

# \* OBSESSIONS #6 \*

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## DELECTABLE MOUNTAINS

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OBSESSIONS, spelled correctly this issue, and subtitled DELECTABLE MOUNTAINS (after e. e. cummings's usage) comes to you typed from rough draft once again, interspersed, again, with typist commentary, by Jeanne Gomoll who has so far been unable to follow fannish tradition and type directly onto mimeo stensils, time-saving though that might be. OBSESSIONS 6 is being written on July 26 [and typed on July 28]. Geez a real colophone. Further business: As you note, this zine is done on mimeo not ditto, and that's the way it'll be done in the foreseeable future. I know, #5 was truly bad. Susan Wood, Ann Weiser & Mike Wood have already asked for and received copies of defective pages. Anyone else that needs same, just ask or write to me at: 143 W. Gilman #303, Madison, WI 53703 or call 608-251-5851  
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You will all excuse me I hope if this time, in this OBSESSIONS I make only a few and very brief mailing comments. (I've been pretty good up till now after all) I feel shaken, uprooted, changed. Um... This is an understatement. These past months (only two months??) have been so full of events and people and excitement that I feel as if I've occupied a time warp and in reality have lived through six months to everyone else's one. Oh...and to set the tone of this mailing in case it isn't clear yet: I am exuberant, exhilarated and quite pleased with it all.

And what you may ask is the cause of such jubilation? Well I'd better do a little background first, because my mood is not merely the function of actual events (e.g., Western, my trip West to Vancouver & Seattle and San Francisco), so much as it has to do with the attitude I've consciously fostered in myself this summer.

You recall those vague hesitant references to Rick in past OBSESSIONS? (My lover of the year past who found himself unable to handle two relationships at the same time, that with myself, and with a woman living in California. He felt he had to choose between the two of us with regard to a primary relationship. He did not choose me and withdrew though we remained sometimes-lovers afterwards. I stayed in love with him, gradually withdrawing, consolidating a sense of autonomy, but hurting along the way. Well he is gone for the summer, which I expected to be good for me, and indeed it has been.

Aside...

I feel uneasy going into any great detail about Rick, a thing I had no difficulty in doing about Dave, a previous important person mentioned here, mainly because he, unlike Dave, has contact with fandom. Dave could be entirely fictional for all the chance any of you have to come in contact with him much less recognize him if you did. With Rick however, there is much more of a necessity for me to keep in mind that he is/could be a very real person to you people reading this and so I feel much more responsibility to keep my judgements/conceptions of him private. This is opposite to the sense I have noticed other fans express (or imply)--i.e. that fans are able to respond, while people



outside, talked about behind their backs, tend to be much more victimized by a fan's written description of their interaction.

I know what I feel I can and cannot do. And these decisions are based on hurting people not at all or as little as possible. I'd prefer to blow off steam at people you will never meet and hurt through attitudes I may have, through my biased reportage, unfairly have convinced you of.

...End of Aside...

So accept the skeletal version of Rick's and my relationship (or lack thereof). (And later, perhaps, equally tenuous references to recognizable others.) It hurts. I was coping. I am, now, coping even better. This in fact, was the point of my summer's resolution, that is, to fill it with as much activity, people and diverse experience so as to become a person--a different person--no longer in love with Rick. I've used this method before, unconsciously then, but still it's the same thing. By living apart, no longer sharing the experiences that cause growth and change in my persona, it's almost as if the me that could be hurt by another person in the past is no longer there. The ammunition is no longer destructive; they aim (accidentally or on purpose, it doesn't matter) at the wrong target: they aim to the heart of my past position, they don't know my new place. It goes the other way too, of course, he will become a stranger to me too.

It seems this is the process of alienation-autonomy that most of us have gone through with our parents: needing to be alone to define and force recognition of ourselves as independent, different (no longer children) people. (For this reason, I love Marge Piercy's description in WOMAN ON THE EDGE OF TIME of an adolescent's rite-of-passage/retreat/naming ceremony.) It's not an illusionary metamorphosis either. We all need to "rename" ourselves at one or more points in our lives (and interestingly, as Ctein has pointed out, some of us have literally renamed ourselves). This is an interesting idea to me, the way we individually formalize our growth & change processes, but it is a bit off the track from my story...

