



Heaven



Welcome to Union Street #50 (Obsessive Press [JG] #152 and Peerless Press [SC] #52), the zine with the transmogrifying masthead (Celebrating Union Street's 50th anniversary!). 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 Quadra 840AV, and hardcopy was printed on a Laserwriter IINTX printer. Text was created with Microsoft Word 5.1 and laid out with Aldus PageMaker 5.0. The Union Street Logo was designed with Adobe Illustrator 5.0 and Adobe Photoshop 2.5. All contents are copyrighted © by Scott Custis and Jeanne Gomoll, 1994. March, 1994 for Turbo-Charged Party Animal APA #93. Members FWA.

Official Bidness

[JG] I second the nomination to readmit **Don Helley**, and I hereby nominate **Georgie Schnobrich** for membership in *Turbo*.

I talked to Georgie at WisCon and she's very interested in joining us, catching up with Madison friends, and participating in our famously active conversations. Georgie used to live in Madison. She and I spent many a weekend shut up in my Jenifer Street apartment laying out *Aurora* with wax, exacto knives and press-on letters. She's a wonderful artist, and a disconcerting artist too: To this day, I have never gotten used to the fact that this very sweet, petite, beautiful woman creates some of the most gruesome, grotesque and startling art I've ever seen. She and her husband, Greg Rihn, live in the Milwaukee area and are involved in Milwaukee fandom. Georgie belongs to *Milwapa*, but she yearns, she says, for an apa in which everyone sticks to one identity. (Milwapans apparently delight in creating schizophrenic identities so that they can argue with one another from several points of view. And you thought it was tough following arguments here!) Anyway, she's a fine person, a good writer, and I'd like her to join us here in *Turbo*. Any seconds?

I'm Sorry I Must Be Going

[JG] Scott and I might well have named last month's masthead cross-street, "Boxer Ave." in honor of my long, combative comments in that issue of *Union Street*. That description won't be appropriate this month. I've only just finished reading *Turbo*—a couple days shy of the deadline—and am now frantically typing my comments. I'm afraid my contribution this month will be shorter than usual. From my perspective—and to continue the theme—we could name this issue' cross-street, "Briefs Ave."

Ellen Franklin

[SC] I'm delighted that you are finding time for us in *Turbo*. I think the single most valuable service the apa performs is providing a place for people to get to know each other. I have often been surprised at the sides of people the apa brings out that I never guessed existed. I think it has been especially valuable in your case, Ellen, where some people in the group once saw you as a quick flash of green and purple. You've been very open and honest with us in these pages and I expect that will pay off in our seeing you as a fascinating and approachable person.

You talked about community and the sort of community experience you would like to have. *Turbo* is a community in the sense of being a reflection of the Madison fan community. But it's not a community in the sense that *Intercourse* is (or at least what I know of *Intercourse*.) We don't often share the intimate details of our lives in *Turbo*. It's not quite safe enough for that. And maybe that same reticence exists in the larger fan community here as well.

You talked of feeling left out of things, not always welcome or "grounded" with the group here, a lack of a feeling of community that you want. I don't think you're alone in feeling that way (you may get some comments to that effect this month.) It seems to me that the Madison fan group has been struggling with these issues for a long time. Nasty fights and outrageous cliquishness have split the group in the past and those memories linger. Today I think we are getting along better as a social group than at any time in the past since I've been around. It's common today to throw a party and invite everyone for instance.



The problem seems to be to take the next step. One can't form intimate friendships with everyone in the SF³ Directory. We have to search out those few people we want to trust. Unfortunately, that means some others get left out. They feel left out of "the loop." Charges of elitism and cliquishness circulate. It's often hard to straddle the fence of remaining reasonably open to everyone while reaching out to those people you want to be close to. Work schedules, parental obligations, other interests outside the group all compete for time and attention. It can be tough to fit everything in.

I guess what I'm trying to say is that there is a community for you here Ellen. Your work in *Turbo* and on Corflu has brought you steadily closer to people in the group who knew you only marginally before. But the overall community is still forming and changing. As you become more prominent in the group's activities, people will become more and more comfortable reaching out to you.

[JG] My fondest memories of community date back to my college days. I liked the loose-knit network of students struggling to survive, excel and make connections with one another. And so, if I think about designing an ideal community for myself, I think of an "outside space" (outside myself, outside my home) in which I meet with and work with others with whom I share some common goal. The private area, the place I retreat back into to do my own work and share with my partner provides the necessary balance, perhaps even the very energy that makes participation in community possible.

