

[illegible]

- Al Curry



[illegible]

"Hello, there, again, Sal 2002, and what are you doing in the editor's office? Uh? But how can you be the receptionist *and* the assistant editor at the same time? Oh, you're not. You're *another* terminal. A terminal what, may I ask? Ah, I thought maybe you were a terminal case. Ahahahah. That's a little human joke. No, I didn't expect you to laugh--machines can't laugh. All *you* can do is sit around and whistle Fortran. (Kobol.)



"All right now, Sal, let's get down to my complaint. *Astounding Sci-Fi Stories* owes me some money--something happened somewhere along the line, and I've been short-changed \$34.00. Yep, 34. Do you remember my story called *Muscle Bridge* that you published a couple of months ago? Yeah, that's the one, the sequel to *Mind Bridge*. Now, when Stan asked me for that story, he promised -- what? You *what*? You bought *Muscle Bridge* and not Stan? Well, hey! What a coincidence! That's wonderful. How'd you like my story?

(Long pause.) "Well, if you felt *that* way about it, why did you buy it? Ah. You needed three thousand, four hundred words to pad out the magazine. Thanks a lot, robot. R-O-B-O-T.

"What I'm trying to say, Sal, is that you still owe me money. I've got a copy of the manuscript right here, and this is the deal:

"Eight months ago, Stan asked me for a story and he promised me 5¢ a word. He *said* that if the story was exceptionally good, he'd pay me 6¢ a word. Got it? Okay. Now then, I got busy, and seven months ago I delivered the manuscript. It worked out to 3,400 words. At 5¢ a word you *should* have paid me \$170. -- and that's *not* counting the extra penny bonus for a rattling good story. But now, when the check came, it was only \$136. *That* amounts to just 4¢ a word, and I've been short-changed because Stan promised me 5. You still owe me \$34. for a story you published two months ago.

"No, no, Sal, you've got it turned around. He asked for it eight months ago, at 5¢ a word. Seven? Who mentioned seven? Oh, sure, I delivered it seven months ago and you published it two months ago. *Without* the 6¢ prime rate, I may add. Your check was for 4¢, not 5, not 6, but 4¢. So, I've been short-changed 1 cent for two months. Got it now?

"Sal, can't you understand simple arithmetic? I think maybe you need a shot of 3 - in - 1 oil.

"Please, now, let's run thru it one more time. I wrote a story called *Muscle Bridge* that was three hundred, four thousand words long. Stan *asked* for the story, and promised me the 6¢ rate if the yarn was *really* good. I whipped out the story seven months ago and delivered it in eight, and then you published it five months later. The check you sent me amounted to \$136., but it *should* have been \$170., because *that* is the proper 5¢ rate. There's a shortage of \$34. here. Now, Stan is an honorable man and his word is as good as gold--and you know about gold these days--it's over \$500. an ounce!

"What don't you understand? Sal, tell me something--have you ever taken an I.Q. test? You have. What was the result? Are you proud of that 93?

"Look, Sal: one story, one simple but spellbinding story called *Muscle Bound*--ah, *Muscle Bridge*. Stan *asked* me for that story 5 cents ago, but *you* paid me only 4 months, and after I had sweated over it for the 6¢ bonus. *You* shorted me two months and that's unfair! What? What gold? *I didn't* buy any gold--why do you ask a silly question like that?

"No, no, no! *That* was a passing reference to Stan and his heart of gold. I said that gold is worth \$170. an ounce these days and I was trying to imply that Stan would not short-change me \$500. like *you* did. He's an honest man. He promised me 5 months payment for a story that was four hundred, three thousand words long, but *your* check was a penny short and that left me holding the bag for a lousy 93 after I had rushed the job and delivered in just 7 ounces! Geez! If I'd known I was going to get tangled up in a mess like *this*, I would have sent the story over to *Omni*. Ben wouldn't have demanded \$34.

"Say that again? Do you *know* that for a fact? -- Well, what is Ben Bova doing on *your* picket line? *His* company, too? Has it spread that far? My, my, Bova on a picket line.

