

Yes, indeed, this is the new OBSESSIONS. Number 25, in fact, and number 66 of the Obsessive Press numbering system. All these numbers are produced—not just made up—by Jeanne Gomoll who lives at 2018 Jenifer with one "n" Street, Madison, WI 53704. (608-241-8445 eves and 608-267-7483 days) Being three issues of AWA behind on mailing comments, I intend to jump right in and get caught up. If there's any space left at the end I might append a short what's-been-going-on-section, but probably that stuff will all be skillfully and sub-tlely included within the mailing comments. So don't just ego-scan, OK? COPYRIGHT ©1982 by J. Gomoll.



Mailing Comments

*Mailing Comments for AWA number 31
(transcribed from notes written in February)*

Cover Very nice, Cheryl. At first, I thought that Anne Laurie had gotten a lot of the same stamps that you use all the time. (I also enjoyed the holiday card.)

Mog Loneliness is often the best prompter for good writing. Or at least I find it so. The same kind of energy that goes into face-to-face friendship is also a prime ingredient of on-paper communication. So, when friends are away, or just not seeming to be very supportive at home, I often find that I get extremely prolific with my correspondence to long-distance friends. Then when my time is filled with telephone calls and shared meals and evenings out with friends, I find it difficult to use spare time (even when it's available) for more of the same, on paper. It has nothing to do with my mood either. Well, almost nothing. Because it's certainly not the case that I only write when I'm depressed, or spend time with in-town friends only when I'm in a good mood. Anyway, maybe this accounts for your last great-big-most-interesting apazine. Which I enjoyed a lot.

I tend to agree with you in philosophy about children's sexuality and the potential bad effects of repressing that until they reach a self-supporting age. I remember when I was in high school that I made a conscious decision, though, not to get involved in sex or what seemed to me

to be sex games (i.e., dating, flirting, etc.) until I was capable of handling the consequences on my own. I felt much the same about sex then as I do now about signing on in the military, getting married, taking responsibility for a child or children, or otherwise getting into a position in which my life is in the control of a complex and not very sympathetic bureaucracy. Given the way society is set up now, any of those life-decisions reduces one's choices to a major degree, often to a life-threatening degree. To me, at age 16, sex carried with it the potential of having to deal with pregnancy or abortion, if I could arrange one (an unlikely possibility), with parental estrangement, or even if I were lucky, with having to deal with making a life-time decision with respect to a relationship before I was at all sure what I wanted to do with my life. Granted, a lot of my fears had to do with misinformation, lack of information, and not enough security with respect to the love and support I could expect from my parents. But some of that paranoia was a rational assessment of what I could expect from the society I lived in, should something go wrong during a teenage sexual experience. I'm still glad that I avoided the whole thing until I knew that I could choose and pay for an abortion should I need one, till I could find and use contraception, till I was more sure of myself and my independence and could deal with relationships and their endings. And I still feel nervous about children being sexual with each other or with adults, because children don't have the economic and sometimes the emotional resources to deal with some

of the consequences that society imposes on people for such pleasures.

You recall that I started out agreeing with you. Well I do, really...in philosophy. I agree that we are all sexual beings for practically the whole of our lives, if not all of it. (I can't remember the time before I was three years old, so I'll wait till the child behaviorists figure that one out.) And I agree with you that it's ridiculous to expect a person to go from complete ignorance to a happy, integrated sexual life on their wedding night as our popular mythology preaches. And I think it's terribly sad that families so easily acquiesce to social pressures (and contribute to them) by making the facts of life a Big Secret to be figured out by children, and furthermore by putting a layer of guilt between themselves and a child who has figured things out in spite of their parents. But no matter how open and supportive a family is, they are not all of society to a child and consequences to a child's active sexual life will come from other places than the family. So I think that parents understandably are hesitant about being encouraging to a child who wants to actively explore their sexuality with others. And I'm even less sympathetic with a person outside of the family, especially an person older than the child, who encourages the child to actively express their sexuality with them, because it is unlikely that that outsider can protect that child at all from social consequences that, right or wrong, occur in present-day society.
sigh

To me, a good parent (in this area of a child's sexuality) is one who does not contribute more repressive influences than already supplied by our educational and other institutions. A good parent, has to, however, be aware of and honestly prepare a child for the way society could potentially react to certain behaviors. Up to a certain age, I should think this would include actual restrictions. During most of the teenage years, I should think that it should include a lot of communication (especially about contraception) and advice.

I'm sorry. I must be dense. But I still don't understand your use of the "no commercial value" label. What international border crossing? You mail it in San Francisco and Anne Laurie opens it in East Lansing. What border? Where? As long as a thing stays in a U.S. plane, the mere going over the air space of another country doesn't occasion any duty searches. Does it?

You say: *One thing I am interested in is people's actual memories--not theories--of their own sex practices as children.* Well I already told you about my mental dismissal of the possibility of my having sex (high school age) because of potential hassles that I felt I was incapable of dealing with. But, actually, that decision was easy because I was pretty sure then, that I didn't function normally and would never be able to be sexual. I never felt particularly attracted to anyone, men or women, though I was practically obsessed with the subject of sex. (How it works, what happens, the usual, you know.) The fact that I was regularly experiencing orgasms would have come as an incredible surprise to me. You see there was this tree...