I liked your zine a lot, Ellen. Lots of great comments. Lots of substance. Too bad you're kept me too busy this month to write long mc's, huh? [It's not *all* Ellen's fault. Besides the freelance work she has sent my way, I also had to finish reading for the Tiptree award, including the final rush of 12 books, during the 3 weeks just before WisCon. (These books were recommended late in the year, and were finally procured from the publishers by the end of January.) We're starting the voting process; now the fun *really* begins.] In any case it was a busy few weeks, what with the deadlines, Bill and Rose's visit, and the several parties following WisCon, or did I just dream those parties?

Hope Kiefer & Karl Hailman

[SC] I believe you guys have set a new standard for moving horror stories. If you knew ahead of time what you would have to go through to get here, would you still have done it? If the answer is "yes" than you are hereby admitted to an exclusive group of local devotees set on bringing back wayward Madison fans (like the *Winzs*, *Julie Gomoll*, and *Hooper*.) Choose your target and start campaigning.

Quite a housewarming/birthday party you had. Any party host should know by now that the sight of *Bill Hoffman* coming up the sidewalk with a bottle of expensive of Tequila in his hand means the party is about to get wild.

[JG] What a story! The quasi-biblical illuminated letters were quite appropriate to this epic tale... Welcome to Madison, folks. We're glad you're here.

So, did you end up having to pay for the sign you bumped in the hotel parking lot? The police accident report sheet almost made it sound like the hotel was going to be cited for failing to post a height limitation sign.

Pat Hario

[SC] Excellent zine, Pat. Your intro. was much too modest. I hope your Dad is doing well. We all expect an update on his recovery. It was very nice of you to comment in such depth for three issues.

YCT me RE: Candle detective work. I have faith in all my suspects. I need not hurry to choose which one to target revenge because in time they will each openly provide me with a new reason to respond in kind. *Tracy*, for example, let loose with CORNMAN. No one can blame me for targeting her now. My other two suspects will surely succumb to temptation eventually.

YCT me RE: apa vs. On-line. The tactile nature of *Turbo* is a significant advantage. Lately it's acquired a certain heft, as well. Our covers run the spectrum from cool to silly, but they are rarely boring. However, the very physical features of the apa you appreciated can also be disadvantageous. The apa is a thing with an indefinite existence. It can be lost, traded, auctioned off or passed on to others who were not the intended audience. Electronic communication usually has a finite life expectancy. Even a hard copy version of E-mail would not have the value of a colorful, graphic intensive, cover enhanced apazine. E-mail is most likely to have a brief life, probably limited to its intended audience. Once out of your hands, your zine takes on a life of its own in an apa.

[JG] You know, I've heard all sorts of reasons why written communication is better than on-line communication, but I never would have thought of the one you offered in your last zine! Paraphrasing (of course)...

Reason #82 Apas are Better than E-Mail: You can't roll up an electronic message and swat a cat with it.

My mom frequently warned me to make sure I had a "fall-back skill" in case my nontraditional aspirations failed to pan out. The only time I was ever praised for an answer to the old "What-Do-You-Want-To-Be-When-You-Grow-Up?" question was when I briefly aspired to nursehood. (I blame it on the *Cherry Ames* book I was reading at the time.) My mom was so thrilled that I was finally acting like a normal girl, that even though I changed my mind a few weeks later and decided to become one of the first Martian colonists, I lied to her about it for years, because it made her so happy to hear me say that I wanted to be a nurse. It almost felt like a minor "coming-out" admission when I finally disillusioned her on that one. And of course, it's been downhill ever since.

The fall-back skill my mom always recommended was typing, probably because she was a typist (and an incredibly good one too, at over 100 words a minute). Even when I was in college, my mom would listen to my plans and then solemnly warn me to polish my typing skills, strongly implying that she didn't really think I'd actually be successful in any of my outlandishly unorthodox career plans. That sort of thing wears one down, and has always worn women down. It's hard enough to shoot for unlikely goals, much less to be constantly told by society that you're unlikely to make it.

Maybe that's one of the reasons I am so hot on the subject that we all must define ourselves and need to ignore the fact that we're always getting labeled by those around us. If I had more time and/or energy, I might have launched a reply to your "Who died and made you God" comment (re fandom, the topic you don't want to talk about but did anyway), but I think I'd

better just leave it at that, and hope to agree to disagree on the subject with you.

Andy Hooper

[SC] Nice job on the covers. It's been a long time since we saluted a Party Animal of the Month. A fine tradition to bring back.

YCT Official business. Thank you for the support and the shameless egoboo. I'm still having fun and as long as I can say that, I will carry on collating, stapling, mailing and haranguing. In fairness, Jeanne came up with the rotating order scheme after we decided that permanent straight alphabetical order would not work over the long run.

Where had you planned to publish your Zappa essay? I'd like to know where to look for it. Is it a paying project?

