources--only to find that there were no untouched primary sources; Sam had dug out the lode first, when no one else thought of doing it or was willing to go to the labor and expense.

We must remember that *THE IMMORTAL STORM* was his first major effort and partly it retains its effect because of the slant that you complain about. Both his approach and his writing skill have greatly improved since then.

Langley Searles: I see your point about "post-dated" rather than "predated" in relation to magazines, but I can't buy it. What we want to know, often, in relation to issues of yore is when did they actually go on sale? We start with a certainty: no issue ever went on sale in the month that we see on the cover date; that month was the time that the issue was withdrawn from sale. We look at that date and calculate the original on-sale date from the frequency of publication. A few magazines in the years after the Gernsback era were so irregular that we can't be sure of the on-sale date (and even within that time, there's difficulty with issues of Clayton's *STRANGE TALES*, following the January 1932 issue), but in a vast majority of instances, the "predated" approach works perfectly well.

Harry Warner, Jr.: My section of *THE GERNSBACK ERA* (if the bleeding thing is ever published) is actually a short history of the early years of the sf prozines. Even if it's published, I don't expect to enjoy many proceeds from it; it was done for love.

So why don't I write the Lowndes memoirs for love? I might yet, but certainly not before I have retired completely. Ed Wood asked me at a Lunacon, many years ago, when I was going to write my memoirs. I replied that if I told the truth, I'd spend the rest of my days in court defending myself against libel suits -- if not in jail as a result of losing them; if I didn't tell all the juicy parts, it would make pretty dull reading -- I'd put myself to sleep typing it out. Well, that was an exaggeration but it doesn't give an entirely false impression. And even if I decided, in my old age, to tell the truth and shame the devil, I'd be defeated by the fact that I'd forgotten most of the lurid things, never having written them down at the time. (Just recently I reread an article I did back in 1967 on the Columbia pulps; I couldn't possibly write such an article from scratch today--an awful lot in what I reread is entirely gone from memory.)

It's my collection of Gernsback-era sf magazines, and the fact that I'm constantly reviewing them (going through them and re-reading this or that) that makes it possible for me to do historical essays on oldtime sf at all. If I lost that collection, I'd have to stop.

Louis Russell Chauvenet: Thanks for reminding me about *THE TITAN*, which I've never read. I'll see if Bob Madle still has a copy. And thanks, Bill, for listing the contents. (I'd always assumed that it was a book-length novel, not a short novel accompanied by other stories.) Yes, my "the best of" would probably contain some different material by P. Schuyler Miller, but almost certainly would include "Spawn", and "The Arrhenius Horror". "Best of" collections did not start until after the Fantasy Press Days. Fan publishers were more honest than the regular ones.

Bill: Yes, the ascription of thanks to "John B. Mitchell" in the acknowledgement page of Don Wollheim's *POCKETBOOK OF SCIENCE FICTION* is indeed an error. Johnny Michel was not a "t" man.

[4/9/88]

5/30/88: ...as I mentioned, I've sent copies of the relevant portions of the preceding LoCs to Charles Hornig; to date, I've received no reply. That done, I was still faced with a dilemma: Sam Moskowitz was not on the OW mailing list. If someone who is not a "regular" is mentioned/reviewed/whatever, in depth, I do try to get a copy of the appropriate issue to them... but if someone is mentioned, in passing, in a LoC, I normally don't bother. But in that Langley and Doc took such strong exception to the Hornig evaluation of Moskowitz, I felt I owed Sam a chance to respond. Even after that decision, I could well have waited and simply sent him copies of the last issue...and this. But, in the interests of symmetry...and resolving all this, I sent Sam copies of the 'documentation':

## SAM MOSKOWITZ

It was very nice of you to forward the remarks of Charles D. Hornig concerning my work as well as those responding by A. Langley Searles and Robert Lowndes and I am appreciative of their defense.

