

Seems I was right last time about the number I was on. (I checked with AnneLaurie's complete AWA graph.) So this, now, is number 24 Obsessions and Obsessive Press #63, published for A Women's Apa. The address and phone number are the same: 2018 Jenifer Street, Madison, WI 53704. Days: 608+267-7483, eves: 808+241-8445. All contents (except for reprinted stuff) copyright © 1981 by Jeanne Gomoll.

One large disadvantage of doing an exhaustive, not to mention long postmailing only a few weeks before the deadline for the next mailing, is that one has very little to say if one is on time for that next mailing. Very few things have happened since last time. Well, a couple things could be said I guess...

It's getting cooler for instance. I find it amusing how words and terms describing weather and climate vary from month to month in the Midwest. That seems to be one of the main climate differences for Midwest denizens as opposed to residents of the coast or more southerly regions in the US. When a Louisiana resident or an LA citizen says that it is "warm", they generally seem to mean pretty much the same thing year-round. When a Wisconsinite says that it is "warm," they might mean that it is swimming weather, or merely that long underwear, face scarf and a second pair of mittens aren't necessary, depending on the season. On the other hand, "cold" might mean sweater time or a wind chill factor of -36°F . Oh, we have some stable terms: "bitterly cold" is seldom used in the summer to describe a day too windy for sun bathing. And "sweltering" is not often heard prior to July and after September. Saying that it is cold this particular week (as I write: 27 October), means for instance, that we've had days in the 30's and 40's ($^{\circ}\text{F}$). In a few months, that word will be reserved only for sub-zero days. Anything above 0 will tempt us to walk around with open coats, and others of us to look wistfully up into the sky, predicting an early Spring.

Most of the leaves have changed colors from fluorescent oranges and reds to rustling browns, and are now in the process of blowing off the trees and across lawns and streets. The temperature has dropped to the extent that I haven't been able to ride my bike to work every day. So, I'm making a valient effort to get up earlier in the morning so that I can walk back and forth to work while the weather is still decent...maybe until they start to report "chill factors" instead of actual thermometer readings on the weather reports (and no amount of bundling is enough to avoid frost-bite if one is out too long). To make up for the loss of biking exercise, I'm adding a mile's swim on Saturday and am thinking of working out on the stationary bicycle at the YWCA one or two nights a week for 15 minutes or so once I'm forced to give up walking to work. For guidance, I'm using the "Aerobic Point System" developed by Keneth Cooper, MD, who wrote several

books on aerobic exercise based on his work with the US Air Force training program. That'll be the final judge as to whether I'm getting enough exercise: I need 30 points a week.

Right now, I'm in the process of reading RIDLEY WALKER, ZERO-SUM SOCIETY, and THE DANCING WU LI MASTERS, which are a mainstream SF novel, an economics book, and physics-for-the-layperson, respectively. As soon as I finish one of them, I plan to start the new Suzette Hayden Elgin trilogy. Last week I finished THE WORLD ACCORDING TO GARP, and wish I'd read it about 10 years earlier. I enjoyed it, but 10 years ago I would have loved it (as I loved CATCH-22), and it would have been an Important Book go me. When it first came out I think I ignored it because I thought it was a Jesus-Freak book, and so saw none of the reviews. Did Irving's nightmares come true and did the book get reviewed as a feminist novel? Or was his neurosis proved silly? Anyone remember?

I've seen lots of movies. Most recently (Mog:) YOU ARE NOT ALONE, which as I said in the letter, was fun and interesting, though not at all a turn-on for me. I highly recommend VOYAGE A DEUX. It's got a very unusual and wonderful portrait of a friendship (almost sexual) between two women. It's neat how all the men are mostly invisible and when visible nearly speechless. What's bothersome is that it is a film by a man and too much of what men think is titillating about women's friendships gets pushed forward. I went to see it with a woman friend here in Madison, and we both loved it. I also liked THE FRENCH LIEUTENANT'S WOMAN, but found it much less dense and full of ideas/thought than was the book. Still Meril Streep is an excellent, excellent actress, and her performance is really great. One thing I've been noticing about movies lately is how well I like the endings: the end of THE FRENCH LIEUTENANT'S WOMAN where the main (contemporary) character hangs on to her realistic attitude and refuses to get entangled in the self-destructive romantic web her lover tries to entice her into. Or, THE COMPE-TITION in which she proves herself to be a better pianist and he swallows his pride and follows her for love. Or,

CONTINENTAL DIVIDE in which he is a newspaper, city man, and she is a scientist, wilderness woman, and neither compromises their life work, and they decide to try a long-distance marriage. It feels to me almost as if Hollywood is catching on with the fact that people's live styles are changing and is starting to see these alternatives in even mediocre, popular films, even romantic films...