Thanks for the tour through Potlatch III. I had a similar impression of WisCon this year. By the time I had to leave the *Turbo* party Saturday night to go to work, I wasn't very pleased with how the con was going for me. Sunday, however, was a big improvement. Some great panels, lunch with Melinda Snodgrass and Karen Fowler, a nap and a fun time at bowling (powered by three beers that hit me like six) really improved my convention experience.

[JG] So, have you heard from *Asimov's* yet? Good luck, Andy. I feel sure that you'll get published soon... I'm glad to hear that you've put writing into a highest priority category.

Thanks for the great con report; we'll make it to a Potlatch one of these years, I hope. I'd like to hear a bit more about the patriarchal paradigm you talked briefly about at the parallel universe panel.

I'd be willing to bet that Carrie will be enormously liked by Brit fans. And who cares what Michael Ashley thinks? Tell Carrie that I really liked her "A Walk on the North Side." What a fine idea!

Bill Humphries

[JG] I've rethought Blumlein's *X, Y*. I no longer think it's a story of a man trapped in a woman's body. I think this is a story of a woman who has experienced a psychotic episode. Her conviction that she is a man represents her brain's attempt to shield her from the abuse she's received most of her life because she is a woman. If woman = victim and man = abuser, she's decided (subconsciously) that since she no longer wants to be a victim, that means that she must become a man. And since masculinity is equated with abuse in her mind, she in turn, abuses her partner to maintain that new identity. Given this interpretation of the book, the character's complete lack of understanding of gender outside of the abuser/abusee role becomes understandable, and of course, awful. (It also explains all those reprints of psychiatric theory interspersed in the beginning of the novel, which actually explain how this could have happened to the character.) Say **Bill Hoffman**, have you read *X, Y*?

Jim Nichols

[SC] "I really enjoy APA-hacking, and missing an ish is like giving up peanut butter for a month." Like any good pusher, I always like to see a happy addict.

Congratulations on the fine job you did at WisCon. My experience as a panel member was interesting as a one-time thing, but not something I'd care to do again.

Michael Shannon

[SC] I also liked *Philadelphia*, though probably not quite as much as you did. Jonathan Demme at one point said that he was hoping to reach the people who were hostile to gays and blindly afraid of AIDS. Consequently the film seems pretty timid in some respects. The most demonstratively affectionate the main characters get is when Hanks' lover kisses his hand. They exchange one other kiss, but Hanks has his back to the camera for that one. They seem to not want to push the audience's tolerance too far by doing something they might consider really disgusting. Hanks also plays a character for whom money and family support is not a problem. He seems to have plenty of money to hire a lawyer to fight for him and his family is backing him 100%. Again I think that is touching to see his family behind him and it's an important thing to show. But the really tragic stories of abandoned and financially ruined AIDS victims has yet to be told on film.

I thought your comments to **Bill Humphries** regarding unions were rather naive. "The big difference I see is that unionized employees by and large have jobs. In the non-union areas, people have careers." This is rather dismissive of the "careers" of millions of unionized professionals like teachers, police officers, nurses, skilled craftsmen and technicians, actors, journalists, etc. Corporate America is very anxious to help unions "fade in importance" by aggressively trying to destroy them for the last fifteen years. There are many examples of this. Corporate America's idea of the "next level" is a docile, powerless labor force forced to compete against Third World wages and working conditions. Worker owned companies are not the wave of the future. Workers unite to buy companies usually when they are faced with losing their jobs because of a shutdown if they don't. It's most commonly a last ditch solution.

Have you ever been a union member?

Kim Winz

[SC] Congratulations on the big news. I leave you to make the formal announcement in these pages. Good to see you again at WisCon.

I sighed when I read about the layoffs at IBM and how they handled them. Once upon a time IBM was a leader in the business community for the treatment of their employees. If you were a good employee, they would try anything to keep you. Layoffs were unheard of for most of IBM's existence. These days it's different. The philosophy today is that employees are expendable, the company owes them nothing other than what is spelled out in their contract. Treating people with respect is just not necessary.

[JG] Well, you did ask, and I do think about the fact that so many people in my generation seem to think they have to either go back to organized religion, or pretend to do so, for the sake of their kids. My brother and sister-in-law when they were kids, for instance, stopped going to church just as soon as their parents stopped dragging them along on Sundays. I don't think I've ever had a serious conversation about religion with my brother, Steve; he never seemed to care at all. And even though they were brought up in different religions, that wasn't an issue when Steve and Betsy married. But now that they've got two kids, they go to church every Sunday. (I don't even know which religion they've chosen.) And I'm deeply puzzled.