So anyhow, I began this summer with the project in mind to become a "different person." Before he left, on our last night together, Rick said something that was meant I think to reassure me. "Nothing will be different between us," he said, "unless you change." I had thought and was talking out loud about my impression that this summer's separation was going to be a real end-point for us as lovers. His statement only made me pause, swallow and realize that I was going to have to change. Certainly it would be my responsibility to "end" things if I wanted that.

I'm sure all of this sounds a bit estoric but it all involved a great deal of hard thinking and, surprisingly to me, a tremendously effective internal campaign, once begun. In May-June, there was the convoluted, time-consuming struggle of finishing JANUS up, doing the artwork, laying it out, etc., combined with a job (designing and executing a series of slides for a police directed program on retarded citizens) I'd gotten through the Women's Research Institute. It was good to continue that sort of work involvement, but in addition I began to open myself up more and more to increased emotional involvement with people.

That part of my summer... (My god, this apa-zine is beginning to acquire the distinct aroma of a What-I-Did-On-My-Summer-Vacation essay...)(Anyway...) ...began when the phone rang one night very late after a MADSTF meeting. My little sister (age 15) was calling. "I ran away from home, Jeanne. What should I do?" Soon after that, my parents called too and I reassured them that Julie was with friends and would be home



as soon as she cooled off. It seems my mother had been reading Julie's journal (Why do parents not respect children's privacy!), I told them what I had suggested to Julie a few moments before, i.e., that they (Julie especially) needed a mediator. That since communication was becoming the real difficulty, and because Julie felt more and more intimidated by my father's argument tactics (how well I remembered and identified)--I suggested family therapy. Julie jumped enthusiastically at the idea; my parents weren't too thrilled. But they did go through with it and Julie feels very good about it. (The therapist (he) largely supported Julie and indeed did prevent my father from arguing unfairly, e.g., "If you loved us, you would...", etc.). Until that first session though, things were tense. I went home for father's day weekend--evenings going to the Milwaukee convention, X-Con, and felt too much "in-between" and obviously on Julie's side. ("Jeanne, tell Julie that--," "Jeanne, tell mom that--," I felt like I was in some '50's situation comedy series.)

But involved I got. Also at X-Con, involved did I get. I find it easier to wander through convention parties, becoming involved, involving myself in talk with no fears, etc... It was a nice feeling. Like being a senior in high school: "owning" the halls. I met someone later on that I'd met previously at the Wiscon artshow but had been unable to get to talk to then because I had had no time. And became pleasantly, briefly involved-involved... ah well, clichés...and left Milwaukee beginning to realize that I could easily make this summer a very interesting one. X-Con, by the way, is planning to transport Anne McCaffrey to Milwaukee from Ireland next year and charge slightly higher membership fees to pay for that. (Although they are relocating at a less expensive hotel and so perhaps the difference will balance out). I really can't tell you anything about programming since I wasn't there during the days--though judging from what I read and heard, there wasn't a lot I would have been too interested in.

...The feeling of being "open" continued. A week before the con in Milwaukee, Hank and Lesleigh Luttrell brought Dan Steffan to Madison from Discon. --He was talked into doing the back cover for JANUS, performed his "Ducks-in-the-News" broadcast on local radio (WORT-FM), and was generally entertained by MADSTF. I still don't know whether it was my eagerness to connect with as many people as I could--or that, in any other circumstances I would have gotten to know and like Dan so well. (Don't some of you find that there are times in your life that you can't help but meeting/attracting other people, while at other times, there is a wall and noone dares to approach you?)

Anyway those weeks too, before loading up the van and heading out west, were also enormously important times for my relationships with other people I have known for a long time in Madison. Ann Steel (of my feminist group, a friend of 3 years) and I began a period of intensification of our friendship, realizing and sharing our feelings that we had learned so much from one another, had benefitted incredibly from each others' insights and support through all the many small and large crises of the past years. At the convention I realized (and told her later) that I felt that with her and Joan Rogers (another member of our feminist group) I'd learned to practice my stated philosophy of giving energy to women-friendships, of loosing the taught value that places male-friendships always on top... At the convention, I realized it was no longer a conscious thing to battle that old standard. Lovely.

