

# Union St

This is Union Street #13, Obsessive Press #112, and is published by Jeanne Gomoll and Scott Custis, both residents of their home at 2825 Union Street, Madison, WI 53704-5136. Phone 608-246-8857. Union Street was created on a Macintosh computer—a IIx or an SE at various points in its lifetime—and hardcopy is printed on a Laser-

writer IIITX printer. Text was created with Microsoft Word 4.0 and laid out with Aldus Pagemaker 4.0. The Union Street Logo was designed with Aldus Freehand 2.0. All contents are copyrighted © by Scott Custis and Jeanne Gomoll, 1990. September 1990 for Turbo-Charged Party Animal APA #53. Members FWA.

## KIM NASH, OE

(JG & SC) Lucy requested, and Scott and I are formally requesting, that Lucy be put into the pipeline and reinstated in Turboapa when her name comes up. She plans a new zine with a new title. To everyone else: Lucy might appreciate copies of your apazines sent to her if you've included comments to her.

## TURBO-APA, ISSUE #51, CATCH-UP COMMENTS BY SCOTT

### PETE WINZ

I want to start out by congratulating you on your enormous contribution this month. You may be flirting with burnout by trying to catch up this way, but if it works for you, great. Provides me with lots of comment hooks.

I did not mean to put you on the defensive by asking about engineering jobs. I hope you weren't embarrassed by the question. I admit that I was under the impression that engineering skills were somewhat more transferrable from specialty to specialty than they really are. I assumed at least, that there might be more opportunities in general considering the shortage of many types of engineers. What I was really after was a glimpse of your career plans at present. You did share some of this information with us. Back to school? Starting a business? Writing? All interesting possibilities, who ever knows for sure what to do next? I can sympathize with your problem because I am in much the same situation myself (I can safely say that writing is not an option for me.) I guess the best solution is to try things and see what works. There have been a lot of fiction submissions to the APA lately so don't be shy about joining in. You might even get some constructive criticism (just don't make the mistake of counting on getting it.)

Is there a family in America that isn't "blessed" with at least one lawyer for a relative? I have a rather eccentric, but pleasant, lawyer cousin back in Iowa. So you can safely conclude that any venom I spew about lawyers in general should not be taken as a personal attack on anyone's mother. I've had a fair amount of experience with lawyers. I come by my disrespect and cynicism honestly. The books I wrote about at the bookstore were not about choosing a lawyer to look over your will. These books were targeted at businessmen and wealthy individuals who needed an aggressive saber-toothed lawyer for mergers and acquisitions, hostile takeovers, shelter-

ing income, union busting, etc. They were about how to find the right amoral, unethical, legal shark to handle the less-than-wholesome intricacies of business in the Age of Reagan. Or they were about handling these guys if you find yourself on the receiving end. Titles like, "The Terrible Truth About Lawyers" for example (I maybe should have bought that one.)

Certainly legal language is unnecessarily complex and obtuse for the sake of "precision." Legal language is power in politics, business, government and everyday life. The real trouble with this is not so much the language itself, as who controls it. Lawyers have a monopoly on this power and, unlike computer programmers, are the only ones with the legal right to profit from this knowledge. If you have the smarts to learn computer programming on your own and you can convince someone you understand it, you can "practice." Not so with the law. Lawyers alone can practice law. Lawyers gear their fees to the rich, so the lower class and poor have little access to legal power. In September, a bill was being introduced in California to legitimize licensed, registered legal technicians to compete with lawyers in providing basic legal services and information that most people simply can't afford from lawyers. A publication I recommend that provides practical legal information, books, software and news is *Nolo News* published by Nolo Press (subscriptions \$12.00/year) of Berkeley, CA.

## KATHRYN BETH WILLIG

Welcome. Very interesting article on Beta Testing. I'm looking forward to learning more about you as time goes by.

## ROSS PAVLAC

Welcome also. I gather you will be the source of some interesting discussions.

## LAURA SPIESS

We are all looking forward to the trip report. What is the "interdisciplinary team" about? I second your new rule proposal.

## KAREN BABICH

"It's a guy kind of task, putting little oblong things into little dark holes with no light and some pretty odd angles." Ooooh, talk about innuendos! Nice idea for a layout, using comments to take off on longer articles and subjects. If you have

the inclination sometime, I would sure appreciate it if you ran down some of your favorite Chicago beers and small breweries. I love good local beer and would like to check out some of Chicago's best next time I'm in town (maybe Worldcon.)

### RICHARD RUSSELL

Sounds like you got a pretty raw deal at Educational Statistics, well you can at least consider the experience an education (puns are never intended by this writer.) Maybe next time you'll know a few more good questions to ask before accepting the challenge. I enjoyed "Something Was Lost in Translation."

### BILL HOFFMAN

Enjoyed the description of your Japan trip. I was particularly amused at the image of you trying to explain your need for a three pronged adapter. Jeanne thought you should have tried making the "international" signal for fucking (index finger of one hand thrust through the hole created by the index finger and thumb of other hand) only thrusting three fingers in and out. I told her you probably would have been thrown out or arrested for that. Look forward to seeing you in November.

