
ALLARGANDO

Jeanne Gomoll

fifteen

ALL MAILING COMMENTS ISSUE

OE Sounds fine with me. I'll be willing to wait an extra day to give you the chance to organize the business pages of the Turboapa.

One thing I don't understand in those extra business pages: How come Hope and I didn't get credit for the cover? I shouldn't have been put on mustright for March, right? no?

DIANE MARTIN You showed me the Book of Questions once before, and I agree, it might make a fun game. #18, the question about what ability I might want to acquire is actually one I used to daydream about quite a lot. It used to come up in my thoughts in connection with the three-wishes scenario. Several of my wishes used to revolve around new abilities. Voluntary Invisibility would be a definite temptation, but I'd probably go with Complete Knowledge Of And Control Over All Aspects Of My Body. With that ability, I used to imagine that I could arrest any kind of disease or illness, change my appearance at will, and live forever if I wanted to. Sometimes while I was mentally bargaining with the granter of the three wishes, I even managed to include Invisibility in with the Control wish. If answering this sort of question turned into a game, I should imagine it might also turn into a discussion of why we want such

abilities, and for me it comes down to needing to know I am in control of my body, my choices and my feelings.

The question about giving up sex in exchange for a much deeper sense of peace doesn't strike the same sort of chord that #18 did. I've never longed for a "sense of peace," really, and like sex too much to exchange for something I don't even know if I want.

But no question about #139: I'd certainly work overtime for a month without compensation rather than go on a month-long vacation with my parents. I might even be willing to do it to avoid a week-long vacation. Lately I've been able to have a fairly good time with mom and dad for a weekend, but pressure builds, and I'd be a far better person after working late at the office than I would repressing anger for that amount of time.

#169. I look in the mirror whenever I go to the bathroom and in the morning when I brush my hair. Not too often. Well. That wouldn't be a very exciting question for me at a party.

#206. I'd have to taste one cricket before I'd let you know whether I'd be able to swallow a whole bowl of them. How much will you give me for one?

With all the talk in the apa recently about Suzette Haden Elgin's

books, I still think it's amazing that I like her personal zines better than any of her fiction. The linguistics discussion you mention from THE LONESOME NODE is one of the most interesting things that's come up in that zine recently. That women speak a different sort of English, and in fact the same sort of English that subordinates speak in the United States (as opposed to white male American English), is a scary, fascinating concept. It's scary because it indicates how deeply rooted sexism is in our culture, that it's not going to go away when the right laws are passed, but will only fade as the institutional roots wither away. The different language is something I've had some direct experience with...

I think I've mentioned it to you in fact, in which case please forgive the repetition, but obviously I'm using a mailing comment as an excuse. About 8 years ago or so, I had an operation on my neck to remove a nerval cyst. Before the operation, I had a low, very strong and loud voice. I think most of it has come back, but the baritone quality of it was definitely lost forever because one of my vocal chords was permanently paralyzed. I'm working on only one chord now, my right one, and it's a lucky thing that I never had any desires to be a singer, because my singing voice is pretty horrendous now. Anyway. After the operation, for several years in fact, my voice was very soft and tended to get very high pitched whenever I raised it. Now, the same thing happens after a long period of raised-voice talking--like at a party, or sometimes, a convention--and I lose my voice rapidly after intensive use of it. But back then, I was always talking in a sort of breath-y, whispering girl-child voice. And I discovered some things.

I discovered that the attention and respect that I used to get during conversations came not from the ideas I was expressing, but from the way I was expressing them: with a loud, almost masculine tone. Now that my tone was so ludicrously, practically stereotypically feminine in tone, I discovered that my ideas were frequently ignored, repeated by a man who apparently didn't

realize that I'd just said the same thing, or often, just generally patronized. I started using other stratagems to say what I wanted to say. I became quieter, and looked for open moments in the conversation to drop in a carefully rehearsed statement. I carefully pruned the "polite" sort of prefaces that women tend to use in our conversations like "I only meant...", "I just want to say...", "Excuse me, but...", all of which translate into "This is not going to be an important statement, and I'll let you guys get back to the really important conversation in a jiffy..." With my voice, I didn't need to doubly sabotage my message. Instead, I started looking for words and phrases that grabbed attention and demanded respect. A lot of them tended to be ones that men said and women weren't supposed to be comfortable using. And I don't mean just swear words.

It was an interesting experience, and it's had a definite effect on the way I tend to interact with people. Certainly, I don't think I've lost all remnants of female conversation style, --it's too ingrained in all of us to simply shed completely--and that's another scary thing

Good issue, Diane. I especially appreciated your comment to **David Busch** about the absurdity of wanting to deal with social differences by voting. EXACTLY! is the word I wrote in the margin next to your comment. Thanks.

JULIE SHIVERS Good for you Julie! I'm glad you're finding the therapist useful and that you're staying in the apa.

JOHN PEACOCK I'm afraid this is another subject of conversation I'll call in absent to: The Prisoner discussions, I mean. Have fun though.

RANDY JONES Great layout and really neat graphics, Randy! I'm sure you can see that you need a bit more margin so that we can read the first words in your staple-side columns, but then maybe that was just meant as a bit of random violence, hmmm?

So how does it feel making friends

with people who are constantly referring to your previous height and youth? It's hard to me to imagine how weird it would be. When I went to college, I moved away from Milwaukee and always feel at least slightly uncomfortable dealing with friends of my parents, knowing that they are thinking about how I've changed or haven't changed from the time they first knew me. Second generation fans need to overcome those reflections in themselves and the people they want to deal with them as adults. I only dealt with it by turning my back and moving away and making friends with people who only knew me as an adult. I hope you and we and I do manage to deal with the weirdness, though, because I like you and hope that you maintain ties to the group here in town. Welcome to the Turboapa, Randy.

BILL BODDEN Well, it's been a few months now, and nobody's spotted a spelling mistake in the logo. Phew. Must be OK. I like it too, and it's all your's. In the case of a logo, though (as opposed to artwork or writing) you don't copywrite it. You trademark it. If you wanted to protect it, you'd have to put a little "TM" next to the logo. I don't think that's really necessary. But if you want to do it, I hereby sell it to you for the price of two movie tickets, which you've already given me. There, it's official.