And Lesleigh Luttrell and I seemed to quadruple the amount of energy we had been putting into our friendship. We'd begun talking (really talking) only a few months before, sometime after WISCON I think, and the importance of those talks began to grow dramatically for both of us during those weeks before Westercon (though compared to the growing-closer we did at the con, that too seems slow and plodding). Les was/is going through a lot of crucial changes/realizations about herself and her life, which I'm sure she'll get into somewhat sometime in her apa-zine, but she needed someone to



listen. We both needed someone to listen. And in my experience, the best people to talk <sup>to</sup> when you're going through changes, is often someone who is experiencing similar metamorphosis. Not only did we listen, we became good, good friends.

And I wonder again how much this growing-closer is a response to the specific person and how much a response caused by my own needs/expectations. Certainly Lesleigh and I could have begun talking at any point in the two years that we've known each other: that we began only recently makes me lean toward the latter element as most influential.

So OK, now you've got the picture: Here is this person who normally tends to open up to new people at cons anyway, in this hyper-state of receptivity. She is taking her turn at the wheel of the drive-away 1977 Ford van (with gosh-wow cruise control even) driving over the plains and mountains and rivers to Seattle, with Lesleigh Luttrell, Dan Steffan (who is taking the long way back home to Virginia) and Steve something-or-other, a rider procured from a ride board ad in Madison. Westercon, the whole week of Westercon for me: from Thursday through to Friday is like an explosion. I fall in love right and left. I hardly even notice the mountains for the people (...And thus, I think all of a sudden, I should name this con-report after eecummings' novel THE ENORMOUS ROOM, or a subchapter of same entitled, "Delectable Mountains". The mountains are extraordinary people encountered in the intense, isolated-in-a-group experience of a WWI prison.) Wonderful analogy.

Enough has been said, often enough about how intense our interactions with people are in con situations [Because of their isolation from our day-to-day life, their almost 24-hours-a-day duration, the sense of brevity (hurry, hurry, you'll have so few chances to know this person!)]. I guess I've experienced that intensity before, but for some reason never like this. See the above mentioned special circumstances, I tell myself, but also think about the fact that this is the first con I've attended without a large chunk of MADSTF always around somewhere. Not to mention the fact that the con itself turned out so well. Damn it--I wish all of you could have been there, it was so fantastic.

You see, things seemed to have developed at the last minute, things not mentioned in, or taken into account by early con pr's. Like 1/3 of WAPA showing up. Like Suzy McKee Charnas, Lizzy Lynn, and Chelsea Quinn Yarbro, attending and participating in programming. Like Susan Wood's idea for "A Room of Our Own" (hereafter referred to as AROOO)(one of those famous "I-don't-have-the-time-to-do-anything-I'll-just--," like when she's been up half the night talking to you and then gets up early to make biscuits and wash your clothes...). Anyway, for me, and quite a few other people, the availability of this place for feminist programming, the programming itself (Suzy Charnas reading from MOTHERLINES and talking about it later, Chelsea's talk on the work of selling sf by women, Kate Wilhelm's interview and later discussion in ARCOO) and the number of people interested in the sorts of things I am interested in -- all this generated considerable energy... You can imagine. Talks late into the night with Jessica and Sherri and Elinor Busby. Other talks with Denys and Ctein and Susan and Terry... Meeting Doug Barbour. And Sunday morning a hilarious breakfast with Suzy McKee Charnas, showing her the review of MOTHERLINES in JANUS. Talking to Quinn about her friend Alice Sheldon. Meeting Liz Lynn, San Francisco writer, and Vonda MacIntyre who agreed to be WISCON 78's Guest of Honor. Meeting and getting to know (and fantasizing about moving out to Seattle to be with) Seattle people: Jane Hawkins, Elinor, Jeff Frane, Loren MacGregor, John Berry, and especially, Jessica and Sherri.

[Add that energy to the amount I carried with me to WESTERCON. You should be able to see how I reached critical mass.]

