

This is OBSESSIONS 17 (if you count the last issue of WHAT SPARE TIME?! (with WAPA mailing comments added) as #16), published by Jeanne Gomoll at 2018 Jenifer Street, Madison, WI (608-241-8445). Furthermore, this is an Obsessive Press Publication, #54 and is © copyright 1980 by Jeanne Gomoll.

Hello. You might notice the nice typing job in this zine...the work of my brand new Selectric II, it's so neat. The thing about working with the State as a graphic artist is that I no longer have access to such typers, but equally that I can now afford one of my very own. Still haven't bought lots of extra elements, but that'll come eventually. Anyway I just recently sent out "birth announcements"/christening party invites for my new typer. I got these prosaic little cards that have a cute little baby girl drawn all in pink on the cover, saying "It's a GIRL all right!" Inside, Hallmark wrote, "...she didn't have a THING to wear!" Well, I covered that punch line up and typed in my own: "...she has a PERIOD!" After name, I typed "IBM Se-

lectric II," and after birth date I put in the date it had been delivered by UPS, and after weighs..."a lot but I didn't want a portable." So the Christening party is this Saturday. It's really amazing how people outside of the group here in Madison, well, outside of fandom, can't understand why I should be so excited about getting a new typewriter.

I'm intending this to be short—not because I'm late (yet) or have so little time well..., but I think I can help myself become a bit more enthusiastic about doing these zines if I get out of the habit of doing such longgg ones. I mean, everytime I start, the project looms so intimidatingly ahead of me, I have second

thoughts about even beginning. I do find it a help though that the deadline has been moved up a month, not only convenient for this particular issue but because the other apa I'm in has it's deadline now on the other other month.

Things I Have Been Up To, first:

I've connected up with a collective of people doing a magazine called BREAD AND ROSES. It's mostly women (one man I think), and it is a radical feminist small press magazine published on newsprint, distributed nationally (I assume to underground-type bookstores.) I haven't been to any of their meetings yet; I'm definitely a fringe participant, but it turns out that I used to live in the same boarding house with Annabelle Kendall, who is one of the zine's editors. She remembered me when the group decided to do a science fiction/feminism issue, and referred Cindy Bogard to me (Cindy is the editor who is coordinating the SF issue). Cindy and I hit it off right away—I got her involved in WisCon immediately (if you were there you might remember her as being the woman on the SF Porno panel criticizing the general tone of that panel.) The SF issue of BREAD AND ROSES will be out in early May...and will be out with quite a few things of mine, both written and art. It was a good experience for me to work with and be edited by them. It was necessary for me to work on my point of view quite a bit, for I found that writing for JANUS meant assuming a lot about readers' knowledge of SF. Writing for B&R, I couldn't do that but instead had to assume a general lack of knowledge, even hostility to the genre. On the other hand, the gradual broaching of feminist rhetoric and ideas that we do in JANUS simply does not go in B&R. Anyone that needs such careful handling is not reading B&R. Anyway, it was interesting, and I got a lot of criticism and help from several of the editors --who like my work well enough that I figure I'll continue writing for them, perhaps a regular review column on feminist SF. I like the contrast this kind

of writing for this sort of audience gives me in contrast to the writing I do for fanzines.

One really neat thing that came out of a collaboration with Cindy on the central article for the zine was a discussion of the acronym, "SF," how it is more comfortable a term to use than the long winded phrase, "science fiction" because it can mean other things, like speculative fiction, etc. Has anyone ever realized what made-for-us initials these are when translated in another way? This is Cindy's realization, and I love it: SF = Speculative Feminism! Probably others have noticed that, and you're all saying, "you never heard that?!—" But I Haven't. And it is neat. That's what I mean most of the time anyway recently.