It seems to me that parents teach their kids what they think (and hope) they will need to know, and then the kids accept some of it and reject some of it, and eventually come up with their own blend of skills and beliefs. I don't see the point of masquerading as something you're not so that kids will have the benefit of some different cultural experience. I knew right away that religion was not of central importance in my father's life. He pretended for a while for the sake of us, I suppose, and for my mom. But I'm pretty sure I learned a lot more about personal ethics from them at home than I did from the nuns at

school (or certainly, from the sermons at church, which I mainly daydreamed through, until I was 11 or 12 and started skipping church altogether).

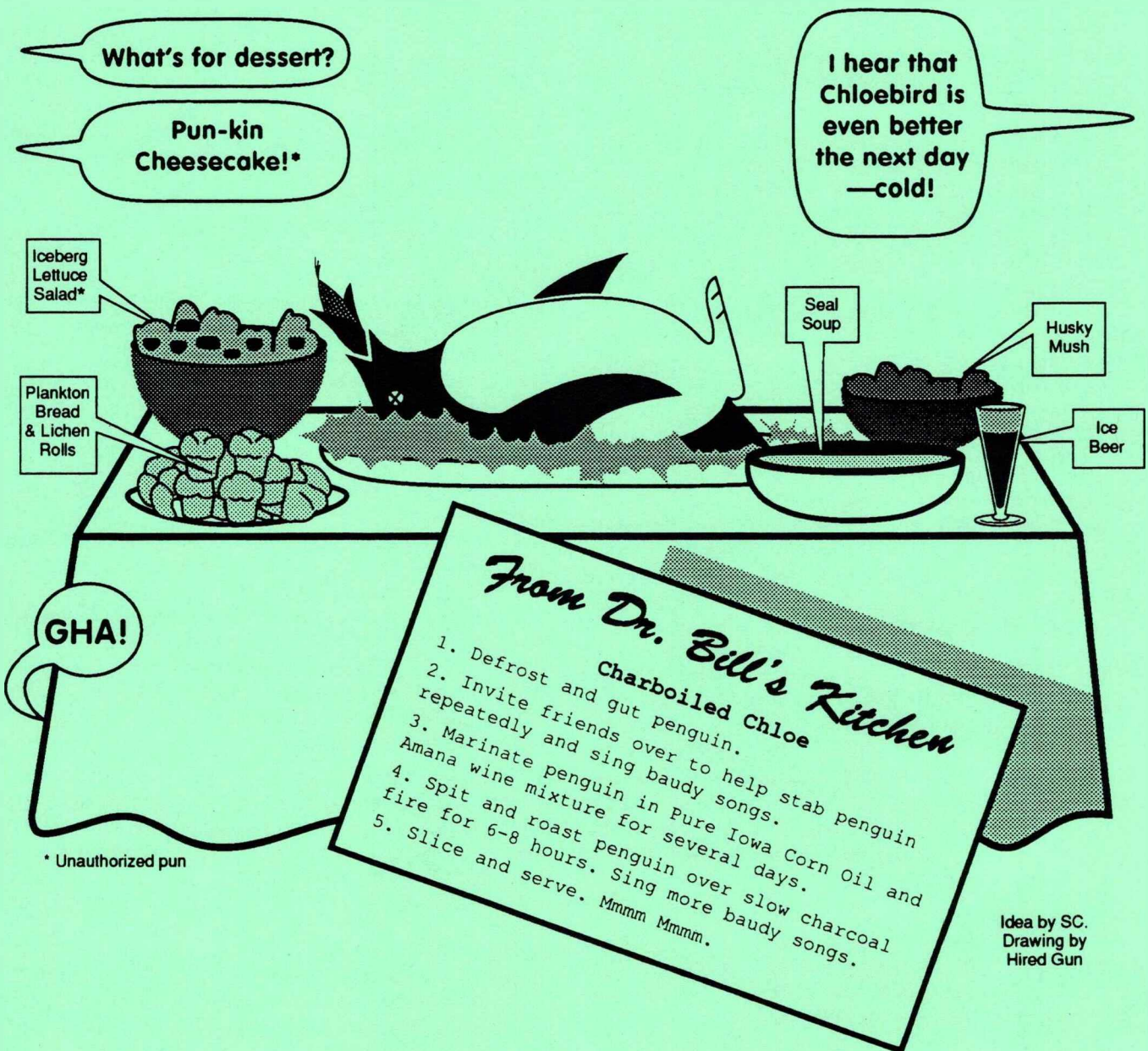
Maybe I just don't get it. But pretending to be religious for kids seems to me like deciding to set the table with extra silverware and fancy finger bowls so that your kid will learn high class manners and will fit into a world you think they should aspire to.

