

Welcome to Union Street #54 (Obsessive Press [JG] #156 and Peerless Press [SC] #56), the zine with the transmogrifying masthead (which has something to do with our trip to APT this month, says Scott, who came up with the pun, only—he says—to make Jeanne happy. What a guy!). It comes to you from Jeanne Gomoll and Scott Custis, whose address is coincidentally 2825 Union Street, Madison, WI 53704-5136. Phone 608-246-8857. Union Street was created on a Macintosh Quadra 840AV, and hardcopy was printed on a Laserwriter IINTX printer. Text was created with Microsoft Word 5.1 and laid out with Aldus PageMaker 5.0. The Union Street Logo was designed with Adobe Illustrator 5.0 and Adobe Photoshop 2.5. All contents are copyrighted © by Scott Custis and Jeanne Gomoll, 1994. July 1994 for Turbo-Charged Party Animal APA #97. Members FWA.

General

[SC] We are finishing up Union Street just after returning from ReaderCon. We will not be printing details this month as the rest of the week is too busy and I have a couple other writing commitments. However you can look for some details about our trip next month and maybe Jae, Nevenah, Vijay or Julie will have some remarks on the convention this time.

Lynne Ann Morse

[JG] Time is, of course, relative ... which means that month after month, some very busy people in this apa publish big, thoughtful *Turboz*ines, and others seem to never find time to publish much more than minac. All of us have exactly the same amount of time every month to produce a zine, but we each prioritize our time differently—whether that time is spent raising children, earning a living, creating artwork, or staring at the ceiling. (No value judgments intended, because everyones time is equally valuable: it's the only time we get.) The fact that you publish great, responsive zines, has less to do with your formal commitments and more to do with the fact that you rank this particular commitment above other choices you might make for use of your time.

I have a story to tell you in response to your selfdescription in "Playing by the Rules," in which you wrote, "...I was always looking for someone to tell me I was doing the right thing, and then wondering why I wasn't happy with what I finally choose to do."

This is the story: A couple approached a friend of mine to counsel them in preparation for a European vacation they were planning. Apparently the couple (let's call them Bill and Warren) wanted to avoid repeating some bad traveling experiences. My friend, Danny, asked each of them what they wanted to see and do in the course of their trip. Bill listed dozens of events, day trips, and sites that interested him. Warren listened to Bill and shook his head. By the time we do all of that, said Warren, it will be time to come home and there will be no time for the things I'd like to do. This discussion followed the pattern of their previous trips: Bill would get very enthusiastic about what he wanted to do and Warren went along with Bill's ideas, politely waiting for a chance to suggest his own. Over the course of the trip, Bill would eagerly verbalize his desires and Warren would silently compromise his own. Finally, as it became clear that there would not be time to do any of the things he would have chosen, Warren's anger would build and eventually explode in a series of bitter accusations about Bill's selfishness and insensitivity. From Bill's point of view, Warren had agreed with Bill's agenda and Warren's anger seemed to explode out of nowhere. Bill was puzzled and hurt. Danny suggested that it was important that they both lay their cards on the table right from the start. Warren may have felt that he deserved to be given credit for compromising his own desires for Bill's, but the compromises were invisible to Bill. As it turned out, Bill was willing to trade various activities once he realized that Warren's top priorities did not match his, and this trip turned out to be a good one for them. Compromise-on



one side or another of a relationship—is frequently necessary, but the important thing is that those compromises be made visibly.

[SC] A very fine zine from you, as usual. I have one question regarding your piece "Playing By The Rules." How do you measure progress with the person/therapist who was simply providing time to listen? I can understand your complaint about the contract/goal method of counseling, but the other method seems to incorporate no means to move forward, only to explore yourself in a single point in time.

I also enjoyed your "Ye Numbers of The Village" piece. You ask, "how can you give something to the community if you don't know yourself what or who you are, or what you are giving?" I ask, how much of this stuff can you discover about yourself outside a community? Doesn't the community help shape who you are and/or what you have to contribute? I liked your comments on parenting and religion in this section.