Other things. Well there's been WisCon of course. But I'm not going to do a con report here, probably nowhere. It's curious to me how much harder and harder writing such things gets to be. Conventions get more and more personal for me, plus the fact, of course, that the typical things one writes con reports about become more and more trite-seeming. But well, meeting Octavia Butler was good, and talking with Joan Vinge again was wonderful. Meeting and getting to know Ellen Kushner (from Pocketbooks) was one of the high points certainly (and hearing her sing at some of the parties. Damn it, I wish I had a tape of some of those songs.). But what has happened two years in a row (fume, grump) happened again this year. That is, all the people who became involved as panelists or other participants in the feminist programming talked and talked all weekend until on Sunday afternoon all the talking boiled up, crystalized at one panel (the Joan Vinge/Meredith Ackley/Karen Axness/Ellen Kushner panel on "Fantasy, Folktales & Feminism"). And as happened last year, on that same Sunday with the panel "Violence & Ecstasy", yours truly was tied up in the Art Show helping artists work out their accounts, returning artwork, etc. As I said, fume, grump. Still, it's good to know that we're continuing to provide the environment and attract the people

that make such explosions/crystalizations possible. Next year more of the same I'd predict, only it is becoming more and more probable that we will be operating out of a regular hotel, and doing a all-in-one-place convention. I.e., we may not be doing WisCon 5 with the University of Wisconsin in the Wisconsin Center convention complex, and working under the University umbrella. It will be a bit more risky without a financial guarantee from the University, but we think our con is now stable enough to be able to be self-sufficient, and the physical and financial benefits to the convention and our group convince us that it is probably the right time to make the change. But we'll know for sure soon. Within a week we'll know who our GoH's will be too, and if I procrastinate long enough you may find out here. I doubt it though. I hope not anyway.

After WisCon, the B&R stuff continued to take a large chunk of my time, but I also did some work on a new project I'm working on with Richard Bruning and Sharon Van Sluys. It's a book on upcoming artists, mainly ones I've made contacts with through JANUS, but we've got our eyes open for others too. We hope to find a commercial publisher or have planned to publish the book ourselves by the end of the year. We all have great expectations about this project. I keep thinking how neat it would be to actually pay artists for their work rather than merely offering them a free contributor's copy of the zine!

And something else has come up too, something that I'm pretty sure a lot of you will have heard at least some details about by the time you read this here. The something else is the new condition of the fanzine JANUS. For a long time there were rumors going around fandom (at least throughout the early part of the year) that Jan and I had decided to stop editing JANUS together. This much is true. For reasons that I'm obviously not going into here, but which involved both philosophical and personal differences between the two of us, we reached the conclusion back in February that something drastic would have to be done to

change the way JANUS was being done. Actually changing things, however, was postponed till after we were through with WisCon. WisCon over, we tentatively decided to associate ourselves with two different fanzines. As it turned out the resources of the group— financial, and workforce, etc.— were such that other members did not think it was a feasible idea to attempt to support two zines. Things are still unclear as to how the new zine will actually be produced and who and how and when, etc., but right now what has been worked out is that there will be an SF³ fanzine. Jan has given over the title "Janus" to SF³ for its fanzine publication during the calendar year 1980, at the end of which period, the title will revert to Jan. (She legally owns the title, you see.) The agreement may or may not be mutually extended by Jan and SF³ for successive periods of one year after that.

The agreement between we SF-cubers as to the design of the cooperative that does JANUS is a good one I think. Mostly it formally mirrors the manner in which JANUS has been run most of the time. In other more crucial ways, however, the arrangement is going to formalize ways of handling problems that have tripped us up before. I'm pretty optimistic about the whole thing. Basically, a publications committee which will include anyone interested in participating on such a committee (with appointments renewed or dropped every half year) will have the responsibility of publishing this official SF³ magazine, JANUS. Decisions of the pub. committee will be subject to review by the SF³ executive board and/or annual meeting, though that's not an event that is expected to happen very often. The frequent turn-over periods for members of the pub. committee should allow for easy access for anyone interested in getting involved as well as accommodate people who become inactive. The committee will be free to establish any operating policies it thinks fit. If it wishes to give certain individuals sole authority in a given area, it could do so. If it wishes to reserve other areas for group decision-making,

it could do that also. We'll be very flexible. I expect the new JANUS to look very much like the old JANUS only more frequent. But we'll see.

With regard to Jan's role in the new JANUS, I don't think I can say fairly or for sure what she wants or what is going to happen. We have agreed not to speak of each other's plans, opinions, etc., reasonably enough, and I expect that Jan will already have or will in the future write on this matter herself. If you have some question about the new JANUS' developments and Jan's position relative to that, I recommend that you write to Jan herself, or ask her here in the apa. She has announced to the group here in Madison that she intends to edit another different magazine, but again, as for details about that you should ask or write to Jan herself.