Tracy Shannon

[SC]

Next Year—

Hoffman's 1995 Feast ... Antarctic Cuisine



What's for dessert?

Pun-kin Cheesecake!*

I hear that Chloebird is even better the next day —cold!

Iceberg Lettuce Salad*

Plankton Bread & Lichen Rolls

Seal Soup

Husky Mush

Ice Beer

GHA!

From Dr. Bill's Kitchen
Charboiled Chloe

1. Defrost and gut penguin.
2. Invite friends over to help stab penguin repeatedly and sing boudy songs.
3. Marinate penguin in Pure Iowa Corn Oil and Amana wine mixture for several days.
4. Spit and roast penguin over slow charcoal fire for 6-8 hours. Sing more boudy songs.
5. Slice and serve. Mmmmm Mmmmm.

* Unauthorized pun

Idea by SC.
 Drawing by
 Hired Gun

Jae Adams

[SC] I wish I had read *Glory Season* when we first received it. I don't think I will get motivated to read it now. I've heard too many negative comments. I would have liked to be in the thick of the discussion.

Me a closet writer? Stop that Jae, you're scaring me. I'm going to keep your quote around, "*but I have to stand up for illogic and inconsistency.*" It's my favorite of the whole apa.

Your "Journal" and "Dream" pieces hint at significant issues that you have been struggling with, but it is difficult for me to get a handle on exactly what's going on. Couched in dreams and metaphors, it is hard to see beyond a sense of depression and turmoil. I hope Spring will brighten the outlook for you.

[JG] The argument about whether Campion's *The Piano* is a feminist film or not has been fascinating. Ms. published a review last month (by Kathi Maio, film editor of *Sojourner*, and author of *Popcorn and Sexual Politics*) with which I mostly agreed—on the pro side of this raging debate. The reviewer's opinion was that the crucial point in the plot, when Baines (Harvey Keitel) stops blackmailing Ada McGrath and returns her piano, allows her to make a choice. She *chooses* passion; she is not forced. This revelation was crucial for both Ada and Baines, that love and passion can be neither forced nor bought. I agree. If Baines had taken her on one of their afternoon sessions as "payment," it would have been rape and it would have been awful. Instead, we have a story of a woman who discovers a passion she seemed not to know she had, and of a man who learns a big lesson of his own, that he gets what he wants only after he lets go of the power to take it. Do you know the story of Puccini's *Turandot*? I think it's the same story. Here's a quotation from Maio's review:

In the end, by choosing whom to love, Ada brings down the wrath of the patriarchy. In similar stories, only madness or death offers comfort to the woeful, willful heroine. But Ada refuses to become the mad-woman in the attic or the tragic loser washed out to sea. She literally snatches life back from the depths (of female despair) and applies her will to finding a new voice.

Bill Boddan

[SC] Interesting moving story. You needed a few disasters to compete with **Hope** and **Karl**, but it was a fun read anyway. It was very nice to have you back in time for the New Years Party.

Vijay Bowen

[SC] Excellent intro. piece. Yours was a fine example of how it should be done. Relaxed, honest, real. Doing an intro. zine is a good idea even for those of us who have met you and been writing to you for awhile because there are details you mention that I have forgotten or maybe didn't know at all before. Thanks.

YCT Official business. And I appreciate your "*prompt collation and mailing*" to me. You've never yet caused me to bite my nails waiting for a last minute submission. I like that. It's folks like you that motivate me to brave the Monday morning crush at the Post Awful to get your apa out first thing.

[JG] I may come back and do the Deena Metzger exercise, and write the story of my life in 5 sentences. I'm just too tired right now to go that deep. But I have to tell you that after I read your five sentences, I knew in a sudden flash that my five sentences would involve far more plot than yours did. I think I find verbs innately more trustworthy than adjectives: they change meaning less often than adjectives. Which is an interesting idea, that some people see their life in adjectives and others with verbs, and that parts of speech hook up to different personality types in different ways.

James Bron

[SC] Intersection will be held on August 24-28, 1995 in Glasgow. Attending memberships through September 30, 1994 are £60. Contact: Admail 336, Glasgow, G2 1BR, Scotland, United Kingdom. I don't have a phone for British calls but the E-mail is: intersection@smof.demon.co.uk

Heather Brooks

[SC] YCT Jae RE: Med School. Great, just what we need in this apa is another doctor. Seriously, it sounds like a great plan. Much better plan than I had when I was in high school.

The only trouble with having your parents teach you how to drive is that they may leave you with some bad habits. Your mom seems very sensible to me, but you know how truck drivers are.