More good story-telling. But I was aghast at the part about the West African man on the train. You wrote, "The West African guy was in for it, and he knew it." Why? He had a passport, you said. Because he was black? Weren't you upset? Did you get mad?

The article about the sexist pig is, unfortunately, just too familiar. Just recently there was an article in the Madison papers about the Madison high school coach who thought the whole equal treatment for girls and boys sports should be trashed. If such things are happening in Madison it takes little imagination to summon up images of what must be still going on in the rest of the country. There's a lot of work to be done and the bath-water just gets warmer.

KIM NASH Great disclaimer, Kim. And I love the name of your press. Wonderful.

The story about the squirrel was truly weird. (And the more I look at the word "squirrel" the weirder it looks. Are you sure it's spelled that way? Oh what am I saying? You have a spell checker.) Anyway, the story about the squirrel. I think you should polish it up (which means, sorry: re-write it) and that you should try to get it published. There's something about the tone that makes it extraordinary. You have an almost British sense of objectivity that leads to the strangest humor, but you also have a very American point of view. Which makes your writing unique. Go for it.

Gosh, I don't know if I ever even ran into Carl Marrs at all at WisCon! I knew he was coming; he wrote a note and we swore that we'd get a chance to talk. But I don't think I even saw him there. You didn't murder him and are now trying to prod us all into forming fictitious memories of having seen him after the fact, are you? Maybe covering up for something Kelly did to him?

Have fun in Orlando, and congratulations (I think, though I'm still skeptical about whether or not you're telling the truth this time) about the lottery win.

Ooops, forgot your comment hooks. Sure, there are a lot of jerks at SF conventions. It's Theodore Sturgeon's 90% rule at work. Life is a constant process of sifting out the 10% worthwhile people, ideas, art, and experiences from the rest of it. People who live full, happy lives have developed short-cut techniques to focus on more of the 10% good stuff/people. Unfortunately, the good 10% is different for all of us, and so we've each got to develop our own techniques. If being elitist will help you to avoid more of that boring 90% and get you more time with the 10%, I say go for it.

As for the other comment hook, hell yes. If it weren't for SF, I have no idea what I'd be doing but most of my life would be entirely different. If it weren't for SF, I wouldn't have

been so weird in high school (since all I read was SF, and I spent all of my spare time and lots of time that should not have been spare time in the reading of SF), and I would have had more friends and I would have been less academic by the time I got to college, and maybe I would have gotten married and turned into a far more traditional person, etc. But those are just maybes. For sure I wouldn't have gotten involved with the Madison SF group after college, and I wouldn't have worked on Janus and so I wouldn't have done a massive amount of artwork for those few years after college, and so I wouldn't have gotten a job with the DNR, which depended upon the combination of my Geography degree and the freelance artwork. Maybe I wouldn't have even studied Geography without my SF background either, but I've written a whole article about that connection and have read it aloud at WisCon 11, so I'll gloss over that for now. But I would definitely not be involved with writing the sort of things I write now if it weren't for fandom, and I wouldn't be a professional graphic artist, and I wouldn't have achieved big-fishhood in the small pond of SF fandom. I wouldn't have met Scott Custis because I wouldn't have convinced Spike to get involved with conventions and fandom and we wouldn't have gone down to Icon and she wouldn't have introduced me to her cousin.

I don't think there's any more pivotal factor in my life than SF. Reading it, socializing because of it, career decisions, all owe their substance to SF since I was about 9 years old and read Madeleine L'Engle's A Wrinkle in Time. About the only major thing in my life that I don't trace to SF is feminism. Though it entangles with SF and fandom, I think I'd have been just as involved in political feminism--probably more so--if I weren't involved with SF. In fact, by the time I was 17, I'd given up temporarily on SF (and didn't pick it up again until after college), because of the sexism in most of it. And I was well on my way to actively integrating my social life, my career and attempts at writing with feminism, by the time I walked into a Madstf meeting.

Should you kill the squirrels? Why do I have the feeling that that's an alegorical question related to the first question? Sure, kill 'em off. For sure, that'll make a great third chapter of the Squirrel Epic.

HOPE KIEFER

I like the cover too.
What should we do next?

Let's do another one.

I'm game if you are. Maybe I'd even help you with the painting job. You definitely had the more labor intensive part of the work. But I love the result so much, I'd like to see another of my drawings beautifully illuminated. I was really impressed Hope.

So how about **Spike's** suggestion this issue about some biking expeditions? Are you up for a bike trip on your new set of wheels?

PETE WINZ

Well, good luck on your quest to catch up on the rest of your mailing comments.

Sounds like an ambitious and potentially confusing plan. Does this mean if I reply to your comments from this issue, that I won't read any replies for another 6 months? There's enough lag in conversations which have to wait from month to month for answers. But six months seems a bit much. I'm sure nobody will be upset if you do as **Diane** did this time, and simply reply to the most recent zines, or just made comments to people who specifically challenged you or asked you something in past zines.

Suzette Haden Elgin maintains that people who refuse to believe that language affects reality, are people who do not want to take responsibility for their language. I agree with Haden. I think language is a powerful tool and sometimes weapon in our society partially because so many people do not believe it has any power. An example of how a word changes reality? Take the word, "savage." When Europeans began to settle the New World (another word whose meaning ignored reality and created a different one), native Americans were treated with respect. But as white settlements began to expand westward, Indian populations displaced, and the slaughters began, the word "savages" began to be used for the re-

treating Indians. There's a fascinating book about the shifting vocabulary used to refer to Indians in American school texts throughout our history (and I'm sorry, I don't have the title on hand at the moment. I could find it if you're interested.) that chronicles the increasing use of words by whites to indicate Indians' lack of humanity. As in many cultures when one group of people are oppressing another group, the words applied to the subjugated group tends to free the powerful group from guilt about what they are doing, by defining the victims as somehow deserving of the treatment.