I have been on a very friendly basis with Hornig for 50 years! He is a very nice person and I like him very much, even yet! I do believe I know what prompted his ill-tempered remarks. The Fall, 1987 issue of A. Langley Searles' *FANTASY COMMENTATOR* publishes twin interviews with the former editors of *WONDER STORIES*, David Lasser and Charles Hornig and that is the genesis of the problem.

When I was publisher of *QUICK FROZEN FOODS* for Harcourt Brace Jovanovich about 14 years ago I was boarding a plane at San Jose following the close of a business trip and when I got on board I sat down next to Charles Hornig. I proceed to interview him at some length with the idea of keeping the answers on hand to eventually write an article on him. A few years ago, learning the address of David Lasser and that he was still alive, I interviewed him by mail with the same intent.

Several years ago I received a letter from Eric Leif Davin of Pittsburgh, enclosing a manuscript of an interview by Hornig that he had conducted by mail. I had already aborted the idea of doing my own writeup since Hornig had published autobiographical pieces in *GALILEO* and *FANTASY REVIEW* with pretty much the same material he gave me on the plane. I therefore thought I might just as well assist Davin and even help him get it published. In reviewing the manuscript, I corrected a number of errors of fact given by Hornig so that the article appeared without them. However, I strongly disagreed with some of Hornig's claims, but did not touch a word of them in the manuscript, but wrote a letter offering my opinion with documentation of why I disagreed.

The main point, made by both Lasser and Hornig that they received a free hand in editorial matters and their further claim that Gernsback kept hands off is simply and provably not true. I pointed out that 70% of each issue of *WONDER STORIES* under Hornig's Managing Editorship was made up of installments of novels. A large percentage of them were German and French translations and English imports which only Gernsback could have located and approved. One was an honorable mention detective novel from a *LIBERTY MAGAZINE* contest. And certainly, in Gernsback's precarious financial condition he was going to bargain himself for 70,000-word novels by American writers. Additionally, he personally handled all stories by David H. Keller and Laurence



Manning. There were some short foreign translations and at least one staff-written cover story, not to mention a backlog of previously accepted but never scheduled stories, including one, "The Literary Corkscrew" by David H. Keller that had been accepted in 1929 four years before Hornig became editor. With a paper and pencil I figured out that even if Hornig had an absolutely free hand over the rest, it would come to 30 pages per issue. But by his own admission he submitted every story for final approval to Gernsback. This is what has made Hornig so furious and I am sorry for it, but it must be done. I am tired of among other crimes, of people accusing Gernsback of being an absentee editor. His involvement in all his magazines was very considerable.

David Lasser's claim is no better, even worse. I have 25 letters received by Henrik Dahl Juve from WONDER STORIES magazine for the years 1929 to 1932 inclusive. Seventeen are from Gernsback and eight from Lasser and some of those from Gernsback are two pages single spaced and there are letters from Gernsback returning a story for revision and telling Juve how he wants it revised. Juve was not considered among the very top authors at that time. Further, for nearly two years starting with the December 1931 issue, Gernsback hired C. A. Brandt as "Literary Editor" of WONDER STORIES to select stories and his name is listed on the masthead.

Now for Hornig's pique on this matter, I cannot let him get away without a sharp slap on the wrist. This will take the form of proving beyond any cavil that he is incapable of locating any errors in my work even if they were planted and that my files are more reliable than his 55-year-old memory of events.

I have kept the original manuscript I corrected of his interview with his word-for-word quotes and my corrections. I itemized my corrections and sent them back by letter and kept the manuscript. In answer to how he became a science fiction fan he said it was at the age of 14 with the September, 1930 AMAZING STORIES. That is incorrect; it was at the age of 12 with the July, 1928 issue of WEIRD TALES Magazine. He said that September, 1930 issue of AMAZING had a picture of

the Woolworth Building on the cover. That was wrong, it had a picture of the Chrysler Building on the cover. He said that the same issue had an installment of "The Skylark of Space" in it. That was wrong, it had an installment of "Skylark Three". He said he came to work for Hugo Gernsback August 1, 1933. That was wrong; it was August 7, 1933.