It was a shame to lose Davey Allison. I used to enjoy racing. I wasn't much for watching it on TV (except for the Indy 500 a couple of times.) I always preferred to see it live. The noise and smell and crowd all add a lot to the experience. I used to go to dirt track races at the local county fairgrounds every year and once or twice to a regular raceway in Cedar Rapids. I also liked seeing drag racing now and then. I made one memorable trip to Cordova Raceway for the World Series of Drag Racing one year. It was great fun.

You are taking German and Spanish? You like languages or what?

I laughed when I read about your exercise in the Open Minds class where you had to choose the music you related to because I thought at once of Jeanne. She's been a classical music fan since she was in high school. Where was she supposed to go? As for myself, I would have had a hard time choosing. I listen to rap the least. I probably listen to Nirvana category stuff most often but it varies quite a bit between all the other categories. Yes, that includes some country.

It was fun seeing you at Hope's party. Your parents should really let you get more sleep before they drag you out to a party. Your mom was particularly merciless to you that night.

[JG] Hey, I like your priorities! A haircut is a success if it reduces the amount of time it takes to get ready in the morning and increases the amount of time one can sleep. That gets my vote. Some people might even conclude that the strange scalp disease I have, which has left me mostly bald and dependent upon wigs, was a psychosomatic condition. You have no *idea* how much time that's cut off my getting-ready-in-the-morning time! Who needs blow-dryers!

Next time your dad in-line skates around the kitchen, especially if Abigail offers to take his hand, please get a photo of him, OK? I would be more than glad to help you produce a



cover for Turbo-apa that I'm sure would be memorable for all of us. (Funny story!)

Jim Brooks

[SC] Fourteen pages? It's amazing what you can do when you have a little time on your hands. Great zine, great comments.

I think you were the perfect narrator for the bar fight story. I enjoyed it immensely. All the way through it I was picturing Pat's reaction to what was happening. Wow. I'm glad the whole adventure was your doing and not mine.

YCT me #91 RE: puns in the business pages. This is a sign that you are reading the apa too closely. Any apparent puns in the business pages are pure accidents and not to be taken as evidence of any sort that I secretly approve of them.

"...don't you think that each of us has that one article or story that we are mentally polishing for sale somewhere?" I believe all of us at some point in our lives have at least one story in us that would have mass appeal. Yet I have few delusions about the struggle it would require to get that story published. My only point was that we shouldn't put too much value on published work. Good writing has value in itself. It shouldn't gain validity only when it is published for pay. There has been a lot of good writing here in *Turbo*. Most of it would not appeal to a mass audience and would never get published professionally. That doesn't mean it wasn't good writing.

"Isn't it possible to distinguish between walking the edge and crossing the line?" I've always been a free speech absolutist and that extends to art. Who is going to decide what is over the line? I don't think art has to be constrained by such concepts as taste.

I want to say "Bravo" for your comment to **Jim Nichols** regarding apa recruitment. We rely heavily on the ability of members to assess the suitability of new people for apa membership. Once in, there is no way to change your mind and get rid of them. Lately, we've been doing a pretty good job of recruiting.

I noticed that throughout your zine you talked about the apa, how it works and the community it has become. You appear to be thinking about it a lot. I think the apa is playing an important role in the local fan group's social scene. I hope it will lead to closer cohesion in the group and inspire some members on to bigger and better things. What's next for you, Jim? A fanzine, convention running, a seat on the Executive Board?

[JG] You've got the wrong name for the video store, Jim. It's not *Flockbuster*, it's *Cockbuster Video*, which features such films as:

<i>Altered Sex</i>	<i>Guarding Testicles</i>
<i>Big Little Man</i>	<i>Mutiny on the Bobbit</i>
<i>Beverly Hills Chop</i>	<i>Remains of the Lay</i>
<i>Castrating Arizona</i>	<i>Schindler's Lisp</i>
<i>Clips of Passion</i>	<i>Spayed Balls</i>
<i>Good-bye, Mr. Happy</i>	<i>What's Eating Gilbert's Grapes</i>
<i>The Gelded Gatsby</i>	<i>Who Fixed Roger Rabbit</i>
<i>Gone with the Whipsaw</i>	

What a great bar story! Whew. You're really very good at action descriptions. I'd be interested to hear how the other witnesses' memories differ from your's.

I was just stunned at your report about the high school class laughing through the first reel of *Schindler's List*. Where did you hear about this? I remember laughing a bit at the restaurant bit, where we saw Oskar's skill at working the room, and I remember laughing with an explosion of relief later in the movie when he admitted that he was trying to produce artillery duds. But I've got the feeling you're suggesting that the laughter was at the expense of victims' pain...

Great zine, Jim.