No really, I used to go outside to the neighbor's tree--a big oak tree in her front yard--on which my father had hung a hemp-rope-and-plywood-seat swing for good times. The swing had been in use for many years before I found this "other" use for it, but through those years it had regularly had to be raised as the hemp rope wore through and broke, and each year the swing got higher and higher as the knots decreased the length of the ropes. One day while I was trying to lift myself up and swing my legs up and over the swing platform (which was by then, shoulder height), I got this funny feeling between my legs. At the time, I compared it to the feeling one got if one rode in the back seat of a car which drove very quickly over a bump in the road, only it lasted longer and was more pleasurable. But it didn't last nearly long enough, and I attempted again and again to hold myself up long enough (my knees raised so that my thighs were parallel to the wooden seat, but below it, arms extended and supporting me over my head) so as to prolong the "funny feeling." I took to taking leather gloves outside

*(in the summertime)

with me, even on the hottest summer day, so that my hands wouldn't give out too early with the burning from the hemp ropes. I'm really surprised that nobody got suspicious about what I was doing. One time, I even told my brother Rick (2 years younger than myself) about the "funny feeling" one could get by hanging in such and such a way from the swing. He tried, but said he didn't feel anything funny. I felt sorry for him, and kept doing it as often as possible (a few times a week*I'd guess, coming several times with each occassion). I was probably about 11 or 12 when I began, and was 15 when they chopped down the old oak because it had some sort of disease. Now that was a sad day. For years afterward I would improvise every once in a while, arranging two chairs, or finding two cabinets near together that I could balance on the heels of my hands and raise my knees so that my thighs were parallel to the floor. And it would work if I could hold myself up long enough, but I generally ended up with sore arms. And then a little later I discovered better ways to achieve the same "funny feeling."

I still don't really understand how it worked, but I'm glad it did. (And what a surprise it was in later years, when I first came in a more usual fashion, and connected the two sensations!) I wonder, did any of the rest of you have such bizarre experiences when you were young? More to the point, do any of you know how it works? (Even now, there's this exercise at Bodyworks at the YWCA where I work out on my lunch-hours that I generally avoid, because it involves hanging from a height with my arms extended, and the raising of my legs. I guess nobody would have to know, but I find it embarrassing to have an orgasm in a room full of women exercising...) I wonder sometimes if this is something peculiar to my own physiology.

Janet In a comment to Rebecca, that maybe I'm taking out of context to your discussion, you say:

The tactic of encouraging women to be nurturing and caring and not like nasty brutal men has been used very effective-

ly by anti-feminists for a long time, to keep women contented, and may backfire on feminists who use that argument--as well as perpetuating the system of stereotypes. Well, I agree with what I think may be your main point in this statement, i.e., that it's no good for a woman to hide her strength and assertiveness when it comes to fighting for women's rights, but I do think it's important to fight only with those weapons which one is willing to live with as every-day behaviors after the rights are won ("after the revolution"). I don't think we gain anything by building a hierarchical, non-nurturing society, in which women are men's equals. (A war against fascists can't be won with fascist methods, for then both sides are just as bad.) It seems to me that we have to identify the things about ourselves and our behavior and what we'd like to see in everyone's behavior, and then fight the fight wearing exactly those battle garments.

Terry I'm glad you're back You're right, I'd have to look over those back issues to remember exactly why you dropped out of AWA (even though I certainly remember the main stuff), but I can't since I don't have those issues anymore. Welcome back.

I loved the How-To-Plan-A-Feminist-Panel article! I'm going to xerox that page and hand it out to a few of the women who are doing WisCon programming this year. (I'm not at all involved in it this year. WisCon has been going on for 6 years now, and the last few years I've gotten steadily burned out on the programming end of it. And I think my feeling of repetition in the planning of the feminist programming would have, if it hadn't already, showed.) Brilliant.

Sara Glad to hear that you're coming to WisCon again. (I got your note and handed it over to Dick Russell who does registration.) I suppose you know that Paul Zrimsek (one of the people you mentioned as being one of your dearest friends in NISFA) is in Madison and a part of MadStf now. Bizarre man, but nice. (Did you see the pose he took in the photograph of us all in the last issue of Aurora?) Thanks for the bio. Did you get your "Don't Panic" towel?

You ordered it from a good friend of mine here in Madison and while he was out of town, I took care of the orders.

Allyson Don't worry, I don't think anyone here is recommending that we open the apa to men. The conversation has been about the time when men were allowed into AWA. (Gad, this sounds like *Les Guerilleres*, doesn't it?) But on the contrary, there were a great many men very interested in joining us here, primarily, I think because they thought they could "write material straight from the heart/soul" and get all sorts of strokes and mothering for it.

Somehow your comments about the reaction of fannish fans against the new media fans, seems very much like your surprised reaction to the talk about the idea of men in AWA. Your use of the terms "us" and "them" is really a reversal of how fannish fans are feeling in conventions lately. (By fannish fans, I mean people whose primary fan activities involves the printed fanzines and is more closely related to written SF than it is to filmed SF, which is a really badly inadequate definition. It'll do for this though.) The reaction going on in fandom is a belated (and long-term), and doomed complaint about the fact that fandom has changed, and that fanzine fandom is no longer the majority (or even the most important part), but simply a small subgroup. Nobody can deny you or anyone entrance into fandom, but it certainly won't be the same as the one people remember who joined it a decade ago. To keep those traditions alive "fannish" fandom will probably continue to split off more and more from media fandom and strengthen its connections through the fanzines and small cons with little or no emphasis on other topics. Hopefully we all keep our senses of humor throughout the process. So...



Anne Laurie No, Plastic, or Pastel Rainbows won't do. They're just "cute"-sounding enough that they might be picked up by the

rainbow crowd. Like, I gave up early on in my anti-cat campaign with my attempts to satirize the over-enthusiastic attitudes of cat lovers with exaggeration. It was simply impossible to tell too cute a cat story and fail to be taken as a serious cat-lover. So I had to resort to dead cats. That couldn't be taken any other way. I'm looking for some similar sledgehammer approach for the passing remark (say at a cocktail party) of properly disparaging tone to use for rainbows. But, as I said, "dead" just doesn't work in this case. Possibly I should work on the other elements in the popular rainbow mythology, like a rainbow ending in a toilet instead of the traditional bucket of gold coins.

