

Union St

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KAREN BABICH

(SC) Ah, commuting hell. Just the thought of doing it someplace like Chicago makes me shudder. Then to put up with a such a jerk all day. Wow. I think I'd be spending weekends on a freeway overpass with a high powered rifle. For a period of two weeks once, I commuted from Cedar Rapids, IA to a new job in Davenport. It was 75 miles one way and I was working the night shift. All country driving, but I used to get so frustrated going home in the morning because no matter how much coffee or pop I sucked down or how bright the morning seemed, all my eyes wanted to do the whole way was slam shut. I hate commuting

ALISON BRON

(JG) I just want to tell you I've really admired the writing you've been doing on "the Norman Invasion." Very soul-searching, honest stuff. And intriguing.

(SC) I have also enjoyed your "Norman Invasion" follow-up. The last paragraph of your zine left me kind of adrift. Sounds a bit serious. I hope you will be able to stay with us and eventually fill us in a little more.

PAT HARIO

(SC) Nice cover. You deserve the compliment. Organizing artistic people can be work too and deserves credit.

(JG) What do you mean by that?! You can get along with artistic folks easier than anyone else in the world. I don't get your point, Scott...

BILL HOFFMAN

(JG) Good stuff, Bill. I liked the hallucinogenic quality of your memory-tossed return to Madison.

I also liked your comment to **Steve Johnson**, that you think channelers are lying. Suddenly the question one frequently hears, the question that always begins with "Do you believe in—," makes more sense. Rather than asking me whether I accept them as a matter of (religious) faith, I can more easily answer on the basis of whether I think they are telling the truth, which is certainly a more comfortable realm of conversation.

(SC) Wonderful reminiscence. Often when I go home or back to my alma matar and old memories threaten to haunt me. I find myself distracted by the extent things have changed.

Buildings are replaced or remodeled, favorite bars and restaurants disappear or change ownership, landmarks get paved over. I tend to focus on those things and try just to remember how things used to be. I wouldn't say the feeling is less melancholy. I know the memories will continue to fade.

Excellent comment to **Lucy N.** She will get a chance to see it as we are planning to forward our copy of *Turbo* to her until she's contributing again.

ANDREW HOOPER

(JG) It seems that you must indeed be trusting us more: not only did the playground story but this most recent story, "The Order of the Blue Flame," included a lot of autobiographical information and truths. I'm enjoying your fictions alot. Thank you.

Interesting comment about how I have portrayed myself in cartoons more by hairstyles than by any other physical characteristic. It's true. It's one of the things that made me realize how important my hair was to my self image. It will be interesting to see how my cartooning changes: whether there will be another identifying physical characteristic, or whether my female characters will begin adopting extremely close cropped hair...

Scott and I did actually wander some streets very near to Time Square around midnight. The two Broadway plays we attended let out around that time, and we went searching for dinner afterwards. But I think we had slightly different experiences than you did on your excursion.

Re that conversation about WisCon at the Hoffman Brunch... No you didn't seem rude, and actually you rarely show the brusque side of your conversational style to me at all. (Too often we seem to spend a sizeable portion of our conversations assuring one another that we have not been offended, you know?) It was an interesting conversation; you made interesting points and I enjoyed the discussion. I think you are right about the inappropriateness of using the term "burnout" when someone has simply gone on to something new. Perhaps I would make fewer cynical chortles when people move on if they didn't explain it as being the result of having been burnt out after only a couple years of WisCon experience.

(SC) Very fine story. The characters were very sharply drawn. It is your dialog again that rings so true. The best for me was **Draper's** phone call to his girlfriend. That was great. I never went to camp or worked as a camp counselor, but I've consumed

flaming shots. Briefly once when I was clean shaven. I wouldn't try it now. Something everyone should try once.

BILL HUMPHRIES

(JG) Sorry, I don't know the chemistry of my Alopecia virus. I've got a file full of documents, some of which are just too heavily scientific for me, but if you're interested, I'd be glad to let you borrow them, and then you can tell me—in lay-persons terms—the answer to your question. I doubt, though, that you will find details as to how my particular virus works. It's my impression that there hasn't been enough work done yet to have identified that level of information.

I said in my article "An Open Letter to Joanna Russ," and I'll say it again: that article was not at all a review of Sterling's article, or an in-depth comment on Sterling's personal opinions. His comment in that introductory essay merely provided me with a jump-off point, a critical connection between ideas that I'd been considering for a long time. So, the authors that Sterling knew about or liked or disliked is immaterial to my thesis.

Also, calling Cyberpunk a fad has nothing to do with the kind of strategy that Joanna Russ points out in her book, *How to Suppress Women's Writing*. The work of male artists has not been systematically erased in our culture as has the work of women artists. I suggest that you find Russ' book in the library and read it.

