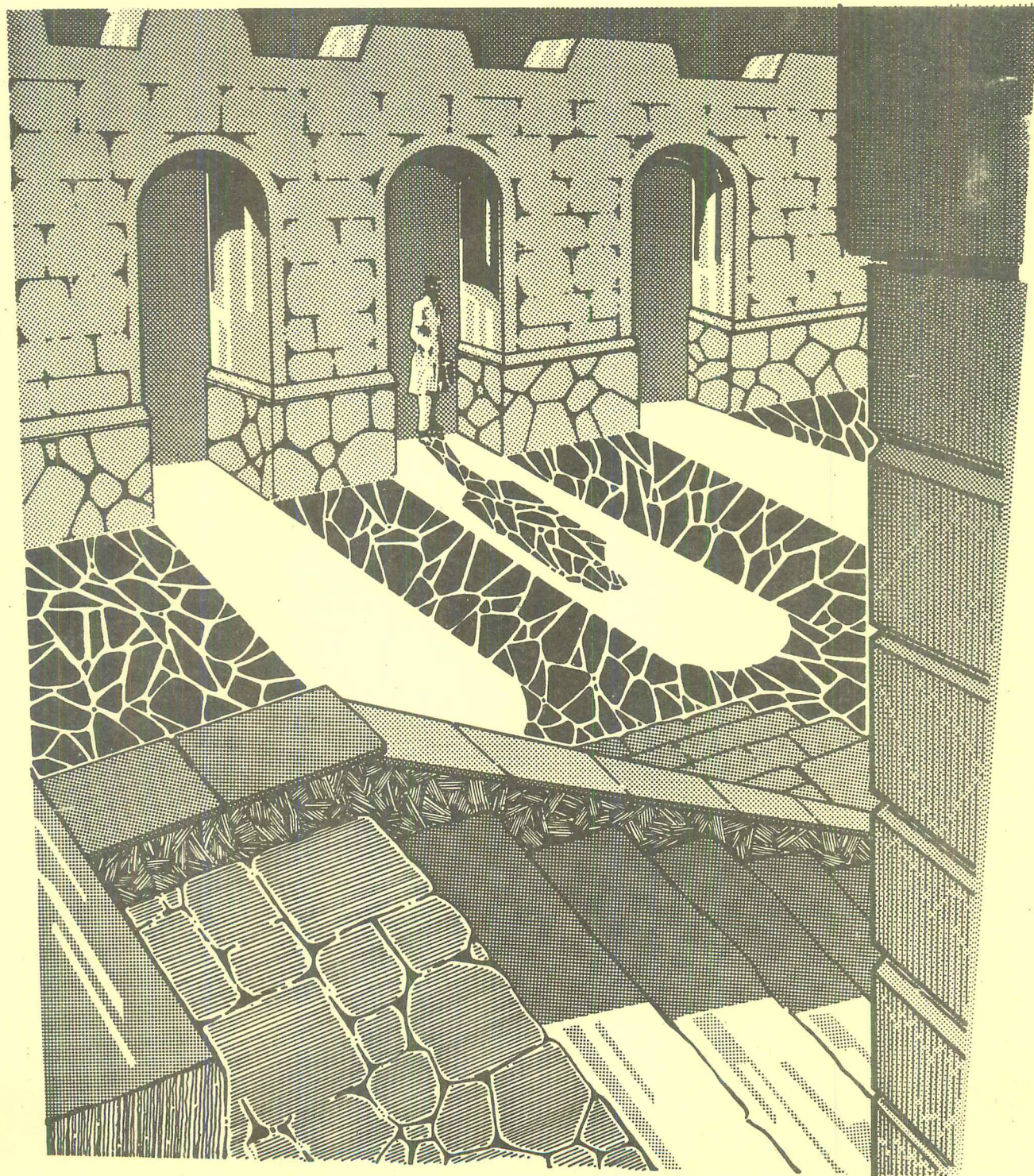


# Xenoliths





ALAN HINTER To say that I was *expecting Outworlds 30* is an understatement, but *Xenolith One* is a very fair substitute. It also reassures me that you are not only still alive, but also stirring.

There was still the *Outworlds* standard of quality, while retaining the charm of fannish informality. An odd combination that very few manage to achieve.

I enjoyed all the various peeps into the private lives of people, rather like a Candid Camera of Fandom --from the agonies of a fan at his first con, to how a pro writer constructs his stories. So much sf is concerned mainly with inventions and ideas that this makes a pleasant peep behind the scenes.

The artwork was equally varied and excellent. The cover was striking and reminded me of the work of Ed Cartier, although I can't quite say why. And those crazy, thoughtful, satirical, comic (you name it, they are all there) interior sketches were delightful.

Many thanks for *Xenolith One*. And it makes me hope that sometime, unexpectedly, one or two of my drawings which you still have, will see their way into print... [6/25/79]

ROGER WADDINGTON Well, if I could look back, I'd probably see my sojourn in fandom as one long stage--I attended my first and only Con in London, at SciCon 70, which is a convenient time to date and remember--with several interruptions along the way; though admittedly I've never had a fanzine with which to chart my progress. It can do a lot, to pull old issues out of your vaults, and say that was distributed at ----Con, where I met up with ----, and these are the issues where ---- collaborated with me; all I have memories of are several spells of gaffiation.

And I don't even know if I've advanced any!

Oh, like all the rest, I first saw fandom as a place where I could learn all about science fiction; I even had dreams of setting that hour-glass universe afire with articles and stories, one after the other, but there were too many others of the same mind; maybe should have saved up, and brought out a fanzine myself instead of spending all my money on my favourite reading! Though too, I've been lately having the feeling of where is it all going, what use the effort of knocking yourself out (albeit not so literally) just to make a stir in a magazine. And certainly I often feel like doing something more positive, instead; maybe planting a tree, or carving something on a rock, some more permanent memorial.

But certainly that first enthusiasm has gone, if you can count the losing of it a necessary stage; I no longer try to do more than I can see, no longer am so serious and concerned, no longer see fanac as the beginning and end of life, no longer sit vainly poised behind a typewriter trying to compose the masterwork that will live down the ages; to slightly transpose an old phrase, what you get is what you see!

And now later still (which is more to the point) I've been having a blitz on the pile of fanzines and fanac that has grown out of my innate laziness, out of my tendency to take more than I can give; the very same one that those issues of *Outworlds* disappeared into... So when the very first issue of a new zine called *Xenolith* arrives, just as I'm clearing the very last from my desk, it's nothing short of an omen, the push that creates New Year resolutions, that creates the impetus to start again, fresh and renewed, with my fanac; so I owe you much more than I can pay!

...And with my other dream in mind, that of becoming a writer when I have all that spare time, I must admit that the interviews with authors are always the first thing I turn to in fanzines, to find out how they plan their work, though I'll probably choose some different method altogether. Certainly I found the Wolfe interview better than most, mainly because it came from several heads (I use the old meaning of the word) and it was writer to writer, and

therefore more incisive and interesting about the mind of the writer, how he arrives at his creations. I think of some of the interviews I've seen, with the inquisitor so full of his self-importance and theories, concentrating on the idea instead of the act, and I realize how narrow the escape!

Having read Poul Anderson within, and a similar piece by Grant Carrington in *Knights*, there comes to mind the thought that maybe this is what fanzines do best, i.e., introduce us to other people, other ideas, other ways of living far outside our own... Something more than the usual obituary on file in the newspaper, a celebration of life in the shape of one man; and in a sense, all fanzines are celebrations, acts of homage to the joy of creation; though I write, as one who's never known the chore of editing one... [6/8/79]

RANDY REICHARDT Like countless other OW fans, especially those not in close contact with you, I'd often wondered what had happened to it. It seems we've lost many important and enjoyable genzines in the last two years such as *Sim*, *Khatru*, and possibly *Myth*, so *Xenolith* is a breath of fresh air.

Enjoyed reading your Iggy speech. Steve Leigh sez you're nervous when you speak; so are a million other people, including yours truly. I've never been able to overcome nervousness when having to speak for more than 3 people. Oddly enough, I've been performing as a musician for almost 10 years, and overcame nervousness back in '72. But I've never been a singer, and this year, my roommate and I worked up an act that, because his voice is god-awful, required me to do 95% of the singing. The first time we played public, it was shattered nerves all over again. But at least you can WRITE a mean speech; that's more than many can do.

Midwestcon 28 was Stephen's first con. Midwestcon 27 was my second. I read through Stephen's report remembering what it was like for me, with only one con under my belt. I too, wandered around somewhat aimlessly back then in 1976. However, I did have an advantage over Stephen: I was fortunate enough to have met a few people at Minicon 11 who were also in Cincinnati. *Winding Numbers* had already been published 3 times. At Minicon 11, I met my mentor, Jackie, was smoothed by Tucker, met Gay and Joe, etc., etc. When Jackie arrived in the lobby of the Norwood that evening 5 people rushed up and hugged her, while I stared and felt just a little out of place. (Jackie had picked me up at O'Hare after flying in from Winnipeg, and we drove to Cinti). But unlike Stephen, who had to wait until Sunday night to decide whether or not he had enjoyed himself, I was made to feel at home immediately. While Jackie was busy saying hello to all her friends, I heard my name called, and turned to see Gay Haldeman approaching with a warm smile. Someone remembered me! It turned out to be a wonderful con, with Jackie and Jodie, et al., springing a birthday card on me Sunday night that I still cherish. I also met you at that con; to jog your memory, one of the first places we encountered each other was that that infamous "last table" in the banquet room: Mike, Jackie, Midge, Jon, Stephanie, Lynn, Bill Bowers, and...Randy who?

I've never heard Joe sing the tune reprinted in *X:One*, so I'm going to set my own music to it; that should make the original version well worth hearing someday.

I want to thank you for printing what you said about "critical facilities", for I am exactly the same way, and feel inhibited by it. I read to enjoy, not to analyze. Perhaps I'm not trained for it, or don't have the ability, but it isn't there. Like you, I only remember if I enjoyed the book or not. I do know that there are some books I've enjoyed more than others, but I don't really know why. I have told people for years that *THE LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS* remains my all-time favorite novel, but why I don't

really know. ...basically, like yourself, I only know what I like and dislike; I doubt that I'll ever change.  
[4/14/79]

RAUL GARCIA CAPELLA The fine Rodak illo on *Xenolith* One's page 3 seems indicative of

a recurrent theme throughout the 'zine: that you're learning/expanding/growing and aware of it. This hasn't hampered your hand at turning out a fine compilation of material, and proving what both you & Glicksohn believe in, where it comes to fanediting.

But then, Wolfe makes the same point in that interesting interview: "I think that any kind of fiction should be intended to be an artistic experience for the reader." Right on--and that can be applied to any endeavor, be it pro or fanzine, as well as writing.

Really sympathize with Stephen Leigh (pages 8-11) as I've often felt precisely the same way at the few cons (count them on one hand) I've attended. Have in fact practically quit on cons for similar reasons. But that's beside the point...

Compliments to John Rodak... [3/28/79]

LAURIE D. T. MANN Your speech for Iggy was very good. I saw one of your first practice speeches somewhere along the line, and wish I could've seen you do "the real thing". Reading it may have lost some of the effect you produced.

Stephen Leigh's A First Con Commentary was amusing. Funny thing about attending your first convention--people are much more likely to be friendly to you if you're a stranger at a convention, than if you've been around a while. I think some fans view newcomers as "converts" to *their* particular image of what fandom is. When the new fans refuse to conform to X's particular image, sometimes there's trouble. There is no "one right way" to be a fan, contrary to the opinion of a few (I'm not accusing fans in general of doing this; just some of them).

Stephen Leigh seems to have a talent for dropping names without getting annoying and repetitious about it in his Iggy report. In retrospect, my *biggest* regret of MAC was not really knowing who Gil Gaier was. At that time, Jim and Gil had been corresponding, and I hadn't really read many of his zines. When we ran into Gil early Monday morning, I took his picture while Jim talked to him. Since then, I've become a Gil Gaier fan, and hope to really get a chance to talk with him at some future date.

The fear of death has rarely been my biggest paranoia. My biggest paranoia has usually been fear of dentists (*seriously*). That's something I haven't been able to deal with well at all. Death, however, is inevitable, even to those of us on the low side of thirty. I tended to repress my fear of death for a long time, talking myself into a complex set of beliefs about reincarnation. Last year, I finally came to terms with it. I no longer need to tell myself there's reincarnation, heaven, or anything else because I honestly do not believe in them any more. This year, I even took a course on Death, Dying, and Immortality, which has been fascinating. Our final consists of designing our own funeral.

(An aside--the first time I read this zine through, I was going to ask you the question: "How could you do an entire zine without mentioning Ro's name once?" I just noticed it on the top of page 35, and again, by inference, on 38. Oh well...)

I like your philosophy on Worldcon organizing. Still, I do think some sort of continuing Worldcon committee would be useful. We can't guarantee that there won't be future committees with all the problems of MAC, Suncon, and Iguacon. While an overseeing committee could not necessarily prevent this either, I think it's a step in the right direction. A "board of governors (or whatever)" could give guidance and support

when individual committees get into trouble--and could in *only* if absolutely necessary.

Why was it that on page 5, the "Bowers" in the illo looked much more like Ron Bushyager than you?

[3/30/79]

GREGG T. TREND I thought the repro on *Xenolith* was excellent, and the lay-out fairly good, tho somewhat rambling, but, certainly on level far above most fmz. I enjoy the way you casually link up fannish memories (personal) with present day concerns (YES, DETROIT in '82). That is an idea whose time has come.

I do think one of the most interesting phenomena in Fandom in the last 15 years is how convention fanac has replaced fanzines as a general area of interaction. I know that in the distant past fanzine fans looked at convention fans (particularly those who attend the Worldcon) as something less than worthy. Today's mailing and production costs, more affluence, more conventions (at least one per weekend) within driving distance have brought about the BNF phenomenon in con fandom (of course, some, like yourself who--now--are equally at home in both worlds). But, the primary reason for all of this is that many fans never wanted to be only paper personalities, no matter the egoboo attached to essaying and LoCing, but to be in real social contact with like-minded people outside of their localities. You meet a few people, of course, who are just as mundane as any non-fan, but, hopefully, more who Understand, who have a Sense of Wonder (like 'wunder where th' consuite is) and whose conversation goes beyond the relative merits of Heinlein and Asimov (that's why con fans once had a bad name--they *only* discussed SF). Trufans, naturally, avoid the topic. The rarest bird is the fanzine fan who has read little or no SF. But they must be erudite in most other areas, excepting baseball records. We know that Trufans, for instance, don't really read *algol/Starship*, *SFR*, or *Locus*; they read *File 770*, *DNQ*, *Janus*, *Mota*, and *Xenolith* and more obscure journals.

Possibly, when transportation costs surpass fanzine publishing investment there will be a new flourishing of the form. I think, over all, that there were more good writers and locers and genzines and fannish zines in the late '50's-very early '60's, when my last bout of fanzine fanac was at its height (or was it just *my* Golden Age?), than there are at present. I think it was harder to make voting decisions in the *Fanac* Egoboo Poll than for the FAans.

*Xenolith*. Strange. Strange stone. Rock? Strangely stoned? I have *Xenolithia*; that is, love of the *Xenolith*. The appearance. The apparent ease of style, tho struggle is mentioned.