In connection to your historical comment to Joan on the origin of apas, I had always heard that apas originated with printers' apas. These apas were generally completely void of any kind of content, being entirely made up of experiments with print fonts, different layout styles, and various screening, and printing effects. Chunks of text from any magazine or book would simply be lifted for the various apazines in order to demonstrate the way a new printing method worked out.

Marty Congratulations on the degree, gaudy though it may be. And good luck on staying in one place for the next year or so. Many editors with time-consuming mailing lists will thank you if you can fulfill that wish. And good luck on the new job.

Janet Your handwriting plus a bad repro effect on my copy leaves me with nothing to say, not even RAEBNC, maybe RAESBNC, since I only managed to read "some"!

Mikki I appreciate the compliments but am a little confused as to whether I should be glad that my personality makes it seem "OK" to you to be a feminist. I did enjoy the contrast you drew between Jan Bogstad and I, though. It's always amusing to hear what other people from outside our "family" have to say about that. (I think I'll just leave it there.) Maybe instead of thinking of it as being OK to be a subdued person and a feminist, you might think

of it as being OK to be any kind personality and a feminist. There really is no "requirement" to be strident and unpleasant as the media sometimes sees us. The idea—the main idea—is to be anything we want to be.

No, you're right, I didn't submit your name to AWA, but welcome. Maybe we'll get a chance to talk more than we did in Anaheim.

Yes, I'm still on the anti-cute-unicorn bandwagon. I wrote an article for RUNE recently, asking for people to send me material for a slide show, and I've been getting a surprising amount of stuff. So, you're not too late. Send me a copy or the original and I'll make a slide and send you back whatever you sent. Or, better yet, if you have the capability, send me a slide.

Tina I sympathize with your tales of moving. I haven't done that for more than 3 years now, and have no inclination to do it anytime in the future, but the last time I did do it, it took a caravan of eleven cars to move me to my present, wonderful apartment. I doubt that I will move again until I buy a house or, more likely, a condominium. What struck me in your story was the similarity of the name Kolbe (that awful landlord) to the name of a Madison landlord whose specialty is gutting beautiful, historical, mansions, and restructuring them for dorm-size apartments, all the while, refurbishing the outsides and getting awards for that from the state historical Society. He's also known for never paying back a renter's deposit unless hauled into the small claims court. Lovely man. His name's Koll.

Feminists do it in their stride.

*And, now, from AWA #32, more
(written & typed in April, 1982)*

Mailing Comments

Joan Congratulations to you and Mor-decai! I hope you continue to enjoy him and that all goes well with you. As I mellow with old age, and having lost my paranoia about pregnancy (when I had myself "fixed"), I find that I actually enjoy other people's babies. Once in a while. It's unusual and surprising to realize that I understand your excitement and enjoyment of your child.

I sort of like the Christmas planning rituals too, but I haven't had time for those things these past few years. Ever since I started to do free lance design work, the months before Christmas have been overflowing with work for other people's Christmases. It's been two years since I managed to do a card for myself...

The Milwaukee Journal publishes Ms. Manners, and every once in a while I pick up a Milwaukee paper and catch

it. I agree; she's terrific. We've also got a leftist, radical, feminist advice-column writer in a Madison paper. Her column is called "Ursula Understands." Recently, she published this hilarious series of letters in her column all about who (men or women) are responsible for leaving those little yellow spots and tiny hairs in the toilet basins. Monogamy vs non-monogamy is a frequently discussed subject, and there's a lot about relationships between supposedly liberated and politically-correct-thinking people. fascinating. One very serious discussion was provoked by a single, male parent writing in who complained that his having a child instantly caused a lot of women to write him off as a serious lover or important friend. He chastised those women for all their supposed desires for a "committed relationship." This caught me up in some thought, because I certainly do just that—not want to get involved with single parents. Mainly because it seems like such an obvious occasion for a potentially uneven commitment. And so it struck a lot of readers and sparked off some really good conversations. On the same level as some our conversations, in fact.

Pat Potts Re your disparaging remarks about Armadillo-Con: Any con is simply the sum of its committee members. And no con, certainly not WisCon, is made up of people who share one political philosophy, or even the same degree of commitment to any political philosophy. When I was down in Austin, I thought it was great that there were enough feminists (and people sympathetic to feminists) to have voted for the GoH's that they voted for. That they are contemplating Gene Wolfe or Liz Lynn suggests that those people are still there. Don't criticize the parts of the con that these people don't control though! Join the con committee! The feminists probably need your support to make the con better! ...Wait, I didn't mean it exactly that way. Do criticize the sexist parts, but from within the concom! I know from experience, working on the WisCon concom, that criticisms of sexism (not enough feminist panels, the behavior of individuals, whatever), served mainly to drain us of energy to keep working on the convention. Only when the criticism is constructive, that is, voiced with an offer of support--at least in advice if not active participation, did the criticism become positive. There are usually only so many feminists: and they can't take on all the jobs. At ArmadilloCon, obviously, this year (and the year I was down there), they were not in control of, nor did they seem to have much influence in film selection. I doubt that hucksters can be controlled by the concom unless censorship is instituted--something I wouldn't vote for if it came up at WisCon. Rather, it's necessary to build up the reputation of the con in a certain way, so that sexist advertising doesn't seem to be a profitable thing at your con.

Get involved in ArmadilloCon, Pat! Maybe you can eventually get some better films chosen for the movie program. Or, do that panel!

Well, were you sculpted by Balticon? It seems that you weren't allowing

for a great deal of time to strengthen and develop defined muscles. It's been nine months for me since I started lifting weights regularly, and I still don't really have defined muscles. My calves are somewhat defined, but they always were. And my upper arms are just beginning to show. When I tense them I can show off some nice biceps. But this is not much considering the fact that I am now doing four chin-ups, and bench pressing 120 pounds (30 times). This is a lot more than most of the women are doing right now at Bodyworks, and though I look very healthy and my muscles are getting nicely toned, there is little obvious muscle-building going on in my appearance. (In fact, this is one reassuring fact for a lot of women who contemplate weight-lifting but are afraid of just that.) Still, (UPDATE:) I'm quite pleased by the fact that I've lost about 60 pounds now in those 9 months and have not once backslid. With this method of dieting (just increased physical exercise), the problem of maintenance is no problem at all.