### BILL HUMPHRIES

Your description of feeding Julie's snake was frankly disgusting. Your rant on "Iraq and Roll" was excellent. One aspect of Bush's game I find frightening is that Bush seems to be perfectly ready to fight it out, but may well be getting lousy advice on how easy victory will be. He certainly won't be the first President caught on that meat hook. Interesting Top 10 list. I didn't see any westerns, horror movies or mobster genres represented. I imagine there are several other genres left out.

### STEVE JOHNSON

Excellent comment to Peacock. Like you, we also objected to *how* he stated things as much or more than *what* he said.

### KATHI SCHELLER

Do you believe that some cars-regardless of make or model-simply attract trouble? It's not a very scientific idea, really, but if you've ever owned more than a couple cars, you probably have felt that such vehicles *do* exist. Sometimes you just have to give up and get something else.

### VIJAY BOWEN

As a postscript to our long-running discussion of tattoos and earrings I should tell you that I got an ear pierced last August. It wasn't really my fault. I had invited my 18-year-old niece from Iowa to stay with us in Madison a couple days. While we were walking down State St. shopping, I casually mentioned that I was considering getting an ear pierced. That was a mistake. "Oh that would be sooooo cool!" she laughed and pestered and cajoled me for the rest of the day until I finally gave in. I'm glad I did it. My sister back home was the only one in my family to really disapprove. Most were amused by my explanation that earrings were the current fashion in Madison for older white guys trying to look hip. The best reaction I got was from Jeanne's mom. Disapproval tempered by a desire to stay on my good side played on her face for a few moments. It's been fun.

### ANDY HOOPER

A truly absorbing and personal baseball story. Some of your best writing I think, at least of what I've seen so far. Your style was so direct, none of the Gonzo-isms that are entertaining but sometimes distract. A clear, vivid remembrance. Wow. You deserve a wider audience, Andy.

## TURBO-APA, ISSUE #52, COMMENTS BY SCOTT & JEANNE

### EXAMINING THE LOBOTOMIZED MAN

(JG) (for Michael Shannon, and Bill Farina)

When I drew the cartoon, it didn't occur to me that I should explain it. Jokes usually aren't very effective if they come attached with a verbal synopsis. But apparently, some further discussion is warranted. **Bill Farina** complains in a comment to **Kim Winz** that many women in the apa liked the cartoon and that none of the men expressed admiration. I think that gender gap is probably a significant one, but if it were a simple case of women laughing their heads off and men cringing and saying "that's not funny," I'd have just left it go. "Too bad for them if they don't get it," I would have said. But I'm really amazed at the reasons some of you guys gave for feeling uncomfortable with the drawing, and I can't let some of those statements go.

**Bill** says he thinks the cartoon is tacky and demeaning and that two wrongs don't make a right, comparing my cartoon with **John Peacock's** violent recipe for crime control.

**Michael Shannon** thought my drawing was an example of reverse discrimination, e.g., something that women are now "allowed" to do, but for which men are castigated as sexist. I happen to agree with **Steve Swarz** that discrimination is not a two-way street when you're dealing with groups that control different amounts of power. Only the more powerful can, by definition, discriminate against the less powerful because discrimination requires the ability to withhold or bestow benefits based on a certain bias, and only the controllers of the benefits can do this. This is an old argument, and from the evidence of some other comments in this apa, I predict we're going to return to it. But that's not the thing about **Michael's** comments that struck me as wrong-headed.

He also said "there seems to be very little difference between the two [the Silent Woman logo and my Lobotomized Man]. In fact, if the original sign was in fact from an old pub (and an English one at that), it at least had the excuse of being produced in a culture which thought such things were appropriate."

There is a huge, immense difference between the two drawings, **Michael**, the most important being that I have not reproduced mine on a sign in front of a public place, nor would I ever propose it be so used. In the same manner as the women in this apa filled many paragraphs attempting to explain to **DuCharme** just why the Silent Woman logo disgusted them, I did so with a drawing, as an analogy, a graphic demonstration of *why* the first drawing hurt us. **DuCharme** didn't seem to get it, if you remember. He invited us all to have dinner at this place, prefacing his invitation with a confession that the logo was in bad taste, but that the food was really great and that we

in bad taste, but that the food was really great and that we should all try to ignore the message implied in the logo. My feeling was that simply repeating the statement that this was an offensive drawing would fail to convince, that it would be more effective to show him what a male version of this sign would feel like. This is why it hurts, those other women of the apa wrote. I tried to say: *that* logo hurt us in the same way a sign like *this* would hurt you.

Think of it this way: My drawing was not simply a cartoon, it is an *editorial* cartoon, and in this area there is a very long journalistic tradition of making fun of the "bad guys" by exaggerating and extrapolating for comic effect. The headless woman logo is *not* an editorial cartoon; it is a sign.