"All right, Sal--I can read the handwriting on the wall of the future. Now, here's what I'm going to do. The first thing Monday morning, I'll send a check for \$34. to you. Will that take care of every little thing and make us friends again?

"Bye-Bye."



"Robot? Your mother is a computer on the Chrysler assembly line!"

(Hang up with a bang.)

---Bob Tucker

[skit first delivered at Confusion 6 and/or 7, Jan. 18, 1980]

[illegible]

TED WHITE I was all set to actually sit down and write for you a new column, in which I intended to bemoan the predominance of current-day fannish writing in fanzines, point with some alarm at the heavy drug use at the cons I've been to lately, and throw in a few lighter items to keep it all from bogging down -- and then I received *Xenolith Four*, and discovered that you already had that column from me! Wow, I must be writing in my sleep ...or maybe just forgetting what I've done after doing it. Imagine my embarrassment if I'd actually written that column again and sent it to you! (Of course you could have published them both in side-by-side columns--you're a tricky guy with layouts--and really embarrassed me; it would have been interesting to see which of the columns stated its case better....)

Oh well.

It would appear that a lot has been going on in your life in recent months. It would also appear that you prefer to drop hints rather than spell out the details for your audience of hundreds. No doubt those who should know do know, and the rest of us probably don't need to know.

But, jeeze, you sure do get one's curiosity up.

Void #30--due out sometime this year or maybe next year--will not be mimeographed. It will be--hold on!--Xeroxed. It's a brand new challenge, pub-wise, and I'm having a lot of fun with it. Dan Steffan's 3-page cover looks real fine; the machine I'm using gives solid black areas and two-sided printing. The results won't be that different from the offset you've used, and since the machine has two reduction settings I can play the same sort of games with pseudo-microelite that you've done with your letters in thish of Xenolith. (Gosh, I haven't written "thish" in years!)

Write if you get work.

(5/20/80 - 1014 North Tuckahoe, Falls Church, VA 22046)

Okay, I've learned my lesson.

In the past two issues, I've written about then-current jobs. In both cases, almost as soon as the issues were published...the jobs ceased. Abruptly.

This is ridiculous. So, in the future, I won't mention employment until it is safely in the past. Naturally. ...but, as far as unemployment goes...

DON D'AMMASSA      In view of Lee Pelton's letter, commenting upon his own fondness for sports, I have another fannish intolerance story for you.

The local fans get together at our house once a month for a non-formal social occasion. Occasionally one or the other of us will invite some non-fannish friends to attend. Recently we had a couple over who are fond of hockey. I'm not, but to each his own. Since the playoffs were on, the male



half of the couple was quietly watching the end of the match later that evening. Unbeknownst to me, at least two of the fans present made loud remarks about the IQ levels of people who watch hockey games. I know fans are supposed to be social incompetents, but one would think common courtesy would not be beyond them.

George Flynn suggests that the conservatism of fans may be necessary in order to maintain the group. Well, I wasn't thinking specifically of fannish traditions. I was thinking in very general terms which have little to do with the group as such. Fans tend not to like changes in the kind of writing being done, either amateur or professional. How often have we heard people say that all of the good fanwriting was done years ago, or that the golden age of SF has receded. They are also conservative in their attitudes about mundane subjects. Admittedly the ideas they are conservative about tend to be liberal ones, like feminism, abortion, and civil rights, but there is still the reluctance to even examine the basis of their beliefs. There are exceptions to all of this, of course, but in general fans are just as conservative--and possibly even more so--as the rest of the world.

(5/18/80 - 19 Angell Drive, East Providence, RI 02914)

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"But what could he possibly hope to gain, dear?"

"Why acceptance, of course. It's probably all part of a greater scheme to become 'in' with today's fans. Old enough to be revered, but not old enough to be ignored. He's probably letting his hair grow; and he'll start dropping references to pot and rock music in his editorial..."