Lyn Paleo Welcome to AWA! And thank you for the excellent bio. I'm on the edge of my seat for the next installment. Lucky me, I'm behind a month and I can maybe read it soon if you're in AWA #33. Really, it was beautifully written with a fictional (but no less real) style.

You asked me for a bio. Rather than subject most of the people in this apa to a repeat of my mailing to the apa issue before you joined, I'll just send you a copy. It was a fairly extensive bio. ...In exchange for that xerox you mentioned of Mog's interview of Joanna Russ. I'd love to see that if it isn't too late.

Marty Siegrist You got a copy of *Aurora* because on your card in the mailing list that I keep for the zine, I had you down as never having received one. And we try to send every AWA member at least one sample copy. We can't afford to keep all of you on our mailing list for more than one issue though, and we hope that you are interested enough to want to comment (write a letter), or contribute an

article or some artwork... Or maybe pay for a subscription. Devious, aren't we.

So, how'd you like *Aurora*?

Anne Laurie Re your comments to Mog about kids probably not playing the game of open-and-honest with parents: true. But who says and open-and-honest parent /child relationship can't include privacy? I.e., one says, when the kid asks you whether you give dad head, that there are some things you feel more comfortable being private about, and giving daughter or son the same. There was a remarkably good section in the latest issue of *Ms.*, called "Do Feminists Do It Better?" which was about Mother-Daughter sex talks.

They classify me as a "lawful" because 1) I can't work at home unless my apartment is reasonably neat and everything is in place. If the work is something I'm avoiding for one reason or another, I sometimes can't begin until the floors are waxed and the bathtub is scrubbed. Not to mention the dusty windowsills. 2) I am the keeper of the SF-3 mailing list and keep persnickity track of all incoming mail and changes-of-address. 3) I take good meeting minutes. 4) And because--this being the reason I'm willing to accept--it's impossible to be involved in a large number of projects and relationships unless one is organized. But that's just a personal prejudice.

Yes, I did like *Ridley Walker*. I nominated it, in fact, for a Hugo. What I liked about it most, was the style. The plot, after all, was extremely simple. It seems to me that SF fans for all their self-proclaimed tolerance to change and affinity for radical ideas, should be a little more open to experimentation in the arts... So I don't expect it to win or necessarily be on the ballot. (On the other hand, I'm just as reactionary as those I criticize, in the area of music.)

I haven't read about the Halstead fiasco in any of our newspapers. Thanks very much for reprinting the article. Has the recall petition worked? I'd really like to know how it turned out.

Have you heard about Wisconsin's Reinquist situation. Reinquist is a judge down in southwest Wisconsin who gave a very light sentence to a retarded man who raped a little girl (about 10-yrs old, I think). The uproar isn't about the sentence though. The background is this: Mother and retarded man are lovers. Little girl has a history of watching the two of them make love. One day when mother is gone she climbs on top of man and he rapes her. Reinquist comments after the sentencing that she was an extremely "promiscuous" girl for her age, and that the man couldn't help what he did; that it was the little girl's fault. In other words it's her fault for acting like an adult and his excuse for being like a child. Anyway, there's a recall movement afoot, and with the history of the recalled Judge Simonson behind him, Reinquist is not making the same mistake as Simonson and sticking with his remarks. He says, now that they were improperly made at the trial. It looks very much like he'll be removed though.

Sue-Rae If you are swimming $\frac{1}{2}$ mile 3 times a week and walking a mile and a half every day, it doesn't seem to me that you have to worry too much about weight gain affecting your health. And if you feel good about yourself at the weight you are, you shouldn't feel guilty.

Now that I'm reducing my weight (for the first time in my life, actually), I've been thinking about why/how I got to the point I did. Your experiences with your father quite clearly had a lot to do with your feelings; but I can't say I had similar experiences. I think the main thing for me was that it felt inevitable. My mother and both my grandmothers were/are overweight, and I didn't want to embark on

a painful regimen of abstinence and see it not work. Sometime during this year of exersize, I've learned and accepted the idea that I have control over my body. Possibly it's no coincidence that I started weight training, swimming and biking about 6 months after I'd had myself sterilized. I don't know. It also could be that I read a book that Jon Singer gave me (*Frogs Into Princes*) and experimented with a few of its suggested do-it-yourself-exercises.) But in any case, I've been a little leery about all these books that have been coming out about the politics of women and diet/fat. That we shouldn't judge our bodies by how our culture defines beauty, is a reasonable statement to me. But that fat is better because it is life-affirming, etc., doesn't click for me. Going on a diet or exersizing to attract sexual partners may be psychologically unhealthy. Wanting to be physically healthy and strong, though, is a perfectly good reason to do those things.

Janet Bellwether I don't understand. How did I convince you that it would be a good idea to buy a moped???

Helen Swift I enjoyed your story about the diaphragm and the health clinic and you and Perry, very much. Hope you're all pleasantly settled and enjoying Canberra now.

I've got an "upside down" uterus too. I guess that about 25% of all women are constructed that way. (Well, I was going to make a joke about Australian upside down being right-side-up uteruses up here, but I won't...)

Lexie Pakulak Welcome.

Marsha Brim Ditto.

Fran Skene, Pat Mueller & Joyce Scrivner Neat! And sooooo pretty!

MAILING COMMENTS

...still.
This time from the last mailing I'm behind on: WAPA #33. I WILL CATCH UP, but in a different typeface. There's something wrong with my Letter Gothic element. It's getting nearly impossible to snap off and change elements. It got to the point back there that I'd do anything to avoid mentioning a book and having to switch to the italic ball.