When I sat down to draw, I decided that a simple reversal, that is, a picture of a headless man would not provide the appropriate analogy. The "desirable" stereotype that the headless woman refers to is of an empty-headed, ignorant woman who nevertheless provides everything that a man might want of her: her sex organs and ability to serve him. In fact, the absence of a brain and loss of the ability to speak might provide a pleasant bonus in the context of this stereotype. A brainless male doesn't translate into a similarly (politically incorrect) female set of values, except maybe to Julie Brown who sings about liking her men dumb. So I exaggerated, instead, the stereotype attributed to so-called strident feminists: i.e., the desire to be safe from the kind of man who "thinks with his cock." (This last is for **Steve Johnson** and **Bill Dyer** who pointed out that lobotomies are generally carried out elsewhere on the anatomy.)

Get it, guys?

## BILL DYER

(JG) Thanks for the article on Patrick Stewart. Very interesting. That explains his frequent excursions into Shakespeare in the show. Did you see the episode which begins with Data playing Henry V in a holodeck version of Shakespeare's play? I swear that Stewart was disguised as one of the minor characters in that scene, playing alongside Data. In fact, I would love to see Stewart in a Shakespearean play; I think he's got a wonderful voice and his dramatic range accounts for much of the characters' depth in the show.

I've heard a little about the new laser jet printers, although my expertise is mostly in the PostScript printers, since the artwork and the typefaces I use are all PostScript based. The PostScript printers are, of course all more expensive than the laser jet printers. Although the latter are coming down in price. For instance the October issue of *MacUser* has a whole section devoted to the new PostScript compatible laser printers and they gave very high marks (4 1/2 mice out of a possible 5) to the Texas Instruments microLaser PS35, which has a sticker price of \$2,999 (which means you can probably get it several hundred dollars cheaper). This is a much better price than the PostScript printers of only a year ago (\$10,000+)

However, I have gotten some literature on the new laser jet copiers and these seem to be getting *really* cheap, like less than \$1000. If you are going to be using your computer mainly for text, or if the graphics you will be

printing are not PostScript you could probably manage quite nicely with the laser jets. If, for instance, you're going to be using programs like MacPaint or MacDraw, there shouldn't be a problem because the artwork will be output in TIFF and PICT formats. Highend graphic packages like Adobe Illustrator, Aldus Freehand, and possibly some of the spreadsheet programs which produce fancy graphs, give you PostScript based formats (EPS, or encapsulated PostScript) and you will have difficulty printing these out on a laser jet printer. There will be glitches at best; at worst, they won't print at all.

So when you go in to price a machine, bring along a list of programs you will be using on your Mac and make sure that the output of these programs can be imaged. If you're going to be going back and forth between other Macs and want to use fonts resident on those Macs, be careful, because the best fonts are PostScript based, and you may not be able to go back and forth between your Mac (which will be using a font like "Chicago" that looks sort of like Helvetica) and another computer which uses the Adobe font, Helvetica. There is, however, a great program called "Freedom of the Press," (made by Custom Applications, but you can get it through mail order houses like MacConnection for \$255), and it brings PostScript-printing capabilities to non-PostScript output devices.

The November 1990 issue of *MacUser* has a big article on personal laser copiers which I think are all toner based rather than inkjet machines, and you might really like to take a look at that. The blurb sounds like it's aimed at your situation: "When your ImageWriter isn't enough but a PostScript laser printer is just a little bit beyond your budgetary means, consider one of these capable QuickDraw laser quality printers." Their favorite machine was the GCC PLP IIS (\$1,899) which they said would print three times as many pages as the Hewlett-Packard DeskWriter (\$995) can. They also liked the slower but cheaper PLPII (\$1,399) which can eventually be upgraded to true PostScript capability for \$999, and the Apple Personal LaserWriter SC (\$1,999), though it's slower than the PLP and produced less crisp images.

If you can't find this issue of *MacUser*, drop me a note, and I'll send you photocopies of the section.

## BILL FARINA

(JG) I think I would have rather heard about the convention and your impressions of Europe than about your plane ride, actually. Contrary to your assumption, I haven't heard that much at all about the convention. Understandably, people are pretty blitzed out after they come back from such a big trip, and unless I am around when they first tell the story of their trip, I don't usually expect them to go into a lot of detail all over again just for me. And unfortunately, few of the people in this apa who went to Holland have gotten around to writing about it yet. However, it certainly is a fannish thing for some weird reason, to focus on the "getting there" in conreports, rather than on the con itself.

## PAT HARIO

(JG) Boy that was an inspiring, beautiful description of your cruise. Would you mind saying how much it cost? It sounds like something I'd really like to do some day.

I wonder if it is just your very polite personality, or am I correct in assuming from your account that there wasn't any competition among the women on the trip, just cooperation? It sounds idyllic.

The image provoked by your words when you were trying to lure seals to the ship was of Sirens and Ulysses... I hope you're going to share some of the pictures you took with us.