--MIKE GLICKSOHN: Upsetting The Parlance of Bowers - *Outworlds* 3.1, 1972

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ALEXANDER DONIPHAN WALLACE A galaxy of gramercies for Series Two, Number Four. The address is Cincinnati Ohio but the postmark is Kokomo IN 469.

Instead of an editorial policy you should issue a MANIFESTO. Such are documents of depth, breadth and weight, entirely according with the Bowersian significance. It is important that a manifesto be issued, or promulgated. And of course your manifesto should have a title of dignity, say maybe like DECLARATION OF INTENT, or BILL'S RIGHTS.

(306 E. Gatehouse Dr., H, Metairie LA 70001)

...so what am I doing...doing another issue when there are still bunches of X:Three and X:Four remaining unmailed?

Well, other than stencils (which I got on credit) the basic supplies for a mimeoed issue are on hand. And, at the moment, the time is available to do an issue...even if the money to actually mail out issues is not.

Besides, it'll be nice to have something to hand out at my 12th Midwestcon.

Eventually I'll get everything mailed out...really; and when I do manage that, I suppose I'll end up with a catch-up all-letters issue again. But that's permitted: it's in The Contract.

[It's probably a sign of how long it's been since I last purchased stencils, but it wasn't until I got home that I discovered that they didn't have the film overlays. As a result, every half page or so I have to stop, and scrub my balls clean of blue gook with an old toothbrush.

[...quite stimulating, actually!]

TERRY MATZ *Xenolith* was great--tho I see you so rarely I wish it had more personal information in it--if it's going to be a substitute for a letter, you're going to have to tell me more. I did like your *Outworlds*



speech. (Ken got upset--he said it would drive collectors of the magazine crazy trying to get all the numbers when one was a speech.) Having entered fandom after you started 'resting' I've not had much experience with *Out-worlds*. *Xenolith* seems like a fine substitute for me--when are you going to four color covers and advertising? Advertising would solve your financial problems--and you could always get unique advertisements by soliciting your friends, so to speak.

With you and Mike worrying about (or wanting) obscurity with the new generations of fans, I have to tell you about what happened to Ken at the last Icon. He and Phyllis Eisenstein went up to the registration desk where Ken announced who he was. Since this drew a blank expression, he humbly filled out a card with his name and address. The woman (apparently from Kansas City) looked at the address and said, "Oh, have you ever heard of KaCSFS?" Ken looked her in the eye and said, "I founded KaCSFS in 1971." She mumbled, "Yeah, right. Sure you did." Phyllis interveaned at this point by saying, "Don't you know who this is? He was chairman of the 1976 World Science Fiction Convention." The woman replied, "I was just moving to KC then, I didn't go." Sic transit gloria. (Although sometimes I think Ken would prefer to fade into obscurity--then people would stop complaining about MAC.)  
[] With some small degree of self-restraint, I will only comment that that would be one helluva B\*I\*G fade...! []

I have to agree with Brian Earl Brown--don't make allusions or references --except for ones I would understand. Those are okay. I mean, when you say "F.H.F. (a very, very esoteric reference)" I know what esoteric means. It means it's probably a very funny and/or embarassing and undoubtedly dirty story. Now I don't mind not knowing real 'esoteric' references but I do object to being left in the dark about dirty ones. Now, probably I should laugh and pretend I know what it means and tell anyone who asks it's a secret but I want to know these things. So, I don't care if you have to spend all issue explaining one reference, just do it. Unless, of course, I do know it already, then I can act smug.

(5/5/80 ~ 1131 White, Kansas City, MO 64126)

...someday I WILL publish the Annotated *Xenolith*. In a very limited edition. For a very exorbitant price... (I don't figure on Social Security being around when I retire, you see, and...)

In the meantime:

F.H.F. is a very exclusive organization, founded several years ago in the bar at Fanfair III. Charter Members: Mike Glicksohn, Derek Carter...and myself.

Derek's membership has since been revoked.

CAROLYN DOYLE I have chosen tonight to devote some of my precious 5 hours of free time for loccing *Xeno-Worlds*. (*Out-Lith* just doesn't make it.)