Do you remember this (there is photo-proof)? At your first con (I know you didn't want to see those photos of yourself at Chicon III), first Worldcon, you & Bill let me get some much needed sleep in your hotel room. I didn't have enough cash to get one till I sold some work at the Artshow (those were the days, if you remember, before the larger prices of current Worldcon art auctions, when mostly pro art--and ms.--was auctioned mainly to help pay for con comm expenses); and I checked in on the second day: I had sold about \$60 worth of 9x12" drawings. There's a photo in the Chicon III book showing me blissfully asleep in an armchair while a party goes on about me. I'm the guy in the black T-shirt and the very dark sunglasses. Thanks for the kindness seventeen years ago, if I haven't mentioned that to you before.

Stephen Leigh's first encounter with con fen seems rather strange, and, seemingly, forboding. That is, if he is playing the situation straight. Tho fandom is an 'in' group mentality--a period of hazing and so forth--I don't think it's generally that aloof. With my first con (and first Worldcon) all the fans I met were surprisingly friendly and approached me (if

[illegible]






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**THE BROWN RECLUSE MEETS THE LOST SOLE:**  
**A SPIDER ROBINSON INTERVIEW——by**  
**Stephen Leigh**

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IGUANACON. There was a panel just starting in the conference room just down the hall -- all I remember is that Jim Baen was on the panel and I thought I'd listen in because he'd just bought a story of mine. I stood in the hallway, leaning up against the wall and watching all the people I didn't know flowing by politely not looking at me. Just my normal frenetic good times.

So up walked this couple, both smiling -- I smiled back, because I *like* people that show friendliness without asking for a return. I glanced at the red name badges, and found that it was the Robinsons -- confirmed, as Spider stuck out his hand and introduced Jeanne and himself. Shit, thought I, here's two of the people I wanted to meet... and I thought maybe I'd sneak into one of their readings and listen and maybe later walk by and mention that I'd liked STARDANCE... and I didn't really expect to get a chance to *talk* to them in the sense of actually communicating something other than pleasantries... and here they were saying hello to *me*. It says a lot about the Robinsons that they would come up to this stranger looking rather lost in the hallway and start a conversation. And as we talked, I had that far-too-rare feeling, the one that hammers at the back of the subconscious and screams down at the cowering id in a baritone voice: "Look, you fool! Those are Good People!"

We spoke of their work, and mine, then went in and listened to the panel.

Later, I mentioned all this to Bowers, who was at that time eating a cookie. A day or so later -- Bill eats *slow*, y'see -- he scratched the scrub brush that passes for a beard with a tobacco-stained index finger, and squinted one eye as he gazed at the Atrium ceiling. He mumbled.

"You know," said he, "I don't think I've ever seen an interview of Spider Robinson." And he fixed his myopic gaze upon me.



## STEVE

I suppose we should get the Obligatory Biographical Quiz out of the way. Just answer as well as you can and keep your eyes on your own paper. Question One, then: When and in what circumstances was Spider Robinson born?

When and how did you meet Jeanne -- I suppose I should tell you that I've only met the lady a few times, but I'm already in love with her myself...

You've probably glanced through the *Xenolith* Bill gave you at Confusion (a glance being all it deserves...) and perhaps noted that in the Iggy report of mine, I described the two of you as "old hippies". By that I meant that you seemed to still have the aura of overt friendliness melded with idealism that characterized (well, *often* characterized) the youth of a decade ago -- hell, that phrase could be applied to Denise and myself and several other people of our acquaintance. But... is that at all accurate, or am I wandering around in a metaphorical wonderland?

## SPIDER

Born 1948 November in (I swear to God) Fitch Sanitarium, Bronx, NY. The doctor who delivered me was named Watt, and I've waited thirty years for someone to ask me what his name was so I could say yes. I don't imagine it will happen -- but I'm ready. It is purely cosmic synchronicity ("nothing important, just dig it") that my daughter Luanna was sectioned into the world by a surgeon named Watts. I didn't select him, my doctor did. I swear.

I met Jeanne on the North Mountain of Nova Scotia's Annapolis Valley, in a gingerbread house by a stream down in the woods of Crows Hollow. I was playing some guitar for some people that lived in it that were friends of my friends. When I got to playin' a random blues she started singin' the damndest blues I ever heard. I gave her about four gross of bars of twelve-bar blues before she had it all out, and then it was time to go. I made discreet inquiry to my friends. Her name was Jeanne, her marriage was *very* shaky -- I dropped the matter instantly. Several months later she came to a party at the house of me and my friends, and the marriage had been dead for some time now in all but legal fact. My eyes lit up. I found out she was a dancer, and that she was a member of Nova Scotia's first and only touring Modern Dance company, and I flogged my friends into driving me to her nearest gig -- forty miles away in Digby -- because I couldn't work the damned four wheel drive, and I saw her dance and that was it. Thunderbolt. I courted her with the ferocity of a panther and convinced her to marry me in a little over a year. We got married in July of 1975, so I would place our first meeting at about October of 1973. We were married in an outdoor triple-wedding on the big field of the commune where we were living at the time, on the Arlington Road outside Hampton, Nova Scotia. All three weddings were videotaped -- when we went for the food and drink we saw an Instant Replay of all two hundred of us.

Yeah, Jeanne and I are only-partially-reconstructed hippies (well, I predate 'hippie' a bit -- I was wearing my hair long and a beard for a good four or five years before it stopped getting my ass regularly kicked for me. Say 1964 or '65). We both did acid heavy for awhile, long before we met each other. She had given much attention to matter spiritual, I had not. She turned me on to a preacher named Stephen Gaskin -- *much* too long a story to go into here, but I respect him immensely as a spiritual teacher and listen carefully to what he says without agreeing with every sentence. This suits him to the ground, which is one of the reasons I love him so much. He says there's two things to watch for when shopping for a religion: is it *exclusive*, the *only* path to salvation? And does it cost money? If either is a yes, go to the next window.

Yeah, I believe all that outmoded hippy crap -- about how it really *matters* what you do, and about



artists having the responsibility of making moral choices whether they like it or not, and about caring and sharing being the two most important -- and most difficult -- human attributes, and about despair being, as the Catholics claim, the worst of sins (though I can't agree it's unforgiveable). I believe that most folks are pretty decent if you can get 'em to calm down and not be so frightened, and that the individual is *not* powerless, and that there is more to life than maximally stimulating your brain-reward center: all that naive hippy garbage. I believe that the *important* new boom (the one that, combined with the technology boom, is gonna save our ass) is going to be a quantum jump in spiritual evolution, and I believe it's already underway. All them damnfool gurus are symptoms of a great need, a vast yearning. With 20th century tools, we are grappling with God -- it gets right interesting from here.

I believe that the human race, fucked up as it is, is on the whole a magnificent and praiseworthy thing. It took four or five million years to develop a thinking ape -- I'm willing to wait awhile before deciding it'll never be a smart one. I'm proud to be a part of the interlocking interdependent network of monkeys that produced Mother Theresa and Al Jarreau records and coffee and foot rubs and science fiction. I believe in the law of Karma -- that you reap what you sow, personally. I believe all humans are potentially telepathic, and I believe we'll get it together one day. Sooner than you might imagine.

So I guess this qualifies me as a hippy, and Jeanne too. On the other hand, we recommend extreme prudence with recreational drugs, have *no* use for smack or speed or opium or PCP or any of that shit, do not enjoy being dirty or smelling bad, work for our living, are monogamously married and delighted with it, do not presently live communally, eat the flesh of animals, pay our taxes and live in an apartment in Nova Scotia's only major city, so I guess it depends on what people *mean* by hippy. It always did.

I think there's a lot of hippies left. A lot of 'em did go cynical, but I don't think they're enjoying *that* much either.

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An Extra Credit Question, then, before going on to other subjects. I've heard a couple of people wonder about this one. What's the name on your birth certificate?

Occupant.




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Most fans and pros of my acquaintance were also early readers of the genre -- proving, I suppose, that bad habits are hard to break. What were your earliest contacts with SF?

At age five I went to the library and a magic lady whose name I never knew gave me ROCKETSHIP GALILEO. Within two years I had read all the Heinlein in the library, browbeating my mother into writing a letter that got me access to the adult SF. When I was done, I was still hungry, so I tried some *other* books that had little yellow stickers depicting a hydrogen atom impaled by a



Hugo Award. This was in the early fifties, when if an SF book *made* it to hardcover it was *good*: in quick succession I discovered Groff Conklin, Boucher & McComas, Cyril Kornbluth and Theodore Sturgeon, and the addiction was established.

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And with the addiction firmly entrenched, which of those authors were your favorites?

My favorites, in something approximating the order in which I came to dig 'em, are... well, all those listed above for a start, and then Pohl, Asimov, Howard, Merrill, Tenn, Norton, Kuttner, Sheckley, C.L. Moore, Knight, Doc Smith, Burroughs of course, Ellison, Lafferty, Farmer, Brunner, Zelazny, Delany, Spinrad, Leiber, Bester, Niven, Anderson, Dickson, Bova, Vonnegut, Laumer, Dozois, Shaw, Gerrold, Tiptree, Wilhelm, LeGuin, Martin, Varley, McIntyre, Vinge, Robinette, Ing, Card, and a new writer named Barry Longyear. Plus a hundred others I forgot -- Beagle, for instance. If pressed, I would go with a triumvirate of Heinlein, Sturgeon, and Pangborn -- no, some to think, I'd *have* to add Cyril Kornbluth and Larry Niven. I have *never* been let down by any of those five. But then, that qualifies Leiber, and Pohl... to hell with this.

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To stay with the indoctrination into SF, then: what of fandom? Were you aware of fans and -dom before breaking into writing SF?

I was very vaguely aware that fandom existed, but had not the least interest in joining it, or indeed *anything* (except young ladies, one or two at a time). A classic loner, with an aversion to groups of any kind. Once I started selling, I quickly realized that Diz Wuz De Customers, so I started attending conventions. My first ever con was a Boskone, and I didn't know a *soul* (Ben was not at that one), and my initial impression of fandom was that it was a snobbish in-group of people who *all knew each other* and weren't much interested in anyone they didn't know already.

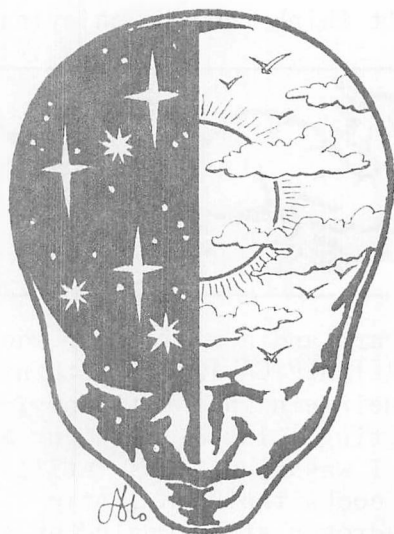
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I'd have to say that your description matches *my* first impressions, also. I managed to get past that mainly because *Denise* doesn't notice such subjective barriers. How'd you get past that feeling of exclusion?

Just before the con ended, Jay Haldeman said 'hi' over a bathtub of beer in the consuite, introduced himself, got me to explain my long face, and proceeded to introduce me to Gardner Dozois, Piglet Effinger, Jack Dann, and a number of other heroes. Later that night, cheered by many new fan and pro friends and quite drunk, I was getting into an elevator when I heard my name called. Jay had bumped into Ted White, mentioned me, and Ted promptly ran all over the hotel yelling my name to tell me he had just bought my second story. An elevator full of strangers got me drunk.

I decided to give ~~fandom~~ another try, after all.

Subsequently, I learned that fandom is one of the largest and sanest families that exists in the world. It was at last year's Minicon that I first consciously realized I was a fan and publicly copped to it. I do *not* write for the fans, I write for anyone reasonably literate, and I am aware that fandom constitutes a miniscule percentage of the buyers of SF books. But I'm also aware that that miniscule percentage are among the most discriminating, intelligent, demanding, perceptive, pig-headed, thoughtful, and above all *committed* readers I have or will have. And among the most *interesting* people





I've ever met. I've spent most of my life in search of weirdos and eccentrics and other colorful folk--imagine taking so long to stumble across fandom! If folk music had anything like fandom, I might still be playing guitar for a living.

It seems to me that I read (in Ben Bova's introduction to CALLAHAN'S CROSSTIME SALOON) that you more or less emerged from the sewers of NY -- I suppose I could have phrased that better -- with your stories in hand, a complete SF writer. Were you suddenly struck by a whim of whatever literary muse stalks the NY underground, or did you always write? I mean, were these first sales of yours also your first attempts or were there -- as with myself -- a trail of Really Awful Efforts leading up to the first stories that worked?

I think I can safely give you a definite yes and no.

It was this way: Until I was about 21 I had written nothing whatsoever except school assignments, attempted seductions, imitation Bob Dylan 'poetry', a few bad checks, and approximately fifty songs. Then one day in 1971 I was walking the halls of State University of NY at Stony Brook (actually, I spent more time hawking the walls, but that's another -- and even duller -- story), and I saw a sign saying "stories wanted for science fiction fanzine". I had never heard of a fanzine, but it isn't one of those expressions that takes hard thought to decipher. "What the hell," I said, and went back to my room and wrote a story. It was called *Dreaming Dervish*, and Norm Hochberg and Lou Stathis accepted it for *Xrymoph I*, and it was quite dreadful. It was exactly what Jim Frenkel (now SF editor at Dell/Dial) called it in his LoC in *Xrymoph II*: a pretentious Harlan Ellison imitation.

I thought it was terrific. Then.

I wrote a second story, even worse, called *Split Personality* for *Xrymoph II*. In his intro, Hochberg called it "new Wave". It was an even *more* pretentious Ellison imitation -- a time-travel story which, since it was occurring in two eras at once, was told in two side-by-side columns that became untied typographically only occasionally: plainly derivative of Harlan's *The Region Between*, and entirely trivial. I graduated before *Xrymoph II* was published, never even saw the second story until three years later, and put all thought of writing fiction behind me. I had never for a moment seriously contemplated submitting either one for professional sale, and I never intended to write another.

Then, as chronicled in *Callahan's Crosscut Saw*, I found myself guarding a sewer for a living, to prevent its theft. It was a *slow* nine months -- I smoked a lot of dope and read a lot of SF. And one day I thought "I could do this," and decided to try and write a story for professional sale. I knew this was *different*: I couldn't afford to self-indulge or pretent (isn't that the verb for pretentious?) as I had been able to in a fanzine.

That provokes a thought -- if, in selling professionally, you felt you couldn't "self-indulge", how do you view the old New Wave or any stylistically-daring story? Do you find so-called experimental writing invalid?

On the contrary, I have been entertained and enriched often by writers bold and creative enough to find valid new ways of storytelling, or to dig up "failed experiments" in the mainstream whose techniques *do* work in an SF context. Phil Farmer's *Riders of the Purple Wage* hits me that way, or much of the work of people like Tiptree, Greg Benford, Tom Robbins, or even Delany right up until DHALGREN.