The good feelings of the con, by the way, were characterized by some interesting events. The masquerade, for one, was won (by applause volume at least) by Jerry Jacks, Ctein,



and two other men. The last three were dressed in lacy bloomers of Arabian nights' harem variety, being prodded/whipped along by Jerry who was dressed in motorcycle drag, singing "We are three little slaveboys of Gor, are we..." In fact, I think most people at the con would agree that the overriding amount of energy at the con was generated by and focussed upon feminist and gay activities. At the gay party Saturday night, funds were collected to make Suncon a positive reaction to Anita's horror campaign in Florida. Rather than protesting by staying away as Marion suggests (and I'm sure Anita would be happy to hear), Suncon can be made another show-place and/or confrontation of solidarity. I think something like this must be much more important a gesture than boycotting the Florida location of the con. [More on this later in the abbreviated MC section to Marion.] The convention workshop (on WISCON and the concept of feminist cons) that Lesleigh and I did was another such event-- through our interaction with people and processes at Westercon, things came together beautifully at just the right moment for Les and I to say as Denys would have said, "some real important things."

We described the genesis and process of WISCON and then described the difference between it and Westercon, the latter being more successful it seemed (to both of us) in terms of being a "feminist" con, because the effects were more widespread. Wiscon feminism seemed to have its primary effect in programming events and was "good" mainly in terms of friendships strengthened within the con committee. Westercon seemed to draw together the attendees of the con into a temporary, enormous family. I went into the ideas I've been considering recently about the development of alternative families in fandom (an idea discussed at length in the next JANUS). We speculated that there were two basic reasons for the staging of feminist cons: (1) negative, that is, to help eliminate sexism in fandom and in sf writing. And (2) perhaps the more significant one, to capitalize on quantum leap effects of cons in terms of opportunities and potentials for a group of people to grow and change with one another. I would go further and say that feminist/gay awareness is adding to the sophistication of the fannish communication network (by sophistication, I mean adding new levels) and having effect on every part of fandom; clubs, fanzines, apas, as well as conventions.

That was a good thing for me to do in the midst of all the emotion I was experiencing at the con. I managed to articulate and speculate on the implications of my excitement. --But back to the source material.

I got to know a lot of people at Westercon. During the trip there, at the con, and later during an evening in San Francisco, Dan Steffan and I became closer friends. Getting to know him was interesting. I found that Dan uses my mask method in reverse (referring to Victoria's list of relationship gambits: the one where I make myself appear more professionally and/or socially competent than I really am and then have to live up to it. Becoming what I pretend to be, as Vonnegut would say). Although not about his art abilities, he tends to put himself down or become a clown (and make the joke on himself before anyone else can/does). Becoming what he pretends to be but doesn't want to be is a vicious circle. I, on the other hand am that way about my art work. I found it literally impossible to draw when Dan was around (and find it difficult to draw in public too, at cons for instance) because I admire his style so much and feel inadequate. I was explaining this insecurity to someone at the con and Dan overheard and subsequently sat me down and insisted I draw (a nametag for --further tension-- artist, Jim McLeod) while he watched. That was good for me, and I made a lot of nametags after that which turned out to be a wonderful (ego-boosting) highlight of my participation in the con for me. I think I was good for him too, in beginning to help him chop away at his insecurities. Anyway, I feel fine about the time I spent with Dan.



Susan Wood is another person I got to know, after the con was over however, not during. Late into the night Tuesday, we talked--recognizing in each other the mothering-trait (taking care of, supporting others and sometimes chafing under the non-recognition by others of our insecurities, needs, etc.--hidden by the carefully constructed Competent person mask), and laughing about it, feeling good to recognize/be recognized. Neither of us, I think though, would chose to discard that useful metamorphizing mask, for a more revealing one. It's just good to let it down once in a while.

Lesleigh and I gravitated towards one another at intervals, sharing our experiences, ideas and feeling a good deal of love for one another. (Yes Lesleigh, it was worth it a hundred times over and yes, I'm very, very glad we went together.) There's a whole list of people I began to know and will probably get much closer with in true fannish tradition, by letter: Jane Hawkins, a gutsy engineer woman who does great palms. Loren MacGregor, a portable, no-batteries-needed juke box and warm person. Jeff Frane, an unscrupulous collector of artists/artwork, but genuinely sensitive and aware (read: articulate about emotions) man. And Denys too who is, if possible, even more warm than he seems in print and sometimes, I suspect, a more articulate feminist than I am. And others...Allyn Cadogan, John Carl, Ctein, Terry, Sharon & doug barbour, Lizzy Lynn --all of whom I felt very quickly "attuned" to. Lesleigh and I were talking about how/why people become friends, why some people seem to become instant intuitive-intimate friends, why others seem forever untranslatable, etc. We came upon the analogy of a radio fine-tuner. A friendship is the process of fine tuning to another individual's frequency. Sometimes, those rare, wonderful occasions when one comes across a person already on the same frequency, "instant" friendships result. (The shock of recognition.) Other times, especially for people who are not able to "tune" to other peoples' frequencies and are mostly out of range themselves, isolation results. I feel as if I've encountered a whole bunch of people exactly on or very very close to my own frequency. Or maybe, my increased "receptivity" is an increased ability to fine tune to others: I'm less restricted now to a certain range. Whatever, it was marvelous.