Jim Nichols

[JG] I feel frustrated that you described the recent WisCon unpleasantness as a conflict (a "power struggle," you said, or "some kind of personal vendetta") between Matt Raw and me, among others. With everyone else, I voted for Matt as WisCon chair, believing that he deserved it for all his hard work during the previous year. I re-joined the committee because I care about the future of WisCon and because I have always felt that the people actually working on a project earn the privilege to make decisions about it. That's why I-volunteered to help you with publications. I did not join to engage Matt in combat. So, of course, I'm really frustrated that Matt seems to define my very participation (and the participation of other new and returning concom members) as a challenge to his power. Not only do I feel personally insulted that he continues to interpret my motives as antagonistic to WisCon, but I view his attempt to reframe the various arguments we've had in terms of "us" and "them," as wasteful of the human resources of our convention. All of us work in his committee; all of us work for WisCon.

You say that you "don't feel any need to boycott Florida orange juice," because you neither watch Rush Limbaugh's show nor read publications sympathetic to his politics. But the main reason for the boycott involves the fact that we all pay for (some of) Rush's fees from the Florida Orange Juice Commission through Federal taxes. (According to N.O.W., the FOJC is supported partially through Federal taxes.) I don't listen to Rush either, but I don't like paying his salary. By the way, N.O.W. reports that the boycott has gotten off to a fairly successful start. I've heard rumors that Rush may be dropped as a spokesperson for FOJC.

Great hair shots, Jim. It's amazing the number of different people you turn into, depending on hair length.

[SC] I agree completely with Jeanne's comment above about the WisCon "mess." The communication breakdown between "camps" seems nearly complete. I was hoping you could initiate some controlled conversation here by giving us your, fairly unbiased, viewpoint.

Those were amazing photos, Jim. Congratulations on completing your first year in *Turbo*.

Michael Shannon

[SC] Good luck on the job hunt and your eventual move to Texas.

I do hear you when you say you appreciate the role unions have played and maybe continue to play in business. And certainly there are businesses that have discovered that happy employees are good employees with or without union representation. But I think the future is much gloomier for workers as the trend in business seems to be to return to the bad old days of worker exploitation. More and more businesses turn to contract workers and temps to avoid health and retirement benefits and unemployment payments following layoffs. I think it is interesting how, back in the 60's, we used to talk about someday reaching a goal of "full employment," yet today I often hear full employment being put down because it would be "bad for business." I think the message we often get today is that anything that is good for business is good, and anything that is good for workers is good only if it doesn't burden business at all.

Tracy Shannon

[JG] I enjoyed your Corflu report, Tracy, and I'm really looking forward to reading John Bartelt's GoH speech. Sounds hilarious. Interesting stuff about Washington D.C.'s mass transit system with all its middle class stops. Along with other stuff we read about that city, it sounds like Washington D.C.'s answer to poverty and crime is to keep it bottled up in one place. No wonder that place is exploding.

I too like trying out the mass transit systems in cities where I visit. You can learn a lot about a place that way.

[SC] Great convention report. I would like to visit Washington someday. I wouldn't want to do it along with attending a con. The city has so much to see that I doubt I would have the energy to do justice to both.

We were both impressed with Boston's subway system. Parts of it were a bit creaky, but it was cheap and efficient. I wonder what this says about Chicago. We've never used the transit system there. If we thought it was as easy and user friendly as Boston's, we'd probably go down there much more often.

Jae Adams

[JG] Your recollection of the night you were attacked on Orchard Street surprised me. I thought you were leading up to a revelation that your attacker may have been David.

[SC] For once, I think I'm going to take the Lynne Ann approach to your "Constant Stranger" piece and see what everyone else says about it first.



You've had a busy month. Hope you will have time to tell us all about it. Thanks for the MadMediaCon summary.

Karen Babich

[JG] Good zine, Karen.

I'm personally very happy that you didn't buy bleacher seats for us at the Cubs game. The shade was very much appreciated.

Well, maybe my aspiration to become a Martian colonist was a bit impractical, but my mom's preferences for my future career didn't have anything to do with "practicality" either. She was just as appalled at my later aspirations to major in Geometry or History as she was by the Martian homesteader plan. I think she believed I had as little possibility of realizing these dreams as much as she doubted my staunch claim that I would never marry. The key to my mom's expectations of my future, and probably the reason we never seem to communicate, is that she expected me to conform to gender stereotypes a lot more than I have.

I agree with you about the extremely useful skill of touch typing. I'm really glad I succumbed to motherly pressure to teach myself to type one summer (and glad that I managed to avoid those high school typing classes).