But: as you no doubt found yourself, a *beginner* who flouts the rules is unlikely to sell. In SF there seems to be a feeling that you are welcome to be Picasso if

you want -- but first you gotta draw a horse so it looks like a horse. Since experimental writing is vastly less popular than traditional storytelling (*not* inferior: less popular), editors are seldom willing to take a chance on it unless there is something (like a familiar by-line) to induce *readers* to take a chance on reading it. Generally when I read a magazine story I want to be "taken away from reality", immersed in the story so thoroughly that I forget that I am in fact sitting in a chair reading a story. On the other hand, Ted Sturgeon, say, can remind me every third paragraph that I'm reading a story, because I have slowly learned that the experience of reading Sturgeon is as much fun as the experience of leaving reality behind. With Delany, for instance, such is not always the case (for *me*) as when, in TRITON, he gives me beautiful writing about a character who is boring at best and repugnant at worst.

That's concise enough, I suppose.  
So you were guarding the sewer from  
the ubiquitous sewer bandits of NY...

Over a period of a month I grazed in my subconscious for ideas, and one night I saw an old Charles Boyer - Claudette Colbert movie (if anybody out there knows its title I'd be obliged) where they were exiled Russian nobility working as butler and maid to a rich British couple. Every night they'd lock themselves in the servant's quarters, put on their finery, get drunk on vodka and smash their glasses in the fireplace. *Wow*, I thought, imagine a bar where they'd let you do that.

A week later *The Guy With The Eyes* was done.

I knew nothing whatsoever about marketing; I was dimly aware that four or five magazines printed SF. I learned from WRITER'S GUIDE that *Analog* paid top dollar; I mailed them the story, and got back a check for \$300. "Well," I thought, "I will be dipped in shit." And sure enough I was.

Because in the next year I wrote a half dozen more stories, and they all bounced, *everywhere*.

In the meantime, however, I had gotten to know Ben Bova, and he took me under his wing and taught me to write. His rejection letters, although the longest was a page and a quarter, were a course in how to sell professionally, and one and a half years after my first sale I clicked again. Hilariously, the second story I sold was a substantially re-written version of *The Dreaming Dervish*, that first-ever effort. Ted White bought it for *Fantastic*, restoring my nearly-destroyed self-confidence and determination to Be A Writer, for which I have never properly thanked him. (I hasten to add that it was very nearly as ghastly in the pro version as in the fanzine original, and I would *not* advise anyone to go dig it up.)

Four of those other six everywhere-rejected stories have, by the way, since been repaired -- to Ben's suggestions, almost invariably -- and sold. Some of 'em turned out half-decent. One of them won me my first Hugo.

Everything written since then (so far, knock on wood) has sold.





Your work has one quality which amazes me more than any other: you tread that fine line between low comedy and high drama quite often and -- most irritatingly -- manage to make it work. You can sprinkle a serious tale with the most grotesque puns and still not lose poignancy -- damnit, Spider, when I try that the stories just shatter and turn into powder in the platen and it's awfully hard to clean up. It's not fair!... Tirade aside, do you view your writing as essentially serious? Obviously, you and Jeanne were serious about STARDANCE, for instance, but what of the "Callahan" tales? To me, the humor is secondary, a device to get the reader snared and make them feel comfortable with the people in the tale -- or am I just reading this into what you consider simple entertainment?

Damned good question. Damned good question. Okay, I'll confess: I write fiction as my own personal method of saving the world.

Let me obscure that. Grandiose rhetoric aside, what I am trying to do with my work (as well as buy groceries) is make the world at least a teensy bit better place. I have *always* enjoyed entertaining people, but it was only when I started writing SF that I began to try and convey a message at the same time. This is because at about that time I stumbled across the only message I have found so far, the only really *important* truth I've run across in thirty years that doesn't seem to be common knowledge. Better than 90% of my output has one single theme:

Shared joy is increased,  
Shared pain is diminished.

I've no particular quibble with that statement -- well, except perhaps to question whether the human race would ever want to give it a serious try. And the vast majority of your fiction that I've read ends with the triumph of that particular philosophy. Are you truly that optimistic?

I feel rather *compelled* to be optimistic. It is a truism that what we all agree to be so becomes so -- and the general consensus lately strikes me as horribly pessimistic. It seems to me that when the airplane is shuddering and bucking and the engines look like they're falling off is *not* the time to stand up and scream "Oh my God, we're all gonna die!" I feel it incumbent upon me to go up to the front of the plane, say "It's not so bad -- I was on a plane in worse shape than *this* one and it landed fine," and tell a few jokes to keep the people from panicking and jettisoning the pilot.

The above, however, is only why I would feel it necessary to *seem* optimistic, even if in fact I were not. In fact, I *am*. I don't think the human race has ever seen a problem it can't lick, given time and hope. Without any question, things have been getting steadily better for a couple million years, and I'm confident that the trend will continue. I wouldn't change places with anyone in history, and I think that if Alexander the Great had been time-transplanted here this morning, he would have been struck dumb by the simple breakfast I made without effort. I know he'd be astonished that I'm able to send my love to a writer two thousand miles away.

Sure, we're dumb, silly creatures, blinking and besmeared with our own excrement, hurting ourselves and each other. But I accept Fred Pohl's article of faith: that we have no real problems, only games we agree to play with ourselves.

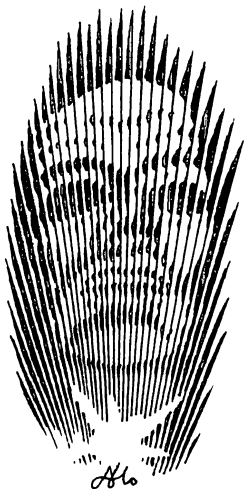
I *would* like to see some better agreements made, but I think a prerequisite is the conviction that we are capable of making better agreements.

The only thing that can do us in is despair.

Getting back to the concept of sharing, then -- could you explain that a little more fully?

As far as I can see, that's it right there: the refutation of entropy, the reason why being alive is a square deal after all, the thing that makes life tolerable. Nobody seems to behave as though they know about it, and so that's why I write about it, every time, and if I ever





run out of entertaining ways to say that I'll have to either discover a new message or go back to the guitar. I don't believe that will happen, though, because the message is such a *basic* and marvelous miracle that there are infinite ways to demonstrate it interestingly.

Yeah, the humor is 'secondary' -- not a 'device to snare the reader' but as an inducement to him/her to invest his/her precious attention in listening to me. I discovered in college that I could write a paper on a subject of which I was wholly ignorant and get away with it if I was funny enough. In a sense, it's just a natural example of the above axiom. The sense of humor that God saw fit to give me has brought me much joy, helped me withstand a great deal of pain -- and so it must be shared. Which leads to an addenda to the axiom:

Shared pleasure -- if it is truly sharde, as opposed to, say, "experienced in the same bed" -- becomes joy.

Unshared pleasure is barely worth the trouble.

And so I salt my stories with what gives me pleasure, in the hope that it will give others pleasure. I'd have to say that humor is as important as the message I'm using to put it across -- it *is* the message. Life is a joke, and not a half-bad one at that.

Our newsmen, commentators, politicians, etc. do a perfectly good job of depressing us. We need them, need what they do for us. We also need people to cheer us up. I am as proud of the Pat Terrry Memorial Award For Humorous Writing as I am of the Hugos and Nebula and Campbell and Skylark. I had major lung surgery once, and my first week home from the hospital I was in so much pain I literally couldn't *move*. I didn't sleep that week. At all. If I drifted off I relaxed out of that One Tolerable Position, and woke up screaming. At the end of that week a Marx Brothers movie I had never seen before came on the tube and I laughed myself into pure agony for an hour and a half, and fell asleep knowing for sure I wanted to live after all. I wish I'd written to Groucho and thanked him.

I asked earlier about favorite authors, but that was in reference to Spider the Reader, not Spider the Author. Does the Author have conscious models, writers whose prose you admire, who can make you laugh/cry from the way they place the word 'b' before word 'a'? Then I think of trying to answer that question myself ...there must be a dozen or so writers, each of which has one or more attributes I admire -- is that your situation?

Conscious models: Robert Heinlein, Ted Sturgeon.

John D. MacDonald, William Goldman (we're talking stylistically here). To some extent Harlan, to some extent Cyril and Fred Pohl, but those four are the ones I think of every time I write a story. If it is ever given to me to write one *half* as well as any of those four men (and it has not, yet), I will be a contented man.

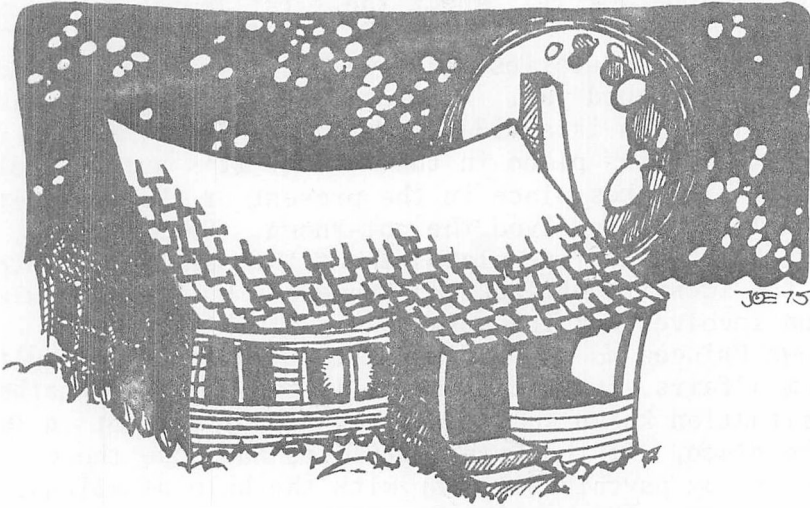
As to writers whose prose I admire, styles I find fascinating, who make me laugh or cry: all those ladies and gentlemen cited earlier, plus a dozen more. Haldeman; there's another. *Mainstream* writers I admire some include John McPhee, E.L. Doctorow, the above-mentioned MacDonald and Goldman, Giovanni Guareschi (Don Camillo ring a bell with anybody out there?), P.G. Wodehouse, Tom Robbins, *old* Saint novels, S.J. Perelman, Kipling, Thurber, Benchley, Westlake, Wylie -- oh hell, the list is endless. I will say that I just read a bloody





# BILLY WOLFENBARGER

## Language at Midnight



(for Jim Adams &  
Sally Pollak)

Chapter 26: THE RETURN      Tired days & nights of layoff, no work, no orders at that strange place that makes door jams -- free time -- spring cleaning at home. Write a lot of verse. Another miscarriage; we're going in for genetic consueing soon as we can afford it; the deep melancholy blues; write verse; time passes, leaves change, it rains; for the first time in my whole life had to pay income tax -- we just barely made too much money (but how did that ever happen to a beatnik & where o where has it gone?); melancholy songs without music; and very tired; weather moves sporadically into spring season; write a little more verse; takes me three months to write a 2,500 word weird story; time gropes.

Angel of memory, return to me now. It is May in Oregon -- later this month will have us six years in this state. And on May first I wrote a little poem:

### *The Plea*

Lose me with hermits of mindsage  
In woods always Autumnal  
Unclasping the years & the feelings of those years  
Into the one final & everlasting Now.  
Let my being be replenished  
In purple shadows & the gloried day!  
Brother to darkness, disinheriting time,  
Fly away -- to reach my true home.

Like a mindwarp timesage. It was a beautiful and vivid day, the light in the sky making everything clear. Fields, railroadtrack, mountains and sky really alive. Us alive with it too.

Now the frogs (...and crickets...) come on with their voices. Old, familiar spacewarp. Writing of Ulanin in verse, while the hills of Hanalos lie in neglect. What will the souls there do when the evening comes on?

What will they do?

These nights and days feel like my 35 years. Old spaces on the planet universe. Old. The future of America is inside candy wrappers.

My mind is on the blink. Favorite worlds in the caves of night, o ancient night, that came before neon, came before magazines, horses, underwear, overwear, hashish,



foxes, people, oceans.

So I hear someone's written a book on the history of Venice West; I need to read of a clear & accurate history of Venice; I was first there in the summer of 1965, and whole worlds were happening then. (Ah, poetry, the Beats, coffeehouse consciousness, New Waves of mind & feeling and spirit bodies, shamanistic Adamic vibes from Venice to elsewhere, and elsewhere to Venice West, such a mind romance in memory now. Everything happens.) Everything is returned & is returning. Voluntary poverty, ocean mantras she sings to you, everyone if they listen.

I remember.

I remember.

## Chapter 27: THE EMPTYING

A taste of coffee again on a morning fresh as Spring morning where fawns hide from their kinfolk through giant tall rye grass, I can hear the thuddings of satyrs through my ears, my head, this being. At this private time of morning (and when the coffee is going strong) the sunlight does not blind them, nor throw them into a discontentment. Though soon, they will return from whence they came, and I might not be aware of the moments passing.

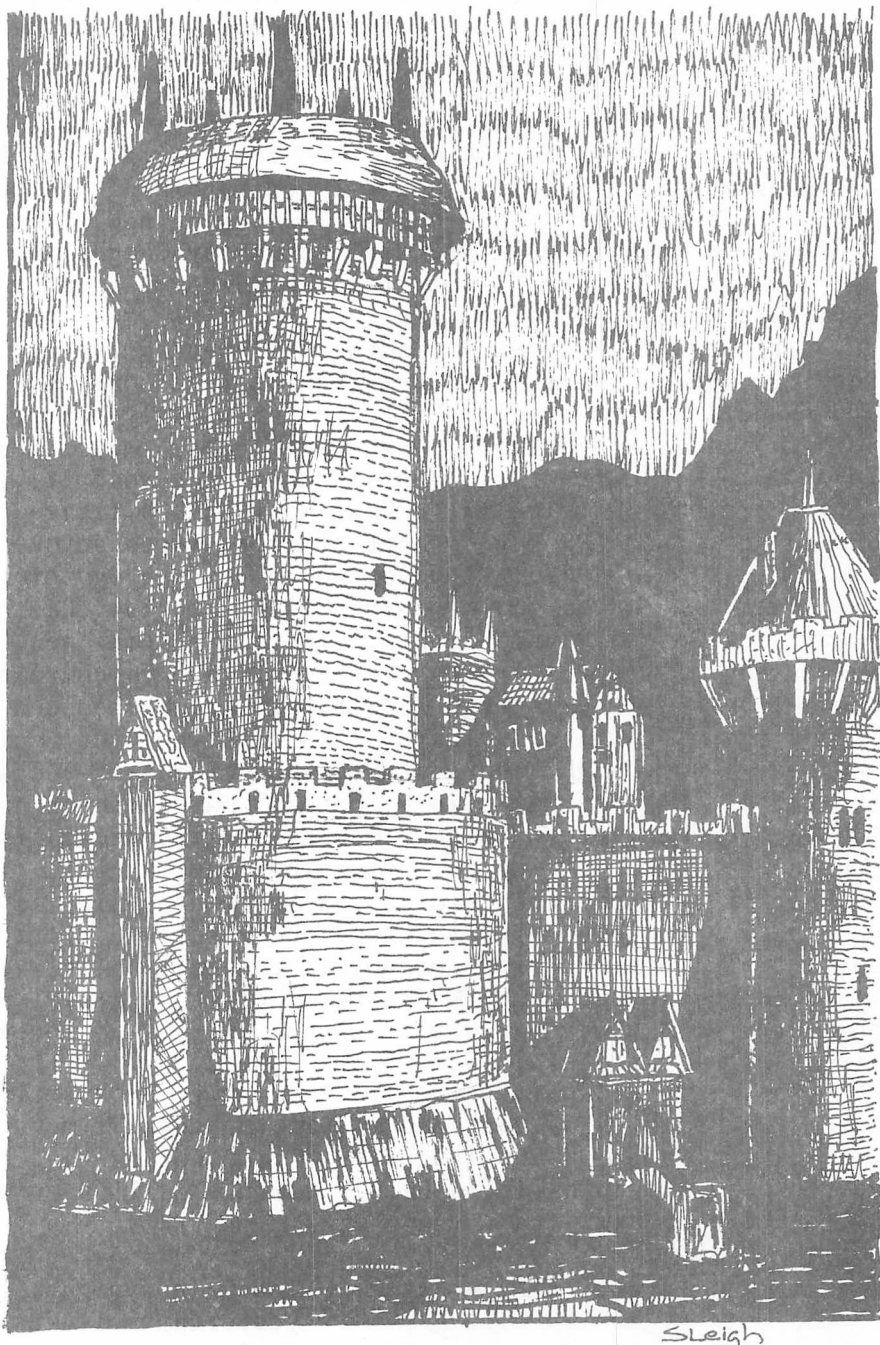
Not long from everlasting now, my wife Loretta & I will do the Friday morning chores, then hitchhike from our house in the country through Harrisburg to Junction City, then to catch the 10:35 bus to Eugene, to have lunch with friends Susie & 2-year-old Abria Dawn.