But how could I possibly know this, particularly the precise date of his employment (which Hornig admitted was correct when shown to him and if one looked at a century calendar one would find that it could not possibly be August 1st, 1933, because that was a Sunday!).

The "secret" is simple. I have Hornig's autobiography in his own handwriting written September 4, 1933, less than one month after he got his job. I think everyone will agree that such a document in my files is more reliable than Hornig's slipping memory!

I might add that on that airflight interview with Hornig my notes show that he admitted that the old FANTASY FAN cost him \$15 an issue, not \$2 which was too ridiculous a price even in 1933 for a 16-page, letter press magazine.

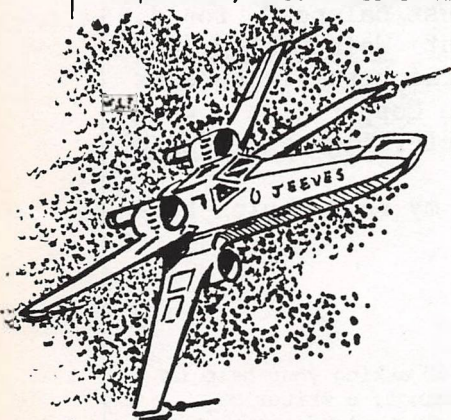
I still like him!

[4/28/88]

Shortly after I received the above, Sam sent me an article, with the following cover letter:

While organizing some material for filing, I ran across this unpublished piece which I've titled "Fantastic Voyage", which seemed to tie in very closely with the letters from Searles, Lowndes and myself on my "files". It was put together two years ago as a backup talk to be read at The Eastern Science Fiction Association in case the feature speaker didn't show or spoke too short a time. He adds: ...I usually refuse to try to identify stories for these requests, because those requesting them can't recognize the story even after you've found it!

If nothing else comes out of this interchange, I am glad it prompted Sam to send the following along; to me, this is prime fanzine material ... something that probably wouldn't be apropos anywhere else.



SAM MOSKOWITZ

# FANTASTIC VOYAGE

From time to time I get requests to identify important stories or authors that survive only as fragments of memory in the minds who seek to be refreshed. Sometimes the need for this information is imperative for business or personal reasons. More often it is just momentary whim on the part of the inquirer. In almost all cases, not only is inadequate information provided, but even when a title or author is remembered it is often the wrong title, the wrong author, the wrong time period, the wrong magazine or the wrong publishing company. Frequently the plot of the story is confused, so when you actually have located the right story you presume it is the wrong one because plot details don't match.



Few people in the world have greater resources than I have for reference and research on science fiction and fantasy. Couple this with 55 years of continuous reading and an above-average memory, not to mention a research methodology and if I cannot locate the answer to what is asked, it means that I am being supplied with erroneous, inadequate or jumbled facts. That computes to answering most such questions is a time waster. However, when I am supplied with a puzzle, which if solved, will give me information that previously was not available, that offers me something in return for my effort and there is some justification in trying to solve the riddle.

This was the case with a letter I received in 1986 from a Mr. Andrew Haigh of Bolton Landing, N.Y. (please keep the name Bolton Landing in mind; it may have proven pivotal in establishing the answer to the question).

Mr. Haigh claimed he had an "Uncle", not a real Uncle, but one he called an Uncle, who was named Richard Parmenter, who had sold science fiction in the "thirties" under a pen name. Could I determine what that pen name was. He offered a few clues.

First, an example of how misleading and unreliable memory can be in these things is provided by the well-known British fantasy author Basil Copper in his article "August Derleth: A Giant Remembered" in the second (1976) issue of the August Derleth Society Newsletter. In giving the background of his early reading he said: "I recall only a few titles from this period. One Weird Tales opus was "Forces Must Balance" by someone called Ed Earl Repp, though the story itself sounds more like science-fiction than the macabre."

"Forces Must Balance" was not written by Ed Earl Repp; it was written by Manly Wade Wellman. It did not appear in Weird Tales; it appeared in Astounding Science-Fiction. It wasn't a macabre tale, it was science fiction.... To make it worse, Copper had been discussing a period in the middle thirties, preceding Campbell's Astounding.