Sooo....it's been a rather traumatic month for me. I've been working on JANUS for more than four years, you know, and it's been painful at times, a great relief at others to go through this business of changing it all. Quite coincidentally I chose this time, well Christmas time actually, to finally go out and have all the back issues of JANUS bound for myself. One copy of each that is. The volume is a rather impressive one—2 1/2" thick—and rather adds to the feeling that a chapter is closed for the zine, and a new one begun. Wish us luck. I expect the zine to continue to feature feminist material, together with an eclectic collection of humor, art, fannishness, serious criticism, poetry, articles, etc., etc.

There are no other big events to report on, I guess. I've read Joan Vinge's THE SNOW QUEEN and loved it (and reviewed it for BREAD AND ROSES), hated Heinlein's THE NUMBER OF THE BEAST, am really enjoying Doris Lessing's CANOPUS IN ARGOS: ARCHIVES, RE: COLONISED PLANET 5, SHIKASTA (PERSONAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL, HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS RELATING TO VISIT BY JOHOR (GEORGE SHERBAN), EMISSARY (GRADE 9) 87TH OF THE PERIOD OF THE LAST DAYS) — SHIKASTA, for short. The last

monstrosity of a title refers to the new SF novel by Doris Lessing — if you liked BRIEFING FOR DESCENT INTO HELL, you will like this new novel, which is only the first of a series of five novels (!). Also in there some-time last week, I read ZEN AND THE ART OF MOTORCYCLE MAINTENANCE which everyone I tell I read it to says "Oh, yeah, I read that during the '60's". sigh. Missed out. Well it came in useful last week while I was trying to find equilibrium in myself as a result of trying situations within the group (in connection with the JANUS changes) and with a lover. It really turned out to be fortuitous reading and I heartily recommend it to anyone that feels they are too mixed up with on-going events and needs to find some distance with which to see things more clearly and from which to make more reasonable decisions. The book, by the way, says very little about how to fix a motorcycle. Which is just as well.

There've been lots of good movies too recently. See THE BLACK STALLION! It is incredibly gorgeous. Also see BEING THERE, funny funny great film. I just saw (tonight actually) THE MARRIAGE OF MARIA BRAUN, which is weird, but pretty good. I thought COAL MINER'S DAUGHTER was dumb, though, too cute, and entirely (even the first part) unmemorable — just so you don't think I like every movie I go to see.

Well that just about catches me up (even though I've skipped mentioning MiniCon at which I had a great time and also did THE DEAD CAT THROUGH HISTORY slide show to great acclaim and was asked to repeat it at Noreascon(!)), and brings me to the point of starting on some mailing comments. Well, not tonight, I've got a headache... But I will proofread these four pages and maybe xerox them off tomorrow and finish the rest after work...

Have you heard the "American joke" they're telling in Poland? How many Americans does it take to change a lightbulb? Only one! Hohohohahaha.

MAILING

COMMENTS

First of all, thanks for all the messages of congratulations for my (not-so-new-any-longer) job. It is so not-new that I've already passed my 6-month probation with flying colors (all "excellents" and praise from my boss) and have been working here at the Department of Natural Resources/Park Planning for almost 8 months now. It is still fantastic, a dream-job. I enjoy myself immensely and do good work on top of it.

Thank you too for the ego-patting support you all gave me, protesting my considering dropping my Wapa commitment. Made me feel good. Made me decide to keep working/writing/being involved with Wapa. Thanks.

Now, specific responses...

ANNE LAURIE LOGAN Once again, thank you for having changed the Wapa mailing deadline schedule. Saved my membership (since even with the best of intentions, the beginning of April would have been simply impossible).

MARTY SI-EGRIST Yes, I did read Boyd's SEX AND THE HIGH COMMAND a long, long time ago. I remember practically nothing about the plot except for some bizaare thing, some perfect dildo... Ohwell, I do recall that I thought it was a witty book, but then too, I recall that I agreed with the cover blurb recommendation by Heinlein, and now such a plug would have a negative effect on whether or not I picked the book up. As I said, it was a while ago.