Good questions to Kim Winz about Prodigy. I sure hope she answers them; now I'm curious.

(SC) I also liked your trip report. It seems that men go on trips like this with other men all the time, but it is somewhat rare to hear about all women excursions. The big thing I noticed was how men never come back from such trips talking about feeling "empowered" by the experience. They may have learned new skills, or discovered some important truth about themselves, but it usually self-oriented. I can't imagine a man returning from such an outing with a newfound respect for his gender, "...their strength and humor." No, with men it usually an experience dominated by strict lines of command, competitive jockeying for position and stress on individual success or failure. What fun!

I agree with your preference for eating out to cooking. When I lived alone, I rarely cooked anything more complicated than frozen pizza. Now, of course, things have improved. As far as restaurants, I'm not sure where you usually go, but I will repeat my rave review of a couple months ago for the Blue Plate Diner across from the Barrymore Theater. It's really a treat. Pasqual's for good, cheap Mexican food, Doty Dumpling's Dowry for burgers, Edwardo's for stuffed pizza and upstairs at Lane's Bakery for basic breakfast. Maybe we'll get some really obscure tips from other Madisonians.

## BILL HOFFMAN

(JG) Pretty gross poetry there, Bill, and of course, I enjoyed it immensely. I hope you're not thinking of applying for an Arts grant to cover your apazine expenses, because I think that despite the aura of learned respectability lent by the Latin, this issue might get you thrown to Jesse Helms. For that reason I suggest you call your zine, *Maplethorp Rag*.

Good luck on the *other* grant, the one from the VA Merit Review Board. I'm sure that Jesse Helms doesn't have anything to do with that one. And I hope you get a neat-keen graphic workstation. I've been doing research (and actual buying) in this area for a year and a half now, and if you are thinking of getting a Macintosh product, I could probably give you lots of information on monitors, software, etc.

## ANDREW HOOPER

(JG) Great, wonderful story, Andy. I expect to see it in mainstream print very soon; it's certainly of publication caliber. And it will be marvelous seeing Madison immortalized in print, not to mention such familiar characters... Has Don Helley seen the story yet? What did he think?

More than that though, I thought it first of all a real scary idea to think about living in a world in which Don Helley's dreams controlled reality, which then phased into the even more horrifying idea of living in a world in which one's own unconscious, unarticulated dreams controlled reality.

Bravo. (...One caveat: How come we never get any fleshed out women characters from you, hmmm? You seemed to have anticipated criticism in this story by including a female character who was by definition cardboard in construction. You even have your protagonist break up with her because she is nothing more than surface personality traits. I want to know why? How come there is such a wide gap of complexity between male and female characters in your writing?) Still, bravo.

(SC) I echo Jeanne's enthusiasm for your story. I have a hard time deciding how this story will appeal to people who don't know you or Don Helley. I enjoyed the story because I could so easily see the main characters from real life. I read the story about a week before writing these comments and I can't now remember how the fictional characters differed from the real people. I think I had such a clear vision of them that I ignored fictional details you gave them as I read. So, I look forward to some of the responses of others in the APA who will have a more objective view.

## BILL HUMPHRIES

(JG) So, were you at the anti-war march too? Scott and I were at the speeches, the march down State Street and part of the capital steps speeches. We missed seeing you. [See comment to Ross Pavlac.]

## STEVEN JOHNSON

(JG) I think that Steven Vincent Benet story that you and Pete Winz are trying to remember is called "Alas, Babylon."

(SC) I was impressed with your rebuttal to Langford's article, but I'm not really in a very good position to respond or defend since I am unfamiliar with significant details. I believe David would give you a lively debate if that were possible. Shall we conclude with a stalemate? I respect your position and the passion you exhibit defending it.

I read your comment to me several times on the Iraq situation and I think I am correct in concluding that you significantly disagree with me on only one point. You feel that I am wrong in assuming Arabs would like more "American-style" democracy. I think it is important to separate what many of these Arabs want as far as culture from what they would like in government. Iran is a good example of a people dissatisfied with a ruling monarchy but at the same time wanting strict cultural guidelines. They deposed the Shah, but reversed much cultural liberation. The same might be true in other countries (are Iranians really Arabs?) In Iraq and Syria political opposition is brutally oppressed, and in Saudia Arabia dissent is not tolerated. However, there are strong signs that progressives and democrats are getting some political space with the Kuwaiti ruling family. In a conference held in Jidda, Saudia Arabia in mid-October of exiled Kuwaiti notables, the Crown Prince promised to solidify democracy and deepen popular participation. Yet no women were invited to the conference. I feel most Arabs want more say in their government, I'm not sure I would label this as a desire for American-style democracy.

## HOPE KIEFER

(JG) Tell me it ain't so, Hope! I'm really sorry to hear that you and Karl consider Madison such a hopeless place to find better-paying jobs, and amazed that you think

you're going to actually make more money and save on living expenses in Philadelphia. Last month Scott and I visited a friend who lives in that area, who is positively wealthy compared to me (being a banker as she is). Anne can't afford to buy her own house now that she lives where she does and her transportation expenses are horrendous. But if you must go, I wish you all the luck in the world. I feel badly that I haven't been available enough to number as a friend you feel you can really confide in, but I can understand your wanting to be closer to your good friends and especially, to your mother.