In many cultures, strict language differentiations between classes prevent a member of one class from speaking to a member of another class as an equal. No matter how desperately the lower class person may want to better their condition, they will not be able to do so if it depends upon the help of the higher class person, who cannot be approached because of language. You say the world is not determined by language but the other way around. I think that a great many people's world is nevertheless determined by their language. They may want change, but language does not necessarily adapt to express every new concept. It depends whose concept it is. In fact, I'd agree with the linguists that everyone's realities are determined by the language they speak, probably more so if you deny language's power.

Now, Gary Hart. Sigh. You misunderstood me, and I'm sorry if I didn't express it well. I don't give a shit how many lovers Gary Hart has. It was his manner of handling the controversy that bothered me. Take your challenging example of Tony Earl. If it was reported in tomorrow morning's Capitol Times that Tony had been running personals in Isthmus and secretly having several concurrent, kinky affairs, I would be very disappointed in Tony, and he'd lose my support. But not because he was having sex with women other than his wife. I would be upset because he's often referred in public to his marriage as a central and important part of his life, and a disclosure about

his extracurricular affairs would mean that Tony had turned out to be like so many modern politicians who like to display the photograph of themselves with a happy family—wife, kids, and dog enjoying one another—to suggest that they can be defined as a classically American "moral" person—but who don't think personal morality really has anything to do with their performance in the public arena. I am insulted when a politician who knows he risks censure by lying about financial conflicts of interest or about his personal behavior toward blacks, expects us to overlook his lies about private behavior toward women. This translates: women's issues are not important in government.

Politicians don't promote their happy families because they agree that the public has a right to understand their personal moralities. The happy family bit is just like the act some politicians put on about going to church every Sunday. And maybe that's a better way to explain what I'm trying to say:

Obviously I don't care, really, whether a politician goes to church regularly. But if it turns out that the church-going is just an act, that they are pretending to be religious because they think this will get them votes or because they think not being religious will lose them votes, then they lose my vote. I will decide they are smarmy individuals with no sense of personal ethics. I liked Jimmy Carter's ethics, what I knew of them. I'm aghast at Pat Robertson's.

I could support a candidate if I respected his or her ideas and abilities no matter if they were married, divorced, swinging single, celibate, gay, monogamous, or polygamous. All I care about is that they are honest and sincere about their personal ethics. Of course very few people in any but a few of those categories could win an important election by being open and forthright about themselves, and that's a pity, but they wouldn't lose my vote for being honest. Had Gary Hart explained his personal ethics and the agreements made between himself and his wife about their relationship, and if I'd believed him, I might be supporting him today. But he didn't. He tried

to cover up the discrepancies between the person he said he was and the person he was found out to be, and then when that didn't work, he tried to act as if the discrepancies didn't matter. And that's what got me mad. I think the discrepancies matter.

Personal morality or the charge of lying about it, isn't a feminist issue. We are all offended by hypocrisy in our public officials. The reason I call the Hart controversy a feminist issue is that Hart and people who felt he'd been unjustly persecuted seem to feel that hypocrisy is wrong except in the irrelevant and non-important areas of sexual morality. They seem to be saying that warped private morality might account for public evils like Watergate and should be fought, but that lies about sexual morality only affect the private person. I do not agree.

Thanks for the comment about the Baby M article. I felt the same way after I read it too. I'd had all sorts of conflicting, troubling impressions of the case, and this article just smoothed everything out, and there didn't seem to be anything more to say about the matter. Nation prints quite a few articles like that. I recommend the magazine.

Your comments to **Spike** about the problems between the Jews and Palistinians reminded me of a book I'd just read, Marge Piercy's (author of Woman on the Edge of Time) new book, Gone to Soldiers. It's a really excellent novel, an epic really, about World War II. What made it different from the many other epic novels about World War II is that practically all the viewpoint characters are women and a large proportion of them are Jewish. For a period of time so close to our's it was a real eye-opener. I had thought I knew that period of history pretty well, and just like Tuchman's book about the Middle Ages, I found out how unfamiliar a time can be when described by a person we don't normally think of being central in that time. It's an amazing book, really, but the thing that reminded me of your comments was the way Piercy describes how anti-semitism was a problem for the whole western world, not just for Germany. Germany simply

reacted to it in the most vile manner. Although Piercy didn't make this point herself, I think it was implicit in the novel: that like abused children, abused populations sometimes grow up to be abusers themselves. Having survived the terrible oppression doesn't end the problem. Sadly. But I don't accept your statement further along, to **Peter Larsen**. You say that having been oppressed "does not entitle them /Jews/ to oppress others or abridge someone else's rights." I think "entitlement" is the wrong concept here. I think that the whole western world perhaps owed the Jews fleeing the horrors in Europe (and the Allies and the Vichy government who had shown little sympathy or help for the victims in the camps, even failing to bomb the railroad tracks that transported the victims there) something more than a new place to live. Maybe if the Jews who had survived Hitler had been cherished and cared for, rather than chased out of their homes and businesses when they tried to repossess their former possessions; perhaps if the camp survivors had been rescued from the camps after the war, rather than left there in many cases because their emaciated bodies made people too uncomfortable to deal with them (American soldiers tended to get along swell with the clean, industrious Germans), maybe not so many Jews would have fled the countries of their birth to build a new one. Or maybe the country they built would not have been constructed with the fear and hatred that our culture nurtured in them... No, they're not "entitled" to oppress the Palistinians. But neither are we entitled to blame the Jews for the current state of affairs. We bear much responsibility and must try to help.

I'd bet we both agree that the way to help does not include selling both sides weapons. We're just constructing another time bomb that way.

CATHY GILLIGAN

It's hard to remember the in-jokes from Wild Cards books now, with even the plot so vague in my mind. But I seem to recall a lot of publishing in-jokes. Like that one about the infinite number of monkees typing out the text of the complete works of Shakespeare and sending it to Andromeda. One character comments that it would prob-

ably come back with a letter that said the manuscript wouldn't fit in with their publication needs right now.