No changes at work. We still don't know yet whether or not the DNR artists are going to be gathered in one room. I've gone on a couple more field trips, but next week's is liable to be the last one of the season: it's a trip up to Eau Claire to visit the Chippewa Moraine Reserve and re-map some lake properties. What's nice about that trip is that we will be taking the DNR prop plane.

And no great emotional traumas to report. I may as well do the mc's...

D. Potter I appreciated the bio. You have no idea how we "lawful" people, (as I'm told I am by D&Ders) need something granite-hard, even if fictional on which to attach rumors, gossip, assumptions and blitherings. Really. Thankyou.

Rebecca Lesses I know, me too: I've already bought all the required books from the Book of the Month Club because I found several interesting ones. They're expensive, that's all. The book club I like the best is the Quality Paper Back Club. Cheaper and an excellent selection.

I think that Lessing would argue with you about her series being a secularized version of merely Christian creation myths. But I do like the idea that our mythology is a distorted memory of one sort or another. Sort of like waking up and trying to reconstruct a fast-fading dream. As for the male/female dicotomy of MARRIAGES, I took it to refer to cultural definitions of male vs female identity: faulty definitions. I understood Lessing as saying that until we realize the dicotomy that our culture assumes (metaphore: the countries' boundaries) is false, we can never be whole enough to move beyond our present spiritual levels.

Joan Gordon I know what you mean about having to "get through" and resist getting bored at first with Doris Lessing. She doesn't use conventional plot-thickener tricks; you have to let yourself get caught up in the web of ideas she weaves. I recommend BRIEFING FOR DESCENT INTO HELL and THE GOLDEN NOTEBOOK, my favorites of her books. (The first is SF.)

Janet Wilson Mostly because of hassels that came up for me at work, I never did anything about a Susan Wood Memorial AROOO at Denvention. And then at the con, it was too late. Candice Massey and Fran Skene did organize an AWA room in Candice's room and that turned out really well. It would be nice if we could try for one next year and start a tradition.

Anne Laurie Logan Thanks much for the Venus Figures (II). Fine, professional-looking job. And a gorgeous photo montage cover!

Debra Daemmrich They tried to put me on drugs a couple years ago for pain/stiffness in my joints too (hands, knees, ankles, wrists). It turned out that I was having a rare response to iron deficiency. I took a lot of iron; it disappeared and now I'm on a daily vitamin pill and everything is OK. Hope your health problem is as easily solved.

Cheryl Cline I've got MY CAREER GOES BUNG too now: I had to order it from an Australian publishing house. I'm looking forward to reading it. Thanks for the reviews.

I truly envy your relationship with your mother. (Why don't you ask her to join the APA?) There's very little of importance shared between my mother and me. A lot of "small and harmless" stuff. And yet both my parents are hurt knowing that they are shut out of their children's lives. All that sharing has ever brought us is a lot of bitter arguments and more walls. *sigh* So I envy you.

Pat Potts Yes, there are chimichungas in the Midwest. In Madison, Wisconsin, at least.

Anne Laurie Logan No, I certainly don't regret suggesting the bios. Thank you for your's: it was beautifully written.

For network purposes—I heard about WAPA from Victoria Vayne at some Midwest con right after OO was published (I never did see a copy of that). She suggested that I write Janet and said that Susan Wood was involved. Since I knew Susan I decided to check it out. After Jan Bogstad and I straightened out a misunderstanding about the fact that we wouldn't be co-editing an apazine as we were (then) JANUS, I got into AWA #1. I think I helped persuade Jan, Diane Martin, Lesleigh Luttrell, and maybe suggested it to Jane Hawkins.