One of the most important friendships that developed for me was that with Jessica and Sherri. I'm going to have difficulty finding adequate words here and doubt even that I will be able to begin to convey the importance to me of the time we spent together. But I'm going to try. Jessica, you told me to write about this here and my hesitation had little to do with nervousness as much as awareness, even then, that I wouldn't be able to express myself adequately. And here I am fumbling for words as I expected I would.

People all surprised me at the con in that so many of them did not turn out to be as I expected them from letters or zines. No matter how much contact I'd had beforehand via written word, meeting them in person was like beginning entirely anew with an almost stranger. Meeting Jessica was like that regardless of how very real and visible she'd made herself (yourself)(who am I talking to? She? You? Myself?) There was an uneasy introduction at dinner Friday night, tinged with the unreasonableness/irony of too much knowledge/little trust. Later that evening I went for the first time to AROO to find mostly men and, at first, only one woman sitting there talking. Discouraging in itself, it became more so. [Hilde was the one woman: and Hilde, we still disagree. (I don't think it's merely semantic.) --on the topic of whether or not rape is ever, ever justifiable. No matter how radical the woman--I don't care if she really honestly believes that men are inhuman, there is still no justification. Ever.] The conversation grew more diffuse, but centered on the topic of how very radical feminist rhetoric can do more harm than good. I didn't like the fact that I was arguing such arguments in a room supposedly set aside for feminist discussion. I felt worse that I was in a defensive position there. I felt much relief when Jessica and Sheri walked in, assuming--"at last, allies"--and we listened in silence for a while (I'd long given up



arguing), and then left to talk someplace ~~else~~. Later, I heard that our leaving was taken as a kind of insult. But I've revised my opinion on restrictive rooms/places for women at cons. I certainly felt resentment for what I assumed to be the motives of some of the men who were in that room at times and unlike the "Frog" man of another con, there were often many more than just one. On the other hand, feelings in that room were often extraordinarily good, and encompassed women and men in the room, and certainly had a wonderful effect on the whole convention.

But I am digressing. following the accidental meeting and leaving from AROOO, I felt suddenly and immediatly very close to Jessica and very easily too with Sheri, that surprising me because I'd had no written contact at all with Sheri. Going back to the fine tuning analogy, I seemed to be able to attune myself to them (and visa versa) almost immediately in a very emotional way. I felt guilty about my anger that I'd expressed in my last apa-zine because it was based on a lack of contact that I could hardly imagine to exist any longer. Now, looking back it is difficult to describe the process of attraction and trust and friendship. It reminds me of my first days with Cyn (Cynthia--described in #4 I think)--how the time between her first dramatic entrance ("Hello--I'm Sin!") and the development of an intense friendship/dependency within days afterwards, have completely been lost for me. I can't recall the connecting days, what we talked about, what, exactly drew us together. So too with this. There is mainly strong feeling, too little reason.

Oh I take that back: there is much reason. It just seems mysterious. I found Jessica to be forward/blunt/honest to an incredible degree: I was amazed, entranced. I trusted her implicitly. Because I perceived her to be always honest in articulating her judgements and perceptions, I felt all the more warmed to know she returned my friendship and love. I found both Sheri and Jessica to be beautiful women (I went back to my room once and drew furiously trying to catch my first impressions of them before I lost them in the swirl of people accumulating in my mind.) Sheri reminded me of Cyn a lot, especially in the way she, in the end, managed to have made me rethink a few things and articulate and act on my relationship with women. (Obtuse enough I guess) Both of them ask such good questions.

[Aside: A frustrating relationship is waiting to be asked the right questions.]