If someone had all the indices, he would discover in the Weird Tales index that there had never been a story there called "Forces Must Balance", nor had Repp ever written for that magazine. In Don Day's index he would have discovered that there was a story called "Forces Must Balance" but it had appeared in Astounding and by Manly Wade Wellman, so that couldn't be the story Copper was talking about because Repp had never sold a story to Astounding. Copper provides no plot summary, so there is no way he can positively identify the only "Forces Must Balance" found. Besides, Copper is very specific that he is writing only about Weird Tales and Copper is an author specializing in weird tales. Even if he straightens it out, as I have done, it doesn't make a damn bit of difference, because Copper didn't want to mention that story at all; he thought he was nostalgically referring to a Weird Tales story and made an error.

Which brings us back to Mr. Haigh and his letter to me, and my reply which follows.

Dear Mr. Moskowitz:

I hope that you'll pardon this intrusion, and that I may take the liberty of asking your help in finding what information I can about Richard Parmenter, who was, among other things, a writer of Science Fiction active, I believe, mostly during the thirties. I am particularly curious about what pseudonyms he may have used. Apparently he was somewhat self-conscious about his career as a writer of Science Fiction, and mentioned it to a few close friends including my parents. He was for many years Coordinator of Research at Cornell University, and died several years ago. He mentioned an incident to me some years ago which might help in identifying him. I guess that the general practice in those days was to sell work outright, but all the same, he was amused to find a story of his written in the thirties appearing nearly verbatim as a moving picture "Fantastic Voyage". He told me that, out of curiosity, he had written to Isaac Asimov to see if there was any possibility of getting any remuneration, or credit of some sort. (His notion was, I think, that Asimov had claimed authorship of the story. Since I never saw the movie, I have no idea of how the credits were handled.) My recollection is that he received a pleasant response from Dr. Asimov pointing out, however, that the idea was unencumbered by copyright or any other restraints, and freely in the public domain....so he was out of luck, which, as I recall, was OK by Mr. Parmenter and rather what he had suspected the



situation to be.

Though Mr. Parmenter was no blood relation, he was always "Uncle Dick" to me, which seems to have been how parents managed the problem of close friends in relation to their kids. "Dick" would have been sassily informal for those days, yet "Mr. Parmenter" was too formal...hence, the "uncle". He was a very dear person to me, and as a matter of fact, pointed me toward most of my earliest reading; everything from Kipling to Claudy to Haggard. My memories of him are very fond, and any information which might occur to you would be highly valued and much appreciated.

May I say that I am an admirer of your work? I particularly appreciate it, and its value since, as a professional librarian, I am aware of how enriched any field is by its bibliographers, and how essential they are to its continued health and well being. Your work is particularly distinguished by its care, accuracy and admirable humanism.

Sincerely yours,

s/Andrew Haigh  
Box 103  
Bolton Landing, NY  
12814

May 2, 1986

Dear Mr. Haigh:

I today received your inquiry regarding your uncle Richard Parmenter, who you state, among other things, wrote some science fiction during the thirties and apparently sold them to science magazines of that period.

Most requests I receive supply inadequate information or jumbled information, which makes it very difficult if not impossible to reply to them, even though I have most material on science fiction well organized and to some degree indexed.

Your letter interests me because I would uncover another pen name and somewhere in the back of my mind I seem to remember a published reference to someone writing Asimov along the lines you mention. He might have even given it in a speech which would make it particularly difficult to track.