Alison Dawson

[SC] Brian is quite a character. Entertaining to read about him from thousands of miles away, but not much fun to deal with up close, I'm sure. One strategy for dealing with people like Brian is to be too strapped for money yourself to be of any use to him. When you go off to school next fall, that may actually put you beyond "helping" him no matter how far in debt he gets. Your mother is putting you in a tough spot, however. She doesn't have the heart to deal with Brian and Melanie herself, but she apparently doesn't mind complaining to you as if you should help her somehow. Once again, I think going off to Scotland to school is the best answer.

[JG] I hope you don't mind my saying, Alison, that your brother is a jerk. As long as he knows you and your mother worry about what he might do if you don't help him ... he's got you. I hope this latest experience has convinced you to forget about the blood thickness thing and to let him sink or swim on his own. It sounds as if he's quite willing to take your whole family down with him.

Bill Dyer

[SC] It was good to see you once again at WisCon. Good piece by Barbara Ehrenreich. She is an excellent columnist (the single best thing about *Time* magazine). Katha Pollett (whose work we have reprinted in the apa) of the *Nation* is also very good. Both of these women seem to see past what is currently fashionable in intellectual feminist circles and focus on what matters to average women. They have a clear-eyed view of the real world. I completely agree with her view of the Lorena Bobbitt case.

[JG] Thanks for running the Ehrenreich article. I read that essay on the plane in January and I've been referring to it ever since. I was really impressed by her analysis. Ironically I read *Newsweek* a few days after seeing the essay in *Time*. *Newsweek* also included an essay on the Bobbit case, only their's was by Rush Limbaugh and concluded that the desire to cut men's cocks off comprises the essence of the feminist movement. The real irony is what a subtle—but crucial—shade of difference separates Ehrenreich and Limbaugh. Makes me wonder, though, what happened to the reputation *Newsweek* used to have for being the more liberal of the two newszines.

Karen Babich

[JG] [This comment is an edited version of the electronic conversation that Karen and I carried on right after the last issue of *Turbo* was published. Karen makes reference to these comments of mine in the current *Blue Plate Special*.]

The problem with using general terms to camouflage specific targets is that anyone who includes those general terms in their own self-definition is perfectly justified to conclude that you might be talking about them.

This is actually something to which I've given a lot of thought lately. **Diane Martin** and **Kathi Nash's** derisive comments in *Turbo* many many months ago—about "some people" in town who were heavily involved in Corflu, Tiptree activities, Cube, and maybe other projects too, I forget, but I was involved in all of them at the time—got me pretty upset. They both claimed to have been hurt by the attitude of individuals in this nebulous group, but would not elaborate either about what exactly hurt them or about which individuals they were talking. I pointed out that their description of this group's activities included me, and that I would like to know how I had insulted them or was making them uncomfortable. But, if you recall, they both said they preferred not to talk about it anymore. Having dropped this bombshell (And it was a bombshell to me. I've been friends with Diane for a long time, and felt sad that I had possibly hurt her.)—they decided to just leave it. Here's the image all this left with me: an unexploded bomb sitting in the middle of the living room. Ticking.

Perhaps I am being unfair to link that unresolved situation with your rather angry essay in *Turbo* in which you complained about the splinter group of fanzine fans who are turning away from fandom in general, tending to their own interests, and in the process, defining themselves as "other," different from the rest of fandom. But I still suspect that, at root, both your discomfort and the situation that alienated Diane and Kathi—are linked.

Even if I had known that you didn't mean to include me in your comments, I would still have felt it necessary to stand with the group you attacked. Here's the analogy for me: A guy tells me that feminists are a bunch of angry, self-righteous, selfish bitches who hate men. I object. And then he says, oh, I didn't mean *you!* You're nice, you've got a sense of humor. You're different from any of *them*. This actually happens to me fairly regularly. In fact, I think of the whole phenomenon of people saying "I'm not a feminist, but..." as a rationalized response to the perception that feminists have been re-defined as *bad*, so it's important to classify oneself in the *not bad* category. I absolutely reject that. If a colleague or acquaintance wants to hate feminists; they're going to know that I call myself a feminist too, and if that interferes with their image of feminists, well, so much the better. I refuse to collaborate in anyone's angry delusions. I can understand why someone might want to create this category of *bad* people: Societal changes really are hurting a lot of individuals who are economically and emotionally invested in sexist institutions and it might be comforting if there was a specific group of people who could be blamed for these changes.

So, when you make general statements about fanzine fans, a label that I have frequently applied to myself, it feels important to me that I say, "You are talking about me when you say that, and I do not share the motivations you ascribe to my group."