If "they're slaughtering our women" acts as an incentive to war, rather than a deterrent, then I'm appalled, because it would mean that once again (or rather, still) our culture views women as possessions rather than full members. I thought the kid on campus who threatened to burn a puppy in protest of the troops being sent to Honduras, really had something. It was amazing how people got so upset about the possibility of a puppy being burned and how those same people just shook their head and sighed when they read about 300,000 American soldiers being sent down to Honduras. I think we should be equally and quite a bit more upset about the sacrificing of human lives—male or female—in a war designed by politicians and business. If it takes the inclusion of women to make it sink through some people's heads that real people's lives are at stake, I think that's for the good. Unfortunately, I doubt if it will work that way. As the reactions to the Challenger tragedy demonstrated, people didn't get too upset specifically about women's lives as stake. The massive public sympathy demonstrated in the days after the disaster was focussed upon the one civilian member of the crew. Unfortunately, I think that if women become fully integrated into our nation's armed forces, I think that people will get used to the idea fairly easily. The main advantage I see is the greater career opportunities open to women who want more choices, and the greater numbers of people who will be personally motivated to join the anti-war movements.

You've got birds on top of your air conditioner too? Aren't they irritating little buggers? I've been starting to fantasize about opening a nearby window and leaning out of it and cleaning out the nest with a broom. I'd probably kill myself doing it though.

DuCHARME

Welcome back. I certainly sympathize with your work schedule. I don't think I could manage with as little

sleep as you manage to get. Hope things start to improve for you soon, job-wise.

KIM KOENIGSBERG

I can't go on just complimenting your typefaces forever, you know. You really need to join in on the conversation here. Nice typefaces though.

SPIKE

I know what you mean about the feverish eagerness sparked by the Spring weather to get outside again and get moving. Every Spring I get on my bike after the temperature rises above 40° in the morning and realize that I've forgotten again how good it feels to arrive at work awake and energetic, not still asleep and cranky from a cramped bus ride. Every fall I forget again, because it feels so good to be warm instead of chilled out in the wind on the bicycle seat. Well it's biking weather again, and I remember again what it's like. Now that I'm swimming at the University pool—the SERF—at noon hour, I get to bicycle both a round trip from home to work and another round trip from the office to the SERF. I'm getting into shape faster than previous years, and am in fact getting quite ambitious about making some long bike trips this season. Now that my regular commuting totals 12 or 13 miles, I'm looking at some day trips to make once in a while on weekends. I just wish that they hadn't closed Monona Avenue's portion of the Lake Monona Bike Trail. Have you found out if there's an alternate route? I'd like to take the "long way" home, around Lake Monona some nights when I'm feeling energetic.

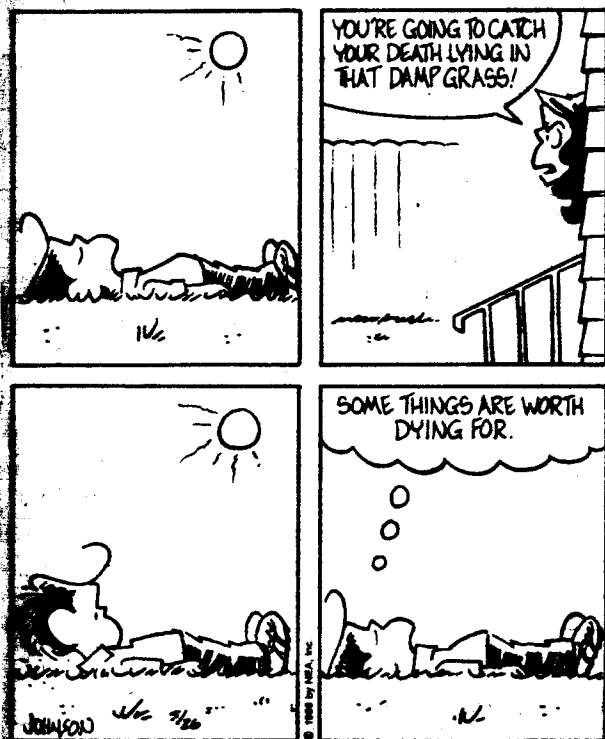
Yeah, let me know about bike expeditions. Sounds fun.

Last issue of the Turboapa, you asked if my study would beat up your studies," regarding the effects of alcohol as now currently understood by the medical establishment. Well, that's up to you. This is my philosophy (We get the facts and then decide which risks are worth taking): Ooops, not enough room here. See cartoon next page. Obviously I'm not yet typing this zine with the help of a computer. Next time maybe. But after the cartoon is a copy of an article referring to the study. It's too late

to get a copy of the actual article from SCIENCE NEWS, since I threw it out. But this one should provide you with the basic information.

ARLO 'N' JANIS

By Jimmy Johnson



PETER LARSEN &
JOHAN SCHIMANSKI

Not to imply that the two of you did a one-shot or anything, but you did both make a similar point in relation to La'adan and the world portrayed in Suzette Haden Elgin's The Judas Rose. That's why the double salutation.

You both criticized Haden's storyline (and the idea of a women's language) for relying on the assumption that no one language would be acceptable for all women from all cultures. This is one point that I don't think stems from Haden's absent-minded approach to novelistic structure and tendency to leave loopholes, etc. I think this prediction/design factor is based on an assumption that I'm actually quite sympathetic toward. And that is that women have more in common with women of other cultures than they do—on some levels, specifically the levels that are ignored by their native tongues—with men in their own cultures. It is the same assumption that makes the plot of James Tiptree Jr.'s short story, "The

Moderate drinking is not OK for body

By Lawrence Power, M.D.

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Almost as though scientists were trying to catch up with public opinion, several disconcerting studies on alcohol have appeared this spring, about five years after consumption in the nation began a slow decline.

Our alcohol intake peaked at 2.8 gallons per adult per year in 1980. The latest figure is 2.7 gallons. It's not a dramatic decline, perhaps, but it is a trend that is bound to be reinforced by new clinical reports.