There is no one with the name of Richard Parmenter listed anywhere in any reference and there are a half-dozen pen name references that are quite elaborate. However, there have been comparatively few stories written and published with the same plot as Fantastic Voyage (fictionally describing life in the blood vessels of the body). One of the earlier stories (if not the earliest), was "The Battle of the Monsters" by the famed sea story writer Morgan Robertson, which was collected in the volume WHERE ANGELS FEAR TO TREAD AND OTHER STORIES published in 1899 and printed earlier in The Saturday Evening Post. It was essentially a fictionalized version of the battle of the anti-bodies in the blood stream against cholera. There was a brief story by Charles Fort "The Radical Corpuncle" in Tom Watson's Magazine for March, 1906 in which the red and white corpuscles in the human bodies in the human body are invested with intelligence and engage in debate as to whether the body they inhabit is an intelligent creature. But obviously, while precedent-setting, these precede the period we are interested in.

The best stories that appeared in the thirties and the ones that are extremely similar to Asimov's book version of Fantastic Voyage are "The World Within" by Benson Herbert, Wonder Stories, August, 1931 and "The World Unseen", a two-part serial by Joseph W. Skidmore, which appeared in Wonder Stories for Feb. & Apr. 1936 (this last is almost certainly the model from which Fantastic Voyage was copied for the movie, following almost detail-for-detail events and broad situations in that story). Neither of these is by your uncle, because we know Benson Herbert as a British author popular in the thirties and Skidmore was a California author, who went mentally unbalanced and died some years ago. "The World Unseen" was probably the best single story he ever wrote and arguably the best story on that particular theme ever written.

There was a bestselling humorous book on a similar theme, THROUGH THE ALIMENTARY CANAL WITH GUN AND CAMERA by Georges Chappel (Stokes, 1930).

This brings us to "The White Army" by Dr. Daniel Dresser in Amazing Stories, September, 1929. This story is done in the style of Morgan Robertson's, giving the white and red cells in the blood stream personalities and dialogue and fictionalizes the destruction of deadly disease germs that have entered the body, ending with the recovery of the patient. Nothing has ever been discovered about Dr. Daniel Dresser other than this and one other story "The Brain Accelerator" in the November, 1929 Amazing Stories. This latter story deals with the stimulation of the brain and the ductless glands, in the process putting to death a dog and reviving it with an increased intelligence. It had strong biological information. This story takes place in Bolton, which name seems very similar to Bolton Landing, your own town, and only you can tell me if you were living in a town by that name at the time your "uncle" was still alive and writing.

Was your uncle a medical doctor or did he have a PH.D. in the sciences which would have made the preface applicable? Does the name Daniel Dresser coincide with any names in his or his friends families? In the "Accelerator" story the lead character is a researcher who has made discoveries in the refinement of aluminum and steel alloys. What type of research did your Uncle conduct at Cornell?

Does anything I have written seem to mesh with what you know? Does his family have any old letters or publications of his that might establish his writing identity? What else did he write besides science fiction?

You could also write Isaac Asimov (who is very good about answering), c/o his publisher Doubleday, asking if the story was identified (as it would seem it must have been) in the original letter to him by your Uncle.

I appreciate your supportive words about my books on science fiction. I have put a great deal of



work into them and have based all of them on original research, providing information on most authors and subjects discussed never previously available.

Please let me know whether you think Dresser might be your Uncle and other impressions you may have.

Sincerely yours

s/Sam Moskowitz

I think the odds are very good that I am right and that his "Uncle" was Dr. Daniel Dresser. The major piece of information he supplied was the fact that the author considered his story to have been lifted for the movie *Fantastic Voyage*. There happen to be relatively few stories with that plot theme in science fiction. There are not a great many more than I mentioned in my reply to him. He said his "Uncle" wrote in the "thirties". The year 1929 is close enough to fit into that framework. He said his Uncle wrote under a pen name. Nothing is known of Dr. Daniel Dresser than the two stories mentioned and I have every fan magazine of the thirties which specialized in bits and pieces about the authors of that period, no matter how insignificant. He said his Uncle wrote "stories" plural. There was a second story by Dresser.