What the hell's F.H.F.? (Famous Horny Fans? Funckin' Horrible Fanzines? Talk about masturbation!) []Funckin'...? Carolyn...is that esoteric...?[]

Seriously, I like your literary masturbation... now and then... once in a while... as long as I know what it means....

Bill...I love the quote on page 121. I remember feeling the same thing when I was just getting into my teens... when I kept bumping into and then shying away from writing... and trying to bump into some sort of social life or relationship. Those were the days that I first met Anna, and we'd produce a couple of crazy plays in an afternoon, in our heads... or when I'd try to go star-gazing, and end up freezing to death. I felt the same way about my flimsy, half-glued life, as you did about *Outworlds*. And I still need people. That's a beautiful quote, and more than anything else this issue, can stand



alone, with everyone identifying with it and applying it to themselves a little differently.

(5/27/80 - 1949 N. Spencer, Indianapolis, IN 46218)

MIKE GLICKSOHN Calling this undernourished excuse for an elaborate coa OW 30 was pretty sneaky, even for you. I suppose the next flyer for Spacecon will double as another issue of Double:Bill eh?

Still, as a Xenolith this is a pretty good fanzine, even if you did inadvertently forgot to append my glossary of fannish terms so I could understand some of the incredibly esoteric references in yet-another finely crafted Bowers "Speech". It's okay, though: I had Bill Marks explain them all to me.

By the way, as excellent a piece of creative myth-making as this live version of OW 30 undoubtedly is/was and as moved as I am to find myself woven as a thread throughout the tapestry of your recent fan-history, I can't help but feel that I'd have been even more flattered if you'd managed to spell the name of my notorious (Hugo-winning) fanzine correctly even once! It's surely a good feeling to know how close we've been these last ten years, Mister Bauers...Sir.

Actually, Joan's check resides in my collection of fanart, not in the shoebox: the shoebox is for potential fanzines, for the future. The art box is for history, the past. Energumen is most definitely history. Well... Energumen 1 is most definitely history...

It's a telling comment on the passage of time that people like Steve and Denise probably wouldn't understand half of the jokes in your description of your list of columnists and their contributions to the issue. Entire generations of fans have risen to prominence in the days since the last Outworlds and all this nostalgia will be meaningless to many of them. Isn't self-indulgence delightfully satisfying?

At the risk of sounding maudlin, may I say once again that being as close to you as I am and have been over the years occasionally tends to make me forget just how good you can be when you put your mind to it. This "speech" is a truly fine piece of personal history and as well written as all but a small handful of fanzine contributions I've seen in the last year. If you ever turned your hand to writing with a larger audience in mind, you'd probably establish yourself as one of the best in the field. (Ro and Steve could use the competition too!)

It's sad to see Mike Bracken falling into that cliched "fandom as a substitute for the real world" worldview although his last line indicates that at least he may have some regrets on that score. One of the few things I've consistently gotten angry about over the last decade or so (and you know how unemotional and calm I am, right Bill?) is the attitude some fans have of "outgrowing" fandom. It's certainly true that fandom isn't for everyone and not even for some people all the time but the condescension of that minority of active fans who drop fandom for some other area of endeavor and then belittle those who stay behind has always galled me. Mike doesn't quite go that far but he verges on it and I hope it's not an attitude he's going to adopt. I'm delighted he's finding creative satisfaction in his job but that doesn't in any way reduce the degree of creativity involved in being an active fanzine fan and Mike ought to realize that.

(6/8/80 - 141 High Park Ave., Toronto, Ont., M6P 2S3 CANADA)

JAN BROWN Regrettably, I wasn't around in those golden early years of Outworlds. I did acquire a few copies, and didn't quite know what to make of them. Two professional writers were conducting a feud in your pages over issues I didn't understand; another professional author was writing what looked like at least a semi-regular column; all sorts of incomprehensible in-



jokes were being exchanged among people whose names I'd scarcely heard--names like Mike Glicksohn, Jodie Offutt, Susan Wood, Sandra Miesel. That I should ever be on speaking terms with such luminaries never once occurred to me. Confused, I read the issues, thought about possibly getting in touch with you (you lived fairly close to me, then), and decided that you would have no more to say to me than I had to say to your fanzine. Confidence is not my long suit, and chutzpah is a mythology to me.