I thought that LES GUERILLERES was (chronologically) written backwards (on purpose). The "last event" being the revolution, women leaving men; the "first event" being a time when women have completely forgotten men—the revolution won long ago. That seemed to be a logical way that one would read the community journal, leafing backwards from present to past entries.

Congratulations on the new mimeos. You should send out adoption notices or something.

Candice Massey It's good to have you back if only franking. I'm glad that your reunion and life came together so well.

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That's all for now, folks, except for the reprints on the other side of this page. Read the SUPERMAN review. I thought the movie was stupid because its moral seemed to be that revenge is BAD if you're a Bad Guy, and GREAT FUN and GOOD if you are a Good Guy. But Ellen Goodman points out an even more interesting (and critical) point.

Hope you all have delicious Thanksgivings and mild winters.

Love,
Jeanne

Superman: just a male recidivist

By ELLEN GOODMAN

BOSTON — I don't usually take movies personally, but I was worried about Lois Lane from the minute the credits started rolling.

I mean, from where I was sitting, this guy she got involved with was just another 1980s Everyman. Strip away the red cape and the blue tights and he was a flying mass of role conflicts.

One day he was a man with weaknesses and feelings. The next day he was an honest-to-gawd Superman. On Monday he was happy at work with nary an aspiration and on Tuesday, whammo, he felt compelled to go out there and save the world.

Someone as smart as Lois should have seen this guy coming around the corner. Sure, he was cute, but the morning after the night before he was going to be out the door. It just wasn't going to work out.

But there it was, once again, the fatal attraction of the Semi-Liberated Lady for the Traditional Man Who is Trying to Change. You see it all the time.

Aside from the X-ray vision and a few other eccentricities, Superman was a case study of traditional malehood. He grew up on the ultimate performance trip. He never rebelled. He never racked up the car. He was a regular duty-first doo-bee. It's for sure that he never cried.

But, like a lot of other urban professionals, he tried to keep up with the times. This is, after all, an era of partnership marriages and meaningful relationships and open feelings. Sooner or later, he got the open feeling that he ought to get with it. When he decided to meaningfully relate to Lois, he wanted to change.

WHAT COULD BE more irresistible to a gal like Lois? We've all known a Lois or two in our life, a lady stuck between time zones with all the messages from the past and present.

One minute she wants to stand on her own two feet and the next minute she wants to be swept off them. She may be Ms. Independence on the job, but in her personal life she only falls for the guy who could take her up, up and away from it all.

The Semi-Liberated Female is a pushover for the He-man Who Is Trying to Change. She thinks she knows who he really is. She thinks she can dig down to his core, bring out the softness in him.

So what happens to this couple? I could have predicted it. Superman gives up his dominant ways in order to live in equitable earthly bliss with Lois. Thus wooed up to his place, they spend the night in pre-nuptial PG-rated bliss.



Superman: a flying mass of role conflicts.

But soon he finds that life as Mellow-man has its problems. For one thing, he can no longer hide his true identity. He's no longer defended by the mysterious powers. He's just a regular guy. Maybe even a person.

NOT-SO-SUPER-MEN bleed. They get backaches. They lose fights. They trade in the awe of women for friendships and sharing. They exchange adventure for affection.

And, while they are struggling to work it all out, the whole world gets nervous without its supermen. If the strong and good and the brave get domesticated, then the strong and the bad and villainous take over the world. That particular fantasy isn't just Hollywood property.

At the first alarm, faster than you can say kryptonite, Superman drops all this trendy sex-role-changing business and gets back to the man's job of saving the world. And, just as I figured, semi-liberated Lois accepts the guilt for ever having taken away her lover from his Important Work.

"It's sort of like being married to a doctor," she says with a sigh of depression.

The Man Who Wants to Change turns out to be just another male recidivist. He slips back to the days when Supermen were powerful and women panting as if his old role were an old slipper. The semi-liberated woman is easily tricked back to her bad old days, eternally pining for the flighty guy with the Big S.

I wonder if this is what they mean by conservative backlash in the movies?

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