The strongest piece of evidence was found in the second story, "The Brain Accelerator", which has nothing to do with the bloodstream. Bolton Landing where Mr. Haigh resides is a town of 600 in the Adirondacks in New York State. The nearest town named Bolton is a town of 150 between Worcester and Boston, Massachusetts. If Haigh's "Uncle" lived in or visited Bolton Landing, his using that uncommon name as the locale for the action in "The Brain Accelerator" is a strong piece of evidence that Dresser is his pen name. The Dr. prefacing the name is very easily explained by the fact that a doctor is the narrator of the story.

It should be pointed out that no subject index could have been of help here, because none exists: One must have read all the stories of that period or been very familiar with them to have found it at all. There are still areas of reference where there is no substitute for having once read the story and having remembered it.

5/6//86

Dear Mr. Moskowitz,

Many thanks for your kind and prompt reply to my inquiries about Richard Parmenter. The pseudonym "Daniel Dresser" is a distinct possibility, since Dick Parmenter was, I believe, a physiologist at Cornell, and his final title of "Coordinator of Research" had to do with the sciences...in particular, the biological sciences, I believe. In addition to his academic career, he was a person of many interests, and had been among other things a pilot in the Lafayette Escadrille during WW I, and Captained a "Q" ship in the Caribbean during WW II. The best source of information for me, in this somewhat quixotic and whimsical inquiry would be his daughter and, if she is still living, his only survivor. Unfortunately, I do not know her married name. At your suggestion I will write Dr. Asimov for what ever recollections he may have of the matter. I have also written to Cornell University, but here again, I doubt that they would have any information regarding his extracurricular writing career. As I mentioned, he was apparently secretive about it, and somewhat embarrassed at the time. They may, however, be able to put me in touch with his daughter though she would have been a little girl at the time, and may not necessarily have any notions about pseudonyms that he had used. She might, however, have manuscript material at her disposal unless it was discarded many years ago. As I believe I mentioned, he told me of using four or five pseudonyms during his career which became extensive enough to require him to hire a secretary to whom he would dictate stories and who would handle his correspondence. This suggests the likelihood that he wrote prolifically, and probably in several genres....possibly adventure, detective and maybe western, as well as science fiction. I think that I recall correctly his saying that never in the course of his business dealings did he ever use his own name, but referred correspondents to a pseudonym in care of a box number. However, the location given was probably always Ithaca, N.Y.

Again, my sincere thanks for your good and informative response to my inquiry. I will, of course, let you know of any further discoveries I might make. It would please me very much to be able to contribute a small detail or two to the rich bibliographical store that you have assembled, which is of unique and essential importance to all interested in the genre. Not only that, if I can discover the names he used, maybe I'll get a chance to read some of the stories! That, after all, was the original stimulus for this quest though who knows? He may well have been secretive for good reasons ... that is, knowing that the stories were crap and wanting to have no part in their existence other than the living they could provide.

Sincerely yours

s/Andrew Haigh

--- SAM MOSKOWITZ ---



...NOT REVIEWS ... But Stuff You Should Know About!

In conjunction with Corflu 5, Jerry Kaufman published a second edition of THE INCOMPLETE TERRY CARR [ed. by Rich Brown & Arnie Katz]; \$5. -- and THE PORTABLE CARL BRANDON, edited by Terry Carr (containing 6 previously unprinted Brandon pieces); \$2. Every trufan needs both. [From: JERRY KAUFMAN, 8738 1st Avenue NW, Seattle WA 98117] ## There's now been a fourth "Live Fanzine"...and the transcript is in MIMOSA 4, "free for the asking (but we won't refuse \$1.50 to help send it your way)" from DICK & NICKI LYNCH, 4207 Davis Lane, Chattanooga TN 37416. MIMOSA 3.5 (gad...faneds who do fractional issues!), the Live version, was conducted in January at Chattanooga 13, and has been captured on videotape ~~of a party~~. They definitely had problems with the mike, but it makes a nice "other bookend" to go with your copy of OW50. It's available for The Usual, in VHS, from the Dick & Nicki. [I now have a copy on Beta; don't ask! And, of particular interest, is Dick's "Not a Hitch, But a Glitch" comments in #4; should be required reading for anyone foolhardy enough to try this way of fanpubbing in the future!] ## One of the best "produced" (as well as one of the best-written) of the current fanzines is CRYSTAL SHIP, from JOHN D. OWEN, 4 Highfield Close, Newport Pagnell, Buck MK16 9AZ U.K. It's one fanzine I look forward to.... ## PAT MUELLER [618 Westridge, Duncanville, TX 75116] has ~~finally~~ pubbed A Fanzine of Her Own: PIRATE JENNY #1; \$3. or Editorial Whim. A nice start. [I've yet to receive a copy of the Lunacon Program Book...\*sigh\*] ## A wee 124 page THE METAPHYSICAL REVIEW #11/12/13, just arrived from BRUCE GILLESPIE, GPO Box 5195AA Melbourne, Victoria 3001, Australia; US\$25 for 6 issues airmail. I keep watching for Bruce to gafiate, so I can swipe his "I Must Be Talking To My Friends" 'title'; but I can wait!