I liked your articulation of your ideas concerning school prayer, especially how some pro-prayer politicians seem to have lost track of the fact that it is not illegal to pray in a public school, only to force others to do so as part of the curriculum. And indeed, it is a rather simplistic/wrong expectation that school

prayer makes for moral citizens...

As for my "formerly radical friend Ellen" at work, I don't think (and really didn't mean to give the impression) that her change in philosophy has come about because she's gained a foothold "in the success ladder." Indeed, she's moving to a tiny town up in northern Minnesota (Waroad) with her soon-to-be-husband and dumping her career and plans to raise lots of little kids up there among acid-rain killed lakes. Well that last probably isn't on her agenda but that's the way the environment is going in the north. Anyway, what I meant to suggest as having happened is that she seems to have turned 180° mostly because of the company she has kept, i.e., fiancé Jack... Jack wants to move up to Waroad for his medical practice because there's good deer hunting up there. He's a Jesus freak, incredibly straight and pompous for such a young man, and Ellen seems to be turning into someone who "goes with" Jack, someone who doesn't clash with him, you know? I'm going to her wedding next month and I'm not really looking forward to this funeral-like ceremony at all.

JANET WILSON Wow. What with your contribution and Elaine Normandy's this issue of Wapa, we've been honored by some pretty extraordinary personal writing. Thank you for relating your experience. I must say you just strengthen my resolution not to do something like you have done and give birth to a child, but I was certainly interested by your account and glad you shared it with us.

MOG DECARNIN Thank you for the support. I practically glowed reading your compliments. OK, you've convinced me.

"Behaving as tho the revolution were over," you say "can also get you killed, if you do it on the street at night." Have your read (and so maybe that was a reference to) Alice Sheldon/Racoon Sheldon's "Your Faces, O My Sisters! Your Faces Filled of Light!"—? If not, you should. Sheldon has written some really horrifying horror stories, and that and "The Screwfly Solution" are certainly that. Good horror stories are stories that scare, and for me, the "monsters" in these stories are very real. A new horror genre: Extrapolated sexism...

I agree with you on the probablity of accidents in the nuclear power industry in your comment to Tina. But I think I will be saying my piece on this subject in an mc to Diane.

What cartoon? I can't find my copy of the last apa to check Christine's zine.

CHERYL CLINE Why just be envious of my free books from the Madison Review of Books?

If you want to pay for postage and promise to review the books we send (according to your stated interest areas or even specific titles if possible, where possible), you could (anyone could) arrange to join the reviewers team. You could send us reviews (2 pages double-spaced, or more), or you could tape reviews on cassette tapes, or you could visit Madison or meet one of us at a convention and get your own books and arrange for your own style of reviewing...

Just write: THE MADISON REVIEW OF BOOKS, 1121 University Avenue, Madison, WI 53715.

I will be on the lookout for womens' diaries and such. Since I just took out a new batch of books to do a women's book show (14 books), you might in fact be interested in two I have in front of me this very moment. NISEI DAUGHTER by Monica Sone (University of Washington Press), the autobiography of a woman who describes her life as a Japanese American living in Seattle in the 1930's

and relocated to a prison camp during the war. Or, THE FALL OF A DOLL'S HOUSE by Jane Davison. It says in the blurb (since I haven't looked at it myself yet) that the book is a "provocative mix of social, architectural and personal history... takes a sympatetic but skeptical look at a treasured American dream—the single-family suburban house." Well that's not quite diary sorts of stuff, but interesting I think. You know, what I could easily do if enough people in the apa get interested in this project is to send out a monthly list of women's books we've got on hand in the book office to anyone that sends me postage money. Then if a title grabbed you, you could quick write to us, send us the appropriate postage and get it and review it (and of course, afterwards, get to keep the book for your very own).

Is anyone interested in this scheme that I just thought up while I was writing? Let me know...preferably by mail rather than by the next apa mailing. I really don't think it would work to make your requests here, since the time differences would no doubt mix things up.

ANNE LAURIE, again Thank you much for the VENUS FIGURES. How very impressive. If I had my Italic element, that most certainly would have been so typed. Not only was your record-keeping impressive, but not very modestly, my record is not bad either. I realize I must sound sort of silly moaning about how guilty I feel for not contributing enough.

