

you Turbo-Charged Party Animals. Also, I figure that joining another apa will inevitably cost me time, and that it may eventually force me to cut back and possibly have to drop out of the Turboapa. In fact, I'm also contributing to another sort-of-apa, again with a group of British fans. I started this second thing a few months before Conspiracy and have decided to continue on with it. So it's even more likely that I'll eventually fade out of this arena. So I thought that including Obsessions #30 would be a good way to explain my probable fade-out.

But I couldn't get it written this evening; it just isn't time for it to be written yet. So, back to the regularly scheduled program...for the moment.

□ □ □

Hope Kiefer I got in trouble a couple times in England asking where the restroom might be. They sort of stare at you, and shadows pass across their eyes and I imagine all sorts of pictures that they must be seeing for the word "restroom." A room with a bed in it, somehow with official sanction: "The restroom." And I quickly apologize, and feeling like I am being rude, ask for the toilets, but it isn't a rude term in Britain, though "loo" is a far more frequently used slang, and they point in the direction of the loo, still looking vaguely puzzled at this term "restroom," trying illicit interpretations and making bizarre assumptions about American culture. I walk quickly in the direction they point, feeling only a little guilty about encouraging false images of my country in the clerk's mind.

Kim Nash The diaper bucket. I remember that. My younger brother Danny was born when I was 18 years old. Well, I actually typed "little brother" at first, but I had to erase that because you can't call a 6'1" kid a "little" brother anymore. But I remember when he was a baby and I was on intimate terms with his diapers. This was in the days before everyone bought Huggies or whatever they're called. (In fact, I thought that you and Lucy got those disposable diapers. Maybe you do, and dispose of them in your diaper bucket?) But it was pretty gross in those days. First of all, the diapers had to be rinsed of solid matter in the toilets, before they were dumped into the diaper bucket. Later on, the contents of the diaper bucket would be laundered and folded and re-soiled by little brother. That, and the fact that little kids demand your attention all of the time they're not sleeping drove me to distraction whenever I was in charge of taking care of him. One time I dreamed of drowning him in the bath water, and the fact that this dream was not a nightmare and made me feel very good, convinced me that I was not destined to become a mother. Anyway, for all of my childless condition, I understand and remember quite well what a great relief it is when a child gets toilet trained. Second only to the child learning to sleep through the night, hey?

I've cut my alcoholic consumption too. Not for the same reasons you did; actually, for reasons almost exactly opposite. You find that stopping for half the year makes the other half of the year more enjoyable. For me, my lack of any great enthusiasm for drinking and the news that came out this past year about the rather extraordinary health impact of even minimal drinking on women's health, made me realize that I didn't enjoy drinking enough to make the risk worth it. Science News reported that any more than one drink a week had a measurable effect on heart disease statistics among women. Now, if I really liked drinking, I'd probably take the risk, but it seems silly to drink socially more because people expect one to do so even though I'd more often rather be drinking a diet coke, if there are really that kind of risks associated with it. So, now I drink no more than one drink a week, and usually not even that. It isn't really a big sacrifice, and that's the point.

Lucy Nash I like the new Star Trek show too. I really like the fact that the captain is a mature person and I like his intelligence too. There's

a depth to his personality that Kirk never had. (I never really liked Kirk, actually. Vonda MacIntyre vowed that if she ever wrote a Star Trek novel she'd kill Kirk off in the first chapter. And she did, in The Entropy Effect, even though she had to bring him back to life before then end of the book. But I agreed with her that Kirk was a boring character.) It seems to me that Kirk has been replaced by the young, dynamic, handsome, and boring #1. As everyone has pointed out Spock has been replaced by several characters; they sort of divided up his powers and parceled them out to several others. That's OK, I think. I certainly like the fact that the android Data has both Spock's emotional naivety combined with a fully functional sexuality. And of course the empath can do the mind-reading work that has always been so essential for Star Trek episodes. I like the new bridge, even though someone pointed out the discomfort the woman in charge of security must have to endure, never being able to sit down. I wonder, a bit, if the three-in-a-row (#1, captain, and empath) wasn't a decision-by-committee decision...

"We can't have the captain sitting on a throne all alone in the middle of the bridge any more. He looks ridiculous craning his neck around every time he has to confer with his first mate."

"So, OK, let's seat #1 right next to him and they can talk out their decisions side by side."

"Oh, oh. You know what that will look like: a bunch of men running everything. We'll have complaints about women relegated to the switchboard again."

"Well, let's put a woman right next to the captain and #1 then, too. An adviser. Someone who the captain trusts."