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B>d

THE DATA FILE:

|          |       |             |   |       |         |     |       |             |     |     |
|----------|-------|-------------|---|-------|---------|-----|-------|-------------|-----|-----|
| 56BANNER | 2k :  | 56BILL      | 5 | 12k : | 56LAST  | WRD | 4k :  | 56SAM       | LTR | 12k |
| 56BILL 1 | 14k : | 56BILL      | 6 | 14k : | 56LON   |     | 14k : | 56SAM       | TXT | 8k  |
| 56BILL 2 | 8k :  | 56BILL      | 7 | 14k : | 56MIKER |     | 6k :  | 56SEARLEDOC | 24k |     |
| 56BILL 3 | 10k : | 56CONTRIREV |   | 6k :  | 56PAGE  | NO  | 2k :  | 56SINGERCMT | 2k  |     |
| 56BILL 4 | 16k : | 56CORFLUG   |   | 2k :  | 56SAM   | LOC | 10k : | 56START     | 2k  |     |

B: 390k Used: 20/182k Not used: 44/208k

This Issue contains approximately 25,100 Words  
--plus what remains 'un-cut' from David Singer's original 1172...  
---Bill Bowers; 6/18/88

22 USA

Black-footed Ferret



...at Corflu 5, someone handed me the Ferret stamp; I knew who it was then, but that's 7 weeks past...  
...if the ~~party~~ guilty party will please identify themself? Thanks! [I'll forward the original to Skel]

--DITTO has been rescheduled to:  
September 23 - 25, 1988

For details, Contact: Glicksohn, 508 Windermere Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, M6S 3L6, CANADA. # [And why isn't that address listed in the other column?] [I have this mad impulse to spend the following week in the Toronto area and then attend Contradiction 8, in Niagara Falls.... We'll see!]

-- ALSO HEARD FROM

were: Piers Anthony; ATom; Brian Earl Brown; Richard Bergeron; Jeanne Bowman; Steve Stiles; and Roger Weddall (today!). Calls Of Comment: C.S.F. Baden, and Marty Cantor. And I have second LoCs from Langley Searles & Skel that will be along next time. Thanks, All...!

CHRIS SHERMAN made the mistake of mentioning something in passing...and I called him on it, leading to this response:

I'm taking up the gauntlet. Working title: "APA 50: The View from a Half-Lifetime Later". It's probably going to be long, and take a while to finish.

I need help. APA-50 was more of a collective hunch than anything else. I'd like to gather impressions, memories, facts, and other mental detritus from anyone who was significantly affected by APA-50 in the years 1973-77 or so. That's the time I'm qualified to write about. Maybe Wm. or Cy or Roger (or yourself, Bill) can write about the later time period.)

Since you have a reputation as honorary keeper of the center, I'd greatly appreciate it if you would provide me with addresses of as many people as you are aware of who were involved with APA-50 during the "formative years". And put the word out to others who can help in the search. I have general and specific questions, and invite any kind of participation.

Anyone with an address for Roger Sween, etc.--please write Chris!





CHICK

ROTHEN'84