



*Welcome to Union Street #59 (Obsessive Press [JG] #161 and Peerless Press [SC] #61), the zine with the transmogriying masthead (with visions of sugar plums dancing in our heads). 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, December 1994, for Turbo-Charged Party Animal APA #102. Members FWA. This APA is looking for a Progressive third party.*

## Official Business

[SC] I cast my one half vote in favor of the proposed Motion.

[JG] For the sake of peace at home with Mr.-Have-You-Voted-Yet?-Custis, I also cast my one half vote in favor of the OE's motion. I also nominate **Jim Frenkel** for readmission to the apa. He minaced out accidentally, I like his writing, and hope he gets back in soon.

## James Bron & Alison Dawson

[JG] Your cover marked a landmark occasion for me. With it, I finally was able to see the picture in stereograms. I've never been able to do it before. It was like a miracle. After the picture drifted into perspective I ran around the house looking for other stereograms, shouting "I can see this too!" Thanks. The hint of the backcover helped a lot since I suspected right off that the two images were the same, so I sort of knew what I was looking for.

## Jae Adams

[SC] I took your advice and stopped by Warner Park on my way home from work the other morning and took a look at the shelter. It certainly looks hopeless, especially with the boards holding it up. I think the roof is rather ugly. The city clearly has a turkey on its hands. I have to admit that I feel sorrier for Jon and the endless hassles he must have to look forward to, than I feel for us taxpayers who will end up paying for this thing. You sure you don't want to edit Jon out of your piece and drop it off at *Isthmus* anonymously? This is the kind of thing they love.

Once again you've weighed in this month with some excellent comments.

YCT Vijay regarding our quest for a new Wednesday night meeting place: we've certainly had a tough struggle to find a good new space. Hope deserves vast praise for leading us through a difficult search. The time we've spent looking has had a serious impact on the Wednesday night gathering, reducing us to an ever smaller core of dedicated socializers, but even that group will eventually fade out if we don't find a space that can comfortably handle us. As the group gets smaller, it gets harder and harder to look at places with everyone's needs and priorities in mind. I think it's going to eventually come down to our having to make some changes in our expectations and losing some people because of it.

YCT Jim Brooks and Tracy about *Turbo*: I agree with your shrewd observations. I would say that an exception to the "10 pages is too long" rule can be made when the writing is exceptionally good (Lynne and Karen often prove this.) It is sadly true that people will complain about not having the time to do a substantial zine, and then complain about those who make the time.

[JG] What an amazing story of bureaucratically orchestrated miscommunication between architect and maintenance. I encountered a similar situation at GEF-2, the government office building where I work. Along with several hundred other commuters, I park my bicycle beneath a huge archway behind the building. I could also use the bike racks in the open plaza between GEF-2 and GEF-3, but most of us jam into the racks in the archway because it is sheltered from weather and affords some protection to our bikes. The ceiling over the archway rises about three stories high, into which lights with motion detectors are set—which is handy in the Fall when it gets dark early.



Unfortunately, the lights have become rather unreliable over the last couple years. I remember last Fall that they tended to flicker a lot, and sometimes shut off all together while I was fumbling for my keys. This year (before icy roads prompted me to give up bicycling for the season), they gave up the flicker entirely, and when I left work at the end of the afternoon, the area seemed almost entirely pitch black. Actually, some nights, it was a little scary, especially when I worked really late. So I started calling the maintenance people and asking them to fix the lights. I assume others were complaining too. But nothing happened until I voiced my fears that lack of lights actually made the area dangerous. The next day, I noticed that they had been fixed, and so I thanked one of the maintenance guys. That's when I discovered why the repair had taken so long.

Apparently, the lights had never been changed since the building was first erected, because no one really knew how to do it. The lights, set into a ceiling three stories over sloping concrete were inaccessible from inside the building. In fact, they finally were able to work on them only by bringing in a truck with a crane. The building had been designed with no thought about how people might eventually change lightbulbs... [How many state workers does it take to change a light bulb? Apparently the answer is three guys and a crane.]