Scott and I really liked *Goodfellows*. I think it's going to end up being one of the classics. But I agree with you about *Postcards from the Edge*: it made me want to read the book.

### KIM NASH

(JG) At the Brat'n'Brau you hinted strongly that you wanted more mailing comments, but first you'll have to do a little more writing here... You're *beyond* living on the edge, Kim. You've long since toppled over the precipice. Living on the edge would mean you were writing your zine on the last night, not *failing* to write it on the last night.

### LUCY NASH

(JG) We've talked about your dropping out of the apa, and I want to repeat, publicly, my support for your sticking with it, with us.

I certainly sympathize with your impulse to put distance between yourself and Kim. That's been my pattern too, when relationships have gone bad for me: first, stunned disbelief; then intense anger; then a powerful urge to avoid seeing that person. Once, after a breakup, I went on a trip to Seattle, where I met some people who became very dear to me. I don't know whether that was an accident, or whether I was actively seeking people and changes to put a painful incident behind me, but it worked, and eventually I got to the point where I could exchange pleasantries with that former lover, without feeling like someone was twisting a knife into me.

I think that when people compliment you on how well you're taking it (what a familiar phrase!), they're acknowledging the particular difficulty of a divorced *parent*. You can't totally cut yourself off from Kim and give yourself a little space to find yourself and your equilibrium again because you have kids in common. Accepting that responsibility requires grace and strength.

But given that responsibility, you must find a way to find yourself and your equilibrium without an extended vacation. And it seems to me that one of the major sources of strength for you is the support of your friends. I don't think you can afford to cut yourself off from any of that support, specifically, I mean that you can't afford to cut yourself off from this apa. I was impressed by the clarity with which you expressed your emotions in your last apazine, and I think it's pretty obvious that your writing in this apa could continue to provide you with both a creative outlet for the things you're feeling throughout this process *and* the support of your friends, who will give you honest feedback and remind you that they care about you. And

obviously, you don't even have to read zines that may still cause you pain. That's one of the advantages of an apa over going to a party, after all.

So, as you requested, Scott and I have begun our zine with a formal request to Kim that you be put into the pipeline for readmission to the Turboapa.

(SC) I Know people have been talking to you about this personally. I want to put this in writing. Please don't leave. Don't cut yourself off from this outlet. We are all here every month and we want to hear from you. So Real Life is too painful to talk about this month? Do fiction, art, poetry, or skip. Mailing comments getting to be drudgery? They are not required. Want to avoid contact with someone? Use the famous five-fingered editing tool. The rest of us will still be here. Still attentive. Jeanne and I are lucky to be able to call you on the phone or go out to dinner. That would be pretty tough for Vijay or Dyer or Lynne or James Bron. But they can keep up with you once a month in Turbo. You feel angry and hurt. Those of us close by can understand why. Give the rest of us a chance to help.

### KATHI SCHELLER

(JG) Nice cover, Kathi. Did you always like the style of oriental brush strokes, or did it have a connection with your interest in Karate?

Yes, the pie thing was fun wasn't it? Though I think your arithmetic must be off a bit: didn't Diane get two of your pies? I'm up for it again next year.

I really liked your essay on self-defense. I'd certainly try to kill an attempting rapist if one broke into my home and if I were capable, physically, of doing the act. (I don't have much doubts of the psychology of the thing; I've got too many friends, relatives, and personal experience not to carry through.) But I had never considered how the added factor of owning hands that are legally "deadly weapons" would affect the situation afterwards. I admire your courage, but worry that if it ever happened and you did attempt to hide the body, that you'd get put away forever...

(SC) Your self-defense article brought up a lot of important issues. Dirtbags have rights, regrettably. Yet, I wouldn't live in a system that worked any other way. Your conclusion seems to be that women who use deadly force to defend themselves from attack in their own homes will end up in jail. I'm not sure I buy that on the vague evidence you presented. Most of the time, courts and juries start out very sympathetic to people who use guns, knives or karate to defend themselves from home invaders. I would imagine that in order to be convicted of manslaughter, the court would have to be convinced that deadly force was unjustified. For example, that the attacker was unarmed and shot in the back while leaving the property, or was killed after being overpowered and disarmed. I would need to have more details on how these women wound up in jail before I can accept your conclusion. I would say right now that a woman attacked by a stranger in her bedroom at night could use deadly force to defend herself and look forward to applause from almost any prosecutor or jury in the country.

### JULIE SHIVERS

(JG) It's really nice to see you be so *happy*. I'm glad that you've found a good relationship. Good luck to both you and Bill.

Where did you get the clipping about the rock garden and three of them dying?