CELIA CHAPMAN You (and others) talking about clothes worn to work makes me think of a book I glanced over recently (yes, from MRB), THE WOMAN'S DRESS FOR SUCCESS BOOK by John T. Molloy. I felt like I'd gotten hold of the enemy's code book. And actually it's a good reference for how your appearance is going to be held against you if you

choose to dress unconventionally. The book is based on this guy's surveys (as far as I can tell, soundly designed, statistically valid surveys), on how people in the business communities react and interact with women based on their dressing habits. Over and over again, the message seems to be that women "have to" establish a uniform for themselves much as men have, and the best candidate (most effective style in terms of respect, power, etc.) is the skirted suit made of quality material and of subdued, neutral colors. Pantsuits, vests, dresses, etc., all score much more poorly. Read as a codebook (Oh I wish I had an *Italic element*, even a script...), it is a fascinating book. It does confirm what several women in the apa have been saying though, that the way we dress does communicate things to other people. Now whether we want to reinforce the language patterns that this society has grown used to in its clothing dialects is another deeper matter. But I think it's important to recognize that there is this level of communication (especially that this communication goes on between ourselves and the powers-that-be) and that we are viewed in certain ways because of it. Also that we can, to an extent, use it ourselves.

Now having said all that, I shuffle around a bit and admit that I wear mostly jeans and flannel shirts and vests to work, an occasional wrap-around skirt substituting for the jeans (but still with those flannel shirts and vests)

I'm in this sort of special situation, and it's an exception that sheds light on the whole I think. I'm "allowed" to dress excentrically because, as the graphic artist, I'm actually expected to be sort of weird. Probably, I'm conforming as much to people's expectations of me at work, as the young male executive who goes out and buys several suits as soon as he lands his first professional position. It's cheaper my way though. Anyway, what I was thinking as I read this book and

thought about how my role as artist exempted me from some pressures, was that the best way to change the pressures that are caused by clothing-language in workplaces, is to change the structure that makes uniforms seemingly necessary in certain jobs. I think the feminist movement is working that way. I mean, by redefining work as not just something that men do, and not just something that is done outside the home for a paycheck, it's going to seem more and more unreasonable to define prestigious liferoles by the costume of a suit-and-tie or Molloy's touted skirted suit. (However, if you are looking for clues on how to dress for that important interview, and want to use his research to get your foot in the door, so to speak, I'd recommend that you look for this in the bookstore. Skim through it there though; don't buy it and encourage the man.)

To add my experience in this weird discussion of men's reactions to women's periods during sex, I've never encountered any men put off by menstrual blood either. Maybe we're not "lucky" Avedon, maybe the taboo is less prevalent than it supposedly used to be. When I started having sex with men, I know I expected them to be grossed out and was rather surprised when that didn't happen, and reexamined my own feelings about it all.

Love it. Right. My COPIOUS FREE TIME. sounds like a great zine title.

Re your JANUS subscription, I have you down in my records as having received issues 15 and 16. I have your correct address in my records. Have you still not gotten them? If not send me a postcard and I'll send you them. #17 will be the first issue published/edited by SF3 and will probably not be out till June. Thereafter, schedules will be much more reliable however. And this is no fannish real-soon-now. I don't think.

"I sometimes take multiple lovers, but I have never yet had more than one deep

emotional commitment at a time." You add, "One reason to think in terms of #1 and so on." Well, to me, the cause and effect of those two sentences seems skewed. It's thinking in terms of #1 and #2 that tends to encourage me to think in terms of having only one deep emotional commitment at a time. The numbering system tends to make more of relationship, seems to make it more important than it really is.

I don't know how British feminist response differs from the American. Did I say it did? I think I was talking about the Swedish book, MANRAPE, and about my friend (who has studied 19th century French divorce literature) and her impression that French feminists have a different perspective than American feminists. I also might have mentioned as an analogy, something about the difference between American and British humor. My French-scholar friend says that French feminism has put much more emphasis on eschewing all things "feminine," rejecting words, traits, anything that is labeled feminine with the idea that the whole role has been imposed on women and that there is little or no value in its remnants. American feminism, on the other hand, has been more interested in revitalizing the degraded aspects of the feminine role, finding in it much of what is healthy for any human being but suppressed in men and devalued in women. Thus, the re-claimed words in GYN/ECOLOGY, the emphasis on so-called "soft" emotions for proud women and sympathetic men.