And waking. On Loretta's 3rd morning of 2-week vacation, getting the morning done. It is hard to pass up the recorded Mozart, so calm, so cosmic, from our country living room.

And how many people do you still know who talk of a death of ideas? Ha, as if morning could ransom from the sky.

## Chapter 28: WRITING IN THE NIGHT

Writing in the night of Oregon in early June, electric bulb on above, then eventually the stars and bright moon and all above. Calm cool lovely Spring night, the calm quiet throne of Heaven, the earth here below on which we live with people & worms & goats & fish & superimposed-over-



our-minds Time & rocks & rye grass & the flowers of the night and mysteries. Writing in the night as if just being born to all this. Writing in this night with poet's voices stilled with deep death sleep, Shakespeare to Lowell, Smith to Kerouac, voices who blow no more upon a physical wind, only in the minds of hearts of memory. Where it remains. Where it is blessed to be. Where it is blessed to be free.

Even though a dog barks distantly in a Northwest realm, even though my cup is empty, and the minute light fragments of stars disappear while others emerge splucking their life so we can see the new lights, and even though the moon is huge and *still* pregnant with her organic mysteries, these fingers move, as though both space and "time" were weaving them. And I get back up to the reality of these languages (must be something in the blood), instead of writing that commercial gothic romance *The Devil's Stones*, which also takes place in Oregon, and not all that very far from here. 5 & 1/2 years of writing these languages in the night, in rain or under shine of moon, begun after living in Oregon seven months. There I go talking about "time" again. There are so many times I wish I could get "time" out of my mind. And it's lonely here, no other poets or writers in Harrisburg, no culture, no beatniks, no fantasy-blown minds or hearts. Is it any wonder I talk through a typewriter? No, it is no wonder. And no, it isn't simply words that I put onto this paper, it is my thoughts & feelings coming from mind & heart & fingers, and it is all a breathing.

Earlier in the light dug post-hole in the garden, turned earth, aware that we all move through space, farmed out. One female goat (Ms. Bluebelle), 4 sheep now, cats, chickens roosters cats, animals, I don't think I was born to live with all these animals. Farmed out. Farm chores, sometimes new, like a raw original dream. I'm not as close to animals as I am, say, to Ramsey Campbell's horror stories, of the beauties of, say, Arthur Machen's spiritual weirds. Or jazz or hemp or a complete run (in legendary dream) of *Weird Tales*.

At present, my poetry reading has been on the decline, though I have been reading gothic romance novels (some by Frank Belknap Long) for the background & reading experience, and re-reading Fritz Leiber's early horror tales, the ones he published in *Weird Tales* and *Unknown & Unknown Worlds*. My sf reading is and has been for a long, long while practically nill; when I do read it, it's usually some Leiber or Varley or that Seattle-living Paul Novitski, a little Davidson here & there, plus a handful of Grania D. Davis short stories. (Does anyone have info on her Avon book? Its name is DR. GRASS.) I'm not above reading mystery stories, by the likes of Jack Ritchie, Barry N. Malzberg (better his mysteries than his sf), and the Lucius Leffing stories of Joseph Payne Brennan. There's several new, & even not so new anymore writers of sf I've never read, nor do I have the burning Desire to do so. Kerouac, Campbell, Leiber, Ginsberg, Machen, Gregory Corso, & a few selected others, I can *always* read. But I don't care, I know I'm not the typical (or even average) sf "fan", and long before high school started becoming self-educated. Haven't even seen a theater or drive-in movie in 8 months. Haven't even been to New York City or Tangiers, though I'd dearly love to go. One of my life-dreams is some publisher pays me to do a journal going to, living in, returning from Tangiers.

It isn't happening, and what also *is* happening is that hardly ANYone is sending me fanzines these days. *You* know, those science fiction fan magazines about stamp collecting, rock concerts, pronos, sf conventions, traveling faster than the sight of light, dope, 14th Century Mexicans, the art & careful practice of conversation, home-town bars with home-town girls in them. I got no moneys, I can't subscribe to anything like that; I'm grateful I got a few stamps.

Therefore it's small wonder I'm lonely, broke, tired, feeling the full moon night, & knowing, eventually, in some future, unknown "time", of collecting all these thoughts & feelings from midnight languages & from worlds that have gone, and worlds that have yet to be, into auto-biographical fusion I call in my mind, *Legends of Strangers*. I bet you didn't know that.

## Chapter 29: THE COMPANION KEEPS

Today (now night) got much more accomplished than yesterday. It was simple to tell. Yesterday was a languid day, I did some reading (mostly a couple of issues of the 1960 Robert





# LETTERS

CV CHAUVIN I meant to write earlier on *Xenolith* since I had a few comments on this & that. How I came to write the piece about you in the Iguanacon Program Book is curious: Tim Kyger asked me at Suncon to write a piece on you for one of their Progress Reports. This seemed reasonable to me, even if (as I wrote) we didn't know one another too well, because we had many of the same friends in common. So I met Tim's very urgent (for him) deadline, and waited for it to appear... nothing. I asked him about it at last year's (1978) Midwestcon, and Tim said they were not going to use it. Well, I felt crushed, and thought of sending it to a fanzine, or at least to you (for the egoboo). So when it appeared in the Iguanacon Program Book, I was quite surprised.

Thank you for your "First Post Iguanacon Non-Practice Speech", and especially for the bit about different Michigan fandoms. It came at a good time: I was very near to resigning from the AutoClave committee over a large numbers of matters of policy, but after reading your speech, decided I shouldn't be so angry. Change can best be affected from within, etc. The only thing I wonder about (when I decide to continue with these things) is whether I am wasting my time by doing things over and over again. I wonder if perhaps this phase of my life is past and maybe I should begin on something new.

I'm glad you're working on the Detroit in '82 bid. I'm glad you said the committee was going to be run democratically. I have more hope in a convention run that way. And I do support Detroit in '82, I think it would be great--as Jerry Kaufman says, the Renaissance Center deserves a worldcon. I am not enthusiastic about becoming embroiled in the feuds that seem to haunt Worldcons, and so if a group of people outside of Detroit fandom wants to put it on, that's okay by me. Some other Detroit fans feel otherwise, but I think it's largely silly of them to be so possessive or afraid.

One thing strikes me as curious: why do you always refer to Chicago fandom, and Michigan fandom, but never Illinois fandom or Detroit fandom? There is a split in Michigan fandom, between Ann Arbor and Detroit, I guess, but these are two separate cities, so it's perfectly natural. I don't feel there is any animosity between the two: mostly, we just don't know one another.

[4/28/79]



TO: Bill Bowers.

FROM: MIKE GLICKSOHN

CONTENTS: One *very* expensive hand-delivered loc!

At first, I couldn't quite place the haunting feeling of familiarity that I felt when I skimmed through *Xenolith Two*. Why, I said to myself, would I recognize a fanzine with a Derek Carter cover and an attractive and well-printed buff interior? Suddenly it came to me! Of course! Buff paper...attractive...Carter cover...the new *Xenolith* is modelled after *Energuman*! You're certainly doing a wonderful job of selecting fanzines to try and pattern yourself after; first *Xenium* and now *Energuman*. I feel somehow fulfilled. (I have quite a bit of gray twilltone left if you want to model *Xenolith Three* after my FAPazine... *Floccipaucinihilipilification*.)

On my first casual perusal of the issue, I could not help noticing that my name is mentioned--explicitly--*twenty five* times. And that's not including the times I'm referred to or implied without the specific typing of my name. (if you doubt me on that, feel free to count for yourself. But I'll bet with you before you try it! Of course, I *could* be bluffing...) Now there are probably certain fans and ex-Worldcon committee members who might feel that this *is* too many. But if you wish to try and drag yourself back into fannish prominence on my coattails, I guess I'm a big enough fan to allow it. But let's eliminate those

paste-up lines around the illos, eh? If you insist on irrevocably linking my name to yours I want to think that your standards of reproduction match those of the SSScotch Press mimeograph. I do have my reputation for impeccability to consider, you know.

I guess you just don't have my knack for picking winning fanzine titles, William. All *three* of my fanzines are listed in MRS BYRNE'S DICTIONARY OF UNUSUAL, OBSCURE AND PREPOSTEROUS WORDS. I find this in keeping with the fact that I am clearly more unusual, more obscure and more preposterous than you are.

When I first read the title "detritus"--*this* is how you win friends and influence loccers? By calling their minor masterpieces rubbish? You'll never win any more FAAN awards *that way*--I immediately saw it as a contraction of DETROIT/ALTUS. ~~AND WHEN I THOUGHT OF THE MEANING OF THE WORD IT SEEMED SO APPROPRIATE!~~ I don't think I'll ever see it again without it appearing to mean that to me; so tell me, is that what you're going to call the worldcon if you win it?

If I didn't know better I'd be tempted to say that some of the layout in this issue was confused. But this is a Bowers fanzine so I guess it must be me that's confused. I just hope the rest of the readership knows you and your speeches as well as I do and can make out who's saying what, when, and about what as they read through the issue! I've checked the colophon carefully and I can't find the layout credited to Bill Bridget or Darrell Schweitzer but...

You know how much I enjoy your speeches and how strongly they invoke shared memories and experiences but I have to admit that not only was I unaware of but also I cannot imagine how one could have "a row of buttocks...leaning out the open windows...watching the hookers ply their trade..." I know we're science fiction fans but let's not get ridiculous with the claims of how different from the general public we are!

Your ConFusion report was much fun to read though. I love reading about conventions I was at when the writer is someone I shared parts of the convention with. I get to *remember* a lot of mutual activities and I *learn* quite a few things that happened or that happened to me! Without my friends to tell me what I was doing I'd have all these gaping voids in my memory. I have no recollection, for example, of wise-cracking from the audience and derailing your speech: certainly never intended to and apologize belatedly for it. Probably I mistook you for Tucker at the time...

I commend you for having the chutzpah to reprint all those insults you made about me at ConFusion. I'd more or less forgotten both the details and the extent of this particular piece of character assassination. I shall bide my time and repay you for this. Just wait until the *next* time they make you a Worldcon Fan Guest of Honour...

It's a shame that despite the frigid hallways and the ice-sculptures and the poker game and all the other things that happened at Mass ConFusion the thing I'm likely to remember most will be The Incident and the Attempt To Conciliate The Incident. (What the hell, I can be every bit as obscure as you can!) If you were annoyed at several of your friends being sequestered from what should have been a happy winding down of a con, I can assure you we weren't too thrilled by it either. And I made the additional mistake of thinking I might be able to do some good on a one-to-one basis and *wasted* an additional hour after the closed session talking in the bar. (As I once did with Bill Bridget: do you think I'll ever learn?) It was a downer ending to the con and I won't easily forget it or forgive the main cause of it. Which is too bad because I used to think I was a pretty decent person--for the most part--and I'm increasingly finding pockets of intolerance and unforgiveness within me. Do you think excessive celibacy is rendering me intemperate?

Didn't hear Spider's speech, eh? Well, when I get around to publishing it I'll make sure Denise reads you her copy for you to enjoy it. I'd send you a copy ...but I save them for my friends. Or I'd trade with you...when you lick your repro and layout problems. (And I *still* owe you at least eight more for that "introduction.")

Good to see a loc from Jerry the K again, even if I agree with his own interpretation that he's misreading the issue he's commenting on. I'm a little surprised you didn't comment on some of Jerry's observations but possibly you felt you didn't need to, that the magazine stood on its own and that your established reputation argued against Jerry's suggestions. And that's probably a correct supposition. Still, I'm glad that he's re-entering the fanzine field, and he'll definitely enrich it.

I'm sure Avedon's comments will strike responsive chords in a great many creative people but it happens to us non-creative types too. Once a fan at a convention commented to me that I seemed to drink as much and hold it as well as Tucker: and all these years I've actually been emulating Rusty!

Since when did a professional fanzine editor hypenate a word like "li-fe"? Tsk, tsk.

I doubt that Ben Zuhl would go along with the statement that "Chicago has no fanzines" (even if the Benzine waiting list would) but anyone with a name like Luke McGuff isn't going to get a long argument from me. Chap's got enough troubles as it is. Still, neither Chicago nor Detroit could be considered a hot-bed of fanzine fandom nowadays. Where are *Effen Essef*, *Imp*, *Dartpass* (who even remembers what *Dartpass* stood for?) or *HWA*? And would *you* buy a worldcon from a city that can't even publish a regular fanzine?

If it makes Luke feel any better, after thirteen years I *still* have trouble making myself go to sleep at a con and I still try and cram as much as possible into every convention day. I suffer for the sensory overload afterwards, but I haven't yet learned to go to sleep when I know there are still parties to go to, people to talk to, beers to be drunk or inside straights to be drawn to. I'm beginning to think I never will.

Sixteen hundred and eighty eight days between the time you got the Canfield sketches and the time the issue went to press. That's not too many, meyer... Coff...coff...coff...

Yeah, you're right, I don't understand the title of your second post-IGGY non-practice speech. But I suspect I understand the speech better than anyone. I hope eventually to become sufficiently rational about the way the Iguacon Committee treated you (and, off-handedly, me) to find out who I ought to be directing my anger at. I don't think I'm ever going to be able to forgive and forget. Like I said, there are things about me that I'm not very proud of...

This is one fine speech/report, as I told you after I heard it at Marcon. It means too much to me to comment on it in detail, but you know, even if I didn't love you, there'd be times when you'd make me very proud of you. Listening to and reading this piece were two such times. I thank you for it.

And that's as good a place as any to end.

[5/3/79]

PS: I hear tell David Warren is a big *Space 1999* and *Battlestar Gallactica* fan. No wonder he likes *Xeno*...