English researchers were disturbed several years ago by marked regional differences in the number of heart attacks in the British population. Preliminary observations in 24 cities with the greatest alcohol intakes had revealed the greatest heart attack rates as well. The researchers decided to carefully control for all recognized heart attack risk factors and then review any possible role of alcohol in heart disease.

Previous studies on alcohol in several countries had failed to connect its consumption in moderate amounts with heart attacks. The social drinker who imbibes one or two drinks a day has been reassured over the years about the innocence of his practice.

In the latest study, researchers controlled for diet, cholesterol levels, body weight, smoking and blood pressure. They found that moderate drinking was indeed a risk factor for developing a heart attack.

Their next challenge was to explain why so many previous studies had failed to find such a correlation and why previous studies demonstrated that non-drinkers had higher heart attack rates than moderate drinkers.

They found that what had skewed the previous results was the inclusion of former heavy drinkers in the non-drinking group. Former drinkers rou-

tinely identify themselves as abstainers; and in the British study, former heavy drinkers accounted for the higher heart attack rates among the abstainer group.

A second traditional heart-alcohol comfort was also dashed by their study. This one involved high-density lipoproteins (HDL). High levels of HDL cholesterol have been found to be protective of the heart muscle. It's a chemical compound that keeps cholesterol out of the tissues, and alcohol raises HDL levels in the blood. This always has been considered a good thing.

The British researchers confirmed that moderate drinking does increase HDL, but at a cost. A subtle measure of liver function revealed that the increase in HDL precisely coincided with liver damage. This suggested to the investigators that the HDL elevations reflected a chemically wounded liver. This can hardly be considered a good trade-off.

Another widely reported study done in Boston on more than 89,000 women who were followed for four years revealed that their risk of developing breast cancer was proportional to their intake of alcohol.

These new cancer and heart observations — added to the well-established relationship of alcohol and cancer of the mouth and throat, along with its toxic effect on nervous-system tissue — are findings that definitely undermine the popular notion that moderate drinking is good for you. It no longer can be assumed to be even neutral in its effect on health, let alone beneficial.

Once again, sadly, if it's too good to be true, it probably is.

Power is a professor of medicine at Wayne State University and a doctor in private practice.

Women Men Don't See" so compelling to so many women. The women in that story were willing to travel to another world because they assumed they had just as good a chance of getting along with an alien race as they did getting along with men on earth. And maybe better.

Sorry, Peter, no comments specifically and only to you. That's a first!

ANDY HOOPER

Terms like Ghu and Bheer and special spellings, etc. don't appeal much to me. It feels too often like telling the same joke over and over again, or like underlining rather than finding the right word.

Peter Larsen, I think, has a point about the excessive number of stupid men in Suzette Haden Elgin's books. I too found the complete absence of intelligent males a drawback in my enjoyment of the book. I could have accepted all of them being evil, but not all so dumb. The worst part of the sort of sexual generalization that Haden did though—for me—was that fact that the bad guy never played out a confrontation with the good guy. Native Tongue was most flawed by this lack: All the bad guys have died by the time the good guys (the women) have begun to triumph. There never seems to be a dramatic conflict carried out. It was as if David and Goliath never met or as if Captain Ahab never found the white whale again. If those people are supposed to represent ideas in conflict (and they certainly don't seem to represent real people), I want to see them confront one another. They usually don't even meet in Haden's books...

I thought **Peter** was being ironic in his colophone.

My interests in opera are a lot like your's in baseball, but I still don't feel like talking about Puccini here in this apa. I'd prefer talking about it to people who share my love and I don't have to fight to maintain my enthusiasm... Why do you talk so much about baseball to people like me: Don't you feel it's sort of futile wasting all that energy when I am listening with only a half an ear? This is not meant to be a rude comment, or a suggestion that you curtail your talking about baseball in the apa, I swear. I really am interested if you secretly think you're going to "convert" some of us. ...I guess this is a comment based more upon a conversation at Nick's than it was on your actual zine, but since we were talking at Nick's about your zine, it seems appropriate here.

TOM QUALE

Thanks for the great letter of comment on Whimsey.

It was a fine letter of comment. It was also a fine zine you did this time with its freudian explication of Dr. Seuss. Loved it. Now what do you think of Ooblick? (As in, it's coming down Ooblick which is better than rain or snow or sleet because at least it's different.). And what about Horton and his little who-ers? I want to know. My whole childhood is rooted in this stuff.

Also liked the material about people who are defined by what they are not. Women, for example. But I don't like Zippy, and that seems to connect to your comment to **Kim Nash** who told **Spike** that she confused him. "The highest of honors," you said. Only someone who liked Zippy the Pinhead could say that, I thought. It seems as though quite a few people, including many that I like quite a lot and think are really very interesting for what I do understand of them, feel this way: that if someone doesn't understand them, that if they are obtuse in a way that confuses, that it means (maybe?) that they are deeper or smarter or more interesting because there is more to them than is obvious on the surface. I've thought this a number of times when I've looked at the large number of covers we've had for the Turboapa that are...well, unclear in meaning.

People have said to me "You're very strange, Jeanne," or "You're weird," and I've grinned and said thank-you. I can sympathize with feeling good about being seen as unusual in some way. But as for being obtuse...I don't understand. If there is one thing I **try** to strive for in my writing, it is for greater clarity. There is enough lack of communication in the world: we've all got our own vocabulary to some degree; we all hear a slightly different thing from the meanings intended by the speaker, without the speaker intentionally introducing more confusion. So, my question to you: Why is that the "highest" compliment to you?

Johan Schimanski

The Southwest
Review of Books is
a beautiful review-

zine, but it's not mine. It's Julie G.'s and she will be very upset unless you remember that. Nevertheless, I enjoyed

having a mailing comment for a zine I didn't put into the apa and liked the quotations from Nazgul. Someone should tell Lisa Tuttle that Chris Priest is a hoax. It should make their divorce easier to complete.