### NEVENAH (CRIP) SMITH

(JG) Sorry to hear about all the problems you're having with your hands, Nevenah. About fifteen years ago, I had total body arthritis symptoms. I couldn't lift my foot higher than a foot or so without a lot of pain. I could type and draw only with great difficulty. And I was considering some pretty dire solutions to my problem. Doctors did all sorts of tests and couldn't find anything. My psychological pattern was and still is (looking back on my recent reaction to the alopecia) not to say anything about serious health problems to friends until I've dealt with them in my head. What happened eventually, though might be of some use to you. They happened to notice on one of my blood tests that I had an oddly and drastically low level of iron in my blood. It turned out that my body can't metabolize iron from food, but that I need to get it with vitamin pills, which I've been taking ever since. About a week after starting the iron pill regimen, the condition—which had gone on for many months—simply disappeared.

(SC) Very sorry to hear about your medical problems/hassles. You appeared to be doing well at the Halloween Party, so I'm looking forward to a positive update this month. I liked the story.

### STEVE SWARZ

(JG) You sold an SE/30 in favor of a PC clone?!!!! Well I suppose if graphics aren't a priority for you, I do understand, kind of. It does seem to me, however, that if you wanted a DOS machine to do the things that your old SE/30 could do, that you would have to pay so much for all the peripherals and add-ons that you would end up *losing* money in order to get something that imitates the thing you are giving up in the first place.

I agree with your definition of discrimination, that it depends on the context, i.e., the power relationship of the individuals or groups that are acting upon one another and I generally don't accept the validity of the term, "reverse discrimination." Very well stated.

On first scanning of your zine, I told Scott, "Steve Swarz is back with a big mailing comments zine. But he doesn't comment to us." And in his typical, snooty-friendly tone, Scott replied, "What a shit." But later, on second reading, I realized that you had shamefully camouflaged your comment to us within your paragraph to Kim Nash, without the MC comment head. *Never mind.*

You don't seem to like my personal rule against putting more time into reviewing a thing than was used in its production and you bring up the example of a conversation in which a spurious comment catalyzes a long, in-depth discussion. I agree that a fanzine or book—even badly written examples—can nevertheless contain ideas that kick off marvelous reactions in a reader that transcend the value of the original writing to the reader. But writing an essay based on the effect of that catalyzing idea upon the reader is **not** a review. My own article, "An Open Letter to Joanna Russ," was exactly one such article: It all began after I'd read a phrase in Bruce Sterling's introduc-

tion to *Burning Chrome* by Bill Gibson, which made me so angry that I never did finish that book but propelled me to my own typewriter to write my own piece. However, my article was not at all a *review* of *Burning Chrome*. A review talks primarily about the piece itself, and puts it into some perspective by comparing it to a set of objective or subjective standards.

Moreover, you seem convinced that a piece of spontaneous writing will have *more* value to you than a piece that has been carefully constructed, perhaps rewritten over a long period of time. I don't understand. You say, "intricately conceived books are often so very difficult to read or talk about that they don't deserve the effort." On the contrary, I would say that intricately conceived books are more likely to contain a greater proportion of catalyzing ideas, as well as more and richer layers of meaning, making both reviewing and writing essays which respond to that literature proportionally more rewarding to the reviewer. That some of these books might be difficult has nothing to do with their complexity. Some of the greatest writing seems outwardly simple and easy, but holds many rewards.

At the base of all this for me is always the concern about how very little time there is to read and see all the books and films and art I want to see in my life. I would like to sort some of that out with my own thoughts and create new art with the connections I make through my experience of those books, films and art. And I am sadly aware of what a small portion of my plans I am likely to accomplish in my lifetime. I'm determined *at least* to limit my searches to areas in which I am likely to find a lot of what I define as good art. I see myself as a prospector, and I feel it's only reasonable to start digging in promising veins.

I've never shared enthusiasm with people who are fans of "baaad" films (or stories, or music, or whatever). They seem to be saying that if an artist becomes too skilled (or creates work too intricately conceived), that the art loses the spark of real creativity. They seem to believe that only unconscious art, with no grounding in theory is interesting. This seems suspect to me in the same way that Doris Lessing's theory about sanity seems false: she believes that the only truly sane people are actually the so-called insane, institutionalized people of our culture, that only they are free of society's enforced reality and are able to see other realities.

...Which is quite a bit off the subject. Sorry. But I'm still determined.

### KIM WINZ

(JG) Well, I'm glad we sacrificed you to the South for some Greater Purpose. Wouldn't you feel incredibly *noble* if Jesse Helms loses the election by two votes. Boy that was amazing to hear that many people in North Carolina don't know that Helms is anti-abortion. I sure hope you guys get rid of him.

(SC) Good luck on your struggle against Jessie Helms. This may be the beginning of the end for him. He's getting old and this race has already made clear that his brand of conservatism may finally be dying out. If Gantt doesn't get him this time, there will be a next time. One very encouraging indication of Helms' desperation is an extremely racist TV commercial he recently came out with appealing to white male voters afraid of

losing jobs to minorities because of race. It got national attention and might possibly erode his credibility and isolate him from the Republican mainstream that has been trying to attract more minority voters.