ALEXANDER DONIPHAN WALLACE X:Two, for which many thanks, bulged with kindly thoughts and helpful comments and, as well, your own views and notions. If "*Xenolith*" requires a diminutive, "XL" would be "excellent". It has been my great misfortune not to have savored those superb Canadian zines to which Mike Glicksohn adverts with soft reverence. Are they still being published? Or are they remnants of a great Past?



Don D'Amassa--whose penetrating sapience I greatly admire--regards it as odd that readers sometimes take experimental writing as an ad hominem attack. Or an attitude close to this, or as a personal affront. But contemplate this from the consumer's angle. He invests 250 of his cents in purchasing a book with the label SF and devotes two or three hours of his entertainment time to reading it. He finds it so much crutting codswallop, a thing composed by the author for the author's pleasure, not for the reader's. He is justly annoyed that he must pay in time and money for the author's experiments. The reader has no recourse to such shabby treatment. It would be further waste of time and money to complain to the publisher's editor? Why should I, a reader, support the author while he is learning his trade, or establishing new fictional devices?

[rec'd 7/23/79]

JAN BROWN Once upon a time there was a neo who was so in awe of a Famous Fanzine Editor named Bill Bowers that she couldn't even bring herself to write locs to *Outworlds*. You're no longer so awe-inspiring now that I know you...but the brilliance of *Xenolith:Two* almost leaves me speechless. Almost...

It so much easier to rely on affectionately-meant, witty insults than to say affectionate things, especially to people I like a lot but don't know very well. It would have been much easier to twit you about your vastly-improved typing or congratulate you on your hands not shaking during your Marcon speech (Steve said they did, but I didn't see it)--but the feeling of warmth, closeness and--yes, love--is so overwhelming in *X:Two* that I don't have a schtick to hide behind. I envy Jodie's ability to openly express warmth; unfortunately, perfectly-good feelings have a way of turning embarrassing when I try to confine them in words.

If your friends weren't caring enough to spend hours trying to reach a constructive solution to an unpleasant problem, would you like them as much? I find it completely incomprehensible that anyone would respond to the almost-limitless acceptance of fandom in the negative way that some people do--though obviously it did happen. Once we start excluding people, though, who is safe? It's frightening to think that some of us might have to watch everything we say and do lest we offend some Personage who has the power to cast us out. In this particular case I'm with you, but precedents are dangerous things. We can but hope the problem will eventually get the message and go away of its own free will, or else get some apparently badly-needed professional help.

Apart from that, Confusion was the most enjoyable con I've attended so far this year, and you were a big part of that. Too bad we didn't get a chance to see you disco-dancing...maybe next year? In a caftan? Bill?

Enjoyed reading your Marcon speech even more than I did listening to it. Mike is right about getting more out of a speech if you can read it--especially with all your esoteric references, there's a lot I miss on one hearing. "Enjoy" is probably not the right word for what I felt while listening to--and reading--your speech, though, since my feelings were closer to pain and outrage at the way you were treated by the committee that was supposedly "honoring" you. If I can see, on a few brief months' acquaintance, how much more there is to you and Mike than mere schtick, how can people who've known you far longer miss it? That you could still be on speaking terms with people who treated you as thoughtlessly as you were treated--that you could exercise so much restraint in your speech--that you could have enjoyed Iguanacon as much as you obviously did--you're an amazingly forbearing person, and deserving of far greater honors.

Not all fans are slans, and even slans aren't perfect, but apparently nothing amputates more tendrils than putting on a worldcon. I'm confident, though,

that your own will survive Detroit in '82.

Very thought-provoking loc from Don D'Amassa! Someone told me a long time ago that the average stay in fandom is two years, which might have a lot to do with the changelessness of con programming. For the newcomers, the same old programming is all new and exciting, and of course they want to experience all the things the old-timers did. If they stay in long enough to become old-timers, they quit going to the programming and spend their time partying with their friends. Meanwhile, another crop of neos has come in, and the same old programming is all new and exciting to them, and so on...

[4/30/79]

DON D'AMASSA I hasten to correct a mistake in Jerry Kaufman's letter to *Xenolith* before the wrath of an outraged fan descends upon us all. George Fergus did not get involved with fandom through being my roommate. It's almost the converse. I was introduced to fandom by Richard Mann, who was then George's roommate. George had already been involved in fandom before I ever met him.

Actually I was introduced to Rich Mann by Marty Massoglia, who was a reader but not a fan at the time, in any active sense. Marty is now active in LASFS, I think, although I have only seen him once or twice in the past decade. Scary to think how much time has gone by since college.

As a matter of fact, it's quite possible that you were one of the first people I met in fandom. I was at Marcon 2 & 3 and met a number of people before I really knew who was who. I met Bill Mallardi there, as a matter of fact. I remember him distinctly because he ate two complete steak dinners complete with appetizers right in front of me, and then had desert.

[7/6/79]

LEE PELTON *Xenolith Two* took me by surprise. After such a long hiatus from fan pubbing, I assumed I had plenty of time to write a LoC to #1 because I didn't really figure #2 would be out sooner than RSN. Silly me.

So, sleeping with Mike Glicksohn is not like sleeping alone, but wishing you were, heh? Well, I think he'd make a great rug. Maybe even a great pillow. But maybe sleeping with Mike is better than sleeping alone. Of course, I don't know if he hogs blankets, snores, or what-have-you. Any of those traits would definately get him a floor instead of a share of the bed.

I am curious, but not inquisitive, as to who set your Confusion memories with a bit of pain. I have been accused many times (justifiably) that I defend my friends too vigorously when they are set upon by someone. Well, I really don't want to stop my actions because they feel "right" to me. As a result I have a few fans who have strong aversions to me. That's ok, it's reciprocated but not dwelled upon. But one thing has always resulted when I get into such a situation. I feel lousy! I know that I acted in a way that was true to myself, but I don't like getting angry, because the person who really gets hurt is me! So you have my sympathies, and perhaps my understanding of why you feel that way towards someone.

Please mention my name! I want to be famous. Even being famous at being infamous is ok, just mention my name! (Non-serious diatribe at needed egoboo. Take as needed and call me in the morning.)

Most of the hassles at Iggy were apparently communication hassles. The only one I ran into personally was second-hand, and all others I have gleaned from various conreports. But one thing I did learn. That a pro who strangely happens to be a friend of ours has so low an opinion of one concom head that if he sees this person again there will be blood. It was an easy situation that was handled as comprehensively as your communiques with the entire Iggy crew. Why the fuck won't people talk to other people before

they act?? It almost seems as though some people want to wear their lack of communication skills as a neon t-shirt. A badge of honor, if you will. I can't grasp that at all.

Don D'Amassa says that fans resist change. This is something I'm beginning to believe. I'm not sure as to the causes, but I might do a little surmising, if you don't mind. The proto-type fan is supposed to be a social malcontent with "real-life". So, they turn to fandom, a society that accepts them. And what do they do? React to changes the same way "mundanes" react to them.. With disbelief, sarcasm, insults, etc. As so many things are different, they remain ever stronger the same. And the same person who had a field day with Don for his admitting that he enjoys drinking beer and watching football can have the same pleasure with me. I don't drink beer but I do bowl. That should place me somewhere in a non-fannish category, shouldn't it? I was also a top athlete in high school. This isn't normal fannish background, either. I have, off and on, been a professional rock vocalist. This obviously means I'm not shy or introverted and can't possibly be a fan. Right? Hey, some of my best experiences have been following the local NHL club, the North Stars. Gee, I guess I'm a mundane! I sure hope someone tells me soon or I'll stay fannish the rest of my life and miss out on being stereotyped. So I'm cynical. Sometimes fannish "purists" piss me off. Of course, I advocate deportation to Cleveland for all *Starlog* readers.

Well, that's it. My first LoC to a Bill Bowers fanzine. Frankly, I approached this with some trepidation. *Janus* affected me the same way. Writing a loc to a publication as good as yours demands a certain amount of literateness that I am not sure I possess yet. But if I don't try, how will I get that literate?

[rec'd 6/6/79]

LINDA ANN MOSS Some people who edit fanzines (as I'm sure you know) inspire witty comments that run on for pages and pages and pages. Now I am not Mike Glicksohn (not hairy enough) nor do I have the time and energy that man devotes to LoC's. Then again I also have the problem of after having read *Xenolith Two* I find that there is much there, some I chuckled over, some I agreed with, some I remembered (painful and otherwise) and some we could all use to forget. A lot about cons, most of which I've been to, but not much that seems to inspire lots of comment.

Actually I think it will be a cold day in Hell before they hold another Michigan con. (And probably colder before I get to another one.) The three Confusions that I have been to come back in a flood of memories, some warm, some cold. It may take you 8 hours to cross what should normally take 3 hours, it may be warmer outside than inside, but Confusion, the year of the blizzard, was the con that hooked me into fandom. It may have been painful, but I can look back now on it and say that honestly and mean it. That and the Marcon that followed it where I met Michael Glicksohn over a pinball machine and proceeded to beat the pants off of him at it. Confusion for some strange reason always seems to live up to its name.

Marcons for me have not been turmoil and unrest. True, Ross would never speak to us if we (Ohioans) didn't show up en masse, but who ever pays any attention to what a conchair says. Now that I'm living in Mpls. I see that Ross is no longer the chair. Gee. I hope it wasn't because of my moving. Of all the cons I have attended (this one ((*Nasfic*)) makes #42) Marcon and Midwestcon are the two that seem to have the best times for me and have become "must" cons to attend, followed closely by Confusion, of course. I'm not sure "interesting" is quite the word to describe Marcons by. Different, weird, bizarre come to mind more often.

This letter isn't as long as it could be, but then again you and I haven't interacted much for so

long...and then again that seems to be changing also. Maybe we've grown. I know we've changed, hopefully for the better. Have we learned anything from it? Only time will tell... A lot about cons, a lot of personal that really doesn't inspire much in the way of comments so I guess I'll just say stay well.... [8/27/79]

SARAH S. PRINCE Meanwhile back at the poolside, the ish's plain excellence deserves a disinterested commendation. If I finish this next sentence, it'll be a ridiculous fat beast, so I'll leave it at bare bones: consistency, unity (if ambiguity) of design/purpose. Yeah, man, that's what I like about your fanzine; besides that, I understand some of the meaningful allusions. [6/6/79]

HARRY WARNER, JR. The new *Xenolith* leaves me with considerable of a problem. I loved almost every page of it, in a platonic and non-crass manner of course. And yet it's going to be a bit hard to comment on, because so much of it is involved with cons, things that happen at cons, and your experiences at cons. It's a bit hard for me to compare experiences at cons with my own. In fact, I got to thinking when I saw the leaflet enclosed with this issue that I should go to Spacecon. Two or three days there might give me enough ammunition to sail blithely through locs to con-oriented fanzines for at least two or three months to come. And I really would like to see that space museum, and it's been ten years or more since the last time I was in the same room with anyone who had astronaut training so the possible presence of more of them would be another attraction. But then I looked at a map of Ohio and saw that Wapakoneta is just this side of Nevada.

Of course, I can go back seven or eight years for personal memories to compare with yours as guest of honor at a worldcon. Maybe I was lucky, maybe the Noreascon committee people were exceptional, or maybe the early 1970's were the good old days for fan gohs. Whatever the answer, I found myself treated with the utmost consideration and courtesy from the first invitation until long after the con was a memory (the request to become the fan guest of honor was couched in the most flattering terms imaginable, and I kept getting freebies like the proceedings book and the lp record set long after I was back home).

I like the literal reproduction you included for the postcards and snatches of other communications in this issue. It's surprising that more fans don't break up their loc pages in this way, now that so many fanzines either use offset or have access to electro-stenciling which makes it easy. In fact, I don't see why reprints of old fanzine material shouldn't be done by reproducing entire pages of the original appearance. It would give today's fans a hint of the flavor or aura which the old fanzines achieved through the special appearance of the type on pages. (One different sort of test for a con contest would be flashing of pages of old fanzines before contestants and asking them to identify famous fanzines of the past simply from the appearance of the pages, without reading anything on those pages.)

Poetry doesn't interest me much these days, as I've explained in various loc sections until fans must be tired of hearing about it. Nevertheless, I felt some of the old enjoyment of poetry reviving long enough to be noticeable, as a result of *Winning at Chess*. It is a poem that has both the literal and metaphorical level, even a stupid person like me can recognize the double meanings without writing to seven persons who know the poet and researching four standard textbooks on the mechanics of modern poetry, and not one word in those eight lines seems unnecessary or out of place or forced.

The Grant Canfield minifolio was another unexpected but pleasant surprise. I sense by looking at these drawings that Grant...loves the city. [5/2/79]

RON SALOMON And I went over to my Funk & Wagnall's to look up morpheme (I remember them yelling for it almost every week on M\*A\*S\*H); I think if I wasn't in fandom I wouldn't need a dictionary; as it is, I use it on the average of once a loc. So I increase my vocabulary by simply reading fanzines, the little dears.

...not only is your fanzine something that faneds of crudzines can only gnash their teeth at ineffectually (and this may be the Year of the Crudzine) but your ability to give yourself and others around you a good time amidst the swirl of convention fandom society is also an Admirable Thing. Stop me if I tend to gush.

You bet there are churches with stained glass windows in walking distance of Noreascon Two! If I know the thoroughness of the concomm, once they hear of the question they'll probably pub a list of churches. [8/30/79]

GEORGE FLYNN As additional evidence that we're both crazy, the other day I was in the vicinity of the Noreascon hotel, so naturally I looked around for churches with stained-glass windows. Well, your best bet is probably the Christian Science "mother church", which is about a block away (in the middle of its own "Vatican") and has not only stained glass but a reflecting pool. There's also a Catholic church half a block from the hotel, but the windows aren't very visible from the street. Come to that, though, stained-glass windows generally tend to be unimpressive from outside, unless it's dark and the lights are on inside. Still, it's your schtick...

I found Don D'Amassa's remarks on the conservatism of fans most provocative, but I'm afraid I could not give it a decent response in much less than a page. One obvious point, though, is that the members of any (voluntary) group are by definition conservative with respect to the existence/nature of that group--otherwise it wouldn't be a group. [8/18/79]

TERRY MATZ I enjoyed reading your Marcon speech--it seems like that's going to be the only way I ever hear any of your speeches--so far I've only been present at one of them. I assure you I didn't plan it that way. It just happened.

I think you have legitimate complaints about the way Iguanacon treated you--I believe you for the simple reason if sweet Bill Bowers gets upset about something it must be even worse than he says it is. As a matter of fact, Cy's piece on you was one of the things we typeset and I wondered at the time... I guess I should have mentioned it to you--you could have made a big fuss then. I hope future Worldcon chairmen will read your article and George Barr's complaints and take heed. But I doubt it.

The only other specific thing I want to say about the fanzine was Jerry Kaufman's reference to Rusty being difficult to work with. I can't say the things I would like to say because Rusty himself didn't want to cause trouble by dredging it up and spreading it around fandom--apparently unlike the others involved. What I can say is what I have heard from Ken and others who worked on MAC--that is that to a great extent Rusty held the convention and more importantly those who ran the convention together. He donated months of his time helping a con that technically wasn't his--out of friendship. And the consensus here is that not only was he easy to work with but the people here would go out of their way to work with him on his convention. I can also say that I would do the same though I've only worked with him on a regional. He was professional, efficient and calm. Some people don't appreciate the last quality but in the heat of discussions that become arguments on how to do things it is nice to hear someone calm and sane step in to cool everyone down. I know you know all this but I don't think Kaufman does.