Re your comment to Scott, comparing women's access to the streets and driving: It's true that driving is also dangerous, and that we accept a certain degree of risk whenever we turn the ignition key. But it's equally true that women drivers do not back out of their driveways with the knowledge that a certain, significant percentage of other drivers are cruising the roads plotting to collide with cars driven by women. Beyond that quibble, I agree with you totally that we shouldn't weigh women's right to be out there at night, based upon their destinations. The Madison, nighttime, free-ride program, "Women's Transit," offers rides to women without regard to where they are going. No preference is given to a woman who is going to work over a woman who is on her way to a bar. The only preference system has to do with safety: A woman alone in a dangerous location gets priority, for instance.

I liked your description of how it felt to pretend to be a man at the Halloween party, and how it continued to affect your behavior afterward. Fiction is powerful stuff.

## Vijay Bowen

[SC] You are right, cartoons were better when we were kids. I, for one, think *Rocky and Bullwinkle* was brilliant (yes, I know it was full of bad puns, I didn't say I still watched it.)

Two ducks and a turkey, you must be expecting quite a crowd. I love duck but I rarely have it because it is difficult to cook. Do you have a secret cooking method?

## Tracy Benton

[JG] I don't find the dressing thing all that depressing, probably because I've never had to deal with a dress code where I work. But I really do look at the whole phenomenon (of how people react unconsciously to different dressing styles) as more of a useful tool for me, rather than a prejudice under which I suffer. As long as I understand the

process and as long as I can manipulate the terms if I choose to do so (or not), I regard it as a relatively benign sort of intrusion.

I haven't e-mailed Stu Shiffman to ask him for details of the Barry Smotroff affair, but if nobody answers your plea for information this issue, I will do so.

## Heather-Aynne Brooks

[SC] Your grandfather's death was a tough loss. You have the memories at least, so he won't ever be completely lost to you.

I've always hated working on cars. In high school I avoided it, yet I still wound up hanging around friends who were never as good a mechanics as they thought they were, while they worked on their cars. We would often end up hunched over a car in a cold wind or rain, hurrying to finish up so we could go somewhere and do something fun. Frequently we failed.

## Jim Brooks

[SC] An acquaintance of mine who knew about the apa once gave me an empty bottle of Turbo Dog he'd brought back from Louisiana. I'll see if I can find it in my basement. His opinion of the quality of the brew is now lost to memory.

YCT me: good point and good advice on asking difficult questions. My concern was that I didn't want to unnecessarily offend someone I consider a friend (Vijay) even though I can't say I know her very well. That makes asking touchy questions hazardous. Care must be taken. An odd circumstance of writing in this apa is that you can make friends here that you don't really *know* in the usual sense. Anyway, I feel Vijay is willing to answer tough (and maybe even stupid) questions as long as she knows someone cares about her answers.

[JG] How long ago did your mother say "Girls' is what women over 40 use to refer to each other"? You should perhaps revise that number, since I can assure you that *this* woman over 40 does not refer to herself as a girl.

## Bill Dyer

[SC] Adolph Reed, Jr. did a passionately negative review of the *Bell Curve* in a recent issue of the *Nation*. I recommend it. I'll send it to you if you are interested.

Wonderful comment to Vijay. I am really looking forward to her response.

## Pat Hario

[SC] The other night you hinted at your disappointment with the new Star Trek movie. I must agree with you. There were a few things I liked about it, sort of, but, let's face it, a climax that consisted of three old guys duking it out just didn't set me on fire.

YCT me: the latest on *Lonesome Node* is that her first move is simply to change the name. Seems she is having trouble marketing the newsletter to a wider, relevant audience because no one knows that a zine called "Lonesome Node" might be of interest to them. So beginning next year she is going to rename it *Linguistics and Science Fiction* and see if she can attract more subscriptions.



I thought *Frankenstein* was great. It was pretty faithful to the book and the performances did not strike me as "over the top" at all. It was almost as good as *Interview with the Vampire*.

Garrison Keillor wrote a funny story about being a middle child. It's called "Earl Grey" in *The Book of Guys*. He cast the inventor of the famous tea as a middle child who was ignored by his parents.

"The middle child is the normal, friendly one. In between their grievous mistakes, the parents have done something right and produced a keeper. So the middle child is ignored: because he or she is so nice and requires no special attention. Parents devote themselves to the troubled children and become close to them. The middle child, the healthy child, is a stranger to his parents."