I laugh too when someone calls me a "Trekkie" when I talk about my love for SF. You say you'd "have to laugh in his/her face instead ignoring" someone who called you a "goddamn media fan." But laughing *is* a form of ignoring, and sometimes a particularly infuriating kind, which is useful sometimes.

I think you could get a copy of the Rush Limbaugh . orange juice boycott sheet from N.O.W.

The Beast in *Beauty and the Beast* doesn't necessarily *act* beastly. He just *looks* beastly. If he were portrayed as an abuser, I would certainly agree with you that the message of this fairy tale teaches a harmful message to young girls that they should look beyond violent actions to a beautiful soul, but I really do think that the message of this story (and of the movie) has to do more with appearances than behavior. Belle sees through the Garçon's handsome façade to the ugly (and violent) man within; and through the Beast's hideous appearance to the kind man within.

[SC] If no one has told you yet, let me assure you. We had a really good time at the game and afterwards. Too bad you weren't there. You missed a good time (except for the fact that the Cubs lost, which we all knew at least to expect.) I know better than to try to make you feel guilty, I just want you to quash the urge next time to abandon us merely for international travel. Thanks for the postcard.

I tried to read Bova's *Mars* shortly after reading Kim Robinson's *Red Mars* and I just had to stop. Bova's was far more politically naive and his characters seemed flat in comparison. It probably wasn't fair to read anything having to do with Mars after Robinson's book. I might let a little time pass and try it again.

Bill Bodden

[JG] Congratulations on the promotion at Steep & Brew. How do you feel about a permanent career in retail? Is this a good thing, or do you plan to look for something completely different at some point?

You've developed a fairly sensible definition of sexual harassment. Thanks.

[SC] Congratulations on the promotion. While in Boston we stopped into a Starbucks (legendary Seattle coffeehouse franchise.) The coffee was very good, the pastry was very good, but it looked like all the other coffee shops around these days. It may or may not have actually been better than a Steep & Brew or Victor Allen's, but it wasn't particularly different from those places.

Good comment to Jae. A while ago, I also responded to her query about violence and young boys, and she has yet to continue the discussion.

Vijay Bowen

[JG] I second your suggestion to **Julie** that she consider sending around that discarded zine that she felt she couldn't submit here to members of the apa from whom she'd like feedback.

So, any results to your musings on my *Hot Wire* article? I'd really appreciate some reactions to that.

[SC] The International S/M-Leather-Fetish Celebration? For four days? Maybe you could give us a few more details but not too many. Such as what program items you were on exactly. And perhaps a little about how the conference was organized. Did you have a good time? How was the rest of Stonewall 25?

Heather-Aynne Brooks

[JG] Congratulations on passing your driver's test. Well done. I flunked my test *two times* before I finally passed. The first time, I turned onto a two-way from a one-way street, and into the wrong lane. Fair enough. I was very embarrassed. But the second time I flunked because it took me two tries to parallel park, and that didn't seem particularly fair. The problem was that my dad had taught me the neat trick, which you probably know too, of lining up steering wheels with the car I wanted to park behind, turning right and backing up until my steering wheel lined up with that car's rear bumper, and then turning left. I had the technique down pat, but then the officer asked me to park behind a *bus*, which threw off the whole system. I managed, but it took me two tries, and another test.

[SC] In all this discussion of driving I have yet to see you talk about the inevitable "When Am I Going To Get A Car?" After all, you need your own car in order to practice this new driving skill. Owning a car is also a great education I eagerly recommend to the uninitiated.

Did you get to drive part of the way out to Utah? That would have been good experience. Sounded like you were in

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a hurry to get through Iowa. I can't see rushing through Iowa just to get to Utah. Nothing in Utah but desert and a few mountains. Iowa at least is green.

I think embarrassing your dad should be one of the main goals of each and every issue of *If*.

Jim Brooks

[JG] It feels like you and I share a lot in terms of our opinion about religion. I found myself nodding my head constantly as I read your comments on the subject. For instance, I also don't understand this idea of choosing religion as if it were a social club. My brother Steve, and his wife Betsy, checked out the local churches in their area without regard to religion. They were far more concerned with the personalities of the ministers, the programs, and the facilities. I know they're attending church regularly now with their kids, but I have no idea what religion the church espouses. And I get the feeling that they don't particularly think that matters. Ironically, Betsy is now dealing with some depression because she shares so little in common with most of her acquaintances-who she knows because they have kids, or because they meet at church. She says she misses having close friends with whom she shares political opinions or important experiences.