Anyway it was wonderful. The memories of times spent in lobby corners, on stairways in out-of-the-way corridors, at Vonda's party Wednesday evening--are all filled with a glow of good feelings for me. I decided in fact to stay in Seattle longer than I'd planned in order to stay with Jessica and Sheri. There wasn't nearly enough time to talk to/become close to all the people I wanted to/could become friends with. I was saddened in San Francisco at having so little time to spend with my brother Eric and friend Debbie Litchman. But I'm glad I took the time to be with Jessica and Sheri. I learned much and tore down some clumsily constructed blocks about extending close friendships with women into physical realms--and feeling very happy about it.

The hyper-receptivity lasted through my stay in San Francisco (except for a brief respite in the trainride down from Seattle to SF, when a nerd sat next to me, trying to impress me ("Oh, sure! --I've seen JANUS on the newsstands. I almost bought it in the Seattle terminal!")) and prove to me he was indeed a physicist ("You see those telephone poles passing us at 4-second intervals? That means we're traveling at a speed of ....."). He followed me around the train. Once I had to tell him that I was going to the bathroom. Ah well.) But after the reunion and intense conversations with my brother and his lover, Danny (who are in the process of trying to adopt a child legally) and with Debbie, and saying good-bye to Dan, I suddenly sputtered out for good--I thought--in exhaustion on the 56-hour bus trip back to Madison.



In this non-chronological description of the con, I feel as if I've forgotten a lot. I didn't tell you the sequence of talking, of connections made, of programming events, and room parties and meetings. My vague allusions to sexual encounters now strike me as a bit ridiculous. Now being on a different typewriter, at home: the typist, not the writer commenting on how this report seems to be going. After, also, receiving communication from Denys and hearing his reactions to the same events (well almost...). Denys, you may worry about not being able to be up front enough to match you stated feelings of openness, etc., but again, your writing makes me jealous and almost tempted to tear up this thing and start all over again. You will probably have received a more detailed response in your mail box by now, but to say this now (even if you've already heard it/read it/known it before), I have to do: I felt the connection too. You're wonderful. Oh--and congratulations too: be happy. Do good. But back to this intermediate appraisal--I feel as if I've missed things with this style of telling. I missed the good amount of extraordinary eating (Chinese--to which Suzy led Jessica, Sheri and I for Sunday brunch; more Chinese, Greek and, unfortunately for me, an Indian experience). There was swimming--my first time in the ocean, or appropriately attired on a nude beach. I loved it. And the scenery: ocean and mountains, Shawn falls with Susan and co. (John Berry, Eli Cohen--who I played computer starvation with in the back seat of Susan's car--, Loren Macgregor, Jeff Frane, John Carl and Lesleigh) As I told Jessica in a letter, I am definitely cultivating fantasies of moving out there and adding myself to the flood of fans cultivating such a move. --On the other hand, maybe I didn't miss a whole lot.

Strangely, after a couple days rest, the feelings came back again though (after, that is, a debilitating 56 hour bus ride from which I just barely remember the two novels I consumed while cramped into my window seat). New adventures are developing (and next time maybe I'll talk in detail about these events/people--and be able to do so in glorious detail because they involve non-fen again). In any case, I know I'll be OK in the fall when Rick returns. By that time years, subjectively, will have passed. I'm not corresponding with him (and thus sharing experiences and growing with him as I would tend to do). It's a good feeling. Sigh.

How's that for a con report.

Other things... I saw two movies recently, neither recommended. NEW YORK, NEW YORK (about a woman who gets walked all over by a no-good bastard...AND LOVES IT.) and Fellini's CASANOVA, a very believable, excellent portrait of another bastard in different times. As I said excellent portrayal: but because it was so well done, I wasn't enjoying myself. Both films in fact did exactly what they intended to do with brilliant acting...but why? We know... I want more... Sputter, sputter. I don't want to go into a long review, and maybe I should to justify the above, I'm sick of thinking about the films though. Somebody else?

Ah well, that pretty much brings you up to date on major things. I've committed myself to enough writing and artwork to work straight through the next several weeks and will use impressions of my latest reading material to fill alot of those duties. JANUS written material deadline is rescheduled two weeks from now: I wish I'd known that before I finished my articles in such a rush. Oh well. The new MADSTF T-Shirt is due to be printed next week and gawd, I'm broke (traveling & not working does that.). Time for MC's. Brief and scattered I'm afraid...but you understand? Really I did enjoy it all, etc...