(6/9/80 - 1218 Washtenaw Court, Ann Arbor, MI 48104)

I've Also Heard From: TIM MARION, BUCK COULSON, PATRICK NIELSEN HAYDEN, SHERYL BIRKHEAD, LUKE MCGUEFF, AVEDON CAROL...and:

Behold, a SUSAN WOOD loc!

...I HAD to respond to *Outworlds* 30.

First: Thanks for the kind words about Joan, and about me. As you know, too often, we both felt and were made, by others, to feel, that we were "only the wives", not fans or people in our own right. The world has changed, in 10 years. One of the best changes, for me, is the fact that, in fandom, women are people too, and not just appendages of their Boy Wonders. But I said all that in *Janus* 17.

Second: When you sent me advance word of the annish, I wrote to Mike. Mike is coming here to visit in July. We are sitting down to plan the Tenth Annish of *Energumen*, the Hugo-winning fanzine.

It's your doing, Bowers!

Yes, there are still people waiting for someone to do the first perfect fanzine. Who does the best Fancy and Pretentious fanzines? (Whatever happened to Jay Zarembo? Paul Novitski turned pro. Where is Jerry Lapidus? Etc.)

*Energumen* 16. For real. Watch for it.

And thanks for keeping me on your mailing list. The "new" Bowers seems like *Something Else*, and I'm not too sure how I react to him; but I'm interested, I'm interested.

(5/15/80 - Dept. of English, U of B.C., Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1W5, CANADA)

Gee...that's neat! (...err...do I get a copy?)

As far as my mailing list: While I may be inconsistent and fickle with others, certain people get most everything I do...even if they don't write regularly, or send me drawings, or whatever. ...and those are the special ones I love, and care for.

(...besides...I'm still hoping for another installment of *Energumwoman*!)

I would suppose that (hazarding a rough guess; there's no way to adequately define/list such things) as of the moment, the number of people who mean the most to me are almost equally divided between those I've known, say, six or more years...and those who probably haven't the faintest idea of your reference to the "new" Bowers, because we've encountered each other in the past couple of years.

It's strange because I know I'm different, now...and yet I'm still ever the same. Steve Leigh, who I met just 3 years ago, says (in *Graymalkin* #5): "Bowers is still Bill, still the recluse hiding shyness behind insult and wit"...so maybe the change isn't total? I still have a lot of problems, a lot of things to work out...but I do know that I like me a lot better now, than I ever have before. I'm having fun...

Recently Glicksohn said that "Bowers has given up on his Quest for the Perfect Fanzine to search for The Perfect Femme-fan." I haven't given up on the fanzine, yet.

---Bowers, *Alapatite* #1, 2/9/77.



I've been thinking a lot more about writing recently...at least on a more consistent basis than in the past. There's a variety of reasons for this resurgence of "wanting to write", some clear-cut, others less so. At a guess, I would say that the primary cause has to be all those "speeches" I've done over the past couple of years. The initial efforts were crude and disjointed...and if I were able to look at them with any degree of objectivity, I would have to say that none of them were exactly smooth! But I Had Things To Say, and I did. ...and I've had a lot of fun doing them.

The "speech" schtick seems to be in a lull now; it could be temporary, it could be permanent. Don't ask me! But whatever form it takes, the urge to put together assemblyings of words--my words, rather than merely publishing those of others--has not abated.

But I've had these spells of productivity before, if in different places, and different form.

As anyone who has visited me can tell, I never throw anything away. And recently, while digging through a file drawer, I ran across a lodestone of kipple: carbons and fragments of stories, columns, articles, from my service days.

...so herewith, for your amusement, are two fragments (undated, but they had to be written in '67 or '68) that I don't think became part of anything I've published:

...and God said: Let there be mass confusion.