Some of Woody Allen's films spark inappropriate laughter (because we expect it of a Woody Allen film) in the same way that Spielberg's films prime audiences for unexpected violence.

I don't know if Woodman's offers an acceptable salary, but did you know that they have posted signs for truck driving jobs?

A dozen summers or so ago, Madison enjoyed a spectacular all-night, all-sky Aurora Borealis show. I took my sleeping bag out onto the porch of my second-story apartment and watched for hours until I fell asleep under the stars. I'll never forget the gorgeousness of it—or (surprisingly) the sound track!

[SC] I was very impressed with your cover. It must have been A LOT of work. Don't be too disappointed that we haven't played the game. I don't want to "ruin" it with a bunch of ink marks and circles.

I think it is also odd to choose a religion based on what it offers as a social community. But if you think about it, it makes a certain kind of sense. Where do people go to find community these days? You picture yourself having a family, moving to a sterile suburb of a large city (maybe your careers will require several moves), you have jobs that keep both parents busy, where do you look for friends and community that are safe for raising kids? A community that you don't have to invest a lot of time in, that is in a pleasant, easily accessible place and is full of the "right" kind of people. Shrewd ministers see the need. I think it is all a symptom of the disintegration of neighborhoods, the flight to the suburbs, the mobility of work and business and the desire for separateness ("us" vs. "them") Incidentally, I'm not aiming those remarks at Kim and Pete. They are specifically addressing religious considerations. They already belong to a community—Fandom. I am talking about a wider trend that I see, for instance, Steve and Betsy (see above) as part of.

I was amazed at your comment to Karen ("Caution Disturbing Story Ahead"). It leaves me to wonder how many of these disasters Steve could have avoided had he quit drinking. Steve sounds like he is out of control. He needs help, but help is wasted until he is ready to accept it. Grabbing his gun was a terribly risky thing to have done, as I'm sure you're aware. You could have easily gotten shot. You saved him that day, but he ultimately has to save himself.

Bill Dyer

[JG] Thanks, Bill, for offering to drive down to photograph the guilt. I promise you, we will take you up on your kind offer again, maybe at the end of the process, for the final pics. The photos Diane took with her 35 millimeter turned out just fine. And, as it turned out, had you actually been able to do the photography, we probably would have had a difficult time developing the film. The guy at Acme who promised to stay late on Saturday to develop the film must have forgotten his promise, because when I arrived at Acme I found a sign on the door, "Closed for Fourth of July Holiday Weekend." The "instant print" facility at Woodman's grocery store developed Diane's 35 mm film for me that day, but would not have been able to develop your film in less than a week. So things turned out in a weird sort of manner. In fact, one of the photos that I showed around at Readercon fetched a truly amazing \$45 at the Tiptree auction, which more than paid for the film and developing expenses. Whew.

The Blues river cruise sounds delightful! I bet you could interest a bunch of us Madison Turbochargers to make a road trip and join you on another cruise some day. What do you think?

Ellen Franklin

[JG] Your comment about the younger participants at the ABA feminist publishers conference intrigued me.

It's hard not to compare memories of how I felt as a 20-something in the 1970s, how my generation was portrayed by the media in those days, with how the so-called "Generation X" is portrayed by the media now. I think there is just as much diversity among individuals today as there was then—that the media's much beloved "trends" obscure more than they illuminate yesterday and today. But it seems clear to me that, for whatever reason, the media's stereotype of the 20-something generation changed drastically between the 70s and the 90s. And since we all know the power of the media to create reality by repetition of a distortion, examining those stereotypes might be a useful exercise.

In the 1970s our generation was portrayed as *leaving behind* the habits, values, and style of the older



generation. The phrase "drop out" was common; the word, "establishment" implied a sense of moribund rot. The idealists among us were supposedly building a new world, forming communes or attempting to create new kinds of communities. But, these days, it seems as if the media portrays Generation X as wanting access to, not freedom from, the establishment. 70s kids completely rejected the music of their parents. 90s kids still listen to it on the radio. 70s kids rejected (for a while) the "rat race" work ethic; 90s kids don't seem to be even giving lip service to that rejection. They're (wrongly, I think) portrayed as wanting immediate (unearned) access.