Thanks for explaining tummying to **June Jarvis**. The description you wrote actually coincides remarkably well with the first image that occurred to me when you mentioned it. But like my first confrontation with the facts of sex when I was a kid, I discounted that idea out of hand. "No it can't be like that. That would be ridiculous." So I thought that maybe Tummying was a colloquial way of describing the social act of joining another person for a beer, as in "tummying up to the bar." This is really amazing and nearly as hard to believe as **Kim Nash** winning the sweepstakes.

PAUL SETH HOFFMAN My brother Rick used to be really into origami. And somehow all our relatives keep thinking that it was me that liked it. Jeanne's the artistic one. She must have liked to fold paper into cute little animals. And she's a girl. At least that's what I imagine accounts for all the origami paper I've accumulated over the years, some of which still rests, unfolded, on my shelves. If I see you sometime, I'll hand it over to you. (I liked the name for the origami fanzine...FOLD. Great.)

NEVENAH SMITH Sure I'll join in on an American Players expedition. I've always loved their productions and I usually make it out to Spring Green a couple times during the summer. I will tend toward the Shakespeare plays rather than the Chekov or Moliere.

The short story you were trying to remember about the robots who take over all work, challenge and risk from humans is called "With Folded Hands," by Jack Williamson. I'm against prohibiting unhealthy things in the interests of protecting people, but I'm violently in favor of full disclosure of the risks. It makes me really really mad when companies fail to disclose real, known dangers in the interests of making a profit. So much so that I'd rather lose

the product itself than lack the information. It's too bad that women who could use IUD's have lost that; it really is a shame. But I will not be blackmailed by companies who say that having to disclose all the information about side-effects risks their profits and so as long as there is a consumer-protection law in place, they're not going to make the product any more.

Sometimes the information gets ignored by the consumer (we don't want to know what ill effects a product will have on us because we enjoy it too much or we need it too much), or we'd rather not know how a product is produced (at what human expense of lives, corruption, bad labor practices, or whatever), but I want my choices to be made based on as much information as I can get. I think that the suppression of that sort of information is as much an invasion of my rights as an attempt to directly manipulate my behavior.

PAULA LEWIS No, usually you don't have to continue to loc every issue of a zine to continue getting it. Sometimes you do. I suspect, for instance, that you might have to loc a newszine more often than you'd have to for Whimsy. I tend to keep people on my list as long as I know they're reading and enjoying. Sooner or later, I get a big juicy letter of comment spurred on by the writer's feelings of intense guilt for having gotten so many zines and not commenting much. I'm ruthless only when I feel the zines aren't being read. But you'd have to get to know individual fanzine editors to estimate your chances on individual fanzines.

This has been Allargando #15, and Obsessive Press #92, from Jeanne Gomoll, PO Box 1443, Madison, WI 53701-1443, telephone number 608-255-9909. Copyright © 1988, by Jeanne Gomoll. All rights revert to the original artists and authors. I'm amazed myself, it's still March and I did 10 pages, first draft. It must be the right time of the month. Member FWA.

Jeanne

ALLARGANDO

Jeanne Gomoll

It's been a rush folks, and I'm minutes away from having to close shop and finish this. I don't even remember what number I'm on, so I'll leave a blank spot and you can fill it in if you're a completist. But otherwise, I'm fine. Still, this is a slightly bleary-eyed Allargando, number 14, and an Obsessive Press, # 91. It is published by Jeanne Gomoll of Box 1443, Madison, WI 53701-1443, and it is Copyright c, 1988 by Jeanne Gomoll. Remember to vote for TAFF. Ask me for a ballot if you need one. MEMBER FWA.

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE WISCON CONCOM

I was really impressed at how well WisCon 12 came off. Congratulations, **Pete!**

Good job, everyone! Despite all the problems attendant to the poor hotel location and layout—programming was dynamic, parties sparkled, and everything seemed to go smoothly. Of course, that generally positive impression is created partly by the "Automatic Con Phenomenon,"—commonly defined as a corollary to Bishop Berkley's theorem (which states roughly, "If enough people believe a thing to exist, it exists."). The fannish version, the Automatic Con Phenomenon, goes like this: "If enough fans attending a convention expect that convention to behave in the same manner as other conventions they've attended, it will do so." Despite the land mines buried by pre-planning mismanagement. Just look at Iguanacon or Constellation for examples of glaring ACP.

The problems one sees in conventions are usually those we notice because they're two inches in front of our faces. Oh, I've spoken to a few people who have told me about some problems that exploded within their metaphorical two inches, and I do hope they talk about those things at the post-mortem; that's what post-mortems are for. But I'm feeling too distant from WisCon planning to speculate on the causes or to suggest remedies for next year in relation to

those glitches. But I do think I've got some relevant comments about things that happened within the limited area of my responsibilities at WisCon. So here goes...

I'd bet that **Carrie Root**—if she's reading this—is thinking that I'm about to complain about the program scheduling for which she was responsible, and the five panels in a row on Saturday afternoon on which I spoke with a rapidly deteriorating voice. Actually, no, that's not it at all. In fact, the panels connected for me, and cooked up a simmering sauce of energy within me. Why I might even characterize my weekend as one touched with allargando! In some ways, it reminded me of some of the early WisCons, when conversations and panels catalyzed ideas and wild, oh-so-politically-correct bursts of energy. It was great, and I heard quite a few people saying that they felt pretty good about those panels too. I just wish that I could have joined in on a few more of the conversations after the panels. No, really, I'm not complaining about scheduling. There was absolutely nothing else you could have done, **Carrie**, than what you finally did do. And I certainly wouldn't ask for sympathy from a concom which probably saw only a tiny proportion of the programming themselves, being so busy working. My time problems were my own...though my schedule was vastly complicated by the Mad Moose Ga-

zette, a thing that is largely superfluous to the convention.

And that is the thing whose problems I want to talk about here.