...and in one place, it was so.

For confusion is known as Angeles City.

When I enlisted in the United States Air Force--a mildly supersitiois draft-dodger; I received my 'Greetings' on a Friday, the 13th--I was a naive, disinterestedly patriotic, thin-blooded midwestern youth of twenty-one, and determined to acquire an education.

Two and a half years later, I disembarked in the Republic of the Philippines.

My patriotism had diminished abruptly at Lackland AFB, the 'Gateway to the Air Force': a mass-production kindergarten dedicated unswervingly to Null-Thinkism. It almost went by the boards at Sheppard AFB, an education factory seemingly dedicated to the proposition of "Do not question anything!", rather than questing for knowledge in your dart-board-chosen career field.

Being stationed, for two years, eighteen miles from Independence, Missouri, accomplished no noticable results in reaffirming my now apparently lost forever belief that the Great White Father in Washington, D.C., has any rational excuse for, or idea of what in the Hell he's doing.

Two and a half years of s.o.s. and varying tenures in military hospitals reduced my thin-bloodedness to a state almost approaching anemic.

I acquired the grand total of six college credit hours.

When assigned to Clark AB, I was no longer a youth; rather an internally greying, and if not angry at least disillusioned, young man of plus twenty-three.

But at least I was naive.

I take some small comfort in that thought, as I must, because it is my last pre-service characteristic to have survived unscathed.

But I now sometimes suspect that it too has been dented. However, I assure you if so, only slightly.

...or, would you believe...

Perhaps it is not so ironic after all that the City of Hell should be dubbed the residence of the Angels--for is it not so that the Devil Himself is merely a fallen angel?

Angeles City, Papanga, Republic of the Philippines.

Here the nights be long and hot; the neverending days unkissed by tempering breezes. Here there be G.I.'s and beaks...the tall and fair invaders, and the whores waiting with outstretched arms for that greenback dollar.



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No money, no honey.

At checkpoint, the world is divided--split by an imposing four-foot high fence of chicken wire. Baseside lies three miles of rolling fields, neatly cut, and unmarred except by an Arco Club, a cemetery of five thousand small white crosses, rank on file, and a lonely flagpole, splitting the black-blue sky with the limply draped Stars and Stripes...before one reaches the conglomeration of supporting installations surrounding the flightline.

Take a scapel, cut it neatly around the perimeter, pick up the ungainly mass and airevac it to Southwestern Texas, set it down gently on the lone prairie, and within the year it will look as though it was always a native as a longhorn steer.

Do this little thing, you cruel bastard you, and you will be condemning to a slow and painful death of starvation a magnificent city of 120,000...a one industry town which has grown fat an indolent from catering to the needs and desires of five to twenty thousand displaced G.I.s over the past fifty years. Do this despicable thing, your merciless childkiller, and you will be signing the death warrent for an overgrown hamlet where the water is visibly a home to countless germs, and where it takes fifteen Filipino's--fearlessly brave behind their lead pipes and swishing stickums--to roll one hopelessly San Miguelized G.I., crawling on his hands and knees toward the sanctuary of that unattainable fence.

Do you have it within your mean and selfish little heart the utter gall to deny these harmless creatures the right to an honest and beneficial life, leeching off the bountiful riches that flow in an unending stream from the storehouse that is Clark AB?

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God, I must have been in a good mood the day I wrote that second piece!

It's really strange...I don't recall anything of what led to either...or where I was trying to go with them. ...and here you thought my cynicism was of recent origin?

Someday, somewhen...I'm still going to do my story/book/novel of my 18 months Over There. It may be less obvious now, but the experience made a big impact on me...

...and tomorrow, I will have been in Cincinnati three years. Seems like only yesterday! Sometimes. [Please note the address below; I've given up the P.O. Box.] ---Bill

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{Mimeoed by Brian Earl Bown} ...my mimeo failed to function last nite...\*sigh\*; #13, eh?

from: Bill Bowers  
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FIRST CLASS MAIL