AVEDON CAROL Interesting stuff on clothing. See my comments to Celia above.

I've just sent my copy of MANRAPE to Janet Wilson—since I think I had asked her originally if she'd be interested to read it. I asked her to send it on to others if she is not, or when she finishes, so maybe you could ask her for it then.

ELAINE NORMANDY As I said to Janet, your's and her apazine this time really impressed me. The account of your reaction to your brother's suicide is a powerful, extremely good piece of writing. Thank you for sharing this very personal experience with us.

Would you consider submitting something to JANUS?

ANNELAURIE LOGAN, AGAIN(?) No, I don't deplore name-badges as an artform. It'd be pretty silly to say that any format, simply on the basis of form, is not "Art." Much like saying that the only "high" art is done on canvas with oils. I like doing nametag art when I have the time. You might be interested in reading what Greer has to say in THE OBSTACLE RACE about the role of miniatures in the history of women's art. A woman artist would have to keep in mind the ghetto-like tendencies of miniatures, as a field, that has been the case in the past, if she were to get very involved in such.

Your question "Why is it only bad artists have inflated egos?" reminds me of a funny incident at the WisCon art show. There was an artist—a young woman—who entered some things in the show that were simply the most horrible things I have EVER seen hung in an art show. Though the art itself was awful — smudged pencil drawings of mis-proportioned and badly drawn damsels being raped by grotesque and equally badly drawn barbarians — I found myself completely fascinated (to the extent that I really didn't see the subject matter of the drawings) by the matting job of the pieces. The matts were scissors-cut from construction paper without the benefit of a ruler. Then to "straighten" the inside edges she had used black electric tape... I could not believe it. What was funny though, was that she was outraged that her pieces (priced \$20 and up) were not selling, and especially that

she had won no prizes for her entries. At first I assumed that the artist was a very young artist. I was not in charge of this year's show and was not around when the pieces were brought in. Later, I found out that the woman had been involved sexually with one of the committee members and expected this connection to win her an award... How odd.

Nope, haven't read DeLynn's SOME DO. Will look out for it though. You might contact Janet or Avedon to be put on the pass-around list for MANRAPE!

Good idea about suggesting apazine distribution systems to feminist small press zines. I'll bring it up to the people at BREAD AND ROSES. No way though, would I want to be OE for something as complicated as that would get.

FRAN SKENE I've really enjoyed your two LMTWGA's. You're very good at emotional/personal writing and I'm feeling as if I'm getting to know you well through these zines. Thanks. Evocative poetry too.

DIANE MARTIN Well, I assume you're reading this well in advance of the apa mailing, since you will have gotten my zine hand-delivered, but I'm sorry that you decided to drop out of the apa. I really do enjoy your writing. At least since we still work on JANUS together I won't be cut off completely. But I do understand your reasons.

Now, as for your comment hooks. Well, I can understand your criticism of those who equate nuclear power with nuclear bombs, but I really do disagree with you about the general naivety and shallowness of thinking that you ascribe to people protesting the continued development of nuclear energy.

My feelings on this are very close to Mog's, and that is that I think that the probability for disasterous, catastrophic accidents is too high—right now—to warrant the speed and carelessness if living without it is an impossibility

(I ran out of room on page 10. So one quick note to ADRIENNE FEIN: Thanks for the congratulations and Yes!, I'd love a list of other books about the lack of "great" women artists.)

with which the industry is propelling itself. I don't think I am proposing the throwing out of the baby with the bathwater, and I don't think that's the major thrust of the current protest. That's a media/industry-defined description of the anti-nuclear power activist that was thrust from the earliest instance of protest on people who are really saying something very different. There was a woman on NPR a few weeks ago (a special on 3-Mile Island I think), who was involved in a citizens protest at the site of the very first nuclear power plant in the country. I thought it was very interesting that at that time she and other community members had merely been asking for documentation, statistics on the safety of the plant. They apparently weren't distrustful of the builders, but merely wanted to be sure. The blocking and secrecy with which their requests met led to the protest, and in a lot of respects, it is the lying and the cover-ups which most worries me now. You and I have often discussed the silliness of individual behavior that won't admit the possibility of personal mistakes... Well, this same "silliness" exists in the nuclear power industry. They've been trapped by their own probaganda, their saying that nuclear power was 100% safe. It seems that they don't take adequate precautions (like not building on earthquake faults, or building in close proximity to cities, or not adequately providing for atomic wastes), because to do so would be to admit that there might be some chance of a problem. Silly. DANGEROUS. I don't trust them AT ALL. And given the stakes, that's not a naive or shallow attitude.