### LYNNE MORSE

(JG) Re your comment to Tracy Shannon about disliking spidery pen and ink interaction with absorbant paper: You might like to try a smooth bristol paper with technical pen and ink. On the other hand, one fan artist, Ole Kvern, improvised creatively to the effect of ink on absorbant paper. At the beginning of his fannish career (when he was drawing a lot for *Janus*), Ole started to use the effect and in fact went out of his way to exaggerate it. He would draw not on bond paper, but on super-absorbant napkins and would draw slowly so as to increase the amount of ink absorbed by the paper. He got a very charming effect in some of his drawings, though he went on to a very exacting, pure line in subsequent work.

Re your comment about minorities and responsibility, I think it's always best to assume that we have the capability to change our lives, at least I like that a hell of a lot better than the deterministic alternative. After all, if everything is out of our control, it won't hurt to try to change things, but—on the other hand—if we do have control and assume we can't change anything, we really lose out. But there's a big difference between saying (to ourselves) that we can change things, that our lives are our own responsibility, and saying (to others) that it's *their* fault and their responsibility. One affirms responsibility (whether it is justified or not, at least someone is working on the problem); while the other disavows it (It's not *my* fault; it's someone else's problem) and may result in no one dealing with it.

I already wrote about the DARE situation here in the apa. I'll try to find you a copy of a back issue and mail it to you.

(SC) Welcome. We have had a spotty record holding on to foreign contributors. I hope you are able to overcome the difficulties and continue with us for awhile. You are a fine writer, judging by this contribution, and I think it's valuable for this group to have a foreign perspective on issues. Please elaborate a bit on your opinions on humor. At one point your trash a male fan for making a joke you found "unacceptable," yet earlier you celebrate religious people who have a sense of humor that others might find blasphemous. What about feminists with a sense of humor? Religious jokes are OK, sexist jokes are not OK?

### TRACY SHANNON

(JG) I'm a fan of musicals too, though I care much less than you do about the dancing parts, in fact I tend more toward the operatic musicals than you seem to. For instance I love *West Side Story*, though I much prefer the recently re-recorded version that Bernstein did of it with opera singers, Kiri Te Kanawa, José Carreras, Tatiana Troyanos, Kurt Ollman, and Marilyn Horne. This re-recording of important American musicals with singers trained in opera—which chose those singers based on their voice, rather on whether or not they "look" the part, because after all it's a sound recording not a movie—is

something that is being done more often much to my delight. For instance I've got the cds of the new versions of *Show Boat*, *South Pacific*, *My Fair Lady*, and *Carousel*, all favorites of mine and they are incredibly rich and gorgeous recordings. I love all of Steven Sondheim's musicals, though my favorites are *Sunday in the Park with George*, and *Sweeney Todd*. *Once Upon a Time* is growing on me too. I'm sure that if I ever get to see it, as I have the televised versions of *Sunday* and *Sweeney*, that it will join those top faves. But yes, *The King and I*, *Cabaret*, *An American in Paris* are wonderful too. I like *Camelot* quite a bit, also *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Kismet*, *Oklahoma!* and I've recently added *Les Miserables* to the list. I just ordered the complete recording of *Les Mis* and am eagerly waiting to repeat part of the thrill I felt when Scott and I first saw it in New York City last month.

### MICHAEL SHANNON

(JG) I don't think driving in heavy Chicago traffic is so bad; I do it a couple times each year. The main thing I hate—especially recently—is the state of Illinois' highways. A few weeks ago, I went down to see the Names Project's AIDS Quilt Exhibit at the McCormick Center, (and the exhibit was stunning and horrible and wonderful, all at the same time), and on our way out of town it took an hour and a half to travel one stretch of I-90 that was, at most, 2 miles long. There was construction all along it, and they redirected traffic back and forth across the lanes several times so that all our time was spent—literally— inching ahead and over. And that was on a Sunday afternoon, with no big event going on downtown. There is absolutely *no way* I would ever want to have to commute through that mess and lose such a big proportion of my life to such a frustrating activity.

### KATHRYN BETH WILLIG

(JG) I buy a lot of cds through mail order companies too, but it sometimes seems that I don't save very much money with the huge amount they charge for shipping. But more problematic, I find that the clubs I know about offer a very limited selection. There are lots of operas and specific classical pieces that I would like, but they're not offered through the clubs.

Speaking of cds, have you ever heard the bazaar theory about painting the edges of a cd with green or purple felt tip pens (only those colors will do) to improve the sound quality of the cd? A friend told Scott and I about it, and for a while I thought I was the victim of a rather elaborate practical joke ("Look, she painted all her cd edges purple! Can you believe it?!"), but I did try it on one of our cds and it did seem to make a tiny, but perceptible difference, eliminating a little hiss. Apparently its been written about in some audio zines, but nobody can explain why it works.