Sitting in the con headquarters room after the convention while strange people conga-ed through and other strange people bongo-ed, and while I nursed my poor, wounded finger, that another strange person had just bitten, and while strange, tired people lip-read bits of paper that they handed around to one another in a circle of chairs—I was struck by the personal strangeness of that weekend. I'd spent the weekend in wild, frenzied activity, trying to talk to as many visiting fans as I could, and speaking my voice horse in various wonderful, intelligent and important panels. I also attempted to catch up with my sister **Julie** and her friend **Rachel**'s lives, and learned **Hope Kiefer**'s secret, underwater, backward flip, and making professional contacts—doing all this stuff that I could only do at the convention because the fans would leave by Monday, and the panels could not be postponed but must all happen this one weekend. And the absolutely strange and weird part of it all was that I had spent a large chunk of that very weekend bent over a typewriter in the Gazette room, writing fannish bits of fluff and coercing other fans to help me publish a fanzine.

Sitting in that dead dog party Sunday night, it occurred to me that it was a strange, and yes, a stupid thing for me to have tried to do—to have produced two issues of a fanzine at WisCon. And so when **Andy Hooper** and **Jerry Kaufman** tugged at my sleeve, and tempted me to join the loons toiling on **Dick Russell**'s Mac for the WisCon one-shot, I thought, "Ah, another fanzine. Not now, no thanks," and started working out my feelings about doing the Mad Moose Gazette.

I don't write well under extreme pressure, especially with other people looking over my shoulder or trying to talk to me. So I'm not very proud of any of the writing I did in the Gazette. But more to the point, I think it is sheer lunacy for me to try to do a thing, a fanzine—that can be done over a period of time, with care and craft— during

a convention—which is an activity exactly unlike a fanzine, in that it must be done now and can not be edited, revised, polished, or even rough-drafted.

You notice that I keep inserting that temporizing phrase, "for me," in the paragraph describing the dumbness of doing the Gazette. I know there are lots of people, like **Andy Hooper** and **Stu Shiffman**, who see their creative productions as an integral part of the catalyzing energy of a convention. Andy writes extremely well under pressure. Stu creates amazingly wonderful artwork under pressure. It's been my luck as editor of the Gazette, and your luck as subscribers to the Gazette, that both these fans have been so heavily involved in recent issues. For me, however, the act of sitting in front of a typewriter banging out silly articles and pasting up the zine stops up all the energy I've built up during the panels and the conversations and the parties. I've discovered that I love to read stuff of mine at a con—to join the written and performed aspects of fanac at a Fan-O-Rama—but I'm not able to shift my time sense enough to write (interior, slow time) and con (exterior, fast time) during the same weekend. I felt mostly isolated up there in the Gazette room, and slid into a work mode. Type that, cut it out, wax it in, oops we need an illo, Stu—? I felt like I was at my office at the DNR laying out a park newspaper, that I was outside of the convention.

Here are some of my thoughts on what's going on with the Gazette:

* When I started out doing the Gazette it was not like this at all. The Gazette—in the early days—was a newsletter in which convention news and information was published. I knew what needed to be published in it because I was intimately involved in WisCon planning and administration. A newsletter made me feel more connected to the convention since it functioned as a useful, integral part of the con. Over the years, as I've gotten less involved, the only really useful things left in the Gazette,

have been the traditional news items, the programming changes, the announcement of next year's GoH's and rates, the art show and the masquerade winners. The stuff that used to be called filler, now fills the Gazette.

* The Gazette is a fanzine now, more than a newsletter. Which is fine, if that's what we want to publish at WisCon. But I think it should either be a more useful newsletter or a better fanzine. It would be a better fanzine, for instance, if we didn't feel that all its contents had to be produced at WisCon. Articles could be submitted well before the convention and typed up in columns (or stored on disks) ready for layout at the con with the traditional at-the-con news items. Paste-up time (or computer layout time) would be reduced to a short hour or so for each issue. And the Gazette workers could accomplish their work between panels with little problem.

* But does WisCon need a fanzine? Do people really care to spend some of the limited weekend time sitting around reading a fanzine? **Ross Pavlac** wrote to me, supporting my feeling that they do not. (*"With all due respect, yes, doing a fanzine at a con...is indeed a 'stupid thing to try to do.' It not only deprives you of the con, but the con of you, and has minimal benefits...A specific example that bothered me with Mad Moose was the panel reviews. What was their purpose? To entice people to attend? —No, it's too late for that. If anything, it is irritating to read of a terrific panel that one missed while one is still at the con—you kick yourself then and there much harder. Also, to do a really good reportage of a panel takes more space than you had to devote to it..Such things might be better covered journalistically by a post-con zine afterwards that is either mailed to attendees as a postmailing, included in a progress report for the next con, or run as a section in the local fandom's clubzine."*) I suspect that most people who picked up an issue of the Gazette packed it into their suitcases and read it after they returned home. And if they're going to do that, I would rather see that zine produced with more care than is possible at the convention. I think it should be prepared for the most part at least, before the convention. And if we did that we wouldn't necessarily even

have to distribute it at WisCon, but could mail it out like a fanzine. What a revolutionary idea!

* I do think that WisCon could use a real newsletter, or at least some mechanism that would get those traditional news items like programming changes, next year's GoH's, art show and masquerade winners and etc. out to the convention attendees. The editor of that newsletter should be a person who is actively involved with WisCon planning to the extent that they know what convention attendees need to read. The newsletter (or whatever) should be full of important information, like programming changes, party times and rooms, ride notices, restaurant recommendations, "new and wonderful" hotel policies (**Ross Pavlac's** phrase), and some artwork for color. Besides a person involved with WisCon planning, we'd also need a person who is good at and enjoys finding this sort of information, in other words, someone like **Mike Glycer** (ed. of File 770) who would ask a lot of questions of the people in charge during the con and would rush back to the newsletter room and publish their discoveries.

* Finally, let me say officially what I've been saying privately for quite a while now. The person who publishes a newsletter or a fanzine at next year's WisCon 13 will not be me. I thank you all for the support and good words, but I think that it should either be done by a more actively involved Madison fan, or it should be done before WisCon (mostly), as a real, live fanzine, or we should simply drop it.