To quote Holly Near at a recent concert, "We're to the point now where we simply can't afford any mistakes. How many mistakes have you made today?"

As for the reality of living without nuclear power, i.e., are we already addicted? as you put it—I think that

ity, as you suggest, it is an impossibility only to the industry that could not take the loss of profit. If the energy were simply not available in this country, we would have to change our lifestyles. Consumers have been forced to make drastic changes in their lives before (during wars, for instance). Putting pressure on the industries, working on alternative sources of energy are extremely important things to do right now, I think. I think that alternate energy sources (plural, not just one: sunpower where plentiful; wind-power others, lots of others I've been learning about at work from people involved in doing such work), combined with serious work eliminating much of this country's energy waste, would do much more than people assume they would.

And so you say "it behooves us all...to ask a lot of questions about it, and demand truthful answers. And to somehow ascertain that they are true. And to think about the facts we learn—long and carefully." Well, yes. I think that's the main thrust of the so-called "anti-nuke" advocates in fact.

Now. Cats. And Dead Cat Jokes. First I'll appologize for upsetting you, and thank you for setting down your feelings here. But I think we're closer on this matter than you think. After my slide show (THE DEAD CAT THROUGH HISTORY) at WisCon, I got—as I think I told you—a weird response from a few people in the audience. These people were a few very young guys (14 yrs. old?) who subscribed to SOLDIER OF FORTUNE and really did seem to get into killing and tortureing living things. I wasn't sure the suggestions they were throwing out were entirely hypothetical. And I got pretty upset, surprised and decided to change the way I did the show next time. It was weird trying to figure out just why I was upset. But I kept thinking that these boys simply didn't "get" the joke. I'd dispute with you that the focus of dead cat jokes is the torture and mutilation of living things, though I certainly understand how you would and probably still will not accept this

assertion. But what I have in mind when I laugh, and the kind of laugh I am trying to provoke in people with these jokes comes from somewhere else. This somewhere else is rooted in a lack of understanding for the sort of people who carry their relationships with their pets to a ludicrous extreme (from my point of view). I'm not speaking of you, by the way. Some of those roots are relatives who treated their prize cats better than their own children, who spoke baby-talk to the tabbies, who really were quite insensitive to the lack of interest other people felt for the topic. Now of course this sort of obsession is not always centered on pets, and people are often unaware that their interests are not shared completely by others, but it's this particular discrepancy that caught my sense-of-the-ironic. It seemed to me that pet-owners (and I'm not talking about cats only either) can sometimes act pretty absurdly, valuing the lives of their pets more than people's, getting more upset over an auto-killed pet than any of a number of outrageous human conditions. I'm very serious now, though I think I may never be able to communicate my reasons for continuing the show to you. The roots of the so-called "black" humor that Dead Cat jokes are a part of, cuts deep to a perception of horror and absurdity that is at the heart of our knowledge about ourselves as humans and the crazy things we have done to ourselves on this planet. You may think this is a pretentious rationalization—or attempt at one—and maybe it is. But I sure know that I am meaning something very different from simply finding humor in the killing and mutilation of animals as did those kids at the show.

(My change, by the way, consists of doing the show only as a show, no audience participation afterwards. I think the general effect of the cartoon slides is that of a Kliban book...from a different perspective.)

Having destroyed my resolutions for a short zine, I'll say good-bye now. sigh.

P.S. I'M FRANKING THROUGH THE ARTICLE
ON THE NEXT PAGE CONTRIBUTED BY
JON SINGER

love, *Tom*

From 'First Generation of Revolutionaries'

Woman Still Fighting Sexual Hangups

EDITOR'S NOTE — Even at this point in the sexual revolution, Eleanor Hamilton's views may startle a few — especially in her home town, where she's used to being looked at slightly askance. Such things have seldom bothered her through decades of advocacy.