Believe me, the above is toned down quite a bit

from what I thought when I first read that letter. I just want you to know that there are people, Ken and me in particular, who swore not to work on another worldcon (or even go to one) who will work on this one if you get it because of Rusty and because of you and because of the others. Of course we will curse you for forcing us out of our Burnt-out Oblivion but you probably don't care.

You seem to be doing very well now--I get a very good feeling from *Xenolith*--which is the only contact I've had from you in a long time. [rec'd 5/7/79]

LUKE McGLUFF I didn't mean to imply that the Detroit bid committee "has" *Xenolith*, although I certainly did. Fannish manners are even trickier than normal society...one learns slowly. I guess it's similar to the situation an author has, when accused of believing something a character believes.

I was thinking about the "genzine revival" some older & tireder fen have referred to. It seems that these new genzines (*Xenolith* is in the group; *Wild Fennel* falls into this group by style, not time) are more introspective, more thoughtful

...this relaxed, thoughtful tone is more interesting and stimulating than the usual y-uck-em-up faanishness of some of the older fmz I have. Actually, it isn't as if I have cubic yards of fmz or anything, just a few feet. Sigh. But I'm working...

Actually, before getting into the Ink, I thought a loc had to be impressive, that it really had to Say Something. I've since found that flagrant begging can work sometimes...which is by way of saying please please please don't trim me from your mailing list, oh Mr. Faned, sir!

When I saw the illo on p.48, I thought, "Oh Ghod no. This is how the Derek Carter alphabet started... next, we're going to have an illo with a robot holding up an 'AN' saying, 'still not satisfied, Mike!' and then will be 'the', and, since *Xenolith* is such a literate, clean-headed intellectual fanzine [but still fun, nonetheless], 'le', 'il', 'der' and maybe even 'zum'." This would of course increase your continental trades. And if you used any Canadian articles, you could trade with Canadian faneds, too. Simple, huh?

The Grant Canfield sketches of San Francisco were beautiful. I've been there a couple times, and the scenes were recognizable.

As to the other illos, the one by Steffan cracked me up. "Space...The Final Frontier." Not only witty, but meaningful, too, y'know? I liked the illos you drew that looked like playing cards. And laying out the ticket stubs and paraperalia from Iggycon gave a cinema verite feeling to your report. A "You Are There" immediacy. The cover was good too. For some reason I associate Derek Carter with techno drawings. But the boat rowing toward the dark cottage on the lakeshore had a proper air of mystery...and within lurks the mad scientist, who will ignore the pleas of the newspaper reporter to cease these mad experiments. "There are some things man was not meant to know!" "But I am a woman, you see." [rec'd 5/4/79]

JOYCE SCRIBNER One problem, for me, with your style of writing is that it always thrusts stories (people stories) to the fore, and so I end up writing them to you (because, after all, who else would listen to stories out of the blue...and to a degree you are responsible...).

I do like the idea of Rusty heading the Detroit worldcon bid; fundamentally I trust him. I was not around when the Suncon committee had problems, and only peripherally when the Iggy concomm did. Yet I saw him do so much to help create information flow for Iggy, that any convention he runs will go well. After working with him for a year, I trust him. Implicitly. I'd like to see the Detroit Worldcon.

I like your interludes of personal writing between articles. I like seeing people as they see them--



selves & other people. It makes me feel interdependent. I react to someone who reacts to someone who reacts to me. I am part of a whole, a cycle. It doesn't have to be as naked as egoboo (i.e., you talk about me, I'll talk about you), though that is uplifting. It is consoling to perceive the layers of force & friendship between us.

The Harry Bell cartoon with the Rotsler noses was marvelous. The article from Glicksohn robot was also fun. Other than these two illustrations, I was most impressed with your own art. They look like sculptured cards & blocks. Very effective. The Rodak covers on X:1 were also strong & easily visible, but I thought the Derek Carter cover on X:2 was very dark, almost gloomy. [7/2/79]

JOY SHEPARD Your comments on our conversation (*Xenolith Two*, 1979:73) at the Phoenix convention were pointed out to me the other day as were Steve Leigh's recounting of the same conversation in *Xenolith One*, (That's almost a year ago--don't you have any newer experiences to rehash?) I was struck by how completely you misunderstood (1) the situation and (2) what I was trying to say to you...and so obviously failed to communicate!

As to (1), the situation, there was hardly a "viscious" argument going on when you arrived on the scene... just a bunch of drunks (myself included) taking alternate positions on almost any topic that cropped up.

As to (2), the point that I was trying to make had nothing to do with "saying that sci-fi conventions existed to promote the genre." Quite to the contrary, I was trying to discover more about the organization (I am an anthropologist, remember?) because I found its network system very interesting. The conventions obviously supply the degree of face-to-face contact essential for maintaining such a structure--one which usually exists only in very small groups. In short, I agree fully with you--the point of conventions is for everyone to see each other and renew ties. The point I was trying to make was rather different. (Did you miss it because you didn't want to hear it?) I had come to the convention expecting to find a lot of creative and intelligent people because I assumed that the literature would in some part mirror its audience. I did find that. But I also found a lot of people rather paranoidly concerned with defining and defending what they felt were the "limits" of science fiction. Sometimes an outsider can obtain an insightful perspective on situations (Anthropologists call it participant observation) and I was offering you the following observations. The conservatism inherent in limiting a thing can be crippling to any art form. Such an attitude on the part of "fandom" can only, in the long run, drive creative and experimental individuals who produce within the sci-fi medium away, leading them to regard the "fans" as a conservative, tasteless mob content with their own internal conversation rather than maintaining any real interest in the literature and art which they originally organized around. That's all that I was saying. Your answer at the time was, basically, "so what?" A perfectly acceptable answer as far as I'm concerned but hardly the stance you take in *Xenolith*. [rec'd 8/1/79]

NORMAN HOLLYN There's an odd feeling in *Xenolith Two* for me; odd, not because the people in it are odd, but because everyone is so...the same. And this after 2 years away. It's like I've been overseas and I've returned home at last, and it still feels like home. It feels wonderful.

In fact, about the only annoying aspect of X:2 was the feeling that I'd arrived home after a big party. Everyone is talking about the party and I've missed it. It makes me feel lonely amidst all of this open friendliness.

There's a gap of two years here that I feel...and

want to plug up. I've missed all of *Xenolith* (Series One); I've missed *Xenolith One* (Series Two); I've missed the *Epilogue*, I've missed your apazines, I've missed your convention appearances. I'll be damned if I miss anymore.

The feeling of apartness is at times reinforced by your writing. Pg.55...you discuss someone who you'd ban from cons you were at. Now, I don't mind not knowing who this person is (I'm still fannish, after all) but it frustrates me not to know what it is that could make you feel so much dislike/discomfort with a person. You say you have very very few very very good friends (to be exact you say you care for a relatively small handful of people...and care for them very, very much). Yet you open yourself up to a large mailing list. You open yourself up in provocative ways Bill. You've heard of Cock Teasers? And Cunt Teasers? This is Gut Teasing, Bill. It's getting me involved in you and what makes you a friend of some Very Good People. And then shutting me off.

What does it take? Rudeness? Libel? Physical assault? How do your friends (those who've been wronged by this person) feel towards this person? Friendship, emotions, ties are fickle things. But strong. As far as I can understand my own it is their very fickleness and strength which makes them so wonderful to be enmeshed. God help me if I ever stop feeling this.

I'm spending a very normal Labor Day Weekend--normal American Labor Day Weekend I mean. I, and the woman who means the most to me at this point in my life are at a lake in Northwestern Connecticut, in a town called New Preston. As I write this I am sitting by the lake... There is an exhilaration in my body now. I am in a sane place. I am meeting interesting people. I am with Janet. I am writing you a loc. None of this needs to be psychologically explained to me. I know I'm feeling good. I know why. It is the very lovely intensity of the emotion--the rush of it--that makes it pleasant.

Oh, and another pleasant connection. On a bulletin board in town is the posted swimming class list. At the top of one of the lists is the name "Michael Gorra". Could it be the same Mike Gorra who fanned so furiously 5 or 6 years ago? Who nearly thrust FHAPH (the Fan History Apa) on us? Could life be so intertwined?

Even fickleness is fickle sometimes.

Your Iguanacon report/Marcon speech was touching. Not only is it easy for me to feel the way you say you did but I can relate it to me. To elaborate:

One of the reasons I slowly withdrew from fandom was work. That's the major reason. But another reason was that the friends seemed to be getting further and further apart and I wasn't prepared to deal with that. No one gives up something they love (except to go to something they love more). Obviously, I was falling out of love with fandom.

Part of that feeling, I'm sure, came from the "who-are-all-of-these-new-faces?" syndrome. But that's only a small part. A lot of it came from going to cons where I felt that my friends needed ego boosting, SMOFing and a sense of creating history more than they needed me and what I could give them. I was already moving into films. I was growing emotionally (being involved and being in a job market does that to you)--I could have been a better friend. I was learning more about music--I could have shared that. But I somehow didn't fit the mold for many of them. I didn't care who Arnie Katz was fighting that month, or who was screwing who at the last worldcon. I refused to idolize some of the same things & people who made up an important part of The Fan World. In lining them up, I was no longer seeing Friend, Friend, Friend, fan, Friend, friend, Friend, fan, Friend, Friend anymore. It had turned into friend, Fan, Fan, Fan, friend, Fan, fan, Fan, Fan, Friend. And when the fannishness became more important than me (selfish though that may

sound) I found it too easy to say Fuck it! Film likes  
me more.

All of this unconsciously you understand. But it was said nonetheless.

Since then it seems that con committees are more interested in being dynamite concommms than in being good people. Feuds have gotten more serious and I don't understand it at all. It was fun when it was smaller, Meyer. And I guess the only way I can fulfill this urge I have to fan again is to carve out a little niche with the people I feel comfortable with and call *that* fandom. Which is, I suppose, what fandom was all along. I just couldn't see it. That's why I said 2 pages ago that I wasn't prepared to deal with things. Hopefully now I am.

I also appreciate your mentioning of your joy in accomplishing Iggy on only four drinks. It's a revelation not easily made (well, it was a revelation to *me*) and that makes it all the more valuable. 9/3/79

PAUL SKELTON      Derek's cover benefits from being just the opposite of his usual technique. Normally his work suffers from having too much detail. One's eye sees and is drawn to the detail, failing to see the wood for the trees. Here the detail is only hinted at (but it is surprising *how much* detail is hinted at) leaving the overall concept to claim the attention. I'd like to know your reasons for placing the cover illo as you did. Whenever I have an 'off-centre' illo I am compelled (no other word for it) to site it down the leading edge of the page, rather than the stapled edge and would have been tempted to reverse the cover and have the rooflines descending from the top-right corner. Had I the facilities for such a reversal, which I haven't, but which I assume you to have. I am especially intrigued by this question as the placement of the other illos throughout the zine seems pretty much as I would have placed them.

Mike is, of course, wrong on several counts. Being a fan, and thus a slant, he must, like all of us, ~~have~~ ~~found the hare in Xen's tale~~ have figured out the basic flaw in Xeno's paradox ("When the hare gets to where the tortoise was, the tortoise has moved on a bit; and when he gets to where it was *then*, it's moved on a bit further...").

Hah! As an ex-owner of an ex-tortoise Mike will be as aware as I that the concept of a tortoise moving is straight out of an R.A. Lafferty story. Obviously, I deduced, when the hare gets to where the tortoise was, the fucking tortoise will still be there. Thus will the beastie pass the tortoise, no doubt with an 'hare' of utter contempt. Why, I could stage a 'proof' of this. Overcome with dreams of stature and grandeur I invited all the important philosophers of our day and there, before this august assemblage, I made my bid for greatness. Unfortunately Xeno proved to be correct. I placed the tortoise down and then, ten yards behind it, I placed the hare down. Standing behind it I fired the starting pistol. To my dismay, the startled hare shot back between my legs and ran out onto the street and under a steamroller which chugged remorselessly over it. Thus it never did catch the tortoise. Beats me though how Xeno managed to take this into philosophical consideration before ever they invented the gun and the steamroller. There was a thinker who was ahead of his time. Fortunately the result of the display did have its compensations and the philosophers and I really enjoyed our evening meal... 'chugged' hare, what else? All except for Bertrand Russell who tried to eat the tortoise, thinking it was one of Brian Burgess's pies.

Mike's also wrong when he says 'XL' is not an appropriate short form, as one thing you always do is XL. But...*any* 'short form' would be inappropriate, would it not? Or am I wrong? If so put it down to the 100<sup>th</sup> proof Macallan's I'm drinking which was the one

of the dozen or so scotches we tried that Mike wasn't too keen on, which may go some way towards explaining why it is the only one of which there is any left. 9/16

I Also Heard From...on Xenolith Two:

SHARRON ALBERT

HARRY ANDRUSCHAK As always in reading reports about Iguanacon, I sometimes wonder if I went to the same convention you did.

MIKE BRACKEN Let Glicksohn make all the comments. He's sure to catch everything.

RAY GARCIA CAPELLA Liked Carter's impressionistic cover. The large Rotsler was great, though I'd have thrown it somewhere between pages 66 and 73. Canfield's fine sketch collection took me back to the School of Visual Arts days in a New York of looong ago, for some reason. Possibly because the class would go sketching around town. Most refreshing, to use it in a 'zine, and I applaud your rising to the challenge.

JOE CHRISTOPHER. I think the highlight of the issue for me was the group of Grant Canfield sketches. I wish the arrangement had been more formal, more a portfolio structure--but I'm probably wrong. Coming across them starting at the bottom of a page may have added to the effect. Anyway, one thing I'm certain of is that they worked by contrast to usual fan-artistry--it was the context that made them seem extra special. If you had been running a batch of realistic drawings, they would have seemed *merely* good.

CAROLYN DOYLE Paula mentions "the light". Bill, what's the light? Other people have referred to it when signing letters to me. The light I have in my room comes from a 100-watt bulb, two windows, and occasionally a few glowing blue sparks that sputter when I peel off a nylon slip--if the room's dark.

DAN FARR

GIL GAIER

FRED JAKOBCIC I think most everybody noticed how desolate the streets of Phoenix were... Phoenix is a weird town, for a good-sized town. Even Marquette has more action, at least on the surface.

RANDY MOHR

JESSICA SALMONSON

NEAL WILGUS

[...lettercolumn finished 9/25/79]

[illegible]

MIKE GILBERT

DEAR BILL, ALMOST DROPPED, GASP!  
THOSE CANFIELD SKETCHS ARE BY FAR THE  
FINEST STUFF I'VE EVER SEEN OF  
HIS AND ARE JUST PLAIN EXCELLENT!



FOURTH  
PORTRAIT OF  
THE ARTIST OVER  
30 - 1967

...yes, it really was 9/25 when I finished up the lettercol. But, since it is now 12/4, well...