AVEDON...reading your zines, your letters, talking to Jessica: yes, yes I want to meet you too.//I'm intrigued by the loss of virginity question & will try to go into detail next time: sounds like a good topic... For now though: On purpose and pleased is my capsule description. SUSAN...thanks for the book (payment will arrive one of these



days). And thanks for getting me to read Atwood's EDIBLE WOMAN. JANET...I like the idea about men having to have WAPA women sponsors in order to enter the apa. (I wish there could be some sort of system like that at the Suncon AROOO, if there is one: i.e., men must have a AWAP woman escort/sponsor to enter...). I'll vote for that. CAROLYN were you at Westercon? "id I miss you? SARAH...we should talk about potting some day, the sensual feel of clay under one's fingers, exchange glaze recipes, texture techniques, etc. I'm a potter too. CTEIN...judging from the range of definitions you got about the word "sexism" it's no wonder people disagree about what makes a feminist. The more basic the definition, the more obligated one is to do something. Seeing/understanding denotes responsibility.//It was good to meet you, by the way. LESLEIGH MADSTF, a "fabulous fannish myth"? Somehow I doubt that we will manage enough consistency to manage that... TERRY...hello again--I'm sorry I didn't get to see you at the Cellar in SF: the only nights that were possible were Weds. or Thurs. (I arrived Sat., left Fri.)...So I came Thurs. and of course you weren't there (Akido night, right?).// With respect to your California Goodluck symbols--they're all in Wisconsin I think. My tomato plant got flooded out while I was away. REBECCA WRINKLE IN TIME and the starfish novel (both by L'Engle) are in paperback. About the aggression info., I'll send you the paper if I can locate one. Jackie Macauley, (head researcher) is out of town temporarily. About the high proportion of women that have been raped in this apa--perhaps its one of those totally non-ignorable radicalizing experiences...//and um...I'm also sending you (and anyone else interested, just send a SASE) the newest (and exhaustive) survey of current information on cognitive differences between men & women (that spatial/math vs verbal/language dicotomy that supposedly exists between men and women). Don't bet on it, Rebecca. Another truism down the drain. JON...the Physics won't have been a waste. Nothing can be a waste if even my geography degree wasn't...//It's people who want to "do" something about this country and reduce everyone's choices to the "right" ones--that are potentially our worst trouble-makers. I'd agree that the options of family-making (in a wide sense of the word: cooperative, supportive groupings of people) should be increased and diversity encouraged. But I've got the feeling that that is not quite what the zen master has in mind when he wishes the "basic unit" in our country to be "the family." Divorce rates are not trumpet calls of Armegadon. In 19th century France high divorce rates were preliminary to general and basic liberalizations in marriage laws/structure, and led in fact to a new social stability, and to the strengthening of the family (not as it was, but as it became). I think we're in a similar period of reorganization--but going back to the old forms without rethinking will only, I think, make things worse. Divorce rates (the symptom, not the cause) would only increase if further pressure for nuclear family priority was applied. ELINORE...hello again (I was so pleased to meet you!). MARION, I hope you go to Suncon anyway: I really do think (as mentioned earlier) that a positive demonstration/confrontation would be more useful as well as visable than if we boycotted the Florida location. To use the South African analogy as you did-- I would extend it and question who is the more courageous: the fighter who stays within and battles a repressive society, or the offended liberal who changes their address to avoid guilt by association. Is silence less damning when it occurs outside the place of injustice? Mary Renault's silence (the lack of political awareness shown in her novels or public statements) should be just as unsavory as the attitudes of any of us who are silent though not living in South Africa. And so, I think, will our open anger in Florida be more dramatic and effective a gesture than our absense which will be more of a comfort than threat to Anita and her ilk. NINA...a neat zine (it says in my handwriting on top of your colophone). I'm intrigued by Carol Emshwiller too, mainly after reading "Escape is no Accident" in 2076: THE AMERICAN TRICENTENIAL (Bryant, Pyramid, 1977). It reminded me of a jazzier version of Racoonia Sheldon's "Oh My Sisters--" --woman trapped in nightmarish world (husband, children, etc.) believes she must be a stranded member of a different world--that her rescuers must come soon. Fine writing. You too. I loved her warning to other foreigners: "Be careful when you come. You might turn out to be somebody's wife. He says, 'shape up.'" Or later: "...I am no ordinary woman. At least I don't think so." GINA...I wish I had said something like what you said in answer to Jessica; it felt right. Indeed there is bleeding, and what else is there to