There are also some alternatives: We could simply publish a list of program changes the first day and drop stacks of this flyer on the freebie table. We could put up pre-produced posters on Saturday night announcing the next year's GoH's and advertising the rates for early memberships. And we could publish the names of the art show winners and the masquerade awards in the same way as the program changes, with flyers copied off and tossed onto the freebie table. Or, as **Ross Pavlac** suggested, they could be included in a post-con zine, in combination with information on the next year's con. The Gazette itself isn't absolutely necessary.

Going back to the old WisCon slogan: We do things because we are interested in doing them. If there is no interest in doing the thing, we consider whether or not it should be done. Like so many things that begin in our group and then struggle on long after interest in them has died, we sometimes fall into the trap of assuming that we must continue doing everything about which we were once enthusiastic. Fanzines and convention customs simply get old and stale that way. The only thing that keeps projects and ideas fresh and interesting is the people who produce them and their excitement in the projects.

Anyone interested? Job's open.

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NOTE TO SPIKE: I started writing this as a short letter to Cube, but it got out of hand, and I didn't feel I could ask you to give such a large amount of space to my comments. If you do want to publish this in Cube, however, you are welcome to reprint it along with the other articles and letters you requested on WisCon-related material.

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**SOME BRIEF
MAILING
COMMENTS**

Peter Larson, I wish I'd remembered to talk to you at Hope's party about the essay you wrote in Turboapa #19, "Exegesis at Random,"

because I was fascinated, but there were several things I don't think I understand --assumptions you're making about our knowledge of religious metaphor--that really puzzle me. I don't really even know how to ask, so I'll wait till I talk to you next time. For all my confusion, I was fascinated, so thank you for that.//I love the layout and xerox art you're using in your zine, **Johan Schimanski**. Each page spread is beautifully designed. And I liked your comments, too, about how the greater freedom allowed by more sophisticated printing technologies sometimes leads to bad design, whereas the extreme limitations of mimeo technology more often produced elegant design.. I've been learning about desktop publishing lately, and the fear of outrageous, ugly publication design at the hand of bureaucrats who have little aesthetic sense has led

some production companies (for instance ones which specialize in producing slides from charts and graphs produced on PCs) to supply restrictive templates to their customers--so that their choices are limited and the really outrageous, ugly design are less easy to produce. I have seen some fanzines that could benefit from a fanzine template. Perhaps a SMOF committee could sentence offending fan editors to "template time." "For the crime of producing a crammed, illegible, ugly fanzine, we sentence you to one year of template restraint!" (Sound of a gavel)//Oh, and by the way, **Johan**, sorry about my goof. Norway wasn't the country that protected its Jewish citizens. It was Denmark, wasn't it?//Also, I used information supplied in the book Femme Fatale: Images of evil and Fascinating Women for my theory. According to the author, Patrick Bade, I wasn't being patronizing at all. Check out the book if you can find it. It's fascinating and has some incredibly beautiful prints in it.//Yes, I would have refused the draft. One way or the other. I'm sure I'd have had to go through the experience to know exactly how I would have responded to the situation.//Enough comments, **Johan**? Sorry I made you feel neglected, because certainly I find your zines wonderful and interesting.//**Lucy**, thanks for the information about nutrasweet. Thank goodness there's one thing I really like that isn't bad for me.//I agree with you about the Wesley character in the new Star Trek, and I saw a button at WisCon that I love. It said "SHUT UP, WESLEY." I was hoping that last week that he'd pass the test and get into the Academy and we'd see him no more, but no such luck...//I've noted your promise for a TAFF contribution, **Andy**, and I will hold you to it. Scott will be keeping track of Dawson's home runs for me.//**Thomas Quale**, Stu Shiffman told me the plot of JULIA AND JULIA--in order to tell me just how bad it was, but I'm intrigued anyway and would like to see it.//I want to respond to **Peter Larson's** essay on Elgin and the WILD CARDS series, etc., but I'm up against a deadline here and don't think I'll be able to this time. I'll catch up with that and other comments on #20 next time.// Well there's a little bit of room here. I do like the cover. Beautifully colored, **Hope!** And **PauTa**: Your logo will be done before the next apa deadline, I promise.//

After the first few experiences, the novelty of reading about what my friends think of baseball has worn off and I'm barely skimming those sections now. Sorry, but that's how it goes.//I like how so many people used lists of 10 items to respond to **Andy's** lists. Wish I'd thought of that.//**Peter Larsen**: excellent criticism of Elgin's writing. I'm with you entirely about her lack of construction skills. Recently in an issue of THE LONESOME NODE (her personal zine) she described how she's right now writing 12 books at the same time. At once. She says she keeps sections of file folders for each book in her file cabinet, each file containing a chapter for each of the books. Every time she writes a section from one of the books she finds the appropriate folder (not writing consecutively) and slips it in. When the folders fill up, she puts the book together and sends it off to her publisher. Maybe this explains it a little...//You are right about the sexism of WILD CARDS #2 and 3. I guess that I get more upset about the ignoring kind/erasing kind of sexism than the run-of-the-mill, familiar, blatant, stupid sort.//**Mia Cupa** re the Ray Larsen reference. I was possessed. I'm OK now. Took some midol.//**Elise Kruger**, love the weird layout, though I'd rather have more text next time. Thanks for the comments about the series/single piece analysis.//**Bill Boden**, I've been enjoying your travel story a lot.//**Kim Nash**, I just flat out disagree with you about the undesireability of rewriting. There are far too many examples of excellent writing produced by lots and lots of rewriting. The authors who publicly brag that they don't do re-writes (King, Asimov, etc.) fail to convince me that this is a good thing.//Don't drop out, **Julie Shivers**. Keep trying. Why not use a tape recorder to get down your first reactions to the apa, then transcribe and polish the results. When you get a writer's block you gotta find a detour.//**June Jarvis**, Julie "Crash" Gomoll is my mother.//**Cathy Burnett**, you're right. I love the Thomas Cole series. I saw it when I visited D.C. in 1972, spent about an hour in the room gazing at them and had a postcard series reproduction for a while.

Sorry that's all I had time for, but it's been a very very busy month. Next month maybe I'll tell you about it. All for now (though there's more I'd like to say about your zines).

Best,

Jeanne

Jeanne Gomoll