HOPE KIEFER

(SC) I agree with you that a little more discussion of the deadline change would have been nice. From our perspective, this change is a minor issue. But I could see how a person functioning as mailing agent for at least four other people would not appreciate any sudden changes. Yet, I think it is reasonable for Kim to want to have deadline always fall on Saturday since he is doing the lion's share of the work. I expect everyone will eventually adjust. Kim should anticipate some screwups the first month or so.

Why not just do a joint zine with Karl instead of making him wait thru the spec. list?

Jeanne and I enjoyed *Miller's Crossing* very much. It's been a great year for gangster movies for me so far. I will probably have to catch *The Krays* and *The King of New York* on video, but I will be standing in line for the *Godfather III* no matter what the reviews are.

LYNNE MORSE

(JG) Good zine, Lynne, and very commentable. I admire the way you've developed as a feminist. (I especially liked your enlargement of my comment about sexual taboos stemming from women's body parts defined as being owned by men. "...that what arouses a man sexually originates from outside, with the woman, rather than in. Which makes the woman responsible, and makes her a target of whatever baggage sexuality carries in a culture." Yes.

Also, thanks much for your reply to Michael Shannon, and your explanation as to why I drew the lobotomized man cartoon. It's amazing how similar your explanation was to my own (in *Turboapa* #53), even to the choice of words. I laughed again at how easily both you and

Kathryn Beth Willig seem to have grasped what I had been trying to say about the headless woman cartoon. I will probably be saying more about this topic in an mailing comment to Kim Nash, since my sense of humor seems to have offended him.

But you haven't added anything to the debate that would convince me to take back my resolution to avoid bad writing. Certainly it's possible that bad writing might convince someone that they could do better and perhaps urge them to try it, but the goal in that case would simply to be more mediocre than the other guy...

KIM NASH

(JG) You say that you are growing concerned with what you see as a male-bashing attitude developing [here in the apa? in SF group here in Madison? Among your circle of friends? In society? You don't say], and then you go on to suggest a few possible explanations for the phenomenon. Before I reply, I'm going to challenge your assumptions, because your whole comment feels a bit like a verbal trap on the order of "Have you stopped beating your wife?"

If I argue with some of your explanations, I'm implicitly accepting the validity of your observation that there is male bashing going on, and I do not accept that. What is going on in my opinion, is healing, self-defense, and education.

You do not point to any specific conversation or Turbo essay in your complaint, but the fact that you mention that "most of the time it's done with a smile," makes me think that you are riled by in-person conversations you've either overheard or participated in at Brat'n'Brau or local parties I can think of several recent conversations that might have initiated this comment but I'm hesitant to bring up those specific conversations; I get the feeling you're not in the mood for very personal discussions here in the apa. So, I'll respond in the same kind of generalities you used in your comment to me. If you want to bring up a specific conversation, go ahead, I'd be glad to talk about it more.

But in general...

When I first began to think of myself as a feminist, my primary urge was to feel anger, which seems to be a fairly common "first step" for women when they first become aware of sexism in society. It's that first-flush, feminist attitude that is usually attacked by those who ask why feminists lack a sense of humor. The ironic thing is that most women develop a very complex and strong sense of humor as they develop their political sensibility. The jokes we make, however, may not seem very funny to men, and they obviously don't appeal to you. You (and many other men) react to the jokes as if they are personal attacks. Your reaction isn't a new one to me, I've heard it before, but I will try to give you a careful and honest explanation of what I mean and feel by some of the so-called anti-male comments and jokes you've overheard.

First of all, they are *not* based on lies about men. The comments may rely upon exaggerations and generalities, but they are at their root based upon real perceptions of the way some men have learned/been trained to act in this society. We talk and laugh about how words and concepts are used differently by women and men, almost as if the

two sexes—at times—speak entirely different languages. We talk and laugh about how differently women and men deal with their emotions because that mismatch causes so many of us women so much pain. The humor, then, is simply an attempt to deal with a painful communication gap that affects the lives of any woman who chooses to include men in her life. We joke about it with one another to acknowledge the male/female gaps in communication to one another, to reassure one another that we are not alone in noticing it, and we joke about it so that we are not always so damned *angry* about it or moping around in frustration. When a woman includes a man in such conversations, it might be a compliment (Have you considered that?) or it might be an attempt to explain a painful or frustrating or simply irritating gender communication gap in terms that avoid an accusing or nagging tone.

When I can, I prefer to persuade with humor rather than speech-making. But you say you don't like the humor, either. Well I guess you could make an angry exit whenever you come upon a group of us discussing our feminism with laughter, but I don't think it's going to stop.

Feminist humor isn't meant to hurt men. But sometimes I believe that it might help change society.

You ask what difference does it make if or why women and men view competition differently. It makes a difference, Kim, if one person sees a relationship as a win or lose proposition and the other person acts under the assumption that they are on the same team. If relationships are important, then definitions of words like these—especially when the definitions are different for each gender—matter a great deal.

I wish you and **Kathi** the best of luck and mucho happiness.

I thought your comment to **Lucy** was rude and pointless. When I first picked up the apa and scanned it, I ran smack into that comment by you and felt rather sick to my stomach. I put the apa down and didn't begin reading it in depth for a week later. Your anger's purpose seems designed to hurt and that makes me very uncomfortable.

The new deadline rule is fine with me. We all profit by an honest forecast of the probable collation date, rather than the same date every month that may or may not be a convenient time to do the bindery work. On the other matter—the \$10 annual fee assessment—I am *not* in agreement, and I hereby cast my one-half vote against the proposal. I think that some people already feel too much of an economic pinch in publishing their zine and in some cases, paying for postage. Covers should be paid for by the people producing the covers, which can be as elaborate as the creator wants. Just like an individual apazine, the means of production are chosen and paid for by the contributor, and sometimes the cover even takes the place of an apazine. If individuals care to help reimburse the stupendous efforts of individuals who do really neat things, that should be left up to the individuals, and not automatically assessed upon the apa membership. I would much rather encourage apa members spend an extra \$10 on an extra page of mailing comments than to cause them to decrease their output for an apa tax.

If you need a new stapler, I make the counter proposal that you go out and buy a good one and then

assess us all an equal share of its cost plus the actual cost of printing up 12 business pages per year.

(SC) Regarding the "apa tax," I agree with Jeanne that covers should be solely the responsibility of the creator. The printing of the business and title pages and the stapler are legitimate expenses, but \$250. per year seems a bit high to cover that. Why don't you give us some estimates of these costs? I doubt people will object to kicking in some money periodically for such things. So I agree with Jeanne, vote against the \$10 assessment and support her counterproposal.

Congratulations on wedding plans. I'm looking forward to being there.

Quite a roller coaster ride through your comments last month. All sugar and spice with **Lynne** and **Hoffman**, rude and nasty with **Lucy**, **Nevenah** and **Hope**. As a Bureau Director you may find the sailing smoother if you place less emphasis on truth and more emphasis on tact.

JOHN PEACOCK

(JG) Your comments were again unbelievably arrogant and rude, and I'm not going to resist the temptation to tell you that you own a name that is utterly appropriate to the tone of your writing style. (The peacock after all is an aggressive and vain animal.) Thank you, however, for making space for Paula's wedding report. I enjoyed reading that essay tremendously and miss her in the apa even more.

(SC) I agree totally with your opening essay on Caller ID and Marketplace-Households. Serious erosion of privacy rights is at work here and people need to keep up with these sorts of developments. I also enjoyed Paula's guest commentary. As noted above, some of your mailing comments were pretty offensive once again. You wrote to Jeanne at one point, "You almost certainly cannot tell me anything that I already don't know." Frankly, I don't think anyone can. I'm going to try one more time, although I can't see much hope.

It seems to me the problem is that you simply have no respect for other people's opinions. Once you have decided that someone is "wrong," you spew hell and damnation at them for not knowing what they are talking about. You attempted to trash **Steve Johnson** with mathematical and scientific evidence and your own "superior" academic background even though you must realize that no one can prove UFOs don't exist. At some point it is appropriate to acknowledge that Steve has a right to his opinion, no matter how improbable you and I think it is. In the end you consign Steve's opinion, with obvious contempt, to the dustbin with religion, "New Age lunacy" and witchcraft. You have no respect for people you do not consider "expert" enough. That wouldn't be much of a crime, except that we are supposed to show your opinions respect when you obviously don't know what you're talking about. Take your comment to **Kathi Scheller**. Clearly you don't know anything about martial arts. That didn't stop you from holding forth on the foolishness of teaching women students Karate for self defense. I assume you would not appreciate being considered "an outright fraud, well-meaning but mistaken, or insane" for taking this view. I don't think your resume includes a degree in film. Yet no one objects to your movie reviews. If they did, no doubt, you would respond that you have a right to your opinion ignorant as it may be of artistic value. You don't casually discuss or debate. Your attacks are so ferocious and personal that it is even hard to agree with you when you're right. Then there is the matter of con-

traditions. Don't you see a problem with advocating the death penalty "for the sake of society" on one hand and being horrified at a woman using deadly force to defend herself from attack "except as a last resort" on the other? You were offended at hunters who kill excess game for pleasure, but aren't particularly bothered by the eventual extinction of the cheetah because of the encroachment of man. Personally I think you're shooting from the hip most of the time, just trying to elicit reactions from people. I'm glad, at least, that you're sharing the wealth. This comment is really not to you so much as all the people you pissed off last month.

RICHARD RUSSELL

(SC) I admit to being intrigued by your troubles with FFRF. But why, Dick, why are you having these problems? I'd like to sympathize, but I really need to know more. In the meantime you are taking on WYOU. How do you find the time? What things are you giving up to take on this extra activity? I know I've made some Dumb Moves too. The difference between you and me is, I've managed to forget mine. You publish yours.

(JG) Good, Scott, but somehow I doubt that Dick's reading this. Let's try this test: DICK RUSSELL'S FAVORITE COLOR IS PINK AND HE JUST LOVES BANANAS.

KATHI SCHELLER

(JG) I wish you and Kim luck and happiness. We'd better get together and plan those invitations soon, hmmm?

Cookie day was great fun, though perhaps a bit over-ambitious. Now that we've got apple pie-making and soup-cooking in the fall, cookie making in the winter, what can we plan for the spring and summer?

(SC) Congratulations on the big news.

JULIE SHIVERS

(JG) One gift idea: Wisconsin Cow Pies, which are sold at Walgreens and are chocolate shaped like, well, cow pies, and packaged in a box with lots of Wisconsinalia printed on it.

(SC) Being decisive and opinionated are very desirable traits. You need to practice. The secret is that you don't really have to go to all the trouble of listening closely, weighing arguments and making sound judgements. Two tried and true methods are: A) Decide which side is being presented by the biggest asshole and vote against them or B) Flip a coin. Faithful use of these techniques will save you many headaches and win respect and admiration from your peers. You can even use them on jury duty should you be called again.

V.P., DIANE MARTIN

(JG) Congratulations on your promotion, Diane. You deserve the recognition. I loved the vivid way you told the story of your meeting with your boss.

TRACY SHANNON

(SC) Being in business is not always what it's cracked up to be. Selling the rabbits at \$15, instead of \$22, is a fairly steep markdown. Did you wind up making any money?

I enjoyed "Ritual" very much. Keep it coming.

KATHRYN BETH WILLIG

(JG) Sure, I don't usually refer to it as my wig, and of course it is my hair in the sense that you say, but that isn't the point for correcting people. Now that I'm not actually afraid of people finding out that I've lost most of my hair, I find myself a lot more comfortable being up front about the whole thing. I guess I've always been of the "make jokes about myself before anyone else does" school of thought. I'd rather be making the joke or at least joining in on the laughter than awkward and embarrassed. Before I needed a wig, when I only had scattered bald spots on my scalp, I used to dread going outside on a windy day. I worried constantly that people would notice. I find it infinitely more comfortable not to care if at some point someone notices the summer hat I'm wearing reveals an absent hairline, or if someday, my wig comes askew, I won't feel like I've been trying to misrepresent myself. Telling people lets me off the hook in some strange but very real way.

The whole thing reminds me of the first time I went to gym school in high school. That was the first time I'd ever changed clothes in front of strangers in a locker room since my grade school didn't have a gym. I was very nervous, very scared about the whole thing. But then finally, when I went down there and started stripping for a shower and changed into my gym shorts, I realized that nobody cared and if I acted nonchalant about my body, everyone else would too. The only person who was ever noticed was the girl who took such elaborate care to keep herself covered with a towel at all times, and always showered in the stalls rather than in the open shower room. I, on the other hand, strolled around with the towel tossed over my shoulder, and nobody gave me a second glance. By the end of the day, I no longer cared either. My worry had evaporated in the moment of pretending not to worry. Now, I'm doing the same thing, sort of, with this alopecia. I laugh about my situation and tell people casually about it, and in effect I'm making it a casual thing for myself too, something not all that serious or traumatic. It used to be traumatic, but now, every time I tell a friend or acquaintance about my condition as if the news is something like "I've got an allergy and I'm taking some medicine," it lessens in importance in my own head too.

But, sorry, I don't know off-hand the theory for the cortisone treatments. When we started the treatments a few years ago, Dr. Thaylor talked to me about it, and it all seemed reasonable, but I've forgotten. I have a huge file of information on Alopecia, and I suppose I should go through it to get an answer to your question and Bill Humphrey's scientific inquiry, but I'm putting it off for now. All I know is that there is no know cure yet for the condition; everything is experimental, and I am through with being a guinea pig.

You told Kim Winz that computer viruses can only be spread through applications. I don't think that's true any longer. Doesn't the WDEF (and variants) spread through documents? That's what makes that family of viruses such dangerous things.

I see that you caught the meaning of my "male lobotomy" cartoon. Thanks.