ERIC LINDSAY I'm rather happy that I'm one of the people to whom your whim sends this zine. What I can't work out is whether a "whim" is like am alter ego. However, a personalzine with a print run of 500? Yet it must be a personalzine, for what else would commence with a lettercolumn. Damned fine idea, say I, for both emotional and logical reasons. What could be more important than what people say in letters from the heart? And in logic, comments on the last issue should be read before moving on to the next issue.

Like Mike, I would find it impossible to give up what security I have, one of the reasons I haven't tried to get over there, even apart from the various rules and regulations that presently keep me out. Until such time as I have an income that is independent of the place I live, I don't think I would be willing to move from this house. And I can't even imagine meeting anyone for whom I would throw away my security.

You, discreet? Well, maybe you appear more so to people who don't know you. I believe I see a fair bit of you in your one liners and little hints.

Ignore Jan Brown's advice on eating. Bad enough to have to watch you imitate a thintall chimney, without risking your turning into a bowling ball.

I'm sick and tired of all the controversy over worldcon size, so I'm going to do something about it, by bidding for (and winning) the 1983 Worldcon, which I'll produce as a relaxacon... Announcing...

BATHCON, for 1983; to be held at the HydroMajestic Hotel, at scenic Medlow Bath. Heated swimming pool for 24 hour pool parties, 9 hole gold course, wooded valley for walks and picnics (the banquet would be held out of doors). As the hotel is only 2 floors high, and over 1/4 mile long, there is lots of rooms for hall parties. To remove the media fans, there will be no films and no TV video tapes. Attendance will be limited to 500, and the concom will go through membership applications to reject all turkeys. Yes, come to BATHCON, and get soaked.

(Actually, I am running MEDVENTION there, Feb. 8, 9 & 10, 1980).

Your worldcon sounded real well organized... I don't know how I would feel, in a similar situation, but I suppose I would take the money and attend. After all, I really don't care what the con is like, provided the right people are there. You are never going to let me forget that non-speech, are you?

Which reminds me, you keep implying that I have been overdoing the drinking during my trips over there, and I deny that. Everyone who knows me will tell you that I don't drink, except for a sample or two. And besides, I'm now going for fine wines...I got this great buy recently, which I can't wait to arrive, a five gallon container. I was going to bottle it, but they want 9-1/2 cents a cork (I found the bottles out back of a club), so I've decided to drink it when it arrives instead, and just to ensure I don't get too heavily involved in the drinking, I'll invite one or two friends along to help me... cheap enough, after all, at an average of 40 cents a bottle... [10/10/79]

ROGER WADDINGTON ...I do wonder how I can enjoy your fanzine so much, when there's so much difference between us! I mean from the evidence presented in the pages of previous *Outworlds*, and now this incarnation, you seem to be the epitome of all Con-going fen who find their enjoyment most in the social gatherings, the interplay of fannish talk; and here I am, almost at the edge of beyond, a fan who finds his entertainment through the words of science fiction, and who wouldn't bat an eyelid if the whole fannish creation were suddenly swept away, all the fen,

all the fanzines, all the Cons; and yet I've been reading avidly, and finding pleasure on every page; though if I stop to analyse why, I'll probably end up hating myself! Though it is possible to say that no two fen are alike; and also that if you laid them end to end, they'd reach no further than the nearest bar... But certainly, any fan who can stand up and give a speech in a caftan, definitely has my vote of approval!

I must admit to a certain unease with X, in that I've had to look hard to see where the speeches end, and the realtime writing begins; if it is a fault, it's all one of consistency, which for all of your consecutive numbering, is going to make it difficult to hark back and find some quote that you thought especially auspicious, some incident you wish to enlarge on. May I respectfully suggest some sort of index when you decide that you've reached an appropriate stopping-off point to consider it a volume?

...and any future efforts to prove that pro authors drink, eat and sleep like the rest of us poor mortals, that they live on the same earth, will probably be met with a mind that's not only closed, but locked and bolted...I mean, it's been hard enough for me to relate when they occasionally appear on television, that these definitely human beings can be those same magicians that create my favourite reading, my other worlds; and indeed, my Sense of Wonder, as much as being fed by the different, alien imaginings, is as much inspired by the thought that there are unimaginable beings out there who are writing all this for me, all these stories; and I want to hold onto this as long as I can! [10/10/79]

MARY COWAN I obtained copies of X:One & X:Two at Midwestcon. It was my second con ever; I knew exactly one other fan when I arrived, and not much of anything about fandom.

So I read both issues and decided that the words were arranged very nicely, but it didn't really mean anything.

Four months later (only four?), after another six cons, I still think the words are very nicely arranged --but now, I *understand*. And appreciate. [11/10/79]

DAVE ROWE Just as well that it's taken this much time to write as it's given me head just enough time to recede in size after the swelling it got for your mentioning me in your Marcon XIV notes, (gasp!), a Bill Bowers speech even!!!

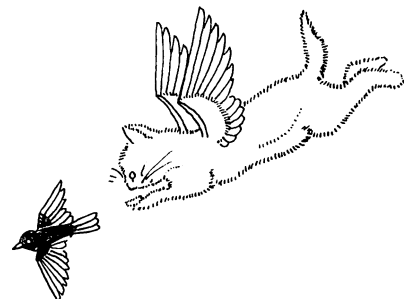
Only thing is, you got it wrong! I said *the trendoes* would refer to it as "literary masturbation", and that I would never be so vicious.

((I know that...and you know that...but THEY don't! Quote for effect; never accuracy...))

I have one bone to pick with you tho. I had this long train journey, you see, and after I finished the p/b, I found yours was the next fmz, oh great! Just mile after mile of l\*t\*r\*ry m\*s\*t\*r\*b\*t\*\*n. [11/11/79]

Part III: I Also Heard From...

ANNE GLANCY  
TIM C. MARION  
JOHN RODAK  
MIKE STREFF  
TONY STRELKOV  
&  
MISS TREICHEL.



Part III: I Also Heard From...





I've been wondering... You see, I'm really not sure which is more valuable:

--my Lenny Kaye fanzines;

--or, my complete run of Larry Propp's fanzine.

For those of you still not attuned to my subtle transitions, this is Bill...who will remain so for the remainder of this issue. There is no specific title affixed to this section since, when I selected the "Detritus" label, I envisioned it covering a joint lettercolumn/editorial... in the manner Bruce Gillespie used the device.

I still planned it that way...I was going to snip and paste...when I typed up those oversize masters, filled with your letters: that was the logical way to take them to the magic Xerox--but by the time they appeared here, they would be delightfully decorated with appropriate illoes, and profusely interspersed with incisive editorial replys/comments/sidebars.

Instead, the letters appear--unanswered, the illoes are noticable by their lack, and the incisive...etc. appears here in one overkill dose.

Many of the letters answer themselves.

The illoes remain in the file, against future issues.

And the incisiveness is probably debatable, but I do have a few things to say for, since March, it has been a long time.

A listing: Lunacon; Midwestcon 30; Archon III; Spacecon; Northamericon; PgHlange 11; Windycon 6; Octocon 16; Conclave 4; Icon 4; and Chambanacon 9...which latter marks #82 on the gradually expanding list of conventions attended. True, it doesn't quite match the projected list that ended X:Two, but in the case of Westercon...for once I exercised Fiscial Responsibility (something I definitely don't make a habit of). ...and missing both Minicon and Disclave was entirely Tabakow's Fault. Pass it on.

The additions are another story; several, actually.

No, no formal convention report(s) this time; even if I were to attempt a bland summary of those eleven "weekends", and were I at all successful in conveying what happened to me at them...you would be in for a case of sensory overload I really don't want to have to respond to.

Besides, none of them was bland.

And several remain to be summarized.

I only "gave up" on conventions twice this year.

It has been a Very Good Year.

*"In my youth, Father William, I often believed  
That platonic affairs were the best.  
But now as I age, I grow rather sage  
And see them as inactive incest."*

Hal Dresner: THE MAN WHO WROTE DIRTY BOOKS;  
Fawcett Crest/1966/pg. 11

I see that Brian Earl Brown has added a column of fanzine "criticism"--by Gary Farber --to The Whole Fanzine Catalog [#11/12]. Which is nice; I always enjoy reading about fanzines.

I even vaguely remember what they are.

Still.

Since I am reduced these days to noting my name in the various fancy expensive SF "Encyclopedias" that are gushing forth, the mention of my name in a mere fanzine is still refreshing...no matter what the context.

(I hope Mike Bracken doesn't mind the guilt-by-association; I certainly don't.)

Perhaps now that I'm writing how in "awe" I am with how "unpredictable" my sex life is--rather than about *Outworlds*--what I'm doing these days may be slightly more acceptable to Gary. From what I can remember of Gary's fanzines--the portions that were legible, that is--one might almost believe so.

Sure some things still pinch enough to produce a resultant "ouch!"; I like people to like me; I like people to like what I do. Not everyone does, of course; but even that bothers me a little less than it used to.

...why, I like to think I've grown up enough to accept, with some degree of composure, criticism from those who have demonstrated some degree of competence in doing fanzines themselves.

(You know what competence is, of course: It's what I point at when I say it.)

Still, I'll be nice and not mention that some of the most gosh-wow letters/comments/reviews I/*Outworlds* ever got, were from...

We were all much younger then.

I was laid off immediately preceeding the Nasfic, and was off for four weeks.

Back to work for five weeks; laid off immediately preceeding Conclave.

Off two weeks; back for a two week contract; off one week...

You wondered why, when the bulk of this issue was done in September, you're only seeing it now?

Monday, Dec. 10, I am to start an open-ended job. Stipulation: a mandatory 55 hour work week.

If I find it acceptable; if they find me acceptable...in a couple of months I may be able to afford to put out fanzines and go to conventions.

But I won't have time off for either.

It's almost enough to tempt me to try and find a "real" job.

You really don't know how refreshing it can be...while sitting on a couch with a very attractive woman...to say something about "my friend Mike".

...and when she says "Who's that?"--and I point across the party room to Glicksohn at the poker table...

...and she says: "Oh, who's that?"

It's almost as refreshing as, after having spent a very enjoyable amount of time at two successive conventions with a new friend...just before then end of the second, when I hand her copies of X:One & X:Two, and she says: "...oh, you do fanzines?"

Readers of something called *Father William's MISHAPventures* (a few years ago), may understand a bit of the ramifications of the preceeding.

Bob Hilles asked me, at PgHlange, if the new caftan (one of a triplicate) I was wearing was the "official Detroit bidding uniform". I replied:

"No, Bob. I am an individual first. The bid comes second."

Sorry. I should have checked the operations manual before acting so snippy.

Since it was my last Wednesday night of freedom (i.e., I didn't have to go to work in the morning) for the foreseeable future, I went over to Hap's Irish Pub, to listen to "little" Bill (sorry, but if you had a last name I could spell...) play, as well as to "submit to mundane women" (thank you, Dotti!).

Bill opened his set with a nice schtick about how, at his last "concert", seven people were elbowed to death. Attempting to leave when he started to play...

You have to realize that this was the Wednesday night immediately after the Monday Night Stampede at the ~~0/K/00111~~ Riverfront Collesium.

But then, humor like that belongs in *Graymalkin*; not here.

It occurs to me, since I've found myself a few times recently defending the

place, that I've now been in Cincinnati long enough to consider it "Home".

It has its problems, of course: all three of the local network-affiliated TV stations are staffed by parodies of the WKRP crew...and I was literally unable to breathe again this fall. (Part of that is my fault, granted.)

But our new city manager is a black in his thirties...recruited from that conservative town of Ann Arbor, and our new mayor is a 31 year old black. I find this delightfully ironic in that Cincinnati surrounds the town of Norwood: a...place... 99.9% so pure white, and determined to stay so. Of course, we've still got that idiot Elmer...the head of the F.O.P., running around in his cowboy boots. And never let us forget good old Simon Leis...the dedicated keeper of our morals.

Cincinnati is a very conservative city. But it is concurrently, a very liberal place...you just have to be a little bit cool about it.

No, I'm not planning on staying here the rest of my life, but right now I like it a lot. (I even stay in town at least one weekend a month. Usually.)

But then, what do I know? I was born in Barberton...a place no one has ever heard of, except those who were raised there...

Hi, Michelle.

I was discussing with a relatively new acquaintance the sciencefictional concept of whether it was simpler to make a lover into a friend...or a friend into a lover.

She looked at me in some disbelief when I said that both had happened to me this year.

For her, she said, the first option never worked; she needed to get to know the person first...to become friends.

I took that to be a "No."

But hopefully not a permanent one.

When Mike Glicksohn tottered in from Indianapolis, a few days prior to Spacecon (which was interesting, thank you; someday I may tell you of my "birthday party!"), he showed me a letter he'd received from Tim Kyger.

For the record, then:

"The decision to run someone other than you [Glicksohn] for Bill's appreciation was mine. Period." --Tim Kyger, 18 June 1979.

Bowers, being Bowers however, can never leave well enough alone:

I note the parenthetical insertation, viz.: "Copy of this letter to Bill Bowers, my files, and the Iggy files."

I now have a copy of that letter.

I took Mike's copy to work, and Xeroxed it.

Speaking of Worldcons and other exotic forms of fanac:

Yes, the Detroit in '82 Worldcon Bid is alive, well, gradually building...and continuing to mystify the Opposition in our own inimitable way. When we win, we will put on an enjoyable and well-run Worldcon...for you, and for us. But in the meantime, we are still very much the same people we were before all of this, and I don't see that much advantage to be gained in losing sleep or getting an ulcer by worrying about what people will think if we don't make every party bigger, every flyer/ad fancier, or every pronouncement of world-shaking import.

Still, I do have a bit of news for you...

Though we seven generally know what we will be doing on the Worldcon, it hasn't been formalized with titles yet...we're still on a first name basis. But I did ask for (before the selection was made), and was given, one specific function.

The Fan Guest of Honor at the Detroit Worldcon will have a liaison with a vested interest.

Me.

One correction to the Detroit/bio ad in Boston's PR#3: I've lost *seven* (not six) Hugoes. Accuracy...even when it hurts...!







A while after I delivered the Nasfic "speech", I happened to be thumbing through an apa mailing. Imagine my surprise at finding one of my "incidents" rather liberally quasi-quoted.

I suppose it could have been worse: the two names attributed to the incident in the retelling could have been the real ones. But they weren't.

The writer has apologized and promised a retraction, but it's an almost too familiar replay of what was happening when the last incarnation of *Xenolith* epilogued. It's all my fault...but it's not.

I could do something about it...change my "ways" of writing; but I don't plan to.

I don't have a "journal"; this and my speeches are the closest I come to recording the important aspects of my life. I employ some throwaways, and exaggerate for effect, but most of what I write/talk about *is* important. To me. No matter how transitory that "importance" may prove to be over a length of time.

I haven't sat down and analyzed it (perhaps I should?) but I'd guess-timate that maybe 80% of the incidents/anecdotes/interplays that I recount are "real". The other 20 or so % is split between those that were combined from two or more separate events, and those that are totally concocted.

And no one, other than me, can tell which is which. Though we do like to guess, don't we?

I've read a lot of science fiction this year; I could write about that.

And I still remember more than I've forgotten about fanzines...