I don't believe that this sort of comparison accurately portrays reality of either generation (or certainly of individuals within those groups), but I am very interested by the amazing contrast between the media's portrayals of the two generations. And I wonder about how much we all absorb these generalizations and apply them to ourselves and those around us.

Do you think that the young women at the conference were acting as if it was their "turn" and were impatient for the older generation to vacate the stage? Or maybe you and I sometimes expect 20-somethings to act like we did (or were portrayed as acting): to reject the established methods and people and to want to go off and do (how did the phrase go...?) and "do their own thing"?

Lisa Freitag

[JG] For as much as I loved your review of *The Crow*, I really disliked the movie. It was gorgeous, of course, and I enjoyed looking at it, but I did not like the story at all. After the third or fourth murder, I felt completely numb; I really didn't care any more about who died in progressively more gory manners, and I don't like films that do that to me; it was a gorgeous slasher movie, but a slasher movie nonetheless. The main character killed more people with less reason with more gore than the crime that he returned to life to avenge. At the end of the film he was no better than the scumbags he dispatched, but he was still the hero, and anything the hero does is, by definition, good. No thanks.

On the other hand, I really admired your insight about how death has come to be equated with coolness.

I've never tried to re-read Trixie Belden or Tom Swift, but I have glanced through a few Nancy Drew books and shuddered. Apparently, though, they weren't as bad as they seemed upon first re-reading. I read somewhere that the Nancy Drew stories get re-written every decade or so, to match the sensibilities of the current generation, and the most recent re-writes have drained more and more strength from Nancy's character.

One book that stood up to a re-reading was Madeleine L'Engle's *A Wrinkle in Time*. I loved that book; it was probably my first SF. I'm very glad I was able to enjoy it again. [SC] We decided to go to *The Crow* largely on your recommendation. I was also impressed with the appearance of the film. I have never seen a movie that so perfectly captured the look of the comics. I found myself continually imagining scenes taken directly off the screen and pictured in a comic panel exactly as framed. *Batman* would have been a thousand times better if they had used this technique to capture the look and feel and story of *The Dark Knight*.

I have to agree with Jeanne about the story. Unlike *The Dark Knight*, this story does not reach out to make any commentary about society. It is a straight revenge fantasy. And it really lost sense when the "hero" confronted all the bad guys in the big warehouse shoot-out scene. Most of the bad guys were unaware that the hero couldn't be killed. They uselessly fired away at him while he killed them off. In that scene alone, the hero commits a crime much bigger than he originally suffered.

It is a relief to hear that the pressure on you at work seems to be relieved a bit. However, I hope you don't give up your dream of doing the photography thing someday. Good luck to Greg with his struggles with his goofy landlady. I am looking forward to more updates from that front. I thought all your comments were very interesting but I particularly liked your comment to Bill Dyer. I completely agree. Not only is it disturbing to wonder what people will do "if really provoked" it is scary to think about survivalist communities that are preparing for just such an excuse.

Pat Hario

[JG] I gave Elk Lisa's and Lucy Huntzinger's addresses for the quilting bees. Thanks.

After thinking about generational differences in my comment to Ellen Franklin, I had to laugh about your expression of (sarcastic) regret that students will be returning to the Memorial Union Terrace. ("I guess we can't barricade the students out of the student union.") I remember studying there in 1973, relaxing there Sunday mornings, and looking around at all the other students. One very seldom saw anyone older than 30 hanging out at the terrace. It was our place. Certainly you didn't see little kids. (After all, there were all us drug-using, bomb throwing hippies loitering around.) Now, I am among those former students who have just continued hanging out in my old student haunts. Now, the terrace is considered a resource for the whole city. Now, you frequently see little kids running back and forth across the terrace. And sometimes there seem to be more people over 30 years old than under. Sometimes, it seems to me that this change symbolizes something rather significant in generational relations.

I don't know about differences in different brands of gin, but I certainly stand convinced of differences between different brands of tequila, thanks to **Bill Hoffman**.

[SC] I thought your whole zine was excellent, Pat.