Cheryl Cline Ahhh...that was easier.

Goodness! what an enormous zine this time! And good reading. Congratulations on your feeling of contentment and productiveness. I think I know what you mean. About three or four years ago, I started to notice that I hardly ever went through cycles of depression/productiveness & good humor any more, that I've gotten more or less into a "rut" of general mellowness and productiveness--depressions being short-lived and quite definitely and rationally connected to good cause. And those infrequent depressions are handleable. This is about the only sign of maturity (of all those I assumed I'd experience when I thought about it as a child) that seems to have come true.

Diane Martin sent for a bunch of the National Women's Mailing List brochures and we handed them out at WisCon. A bunch of us have sent in our checks (as well as *Aurora's* vital statistics) and are enrolled. Thank you much for the information and the encouragement to do so.

In connection to those "good" books Mog had you read out of concern for your balanced reading habits, and your conclusion that Heisenberg's uncertainty principle is a major influence on their writing—Thomas Berger's writing fits in quite well in that generalization. I'm quite fascinated by his writing even though he fits your criticisms of men's writing as being about the destruction

of identity, discontinuity, chaos and alienation. With every book, Berger seems to have gone further in trying to deal with the idea that we can't really understand another human being totally. His books are *Little Big Man*, *Arthur Rex*, *Who Is Tony Villenova*, *Neighbors*, and *Reinhart's Women*. Some of you may have seen the film they made of *Neighbors*: the book is extremely close to the film, except for the fact that the ending has been changed to a more upbeat one. (in the book, Earl "had his fatal stroke not long after [the car drives away from the smoking ruin of Earl's house]. He was helplessly conscious for a time while it was under way. He was aware that his friends recognized his predicament as genuine and not as some device of guile.

"Harry sped up the engine. He said: 'I'm certainly not going to think the worst of you, Earl, old pal.'

"Dying, Keese realized that Ramona had leaned forward to pat his shoulder.

"She said: 'Earl, it could happen to anybody.'" Also different is the fact that the craziness of the book is made objective in the film, where, in the book it is all (perhaps) in Earl's mind. He keeps trying to understand these new neighbors of his and keeps misunderstanding because his involvement with them (and his own craziness) muck up his conclusions. As you said, Cheryl, the Heisenberg uncertainty principle. Earl has this additional problem (in the book) and that is that he has weird peripheral vision: He's always seeing strange things out of the corner of his eye, that on further straightforward inspection turn out to be ordinary things. However, by the time the story gets under way, his peripheral vision's weirdness is completely undercut by reality's weirdness and he isn't sure anymore what's merely peripheral vision distortion or real craziness, and it's impossible to check all the time... So instead of reading about this subjective confusion, the film uses the bit about the power lines in the back yard and the TV announcements. And the swamp.

The thing that fascinates me, though,

is Berger's progression and working out of the ideas. He doesn't—as you complain about all of these modern male novelists—conclude that there is "No Point to anything", but rather keeps playing around with different sorts of reactions to an uncertain existence. *Tony Villenova* was the most depressing of the series, and almost prevented me from reading *Neighbors*. I loved *Reinhart's Women*, though. That novel is about Reinhart, an aging gourmet hobbyist, a divorced man, living with his daughter who is an extremely successful, extremely well-paid fashion model. His life and this story, is a complex and burlesque comedy of misunderstandings and revelations, as people come to see different (but never all) facets of the personalities of people close to them. Reinhart's first revelation is that his daughter is an active lesbian and shows none but himself the sweet, shy side of her personality. Reinhart's son remains a complete enigma throughout the book, because we see him from so many people's eyes. There's a painting in Reinhart's apartment that metamorphoses every time Reinhart looks at it—as does every person he knows. But all through the confusion, Reinhart not only survives (unlike Earl in *Neighbors*), but flourishes. And the point Berger seems to be making is that the attempt to control *others* is fatal, because such control depends on a real understanding of others and that is something that one cannot get: for in the very act of trying to control others we change their behavior to something unexpected. Berger manages to make that into a very humane conclusion, and further manages to suggest that our own personal freedoms (from others' attempts to control us) is far greater than we think. In effect, Berger's conclusion from Heisenberg's message is that we live in interesting times, and the trick is to find a place in which to enjoy it safely.

I didn't think, when I placed that innocent little check-mark beside your comment on contemporary literature, that I'd say quite this much. But Berger has been an interest with me ever since I read and loved *Little Big Man*, and ever since then, I've been growing this Theory. This is the first time I've been provoked to trying to explain it. Now, I'll be eager to hear what more you have to say (as

you promised you would: "more later," you said.

Andrea Chalfin-Antonoff I like your logo for "Zombie Jam-boree". And congratulations on the added name. Welcome back. The Marlo Thomas story was fascinating; and an unusual interesting bio. Thanks. The issue before last of *Obsessions*, when I wrote that bio of my own, I got to thinking about all the different ways I've described myself. Like you, I've sometimes told the story of my life as a series of jobs. Other times, to certain friends, when that is the sort of conversation we are having, I have told the story as a series of relationships (friendships, family connections, lovers, etc.). Last month, for ANZAPA (an Australian apa), I told the story of my life as essentially a series of places. Depending on the context, one tends to pick out a theme and tell the story through that filter.