But it's only been the last few years that I've been able to deal with *people* (on any level other than the totally superficial) without the security of a typewriter in front of me. But I am doing so now...sometimes less than successfully, and mostly taking two steps back for every three I take forward...but I'm doing it.

And that's what's important. To me. Right now.

I am not above teasing, intriguing, innuendoing. It's fun. But it's not the rationale behind all...not even most...of what I write.

I've said it before, and I say it again:

I'm not ashamed of *anyone* I've been associated with, involved with, infatuated with. But it's up to them to tell you who they are, and then only if they wish to.

I haven't always been noted for discretion, but this one thing I learned well: Once a name is put into a fanzine, you can never erase it.

But still, because they involve *me*, I am entitled to write of these encounters. What I do to my own "name", "reputation", whatever, is on my own head; what I do to others is on my conscience. And to me, that justifies "prior censorship", always.

If you know who/what I'm talking of, fine; you probably have reason to know.

If you don't and would like to guess, that's o.k. too; it's part of the game, as long as you don't expect confirmation from me. ...and don't put names in my mouth.

If there's any one thing that's inherently more amusing and ridiculous than fanzines and fannish relationships, it's sex.

But that's another subject entirely...

It was not intended that the following item appear here: After I'd written it, and before I delivered it (since with only one exception, no one has ever read one of my "speeches" before its deliverance), I told Denise that, if after hearing it, she wanted it, she could have it for *Graymalkin*.

She sat in the front row, listened...and afterward said she'd like to run it.

Well--perhaps it's only natural--but it seems that the Leigh's financial fortunes seem to parallel mine remarkably...and Denise has been unable to publish an issue of *Graymalkin* since Midwestcon.

So, I asked for it back.

I want it to see print before my life changes too dramatically, once again.

Not that my life hasn't (surprise) changed considerably since Northamericon--enough so that perhaps this should precede, rather than follow the last few pages...but this is where it goes.

Other than that, you are free to interpret it, each in your own way.

1979: If the peaks weren't as high, the valley's weren't nearly so deep... Bill

12/19/79





Realizing that this is, indeed, 1979, and not 1978 revisited--this:

My very first fanzine was dated September, 1961.

...which means that I have now been in fandom, publishing the bloody things, for half of my life.

Which is a rather frightening thought.

Almost as frightening as the realization that a couple of the people I spend a fair amount of time with these days were born *after Abanico One* was mailed out.

Everybody have their calculators handy...?

(But then, we all have our reputations to maintain, don't we? I do my best.)

Realizing that this is, indeed, 1979, and not 1969 (or St. Louiscon) revisited--this:

In one of those alternate universes I mentioned, this weekend may well mark my tenth wedding anniversary.

In this reality, it doesn't.

So much for yet two more Great Moments in Fannish History.

When in doubt...they say...talk/write of what you know best. And so, since this seems to be a year with less "causes" and more "because"s than last--and since, by a perverse sense of logic probably peculiar to me, it does tie into what I wanted to say last year--but couldn't--let's talk about those two most noble forms of fanac--

Fanzines. ...and fannish relationships.

...immediately following the mandatory--of course--disclaimer: Since I am only a recent graduate of the Suzi Stefl/Denise Parsley Leigh School of Discretion (a subsidiary of the Mike Glicksohn School of Applied Embarrassment), I must needs go about this in my own subtle way. In other words, there will be times when I seem to be avoiding the subject.

Probably because that's what I'll be doing.

But I'll get back to it eventually.

Have I ever failed to tell you All?

There were some who were puzzled by the fact that I went to the trouble of right-justifying the first couple years of *Outworlds*--but they claimed to admire my perserverance in doing so. It was simple, really: It was my way of teaching myself to edit. If something was not worth typing twice...it probably was not worth printing.

Some of these same people were less tolerant and considerably more derisive--the demeanor of my friends hasn't changed remarkably over the years--when they found out that I'd typed up dummies of entire issues--and then had torn up the results because they didn't "look right" to me.

And I've done the same thing to some relationships.

...not something I'm particularly proud of, but a fact some people should be aware of. Particularly those who persist in telling me what a "nice guy" I am... before they know me.

Once an editor...always an editor.

Before I go much further, there is someone I owe an apology to. And that is to my little seester, Dotti Bedard-Stefl, because for the past two months I've been saying that I couldn't possibly contribute to her fanzine...her fanzine on "Family Relationships". The fact that I was trying to figure out how to put *this* together is an excuse...not a reason.

Most of you, I'm sure, are aware of this extended family of ours... With Rusty as the Father, and Tucker as His Son...and with Glicksohn as Ghod...as was proven in Derek Carter's Autoclave 3 speech (which, considering the proclamer, and the proclaimed, makes Mike a *very* minor deity, indeed)...

Still, I think I first became a bit disillusioned about the whole thing a couple of years ago when Gay Haldeman informed me that I could not longer call her "Mom", because she was chronologically younger than I.

No one before that had ever indicated to me that logic had any place in fannish relationships...



*Outworlds One* was 26 pages long, and I was harrassed because it had no contents page. *Outworlds Two* was 34 pages long, and I gave them their contents page. On page 17.

...and *Outworlds Three* had one on the cover...and 17 & 24 had one on the back cover...and I remain convinced that some people *still* haven't found the contents page for *Outworlds 15*.

Some people apparently have to have everything laid out neatly and logically before them.

And I'm one of them...or else I wouldn't have done those things, I suppose.

Or did I do them simply to remind you that I was there, behind the fanzine?

And when a friend told me that they were working on a "Handbook", to try to prove that there was indeed a person behind the "myth"...

Well, I'm working on my own version of the Handbook.

And all of this is only a footnote to it.

Speaking of family relationships...

In this very same city--but at a different hotel--in other words, at last year's Rivercon. The scene was Friday night.

Early. (Which qualifier should relieve a couple of people poised to do me injury.)

Denise and I went into the hotel restaurant with Marla, Sherry...and their parents.

The incident probably wouldn't have stuck in my mind except that shortly before then I'd been asked why Lyn & Nathan were going to so many cons and fannish gatherings, when they obviously weren't fans in the classical sense.

My answer was that I really didn't know--but I suspected that despite the day & age, and all the laws, it might be as simple as the probability that they were more readily accepted...simply more comfortable...here, than they were in most other places they might go as a couple.

...and, as all the people around us were waited on, and served, and as the waitress continually circled our table at a safe distance...the impatience of we the starved ones gave way to stronger emotions.

Finally, Denise stood up, went and stopped the waitress in her tracks, and said: "You're not serving us because my daddy's black..."

We were served rather soon thereafter.

One of the devices that I used in *Outworlds*, and succeeding fanzines, is that of continuous pagination: each successive issue picked up in page number where the previous issue had left off...rather than resetting the counter to "one" each time. I do this because, to me, each issue is part of a continually building "whole" that I hope will be greater than the sum total of the individual parts.

I have been accused of following patterns in the type of people I become involved with. At times there was an element of truth to that; at other times, I think not.

...and yet, each individual issue of *Outworlds*, and now *Xenolith*, is/was just that: individual. Totally unique unto itself.

...and each of the rather few people that I have cared for has been just that: an individual. Totally unique unto, and for, themselves.

I have yet to cease publication of a particular fanzine in a manner that I wish to, on a neatly predetermined note.

...next subject.

I went into the subject of schticks in my Marcon speech, because almost a decade of such antics was cited as the reason my best friend was not permitted to write my introduction for the Iggy Program Book.

Therefore, having nothing to lose, since he's already been a Worldcon Fan Guest of Honor...and I *was* asked to write his introduction...this:

At one point, Mike & I figured out, much to our mutual dismay, that over a six month period, we'd ended up sleeping with each other at conventions more times than either of us had slept with anyone else.

Now this was obviously some time in the past. In Mike's case.



Part of the beauty of both schticks and cliches is that they generally have some basis in truth...if you dig deep enough.

Now fannish "reputations" are another thing entirely...

I mean, everybody knows that, really, Mike only drinks and plays poker...

...and that I, being totally "safe", only drinks...and makes speeches...

In fact, the only burning question remaining is knowing which of us wears *only* the caftan.

Some people have been known to go to remarkable lengths to find out the answer to that one.

One of the neatest things I ever saw in fandom occurred at a Marcon quite a few years ago:

In the lobby, the classic confrontation: the middle-aged, suited, clean-shaven, military-type...and the (obviously) pinko-commie-punk-kid--he had long hair--arguing.

I eavesdropped.

It seemed like much longer, but it was probably less than an hour--but it seemed that, nose to nose, they could find no common ground to agree on...

And yet, in all that heated exchange, never once did I hear one refer to the other's age, occupation, heritage...or lack of legitimate birth.

They were arguing over their interpretations of a mutually favorite science fiction author.

...only in fandom have I seen that relationship.

This summer, after having recounted the Mike-&-I-sleeping-together schtick...for perhaps the second or third time since it happened...I was asked:

"I've heard those stories. Does that mean that Mike is...does... Both ways?"

In roughly the same time-frame, a friend commented that being "bi" seems to be the "chic" thing to be in fandom these days.

A cynical person might observe that it does seem to be the case.

An idealist might say that it finally means fandom is growing up.

Being a totally confirmed cynical-idealist...I can't help but remember what a definitely non-bi friend once said in a totally different context: "There's simply too many people in the world to love...to restrict yourself to just one."

I was mildly upset that, since the stories were of Mike & *me*, the lady only questioned Mike's orientation.

For the record, and trivia buffs everywhere, however: as far as I know, I am a dedicated heterosexual.

...while remembering that I never say never about *anything*, these days.

And, no, I'm not going to repeat here my answer about Mike's preferences...

I understand that the item following me... I use the word "understand" there because, as of this writing, apparently everyone in the world has received the 3rd NORTHAMERICAN progress report, telling them that I'm "on" at four today...everyone except me, that is. Please tell me that this isn't Phoenix Revisited, someone...please?

(It's not...but I couldn't resist...)

...anyway, I understand that the item following me is a panel titled "Living With a Writer". I don't know all of the participants, but in at least two cases I think the about-to-be-dumped-upon deserve a break. I'd like to see Steve Leigh and Andy Offutt demand equal time to depict the joys and trials of living with a fanzine editor, and a fanzine writer...

Now *that* would be a panel with some significance...as well as dealing with the realities of the creative process.

Just look at all the people who couldn't take the pressures of fanzine editing and writing...who have ended up in SFWA...

A quote:

"It would take a good psychiatrist to work out all of the ramifications of



this, but I think I could make the obvious point that fandom does provide a sublimation for sex."

---Bruce Gillespie, *Outworlds III* - May, 1970 [p.69].

It has been suggested that my fanzine output has been somewhat down in the past few years.

What can I say?

Freshman Fannish Relationships, 101:

"Let's do...and say we didn't."

Basically, I'm a chicken.

But if the right friend issues the challenge, I'm liable to try most anything.

I suppose a whole new generation of fans have arrived since the day the name-badges of the "Official Bill Bowers Groupies" littered the fanscape.

I still don't really believe that I had the nerve to present the first badge in public...because, obviously, the first recipient had to be someone short and cuddly...as well as someone I'd slept with.

Did I forget to mention that he was also considerably hairier than I?

But my hair is much *longer* than his.

A few years ago, at Jon & Joni's annual sacrifice to their mosquitoes:

A teen-age fan was carefully reconstructing the remnants in the roach bowl for one last try.

Someone asked his mother, sitting at the same table, if she approved of such things.

"Hell," she said, "I turned all of my kids onto grass."

Some fannish relationships are simply beautiful.

Sophomore Fannish Relationships, 201:

"Let's do it with everybody..."

...and, as I write this, I try to rationalize yet another relationship that had started so simply...that so suddenly had become incredibly complex...

The Bowers-cartoons in fanzines have not been as prevalent as those devoted to Warner or Glicksohn. There have been a few, but the classic was commissioned by Jackie Causgrove, and depicted by Alexis Gilliland:

In the first panel, a rather strange-looking individual is telling the obviously adoring sweet young thing: "And I have my own fanzine..."

The other panel shows the two strolling away, arm-in-arm, with the taller of the two saying: "How about coming over to my place for a little collatio?"

I must admit that I did find the fact that Alexis had scrawled the word "Outworlds" across the taller individual's back a bit tacky, tho.

In January, 1977, in one of my rare introspective moments, I wrote this:

"(...one thing) that I've noticed is this: of the (still) handful of people I consider close friends, none achieved that 'status' overnight--even tho it sometimes seemed so. More often than not, it was someone whom I'd seen at 3 or 4 cons...someone I knew the name of and not much more...and then, suddenly, for no apparent reason, at a particular con, something clicked. It's happened several times over the past year...and it continues to amaze me. And intrigue me."

I could rewrite that observation today, with as much validity. And I'm still amazed. And occasionally intrigued.



Fannish Relationships, Junior and Senior Level:

"Let's don't...and say we did."

And then, last August, I found occasion to write this:

--I make no great secret of my admiration for the writings of Don C. Thompson: the honesty and emotion that pours from the pages of *Don-osaur* is awe-inspiring and an almost tangible piece of a man's life laid out before me. It is something I admire and envy. Yet, in its own way, it is all rather frightening.

Because...

I knew this fan who was a devotee of Don, and his style of writing. This fan published a small fanzine, and in many ways attempted (and in a few succeeded) to emulate Don's honesty in writing. Now then, this fan was at a convention and witnessed (strictly) accidentally a very emotional scene between two other fans at that convention. Returning home, the fan wrote a con report--and retold the incident. Oh, the names were changed--and beyond a shadow of a doubt 90% of the readers of that fanzine would not have known who was being talked about, even had they cared. But the fact remained that at least one of the primaries was in no way prepared to deal with any public retelling of what happened at that con, no matter how discreet the rendering: this was a very private, very emotional, and very hurting experience. And the irony remains that the fan who wrote the report witnessed it through only the most unlikely set of circumstances imaginable.

I was the fourth person there, in that room, at that convention. I was there because they were my friends. I was there because I was involved, even though I was not one of the principals. The person who wrote that report was there, primarily, through my doing. [But not totally; these things get incredibly complicated...or is it only me?]

Because the fan "reporter" had enough sense to send an advance copy of the con report to the principals, I was able to exert enough influence so that the piece never saw print. This was prior-censorship; but the preservation of someone very dear to me was involved. Those who knew the principals knew, or could pretty well guess, just what occurred there. Those who don't, well, they'll not know from me. You see, even though that convention was a very long time ago, it was only yesterday also, and there are still feelings, very deep feelings, involved.

Total honesty is not all it's cracked up to be.

Especially when it involves people other than the narrator.

---Xenolith<sup>1</sup> 7; page 60.

That was the lead-in to an exercise that a friend labelled "literary masturbation" because even though I told "all"--I had to get it out--for once I named no names.

I have not always been so considerate.

The one thing I have consistently said, when asked to evaluate my fanzines, is this: "I have often been pleased with the things I've done...but I've never been satisfied."

I suppose that some statements can apply to more than one area of one's life.

...not to mention the Derek Carter cartoon I published, showing me wearing a t-shirt emblazoned:

"Owned and operated by Femmefen International."

I'm not quite ready for a gravestone yet, but when the time comes...

Having been one who has sometimes been judged by the way things appear to be; having been one who is on occasion not adverse to having people judge by the way things appear to be, I give you this:





