



Welcome to *Union Street* (issue #36 and *Obsessive Press* #136), the zine with the transmogrifying masthead. (Look both ways before traversing the year!). It comes to you from Jeanne Gomoll and Scott Custis, whose address is coincidentally 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 was printed on a Laserwriter IINTX printer. Text was created with Microsoft Word 5.0 and laid out with Aldus Pagemaker 4.2. The *Union Street* Logo was designed with Adobe Illustrator 3.2 and Adobe Photoshop 2.0. All contents are copyrighted © by Scott Custis and Jeanne Gomoll, 1993. January 1993 for Turbo-Charged Party Animal APA #79. Members FWA, and both readers, yes, of all of Vijay's colophons.



Official Business

[JG] On the subject of joint memberships: after reading everything everyone's had to say on the subject, I've decided that I no longer want to make a formal rule proposal. Here's why:

- 1) I wish that the actual number of zines was held down to 30, but the possible mechanisms for enforcement seem far more trouble than they are worth.
- 2) Even more, I wish that all members could be required to contribute substantially and regularly to the apa, and could be dropped if they rode too long upon the coattails of their joint membership partner. But again, the mechanisms for enforcement would either be too bureaucratic or too heavy a burden on the OE.
- 3) As documented by the wide variety of reactions to my question about joint memberships, we all have developed our own personal reaction to them. We all have different problems (if we have them at all) with joint memberships. We all like slightly different things about them (if we like them at all). It seems unlikely to me that anyone could manage to offer a rule proposal that would appeal to a majority of *Turbo-Chargers*.

[SC] Tracy, you can put me down for a cover in April or May.

Thank You All

[SC] I would like to thank those of you who came by to help us celebrate at our 2nd Annual (we hope) New Year's Eve Bash. It was a tamer and smaller (about 25 people) gathering this year than last, but I think most folks had a good time. We did a few things differently that got generally good remarks. We laid out food in Jeanne's office which permitted people to come and go easily, but made it hard to sit and hang out there. Most people appreciated that and it was less messy for us to clean up. We also cleared the dining room for dancing on our newly refinished hardwood floor. That worked well although this year's revelers neither excessively danced nor excessively drank.

We promised a surprise this year. Julie Gomoll came up from Austin for the party and appeared in a black body leotard, gold lame jacket, leather bolero hat and (for awhile) a black mask. Yes, that was a surprise. Many people in this group love to dress up when given an occasional opportunity. Many of the women were smashingly turned out in dresses and skirts. Most of the guys wore ties or suits and at least three came in tuxedos. We hope to have pictures to share soon if not in this zine.

Bill Humphries counted down to midnight as everyone crammed into our living room armed with noisemakers and poppers. The big moment brought an explosion of cheers, pops and horns that could probably be heard for blocks. I realize now that we forgot to break into "Auld Lang Sine." Most people stayed until at least 2 AM and we finally broke into furious cleaning at about 4. Followed by breakfast at Country Kitchen. We were all home before dawn (just). Thanks to all those who brought snacks and drinkables. Special thanks to that special group that helped us clean up at the end and a double special thanks to Steve Swartz for making his excellent eggnog as well.

BILL HUMPHRIES

[SC] I suppose that if you and I ran into Rush in Chicago and the best excuse he could come up with was that it was all just "an act," I would be willing to give him the benefit of the doubt. Instead of dropping him down an elevator shaft, I would choose to spare him a little pain and thrust him in front of a passing cement truck.

Congrats again on a fine looking zine. I found myself agreeing with much of what you said, including kudos to *The Nation* and *Milk and Cheese*.



I think I told you this story already, but I will share it here again. When I went to Iowa in November to visit my family, the subject of the election invariably came up and I was prepared to stand my ground. It turned out to be too confusing to discuss. The women in the family voted for Clinton. My brother voted for Perot, but he was also the only one who voted for the Equal Rights Amendment to the state constitution. My dad voted for Bush, of course, but before voting against the ERA, he called the women in the family to ask if they supported it (presumably he would have voted "Yes" if they were all strongly for it) and he said they either didn't know or leaned against it. All I could do was shake my head.

[JG] We get the Sunday *Milwaukee Journal*, which has been instrumental in uncovering a lot of the information about miscreant priests. Amazing stuff. I would disagree with Father Fiore. I don't think the existence of abusive priests is anything new; I'd be willing to bet that it's always gone on, but has only recently been believed. I lay the blame on the Church and its misogynist, patriarchal traditions and behaviors, and wonder if a community of powerful, celibate men isn't a dangerous situation all around.

Kate Wilhelm got very, very angry when asked about her fictional use of gay men and lesbians as villains. She became speechless with anger, in fact, and refused to discuss it. (Note: I was not being rude, and attempted to phrase the question in as non-accusational a way as I could.) She also denied the possibility that homosexuality could even occur in a truly utopian situation (e.g., *Where Late the Sweet Birds Sang*).

LYNNE ANN MORSE

[SC] My guess for the mystery poet is **Bill Hoffman**.

[JG] Mine too. I bet it's Dr. Bill.

I was shocked when I heard that Roger Weddel had died. I met him in person for the first time at Magicon, although I'd traded zines with him on and off for a decade or more. It makes me very unhappy now that I didn't take the opportunity to get to know him a little better when I had the chance, but I saw him primarily through his fanzines, which didn't impress me nearly as much as the powerful, lively impact of his face-to-face personality. I found a letter from him—a LoC on an old issue of *Whimsey* that was very nice—to which I never responded. I did, however write him immediately upon returning from Florida, telling him how much I enjoyed meeting him, and that I thought he was the perfect fan fund representative. And indeed he was. He was absolutely the most out-going, friendly, life-affirming person I've ever met. He seemed to have no fears about raising DUFF funds, writing a trip report, or meeting new people. I suppose that compared to the life-and-death fears he was dealing with at the time, such considerations must have seemed insignificant in the extreme.

I liked him tremendously and I hate the fact that I've lost the chance to get to know him better.

You wrote that you were depressed at the idea that powerful women in films always seem to be portrayed as outlaws. I don't know, it doesn't seem all that depressing to me: I guess because the idea of being an "outlaw" or outside-the-law, is a fine place to be as long as the law defines women as powerless.

You suggested that **Hope** and **Karl** take pictures during Hope's labor. That reminded me of the guy who used to work in my bureau at the DNR. He bopped into work the day after his wife gave birth and passed around a truly amazing set of snapshots

of their baby's birth, crowning through bloody expulsion. I shuffled through them, fascinated and horrified at the same time. Why was he showing these pictures to me?, I thought. He hardly knew me. So I asked him, "Does your wife know you took these pictures to work?" He looked at me as if I'd asked him what kind of tampon he preferred and finally brushed the question off. "I'm sure she won't mind." Then he bounced down the hall to show the pictures to anyone else who would look.

HOPE KIEFER

[SC] I was amused at your mentioning of names for the baby. It's the sort of comment that will probably spawn an avalanche of opinions and suggestions from fellow apahacks (who wouldn't want to take credit for suggesting the perfect name?) My only opinion on the subject is that I hope you refrain from adding yet another "Bill" to the gaggle of Bills we have already.

Your mother's deterioration is such a sad thing. I feel very lucky to have had a chance to meet her on a couple of occasions here in Madison. I don't command the level of eloquence I need to express to you how much I sympathize with what you're going through other than to say that I think about you a lot. I can't say that I know what you're feeling, but I've been on that long dark road myself when cancer took my mother ten years ago. Peace be with you.

[JG] Congratulations, **Hope** and **Karl**! We got the news about Forrest Kiefer Hailman from **Pat Harlo** the day after his birth. (You're not planning on calling him Forrie, are you? Forrest, however, I like.)

I wouldn't have any problem living in a world (that your housemate Tim imagines), in which men could freeze their own sperm and would have to be petitioned by a woman who wanted to become pregnant. Once the sperm is in a woman's body, and she is impregnated: she's got the power (and physical responsibility). But until then, men control all choices regarding their own sperm. Certainly you don't disagree that a man should be able to practice birth control, using a condom or other methods of male contraceptive without a woman's "permission."

KARL HAILMAN

[JG] Drivers license or drinking license at age 16. Take your pick. *I like it!*

Congratulations, Karl!



JAE ADAMS

[SC] 1992 was a pretty good year for movies I thought, and Eastwood's *Unforgiven* was one of the best. It is a masterpiece. The best thing he ever did and one of the most important Westerns ever made. I just thought I'd throw that in because I don't see any better place to inject that opinion.

Your comparison of *Unforgiven* to *Much Ado About Nothing* was interesting even though I am not familiar with the play. You seem to be objecting to the fact that instead of taking violent revenge themselves, the prostitutes had to have a man do it for them. I can't really dispute that, but I don't think the movie-makers intended us to see these women as powerless. What were their options for revenge? They could have pulled out knives and attacked the assaulters, but the sheriff would have stopped them. They could have bought guns and tried to hunt them down, but they were inexperienced and may have fared badly in a gunfight. They chose the most powerful and surefire solution. They hired a professional killer to do it for them. The killer in this case is really just a sort of smartbomb. His gender was not supposed to be an issue.

The face slashing was a set-up for the movie. Eastwood is blasting the myth of the romantic gunfighter, and part of that myth is that gunfighters resort to violence for worthy causes. Hence the ugly assault on the prostitute. Instead of gallantly coming to her rescue, the Bill Miner character uses her misfortune as an excuse to resume his bad old ways. What we discover is that violence doesn't work as a solution. The gunfighter is a mostly mindless killing device that no one really controls. In the end, no one receives justice. Everyone fares badly because of the decisions they made. Yet our culture's love of violence erases reality and substitutes myths of honor, bravery and skill.

[JG] I hope you've rented and seen *Thelma and Louise* by now. I don't really want to discuss this with you on the basis of what you've heard through reviews, since—in my opinion—a great many of the reviews completely missed the point of that film. (Elk Krisor owns a copy of *T&L* if you can't find one.) In no way, would I say that the movie's major theme was revenge. And yes, I thought *T&L*'s ending was very positive, and ironically life-affirming ... but you really have to see it.

The image that I keep remembering from *The Unforgiven*, (which I agree with Scott, is one of the best movies ever made), is of the house that the sheriff is building. It is rickety and there are no square angles in the whole structure; it looks like it's ready to fall into match sticks with the first stiff sandstorm. Since the sheriff's character seems to symbolize the "civilizing" force on the frontier—as he attempts to end the reign of and de-romanticize the image of gunfighters—the house comes to symbolize civilization itself. It's the thing that the sheriff is attempting (badly) to build. Our culture, built as it is, with the materials of the western mythology, is no less unstable.

I identified with Peter Pan, too, and disdained Wendy, though there was something about the several generations of Wendy's daughters waiting for Peter that fascinated me. (Possibly one them would eventually be *different*.) Several years ago, I started thinking about the fact that most dramatic presentations of *Peter Pan* cast Peter with a female actor, and I wondered if I had always thought of Peter as a woman-in-disguise. I read Barrie's book after I saw the Mary Martin version on TV, and so thought about Mary/Peter as I read the novel. ... Which leads to an interesting idea: that a woman-in-drag as Peter who attempts to kidnap Wendy, may be attempting to fuse the two parts of

herself-as-woman together, like a body to a shadow. Wendy (the stereotypical woman/mother) plus "Peter" (the rebellious, independent, free (flying) woman), equals one, whole woman. Maybe, one day, Peter and Wendy will go off together, not to Neverneverland, not to the nursery, but on to a whole life.

JIM BROOKS

[JG] I'm so disillusioned. Restaurant parking lots with many trucks *don't* mean great food?? Sigh. I don't think I can remember seeing a restaurant parking lots with tractors in them.



CATHY GILLIGAN

[SC] Congratulations on the new job. How long do you feel you need to continue taking classes at MATC? Are you planning to complete the degree program, or just take the classes you need for the job?

You have our condolences on the sudden death of your father. It can be so hard for a family to deal with death when it is unexpected and there is no time to prepare.

Hi again, Greg. No resolution to the Joint membership debate is on the horizon so if you are thinking of joining the pipeline, I wouldn't wait. Current turnover in *Turbo* is very slow. Stop complaining about my suggestion to Cathy of selling you space. It could have been worse. I was only talking about money. I could have asked Jeanne to suggest ways you could compensate Cathy. Believe me, you wouldn't want that.

[JG] Well, it's a good thing that I didn't bet with you. I finished *Hope*'s fish on time for her shower. but I only got around to balancing my checkbook on Martin Luther King's birthday. I was three months behind. So I'm that transparent, am I?

KIM WINZ

[JG] I Haven't read Rice's *The Tale of the Body Thief* yet, although I will soon. It's on my to-read shelf. I did read the book that came out right before that one, though, *Cry to Heaven*, about castrati singers in Italy during the 1700s. That's my favorite Rice book so far.

VIJAY BOWEN

[SC] Good to have you back writing in such fine form. Your boast of receiving a g-string and fishnet stockings for bribes got a chuckle from me. Maybe what we need is a system where the first time grace is given, the OE gets what she wants, but the next time it's given to the same person, the rest of us get to vote on a bribe. We could tailor it to the wayward member (Ross to have to buy a copy of Al Gore's book, for example) or to the over-generous OE (giant inflatable sex toys, etc.) It's an idea with promise.

[JG] *Sunday in the Park with George* is just about my favorite musical. Every time I listen to it, I am amazed that such an intellectual subject ("what is art?") can be charged with so much emotion! I think there was a semiprozine about art published a few years ago, titled "Finishing the Hat," and I nearly subscribed just for the title.

I also like **Andy Hooper**'s idea that people who are granted grace in *Turbo* should be required to contribute to the next two issues in order to maintain membership. I would even vote for such a rule.



BILL HOFFMAN

[SC] Welcome back to you as well.

[JG] I'm glad to see you back too and commend you for hiring **Diane Martin** to write the funny bit after your comments. Doesn't make up for mailing comments though, hmmm?

DIANE MARTIN

[JG] I refuse to feel guilty about not cultivating an award-winning garden (like your's), and you should try not to feel guilty about your failure to split into four Diane Martins so that you can do everything you ever thought you should be able to do.

MIKE DUCHARME

[JG] You're getting me really pissed off, Mike, and what makes it worse is that I suspect you are no more likely to read this than is Dick Russell. How could you ask if **Kim Winz** is still at IBM? This question shows that you not only have been failing to read any of her zines (in which she nearly always mentions her employment at IBM), but that you are not even aware that she is a member of the apa (because you ask the *Turbo* membership at large about her, so that we might convey this news to you).

This is the third off-the-wall comment of this type I've noticed in your zine, Mike. First you direct a comment to John Peacock several months after his very noisy expulsion. Then you make a blanket endorsement of new apa member nominations, seeming to have completely missed the reason for asking for seconds.

So, answer me, Mike. Are you there?

BILL BODDEN

[SC] I don't think anyone believes that you have to drink to be a good companion. I don't think alcohol is necessary for people to make meaningful connections (a.k.a. "bonding") and I don't exclude people from my friendship and my company because they choose not to drink. Furthermore, I think it's an exaggeration to say that you are experiencing peer pressure from this group to drink.

The SF³ group is a predominantly alcohol-averse crowd. I can quantify that in some detail. Take our New Year's party as a typical example. About 25 people partied here for almost 8 hours. The pop supply was devastated. At most, 15 beers were consumed (enough for two or three beer drinkers at a rate of less than one beer per hour), slightly over half of Steve's spiked eggnog, a smattering of hard liquor (just like last year—by the end of the party—there was more hard booze on our shelves than what had been there at 8 pm) and eight bottles of champagne. I would consider that modest alcohol consumption and not unusual for one of our group parties. Even our wildest parties usually only feature a couple of moderately intoxicated people. I'm not complaining. I'd just as soon not see people puking in my bathroom or passing out on the floor. Finding that place where people are loosened up enough to relax and socialize with gusto is what we all want. If a few people go over the edge a little now and then, that should be OK because it's rather rare. So I think your own alcohol consumption behavior is really the norm for this group and not the exception. In fact I take the opposite view and claim that this group is particularly intolerant of those of us who do drink a fair amount once in a while.

I think Steve's idea of "drinking buddies" are those few of us who like to drink recreationally to reach a level of intoxication where most of the barriers are down and we can speak freely about

most any subject—and to get a little silly and have a few laughs. I don't blame you if you don't find this sort of thing very attractive—or healthy. It's not something I do very often anymore. But the fact is, Bill, you don't like smokey bars, you don't have much patience for drunk people, and you keep a tight grip on your personal life. I don't think you'd enjoy going out on a little drinking binge. That's all fine and good. I'm not interested in interactive role-playing games. I don't feel any pressure to change. Neither should you.



KATHRYN BETH WILLIG

[SC] Welcome back. Your zine was harrowing reading in parts, but in the end it appears like your condition is improving and the outlook is good. Please keep us informed.

[JG] What an amazing chronicle. Best of luck to you through this hard time. I hope everything turns out for you.

ROSS PAVLAC

[SC] I had to laugh when I ran into Dick Russell out at Eastgate Movie Theaters one cold night just before last month's deadline. He told me that he had just received your apazine.

"I don't know what you and Jeanne said to Ross, but you sure got his attention this month!" And so we did.

I am not now, nor have I ever been, interested in debating with you. As **Diane** shrewdly pointed out to **Kim Winz** (and the rest of us) last month, it is pointless to argue with you over these issues because you are set in your world-view and no amount of statistics, charts, graphs or "expert" opinion is likely to change that. My essay on Pat Buchanan was really aimed at the rest of the membership. I felt they needed to be less apathetic about members (in this case, you) who support demagogues that spew hate and vileness for power. You agreed that the quotes I used were accurate and in context. It is not surprising to me that you fail to see the scope of his message. You're probably too close to see clearly (trees vs. forest syndrome), but most of the apa membership, as well as the nation, heard his meaning loud and clear.

My question still is, against almost universal opposition in this apa, why are you continuing to argue—or even to stay? There must be other apas where you would get at least some support, why fight with us? I'm not really asking you to leave, Ross, but your persistence puzzles me. Maybe **Steve Johnson's** theory about you is correct.

None of this should be taken too personally. I still like you, Ross, and we were genuinely disappointed when you didn't make it up for our New Year's party. I look forward to seeing you at WisCon or Worldcon later this year. But I don't look forward to your zine. And it disturbs me that you seem blind to the real pain your comments often cause. Note **Cathy Arbothnott's** anguished comment to you in #77 and the rage you bring out in **Kim Winz** and others. Such insensitivity carries a price. Gradually more and more people will just stop reading your zine.

[JG] You asked about women-only space. This is how I understand it: Women in our culture learn that their opinions are less important than any man's opinion, that women are perceived to be more attractive (and therefore worth more) to the extent that they are quiet, subservient, and agreeable to men. In mixed groups, women learn to flirt, put themselves down, tailor their conversations in the direction the men find interest, show support for what men say, and not take offence at being ignored. Women-

only space provides the opportunity for women to encourage one another, to build up a sense of self-esteem, and gives women a chance to practice speaking out, to express opinions and to find out that other people might find their opinions worthwhile and interesting. These lessons are much easier to absorb without having to fight internalized behavior expectations related to the presence of men. Gradually the skills learned transfer to mixed groups.

You completely missed the point when I accused you of twisting the truth with regard to the majority of left-leaning media who, you said, thought that abortion was "wonderful." I wasn't challenging you to prove that most of the press is liberal; I was challenging your use of the word "wonderful," in the sense of "Oh, wow, I'm so happy that I can finally have the abortion I always wanted!"

I also think that you continue to miss the point of most of your survey results. A person can say that they would have an abortion or not have an abortion in any number of circumstances (as listed in the Hunter article that you excerpted), and still be pro-choice. There is an enormous and *critical* difference between the choices one makes for oneself and a law which allows each person to formulate their own decisions. I have written several times here that I don't know if I would choose an abortion myself if my fallopian tubes miraculously re-joined and I conceived. Nevertheless, I believe that it is every woman's right to make that decision herself. To be "pro-choice" but "anti-abortion" by my definition means that one has decided not to choose abortion for oneself but that one is willing to support whatever choice other women make in their own lives. By support, I mean, to give emotional support if that's what is asked, to give informational support if that's what is asked, or to give physical help (I'll be there for you, no matter what you choose) if that's what is asked. Arguing with a woman, assuming that she isn't capable of informed choice—as you suggest—is hardly a supportive attitude in my book.

Your equating of homosexuals with pederasts explains why you don't think gays should be allowed to work in the same places as straight men, to legalize their life commitments with their partners as straight men do, or to worship god in the same way that straight men do. However, as you surely know, a boy-abusing pederast can no more be equated with homosexual identity, than can a girl-abusing pederast be equated with heterosexual identity. Some straight men molest young girls. Does that mean that we should forbid all straight men from teaching grade school and from practicing gynecology? Of course not. There are heterosexuals who are criminals. There are gays who commit crimes. But all men and all women, in my opinion, have the same right to aspire and achieve any career for which they qualify, to aspire to the highest levels of organized worship, to participate in such organizations as the Boy Scouts, and, if they wish, to legally formalize their relationships with life partners. None of this involves "special privilege."

Well, maybe we're *all* "waverers." So what? I don't accept your given assumption that parents should all be horrified that their child might be "exposed" to alternate lifestyles and eventually chose one. I think the world would be a much healthier place if children weren't inculcated with so many dire messages about what horrible human beings they must be if they find themselves thinking or feeling the "wrong" sorts of thoughts.

STEVE JOHNSON

[SC] I will be very interested in Ross' response to your comments to him. Your theory as to why he is sticking it out in *Turbo* is as good a guess as any I can come up with.

I enjoyed "Seminars For Men." Maybe I'll take a copy of it to work.

Thank you for the compliment on my snide little Rush Limbaugh comment to Ross. I see these little comments as rubber bands against boiler plate, but in a million years or so, I might get through.

[JG] As an analogy to those who lack interest in exploring some of the new-age issues you write about in your zine, you asked me how I "feel towards those who choose not to explore what feminism means. ... [Do I] consider these individuals to be closed minded ... [How do I] feel towards individuals like Rush Limbaugh, who seems to have acquired the attitude that feminism is not worth exploring?" People who aren't interested in this particular thread of conversation, don't write mailing comments to me about it, and, for the most part, I don't think much about their opinions about feminism, one way or the other. I wouldn't put Rush Limbaugh and others like him in that category, however. He (and they) have very definite opinions about feminism: that it's bad, that it threatens them, that it's a sign of female selfishness, that it's a threat to Our Way of Life, etc. It's aggravating to get involved in a conversation with someone who would never think about reading about feminism or listening to those who desire change, but who believes they understand far more than I do about what women (and even I) want, should be, and will eventually do. Indeed, people like this care a great deal about feminism, although they refuse to believe that there could be any more information in the head of a woman than they understand by virtue of being a man.

Perhaps your analogous (Rush Limbaugh) situation would be if someone accused you of treasonous behavior for writing about and thinking about the possibility that the US government might know more about UFOs than it lets on. Or if someone suggested that you are guilty of heretical belief in a non-Christian higher power. These people might be *very* concerned with your interests, and fanatically concerned that you be stopped. They might not care about trying to understand your concerns.

That's all for now, folks. See you in February.



—Scott and Jeanne