Janet Bellwether I hope you manage to read the last two books of Suzette Haden Elgin (SHE)'s Ozark trilogy. I really enjoyed them. But make sure that when you find the second one, you have the third ON HAND. The second ends in a terrible cliff-hanger, and you will want to start the third immediately. The reason I sound so tentative about the possibility of your actually finding these books is that SHE was royally screwed by Doubleday. All three books were out, the reprint rights were sold to the SF Book Club, and they went out of print: and SHE still hasn't received her advance on the books. Besides that, they didn't bother to print the map that she provided to go with the trilogy, and you really need one. (I ended up drawing one myself to go with the book. SHE gave us a copy of the map she'd drawn when she came to WisCon and we will be printing that in AURORA if anyone is interested in having that to look at as they read the trilogy, which I highly recommend.) Another thing is the extreme ugliness with which Doubleday produced the books: Each book is typeset in a different, progress-

sively smaller type size. The covers are all hideous, done with completely unrelated and inappropriate designs (mostly clip art). Still if you can get past that awful packaging (and maybe the Book Club editions will be better: they can't help but be, I suppose), the story is wonderful. You will all, I bet, want to meet Responsible of Brightwater, or better yet, be her (as I did).

The Ozark trilogy is by far the best fiction SHE has ever written, by the way. It surpasses the quality, by far, of her Coyote Jones series. I don't know if I'd call the trilogy her best writing, though. I am even more impressed by SHE's professional linguistics writing. For instance, Suzette spent 3 months preparing for her GoH speech at WisCon (an impressive thing to do for an SF con in any case); but it turned out to be a Major Linguistics and Feminist paper that sparked all sorts of fantastic and energetic conversations and explosions in everyone who attended WisCon and caught some of her non-stop teaching/talking act (or, to those of you who've read the trilogy: her non-stop *granny* act). The paper/speech was one in which she proposes the possibility of a new language, designed by and for women. Not just a reworking of existing patriarchal languages, but an honest-to-goddess new women's language. One that she calls language "0". After the speech a lot of people came up to the concom and asked for copies of the speech and we've promised to reprint it in *Aurora*. It will come out by the end of May. Jan Bogstad will be publishing a critique of the paper in *New Moon* along with a question/answer format discussion of it. I don't know the schedule of that publication, but it should come out around the same time or not long after *Aurora*.

Gerri Balter And welcome to you. It seems I'm saying "Welcome" a lot this issue, but of course this is because I'm going through three issues of back-issue AWAZINES. I'm lucky and grateful to Anne Laurie for having given me a grace period, or one of you newly welcomed apa members would have been here in my place...

What a frightening story—having to keep walking in rhythm to avoid being shot and killed. Somehow there seems to be a metaphore there...Like the situation in American cities in which women are told to stay indoors at night, and to walk/dress/look a certain way when they walk outdoors, in order to stay alive, to stay safe. ...And then being told that women have as much freedom as men have. People (even the victims) tend to forget that the rhythm is a form of bondage in itself, and not the solution.

There were lots of frightening things in that introduction/biography of your's... Thank you for sharing the story with us. You must be a very strong woman to have come through all of that with as much enjoyment for life as you seem to have.

Pat Mueller Once again, another neat-o logo/cover. Hey, y'know, you ought to do that for a living. Joke.

I like the typeset interior too. Now I'm all interested in typesetting and would love to be doing this zine on one. I'm using typeset material a lot at work (as editor of all the park newspapers), but also I've learned to typeset for my freelance design work. There's a local printing shop in town where they offer lessons on the typesetter and cheap user rates: So I took them up on the offer and learned to typeset in order to do *The Cacher of the Rye*. No, not *The Catcher in the Rye*. *The Cacher of the Rye* is a fannish parody of the Salinger novel, written in the late 1950's by Carl Brandon. Carl Brandon is one of the all-time famous fannish hoaxes—in reality, he was a bunch of San Francisco fans (mostly Terry Carr) who perpetuated the hoax that Brandon was a wonderful, talented black San Francisco fan for three years. After three years, Brandon was on the verge of being elected the OE of FAPA and was probably one of the most popular fans of all time. No one had met him though, because whenever a visitor came to SF, Carl was unfortunately visiting his grandmother in Sacramento. Luckily for

the hoaxters, widely traveling fans were unusual in those days and so noone suspected the truth from that. In any case, *Cacher* is one of the best-known (but not very well published—only 75 copies were originally circulated and it was never reprinted) of Brandon's works. Terry Carr gave me permission to reprint it in honor of his GoHship at WisCon (with Suzette), and for the occasion, I learned to typeset. I'm really proud of the resulting book: especially considering that I did the cover, typeset the text of the story and the text of the 20 page introduction by Terry (in which he tells All about the Brandon hoax) and the complete Brandon bibliography, in about one month's time. I've just started publicizing it to fandom in general (outside of WisCon I mean). In fact, the last page of this apazine should be an ad for the book.

The experience has made me so enthusiastic with the process of producing a professional-looking book that I am tempted to get involved in the Women's Apa reprint project. (Are you listening Anne Laurie?) If the money can be collected to finance the project (from all of us, I would assume, if we can't find outside funding), and if all choosing of material & editing/copy editing is done by others, I'll help do some or do all production... Typeset, layout, and arrange with printers, etc. That seems to be a relatively "safe" offer because I think those "ifs" are sort of big ones. But if... And if all that happens, Pat, I'd like some of us to discuss design possibilities and ideas regarding this project. It seems to me that, depending on the type of material that is chosen, and what kind of graphic materials are incorporated into the publication, it could be done in some really very creative ways.

I think you made excellent sense and described the situation to a "T" (and I bet I'm not the only one it will have sounded terribly familiar to). It sounds like a Good Thing for you to have gotten un-involved with Mike.

I don't play D&D or any of its variations, but I've noticed that the Madison home-grown variety seems to include a

lot more role-playing than I've heard about happening in other places. For instance, in one game that a friend told me about, they spent their whole game at "home" playing around with sex-roles at the local tavern. The group is made up of mostly men but has a fair number of women involved (say 25%) of which several are DM's.

Say, if you're going to be in Wisconsin the week before ChiCon (at Lake Geneva?), why don't you arrange to visit Madison while you're there and maybe catch a ride with one of us going down to Chicago? If you like, you can crash with me for however long you'd like to stay. Let me know.