The only trouble is that the resulting setup looks slightly like a talk show. I keep expecting the captain to cross his legs, look down at his clip board and say something like, "Well we have a really good show for you tonight. Our first guest is..." (This is Scott's joke by the way. He still doesn't like the talk show seating arrangement.) I read an interpretation of the empath's role someplace (Isthmus?), that was really interesting, that she's the evolution of a communist adviser of political correctness (assuming that the Star Trek world evolved from a socialist world government, and not from the USA.)

Both Scott and I have been grumbling a lot about the main thing we dislike in the new show, and that is the role of the kid. I can see why he's there. Again, it's the decision-by-committee process, and it was decided that the new show should probably appeal to all age groups, and it was crucial not to neglect the adolescent boy market. So, to do that, here is this kid who seems to be figuring in nearly all the plots as a major problem-maker and problem-solver. The thing I really, really hate about him, is that in order to appeal to teenage boys' wetdreams of proving their superiority to dumb adults, this kid seems to be capable of running any station in the ship with no formal training. This is mere daydream stuff, but the effect is to insult the skill and intelligence of every other person working on the ship who, one assumes, had to go through years and years of study and training before getting their positions. It practically goes back to the Father Knows Best sort of plots where the adults were always so dumb and could always be manipulated by their naturally smart kids.

I'm pretty comfortable with the show from a feminist viewpoint. I like most of the women's roles, and I breathed a sigh of relief at the revised show intro: (...Going where no one has gone before...).

Andy Hooper I really really liked 9 Innings. A great woven performance around a theme.

Your attempts to suggest that people do their own non-apa fanzines, will I hope, encourage some of the Turbo-apas to follow your example. It seems to me, though, that rather, the opposite is happening in many cases.

The name "Turbo-Charged Party Animal APA" helped to lull people's feelings of insecurity about actually writing and publishing a zine, and at the start of the apa, we had some really well-done, surprising zines in the apa. We still do have a lot of good stuff here, don't get me wrong. But the sleight-of-hand act that tricked a few people into the apa (tricking them to ignore their own self-doubts and insecurities by calling these things mere "letters" instead of zines, etc.), now works against any call for increased quality or against a quantum leap of production, apazines to fanzines. The apa is turning more and more to purely party talk.

Spike Good funny stuff on circumcision. Amazing that you could get so much funny stuff on that topic. Maybe you should follow Terry Garey's panel performance on pencils and do a convention panel on circumcision.

Paula Lewis You say "Maybe by the next time we see each other you'll have figured out who I am." What did I say to make you think I didn't know who you were? I remember playing pictionary with you as my partner. I don't think I've ever denied not knowing you, or have ever asked anyone who this Paula Lewis was. I'm confused? Why do you accuse me of this mean thing. It happens all too often for real the way it is. Why must I be accused of not knowing someone who I do know and I remember I know and have never not said otherwise since I met her????

David Busch I think your attempt to standardize some list of formal specifications for apazine appearances is ridiculous. Please don't count my future non-participation in this topic of conversation as a vote one way or the other. The reason people comment on your small type is, I assume, that they are having difficulty reading it, and they want you to know that they are not going to bother reading it. Nobody's forcing you to do it any way but the way you want to produce it. If it were me, though, I should think the fact that some people found my zine so hard to read that they were skipping it would have some impact on how I produced my zine since the whole reason I produce it is specifically so that other people will read it. Logically explaining the reasons I produce it one way or the other isn't going to matter one way or the other.

If you're interested, cartographic studies (which I no longer could find, since I'm no longer a geography student; if you're interested, I suggest you contact a geography librarian) show that capitol letters, no matter what size type, are less readable than upper and lower case combinations. These same studies show that for optimum readability, no more than 70 characters should be included on one line of type. More than ^{that} makes it difficult for the eye to scan to the next line.

In any case, it's not a matter of vision that prevents people from reading your zine, David. Sure, we can all read it if we have to. But reading apazines or fanzines should not be a chore. When it is, why bother?

Sorry for my spotty mailing comments, folks. As I said, I spent several hours working on an apazine essay that didn't quite come together. And so, I'm afraid I put this together rather on the fly.

One thing: Several people have asked me about the book I talked about last time, Intimate Partners. If you like, I will order it for you from my book club. Other than with the Quality Paperback Bookclub, it is available only in hardcover (\$18.95). The QPBC edition is only \$8.95. I'll pay for postage & handling for you since I'll be getting "bonus points" for ordering it which I can use to get more books. Just let me know.

That's all for now. Best,

Jeanne