do but laugh? It's my response nearly always. ...and...JESSICA, hello. Smile. I love you. JENNIFER, given the success now of Westercon's WAPA party(s) (it seems to be getting better and better every time), Suncon will have to be really, really wonderful. I'd like the women's suite fund idea to be seriously considered: if it's done by us and not the concom, we can do what we want. (And require women escorts for all men who come in?)//I liked the point you made to Ctein about actions of the oppressed to overcome oppression not being "reverse sexism." I'd like some people to hear that: the opposite seems such the "thing" to say these days, so liberal-obvious. KAREN--sorry you didn't make it to Westercon: hope "the situation" improves, and yes, why not drop in on your way out West. PAT...was that all in the "entertainment mode"? Indeed, I'd like to hear more of the "Sympathetic/Empathetic Mode, for interpersonal relationships." JO-ANNE, I liked the 2nd person letter style, very nice, warm, real: and no you're wrong dear, I think you are not quite "without inner resources:" not to have written as you did. Take your own best friend's advice and you will be fine. ANN--Again, I loved your theory. (Or Roberta Miller's theory)(Yes, tell us more about her!). I will keep your zine out and either go on to the lengths your thoughts (again) prompt me to sometime: either next APA or by letter. One at least, perhaps both. We must meet, you know: Your ORLANDO's are all so extraordinarily provocative to me. I think that you must yourself have similar qualities and I am intrigued. The parts where you talk about sexual thrill equating with weakness, I've got underlined (thinking how my knees noodle-out with sexual arousal), but as I said later, later.//I promise, later. Why did you say you were "abashed" about the letter to me?//My birthdate is September 10, 1951, 8:30pm (and too, don't you need the place/lat.-long.?--Milwaukee, WI). I'd love a quote. My brother did my horoscope and says there is a whole lot of strange things in it, like a Grand Trine (?) or something. VICTORIA--Your challenge challenges, but oh god I don't have time now. I question the reasonableness of even trying to imagine a group of people who have no preconceived notions on any of the social sciences/arts... It's a laboratory exercise that introduces too many of its own factors (sterility, inapplicability to reality) to be useful it seems to me. Also it seems rather impossible to really extrapolate in such a situation after all we can't possibly separate our own preconceived notions from our extrapolations. It seems to me (further) that you want something that is impossible. You ask, have asked very often, for "proof"--"unbiased information" regarding the existence or non-existence of differences between men and women. What I wonder is this: Until all the returns (or jury) have come in, and in the interest of scientific objectivity, might it not be a good idea to not assume anything, or rather, assume that no differences exist, until proven otherwise. Your arguments seem like those of theists who ask us to believe in the existence of god until proven not to exist. Sorry, I think the burden of proof goes the other way. People are people and to assume difference unnecessarily, is almost always an "ist" of some sort or another (racist, ageist, sexist, etc...)//I LIKE the suncon display idea you suggest, an sf "without comment" board. I'd like to incorporate that sort of thing into the fanzine panel I'm supposed to be working on. Will you (and anyone else with a longer participation in fandom than me--nearly anyone--or access to material) help me? Or can I help you? Whatever: I'd like to see it done: seems great.

PHEW. done...I think. One thing that occurred to me while I typed was that I will probably be sending this to other people (mentioned or concerned) in here. It's late at night now, and I should stop before I start getting absurd, but it's only line 49 and I don't want to let go of the glow of the convention that has hung on while I wrote and typed this zine. Ira Thornhill was through Madison the other Weds. on his way to Autocon (I had thought it was going to be going on while I was out on the other side of the continent), and I was nearly tempted to call in sick and go on to another con, another WAPA party... But we've been really busy at the Institute and I couldn't do it. Oh I was close though. I hope you all had a wonderful time though. I hope too that I get to meet the rest of you at Suncon. Until then, or October, whichever comes first,

love, Jeanne