Your comment to Avedon about how maybe some fannish fans look on feminists much as they look upon media fan/invasaders, is quite true I think. Recently I've been working on an idea—that with the help of some other fans here in Madison—I hope to turn into a fannish musical parody.

Filker on the Roof will be all about the story of how fandom was invaded and subverted by all sorts of fringe fan groups until, at the end, all the trufaaans had to leave AnatefCon because the hotel was being razed to make room for a new movie theater. All the faans are leaving the hotel at the end (singing "AnatefCon, AnatefCon"), carrying all of their belongings with them (their mimeos, their collections, etc.). The song at the beginning of the musical would be the most fun ("Tradition!"), but all of the songs from *Fiddler on the Roof* are converting quite naturally to this idea. I'm especially enthusiastic—to get back to why your comment sparked this digression—about the scene where Tevya says goodbye to his third daughter at the airport. She is going off to that "frozen wasteland," Madison, Wisconsin, to edit a fanzine with a feminist... Anyway the play will be full of all the groups that are "subverting" fandom and dispersing the ghetto.

Next week, I'm picking up my contact lenses too. I'm a bit nervous about how I'm going to deal with them.

Anne Laurie First of all, thank you for the grace period. I really needed the time.

Secondly, I'd like to compliment you on a beautifully laid out zine. I really liked repetition of the Japanese woman's face with each mailing comment. Very elegant touch. (And I still like the gray paper very much.) You should also be involved in design discussions on this hypothetical WAPA book.

Thanks for reprinting the concluding articles (or is there more?) on the Halstead mess. What an awful situation. Is there any movement to remove the judge? I hope so.

Lyn Paleo Thanks much for the continuation of your biography.

At least there are some advantages for getting behind on the AWA mailings. I got to read both parts of your bio within a couple of days of each other. I admire your writing quite a lot.

Thank you for sharing the information you gathered on the Holocaust. It was put together professionally and is a truly horrifying account—covering a lot of areas that aren't normally mentioned in more well-known accounts.

witty but obscure interlineo

I'm reaching the end of comments now... perhaps not because there are so few zines left on which to comment (though that's true, relative to what I've gotten through so far), but because I'm reaching the end of my energy to respond. Scanning ahead in my copy of AWA 33, I see only one check mark (next to a comment on Catch-22, one of my favorite books of all time) that is likely to elicit a very extensive comment from me. So, ahead of time, to the rest of you: my apologies, and of course: RAEBN(M)C.

Ethel Lindsay Perhaps it will be a sign that our society has gotten less uptight about homosexuality and lesbianism, when it stops being so embarrassed at the thought of using a multi-defined

word which shares a meaning with that sexual minority. The English language has many words with multiple meanings. Additional meanings don't subtract richness from a language; they add to it. So maybe it would be better to promote the use of "gay" with all of its meanings.

Janet Wilson Well, I wouldn't want to speak for Brook Shields, but some of us really do get turned off sexually by people who smoke. I do. I don't, as you imply, conclude that smokers are "dirty, sloppy, stupid and bad parents"...I just get a mental picture in my mind (and taste in my mouth), and whatever attraction there was, vanishes when I find out that he smokes.

Mog Decarnin Thanks for the excellent reviews and recommendations. *Pixote* is coming to Madison soon and I've been planning to see it. Now, I'll definitely want to see *Children's Island* as well.

Terry Garey Humor is the reason I like *Catch-22*, not the dressed-up male angst. In fact it's one of those books that I think I'll read over and over again for the rest of my life and always enjoy. To me, humor is at once the clearest mirror with which to understand the world, and the most powerful lever with which to change it. But besides that, *Catch-22* has always fascinated me on all levels. I read it first in my sophomore year in college, and for that class's term paper, I completely took the book apart. I typed every incident on little 3x5 cards and covered my wall with the cards and pieces of yarn connecting them. There was a time line yarn stretched waist-high across the wall. I discovered two purposefully planted discontinuities in the plot line. They were obviously not accidents: they were not irregularly or sparsely spaced. That was great fun. And then, I found a geographic discontinuity. It turns out that there is an island called Pianosa the right distance off the shore of Italy near Rome, but it has a totally different topography and configuration than the Pianosa

that Heller describes. The real Pianosa is larger and not the right shape. However, there is another Pianosa off the east coast of Italy (the same latitude, approximately), that exactly fits the description Heller provides in *Catch-22*. It's that pattern of reversed-but-not-quite-discontinuity that Heller uses on the time line and in the structure of the whole book.

...Well, I guess all this doesn't really convince you to like *Catch-22*, does it? ...But you did ask. Lucky for you I'm nearing the end of my energy for apa-writing, or I'd have gone on for pages.

Mikki Verneti In this discussion that started with Avedon criticizing the intelligence of media fans, and Anne Laurie defending them because her friend proves that the criticism is a false generalization...I tend to side with Avedon. And I feel that way mainly because of a trip to your area a year or so ago, to AquaCon. Your comment about being tired of starting conversations and the other person saying "'Oh, I don't read. I don't have time,'" echoed the sort of comment I heard over and over again at AquaCon when I mentioned some book, idea or author. Over and over I'd hear "How interesting. That's a lot like in *Star Wars* when..." And AquaCon was organized in order to combat the dominance of media fans at local cons, to do a literary convention for a change. The only problem was that they had a hard time getting people who had read SF to be on panels and ended up using Jan Bogstad and I on nearly every panel. I alone was on a dozen panels that weekend. I have no criticism of the concom, but I think the LA area, and perhaps southern California in general, is a bit "ahead" of the rest of the country, and provided a bit of a preview of the growing prevalence of fans whose main common ground is a small number of movies, rather than a diverse and very large number of books. As a result, conversations based on this common ground tend to be trivia games more often than the exchange of ideas I associate with conversations shared by people who read. There will always be exceptions, but in the main, people who are mostly in-

terested in films and read little are not as interesting as fanatic readers. And there are a lot of the latter types flooding conventions these days.