I will write to Noteworthy Music and get their catalog. Thanks.

We've had some difficulty with our cd player too—with skipping—which seemed to go away for quite a while after we took it in to be fixed. But every once in a while it does it again. Maybe we should take your advice and get a new one next time rather than go for repair.

Well, I guess it does make sense, now, with hindsight, that the difficult-to-remember stuff sticks with us better than the easy-to-remember stuff. The amazing part of that study, I thought, was the fact that a lot of scientific studies have been assuming the opposite for years and years, and that only recently did anyone do a study to test out the assumption.

## ROSS PAVLAC

(JG) I'm beginning to think that nothing terrible may happen in the Gulf after all—that Hussein is going to find an excuse to pull out of Kuwait (taking along with him all portable assets) , and that there will be some sort of agreement that will give him control over the disputed Kuwait oil fields, and that the US will (mostly) pull out, leaving a semi-permanent just-in-case force behind in the desert. I suspect that there are all sorts of intriguing behind-the-scenes machinations going on that will make for a fascinating book twenty years from now. I suspect that international corporations are having a rather large impact on negotiations and the question of whether or not to provoke attack or not. Oil companies are probably quite comfortable with a confrontive situation in so far as it raises the price of oil, but are probably less sanguine when it comes to endorsing a war that could destroy whole markets as economies collapse.

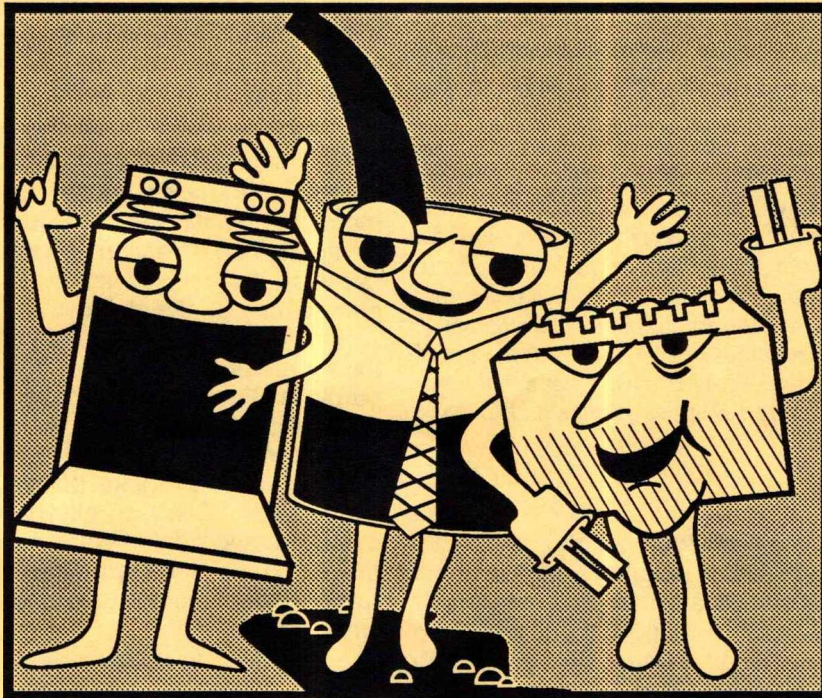
A couple weeks ago, Scott and I attended the first anti-war demonstration that I remember attending since the anti-Vietnam demonstrations of the 1960s. I'll be just

as happy if it's the last I feel obliged to attend. There were speeches down on the Library Mall with a few counter protesters who impressed me with their youth and their similarity to young men described in the recent Public TV Civil War special: so eager to participate in a war, anxious lest it begin and end before they could get into it. Looking around us I saw lots of Vietnam War veterans (also marching against US involvement in the Gulf conflict) and wondered what they thought of the young men's enthusiasm. We marched all the way up State Street to the Capital, gathering many people along the way and listened to a couple more short speeches. Maybe Scott can remember how big the crowd was estimated to be...

(SC) "...the U.N. has not been a model of fair play for many years." It is true that the U.N. has frequently sided against illegal U.S. intervention in such places as Nicaragua, Panama and El Salvador—to mention a few. The U.N. has been "unfair" usually when they have failed to fall into lockstep with U.S. priorities. The U.S. is supportive of the U.N. when they support us, even if our actions are criminal. When the World Court ruled against the U.S. mining of Nicaragua's harbors, little was seen in the American press about it. When the U.N. decided to back sanctions against Iraq, they were trumpeted in the press for their "wise decision." What we must do in Iraq under the circumstances are to press U.N. sanctions, replace the U.S. force with an Arab or at least truly international force, and begin actively negotiating with Saddam. War must be averted and can be averted if we have sensible leadership.

That's all folks!

*Scott & Jeanne*



(JG) Look for these guys soon on Wisconsin television, via an animated film I'm helping to produce for the state's recycling effort. (The cartoons represent the three categories of things that you can no longer throw away as of January 1, 1990, large appliances, used oil, and car batteries.)