I stand with those fanzine fans (like Debbie and Abi at the Reinconation panel) who are attempting to keep hold of the simpler label, "fans," for themselves, since they/we feel we originated the term. I think we all understand that the label has widened in its generally accepted definition to include a much broader range of interests—convention running, movies, TV, etc.—and so when we use the term among ourselves, or with people we think understand our subtle shading of the word's meaning (in the use of "faan," for instance), we are acknowledging—with the extra "a"—the fact that it is necessary to make a distinction. The word "fan" has turned into a homonym, with meaning dependent upon context. There are fans and there are fans. We wish to make the distinction because we perceive ourselves to belong to a group with unique qualities that attracts us more than the interests of the general group. With Dick and Leah, I too mourn the loss of real "fannishness" at worldcons. To me, worldcons and most of the people who attend them share a worldview that is closer to the one I see projected on commercial TV than to the worldview I have long associated with the small, literate, scientifically-aware group of "fans.") This is not bigotry, even in the form of "casual or habitual contempt" that you mentioned in your e-mail message. This is the same sort of group-awareness and process that created the whole of fandom in the first place...which is a good thing, in my opinion.

So: You and I are left to agree that some individuals— independent of the groups to which they belong—show contempt for individuals who belong to other groups. Yes, I think we both come to this conclusion, and both of us dislike this intolerance. Perhaps we only disagree about whether the labels themselves instigate this sort of abusive behavior. For my part, I don't blame people's bad manners or prejudices on the fact that they choose to identify with certain groups. Do you?

I think I've responded to almost all of your comments. There is one thing that bothered me about your message, though: and that was the way you lumped together Abi Frost's statement about the "hordes at worldcon," and the anime fans who objected to WisCon's support of feminism. There is a really significant difference between Abi and the anime fans: Abi has put a lot of work into the institutions of fandom. She won TAFF because of the work she has put into fandom—her writing and her involvement in various British cons. She has a right to be critical of the current state of affairs in fandom. The anime fans complained on the basis of their role as *WisCon attendees*. They had never worked in WisCon; and in fact had no intention of working on WisCon. They wanted US to change it to suit *them*. It's that expectation (that we should make WisCon for others) that got me angry; not the specific interests of this group. (In fact, I believe that it's possible that WisCon will eventually evolve into a media convention. If the only people that are willing to work on WisCon have as their primary interest, media SF, then of course, WisCon will reflect those interests.) The anime fans wanted the WisCon attendees to change the convention to suit themselves. Abi, on the other hand, was expressing frustration about working on something that no longer feels like it is for her. I feel that way about worldcons too; and people like Abi and myself now look to smaller fanzine-oriented conventions in which to invest our time and energy, where we feel we're working on a convention for our own group.

Stuffed Town Gazette

Perhaps it was the tequilla. Perhaps Bill was abducted by aliens. We will never know. All we can be sure of is that Bill Hoffman was unable to send a zine for Turbo. This is what we have heard: after leaving Wisconsin and meditating upon the previous week of decadence—Bill Hoffman flew directly to a Scientology Clinic in Moscow, Idaho, where he experienced a dramatic religious conversion and took a vow of chastity. Disavowing technology, he destroyed his laptop computer. In the meantime, Bill asked us to reprint his menu from the March 12, post-WisCon feast.

Bill Hoffman, 1017 SW Grover St., Portland, OR 97201

Moroccan Celebration

Cookies
Mint Tea
The Snake

Vegetarian Harira
Harira with Lamb
Moroccan Bread

Bisteeya
Bisteeya Bil Roz
Mixed Herb Salad

Seven Vegetable Couscous
Tomato and Hot Pepper Salad
Moroccan Bread

Driveway Roasted Lamb
Orange and Black Olive Salad
Moroccan Bread

Granita

Chicken Stuffed with Olives, Lemon and Coriander
Squash with Moroccan Butter
Moroccan Carrot Salad

Roasted Roots
Skewered Lamb's Liver, Berber Style
Moroccan Bread

Pear Ginger Flan
Moroccan Date Cake
Baklava
Coffee

Harissa
Assorted Beers, Wines, and Other Intoxicants
Olives

Brought to you by Bill Hoffman and a cast of thousands. Special thanks to Ellen Franklin (planning, cooking, passion), Jim Hudson (planning, cooking, restraint), and Rose Cain (cooking, beads, sex). Dishes prepared by: Jeanne, Scott, Ellen, Jim, Steve, Pat, Diana, Tracy, Lorelei, Michael, John, Mary Ellen, Kim, Kathy, Bill, Bill, Julie, and Laurie. Lucy N. and Kathi supplied dishes. Nevenah came up with a house, and Kim Nash supported the tables. The lamb was stabbed nude by several of the above in a shocking ritual of primitive passion.