UNSURE WHAT'S-BEEN-GOING-ON SECTION →

...Which leaves me with almost a page to add some non-mailing comment type remarks.

I have been well: still exercising. Swimming three times a week (and up to a couple miles on Saturday), weight-lifting three times a week (and up to 120 pounds on the bench press, 30 repetitions), and biking to and from work now that the weather has turned comfortable again. I'm joining a bike club, in fact, and take longish (30-50 mile) trips on Sundays. I feel great.

A couple nights ago there was a "Take Back the Night" rally, march and dance in Madison that I attended. It was a wonderful experience: ironically (for the occasion) a totally joyful, energy-kindling evening. There were over 1700 people there and as we flowed down State Street the women in the march (about 80%) had the great sensation of watching men standing outside the bars looking faintly uneasy and suspicious—in other words, totally switching roles for that evening at least. It really was a tremendously powerful feeling. And it was a good night for me personally too: I met two really interesting women, one of whom lives only a couple blocks away from me, with whom there seemed to spark an almost instant friendship. There have already been plans to get together again: Mary and I this Saturday, and Jini and I to see *Personal Best* together sometime this week.

There were some good speeches at the "Take Back the Night" rally Saturday night, but one comment was made in one of the speeches that really pleased me. It seems that there are a lot of small towns in Wisconsin which do not have the funds to pay for a safe-house for battered women. In some of these towns, women have been getting together, and rather than moving the woman out of her home, the women have been moving in with her, until the husband leaves! What a great idea.

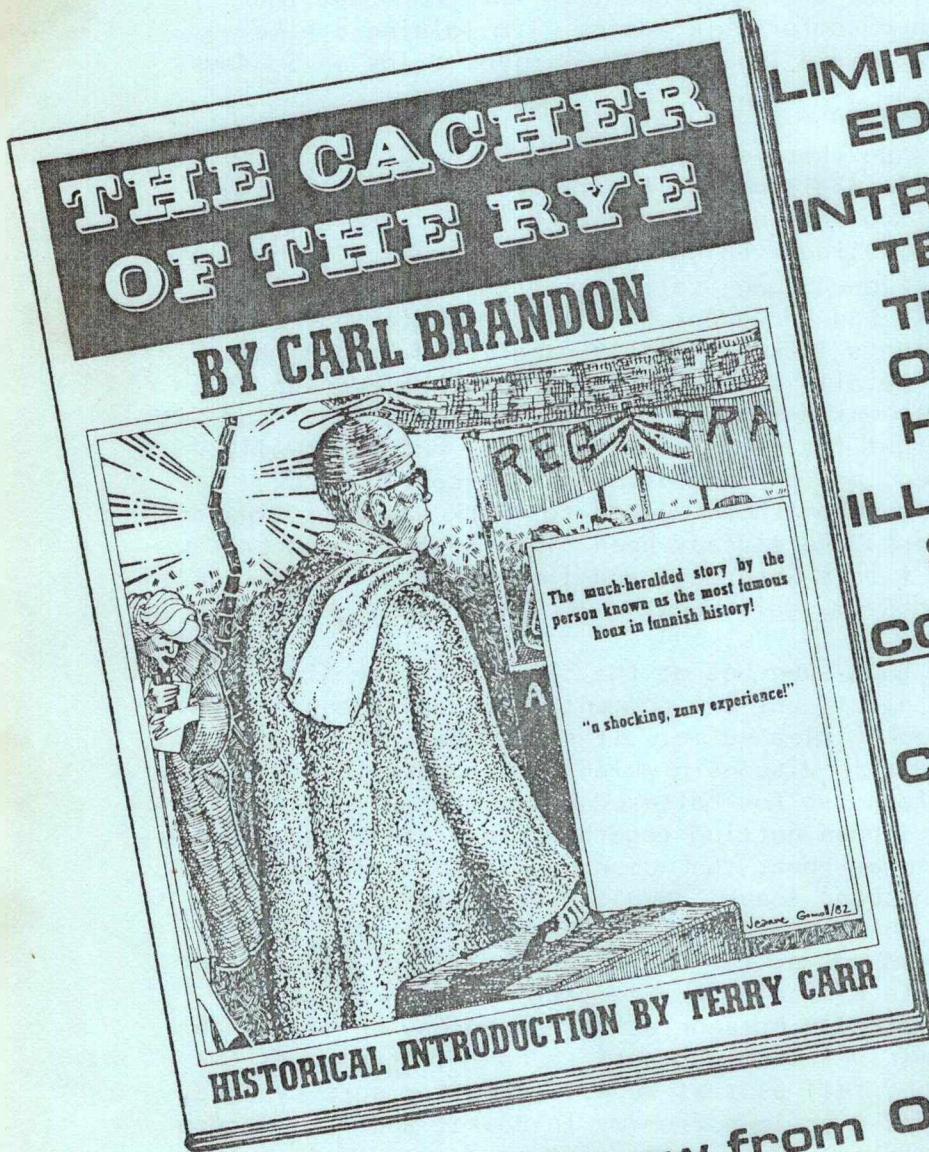
Nothing is settled yet at the DNR regarding my job and whether or not the artists will all be relocated in one work area. It's all been typically bureaucratic: the bureau chiefs squabbling among themselves over who gets to have control over the most people. They tell us that we will know for sure by June. Meanwhile, my work overflows from my In-Basket and I've gotten a larger office to provide me space for my new waxer that I had to have in order to lay out all the park newspapers which I now edit. It's still a very enjoyable job. And now it's Spring and I can start planning field trips out to the parks. Devils Lake next week!

See you all in July!

Jeanne

THE CACHER OF THE RYE

BY CARL BRANDON



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