By RICK HAMPSON

SHEFFIELD, Mass. (AP) — At 70, the author and psychiatrist who calls herself "a member of the first generation of sexual revolutionaries" says more parents are coming around to her conclusion: "Virginity is about as useful as your appendix."

"It used to be that a man wanted his wife to be a virgin when they married. These days, I don't know of any young man who would marry one," says Eleanor Hamilton, a sex counselor who has lectured Americans for 40 years about premarital sex.

From her rustic cottage in the Berkshire Hills, Mrs. Hamilton talked about her career and the theories she has expounded in five books and on national television appearances.

What's wrong, she was asked, with marrying a virgin?

"The average age for sexual matur-

ation has gone from 14 down to 12," Mrs. Hamilton replied, "and for marriage from 18 up to 22. That's a 10-year span. Sexuality is a primary function, put it on the shelf like that, and you have an 80 percent chance of dysfunction."

She recommends that potential marriage partners get to know each other by living together first. "You don't know anyone until you live with them. If one of my children wanted to get married to someone they hadn't lived with, I'd crack 'em," she laughed.

Mrs. Hamilton's liberal world view took shape in Oregon, where she was born and brought up.

After college she came East with her husband, a New York City psychiatrist, and began raising a family that eventually included four children. When her husband suffered a heart attack the family moved here and Mrs. Hamilton began marriage counseling.

Area residents still recall the commotion Mrs. Hamilton caused 10 years ago with a speech on "Sex Before Marriage" before a group of Berkshire County ministers.

"I'm sure they expected me to say, 'Don't do it,'" she says.

Although most of the ministers ac-

cepted her views with pastoral calm, the next day a newspaper carried an account of her talk that was headlined, "Noted Psychologist Advocates Sex at an Early Age."

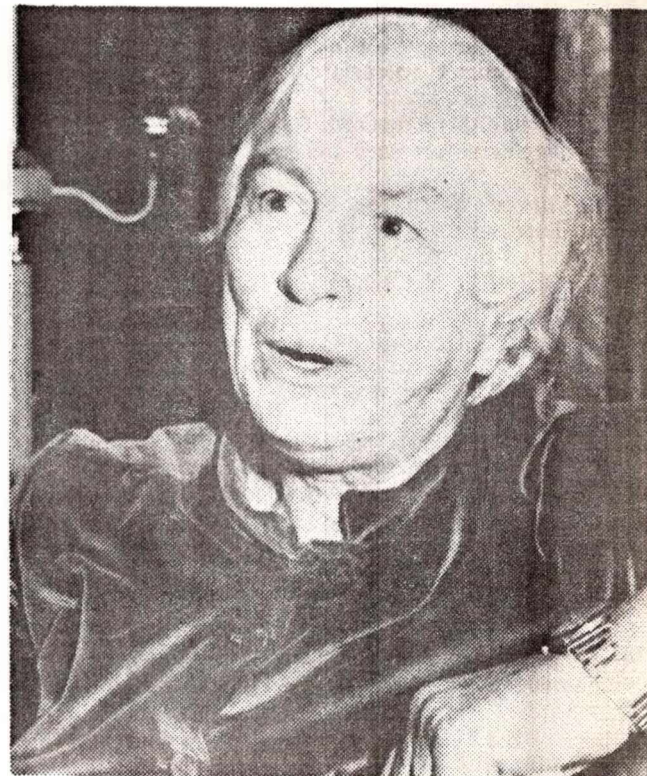
Mrs. Hamilton holds "Pleasure-Nurturing Weekends," where for \$100, people "learn ways to create and maintain pleasure and cope with feelings about image, touching, intimacy and sexuality," and practice "giving, receiving, playing and celebrating."

This may raise some eyebrows in town, but Mrs. Hamilton insists she's not staging orgies.

She also believes teen-agers are going to have sex, so why not give them a safe, protected place in their homes for it. And, she says, if teens learn to have a "loving regard" for each other — and what she calls "a loving touch" — they can achieve sexual satisfaction without risking sexual intercourse.

Mrs. Hamilton says such intimacy is encouraged at her summer camp in Nova Scotia for children ages 8-16. "We've never had a pregnancy," she boasts.

The camp was started in 1969 and is accredited by the Canadian Camping Association.



AP Laserphoto

Eleanor Hamilton
...no use for virgins