YCT me: I did not mean to give you the impression last time that I thought it was OK for people not to comment to each Union

other. I meant that it was OK that some people are more reluctant than others to share intimate details of their lives. I am in complete agreement with you that "we should all be more considerate of people who we know feel scared if there's no comments, and take the time to give that person our thoughts." As I said in the business pages of #95 and again to Andy this month, I find it frustrating that some writers are repeatedly failing to interact with the rest of the community. I believe we all have a responsibility to each other. This apa would be a lot more friendly for people to "open up" about themselves if we all took the time to give each other some attention.

YCT Alison: you are wrestling with many of the same career problems that I'm stuck with. I want to move ahead, but that means going back to school for a long time. I don't want to leave Madison which further limits my options. Right now I'm taking some accounting classes from MATC in hopes of getting a civilized day job fairly soon, but beyond that I haven't a clue.

Nice trip report. I laughed at Peter's changed ways (coffee and beer.) The big city can do that to you. I knew a lot less about coffee and beer before I moved out here to Madison.

I was puzzled at your "Repent, repent" piece. I've been out drinking with you Pat. It's always been fun. You loosen up like everyone else, but I've never seen you really embarrass yourself. Relax. Trust yourself. I've known a lot of people who really shouldn't drink because of what it turns them into. I can sometimes get hostile under the influence myself. That's never been true for you so far as I've seen.

Andy Hooper

[JG] Well, since your zine is collated at the end of the apa this month, I would like to say that I don't have enough time to comment on it. But it's just too good a zine to sacrifice to a punchline, so I guess I won't...

I loved the hallucinatory sense of the images you used to convey your feelings as you wandered through the Civil War battlegrounds. You've immersed yourself in this history for so long and in such detail, that you must have experienced a sort of mental parallax view. Knowing so much about a certain time and place, that when you actually stood on those battlegrounds, the various bits of information created a sense of actuality, that most of us (who would stand there reading aloud from a guidebook) could never experience.

Rotsler's art fit into the mix in a weird sort of appropriate way.

Great comment to **Ellen Franklin**, about the painful slowness of finding good friends, as opposed to acquaintances, in a new place. I need time to grow to trust the connections that create a close friendship. Your theory that a concentration on developing relationships within small groups will lessen the feeling of estrangement rings true to me. Thanks for your comments on the Tiptree award. (To paraphrase your own comment, I have to admit that sometimes I have had trouble understanding the massive effort which you have put into studying and writing about the Civil War.) Both of us, Andy—you and Civil War history, me and feminist SF—are involved in a lifelong fascination. I've spent much of my free time in the last 20 years enjoying, celebrating, and promoting feminist SF. It's no more a passing phase than is your interest in history. I feel incredibly honored and thrilled to be able to contribute to the Tiptree Award—the institutionalization of my obsession.

[SC] When I collated #96, I found it mildly amusing that you still managed to wind up at the end of the apa even with two normally regular contributors (Hope and Whump) slated to follow you. This collating scheme doesn't seem to be very lucky for you.

As expected, your zine was the last one I read. I enjoyed it so much I decided to write your comment first. It was a wonderful zine, Andy.

The movie "Gettysburg" has been running repeatedly over one of the cable stations and Jeanne and I saw parts of it at different times. When it came out in the theaters, we both decided not to see it because we didn't think we'd be interested in a four hour movie about a battle. Yet we have found ourselves fascinated by the bits of it we saw on TV and I expect we will rent or tape the whole thing eventually. Your zine fed into my renewed interest in Civil War battles. They are interesting partly because it is so hard to imagine people actually doing some of the things they did. It's also timely that a modern battle is raging over one of those old battlefields between Disney and the forces of preservation. As I understand it, they want to use part of one of the battlefields (Gettysburg?) to build their silly historical theme park. I'm more opposed to this idea now than I ever was.

The number of fields you visited sounded exhausting, but seeing them with a guide as knowledgeable and passionate as you would have made the experience unforgettable. I would have liked to have been along, but I'll have to settle for reading about it. I wish I could look at your pictures again now that I've read your zine.

YCT OE: I see now why it can be so aggravating for the OE when people repeatedly contribute poorly. I have a clearer view of what sort of time and effort and passion some folks invest in their zines as well as the indifference those efforts are met with. I don't just see the results, I see the lengths good writers go to deliver a good zine. It can be an extremely frustrating process to watch.

> Scott & Jeanne 12 July 1994