[JG] Obviously, someone else in the city came home from work and discovered their yard littered with piles and piles of leaves. Someone who doesn't even have trees, perhaps. To this day, she repeats the story to friends over and over again, about the mysterious appearance of the leaves. "Where did they come from? Why me? Did you do it?" She asks pitifully. She has become paranoid. She is considering buying a video camera to monitor her yard while she is gone during the day. Her friends find it all hilarious. They are plotting to secretly re-sod her yard in the Spring and plant a serpentine line of tulips across her front yard. She will eventually seek professional help.

I liked your admonition to Heather about valuing an eclectic taste in music. A few weeks ago on NPR's *All Things Considered*, there was a story about Brandon Marsalis (I think, but I'm not sure. Some very famous jazz musician) who has been taking old music from the 1860s and 70s—Stephen Foster tunes, mostly—and converting them to jazz form. And it sounds absolutely wonderful. I loved it. Did you hear anything about this? Do you know the artist?

## Bill Humphries

[SC] I really enjoyed your ranting summation of the recent electoral debacle. About all I can say is that America is going to quickly become a very mean place to live.

I also enjoyed the Singapore piece. The news media could afford to cast a little more light on society Singapore-style in the face of all the Michael Fay stuff. Many people here were left with the impression that Singapore must be a great place to live. Incidentally, did you see the story about China and their solution to donor organ shortage? They use the organs of executed prisoners. They bring the doctors in to remove organs as soon as the condemned are shot. In fact, they schedule the executions to coincide with the demand for organs. Someone comes in who needs a liver, they set up an execution. It's an idea that is bound to catch on in the new Republican America.

[JG] Excellent zine, Bill. Really good summation of the election.

Re Clipper, did you read in *Wired* a couple issues ago that Clipper has been scuttled by more than just political opposition? The NSA invited encryption experts to test Clipper. Go ahead, try and break it, they said. And while none of the experts succeeded in breaking Skipjack, the algorithm used in Clipper, Matt Blaze, did something almost

as good. "Blaze discovered a mega design flaw in the technological 'backdoor' of Clipper: the Law Enforcement Access Field (LEAF). The LEAF contains an encoded copy of the 'session key' that can be used to read encrypted data. With information held in separate top-secret digital vaults by two government agencies, law enforcement should be able to decode the session key. Bottom line: corrupt the LEAF and cops can forget about unscrambling a Clipper-encoded communication of any kind.

"The LEAF is protected by a 16-bit checksum, which is a kind of self-checking mathematical equation. But hold on. Blaze warns: any random sequence of 16 bits has a 1-in-65,000 shot at passing that checksum test. Generating that many numbers is a simple hack for even a pedestrian programmer. Blaze found it possible to generate a seemingly valid, yet 'rogue' checksum in about 42 minutes. Blaze's method means law enforcement officials can't tell if they have a valid or bogus LEAF...."

"Blaze's research paper that helped sink Clipper is available through an anonymous ftp at [research.att.com/dist/mab/eesproto.ps](http://research.att.com/dist/mab/eesproto.ps)."

## Jim Nichols

[SC] Good housewarming/BD party. It got a bit weird at times (electrocuting a pickle?) but fun.

YCT me: you and Tracy pointed out that WisCon has, in fact, had a couple panels on the subject of race in SF. Since neither of you appeared to have attended these panels (or remember what was discussed) it's rather hard to conclude, as you did, that "starting the conversation was really no problem." We both know that panels often fail to live up to their program book descriptions.

Assuming that the WisCon 16 panel, for instance, was a substantial one, where has that gotten us? I don't wish to criticize a panel that I didn't attend, but I don't think that scheduling a panel on race in SF at WisCon every year constitutes confronting the issue. My point to Vijay was that we here in Madison know little about race and SF fandom. For the WisCon 16 panel you had to recruit most of the panelists from outside of town (and maybe outside of fandom, too.) I think we still short of knowledge on the subject.

## Georgie Schnobrich

[SC] Thanks for sending another terrific zine.

Thanks for the First Contact information. We may find our way out there sometime.

YCT me, self defense and body language are not absolute protections by any means, but I am well aware that they go a long way toward reducing the risks. In my line of work (maximum security forensic mental health) it's important to not only *know* how to defend yourself, but make others believe that you are ready for anything. Size is not necessarily a deciding factor. If someone thinks you can be easily scared or surprised, you become an attractive target regardless of your size.

[JG] I got reinvolved in WisCon 19 this year mainly because I definitely intend to involve myself in WisCon 20. But I didn't vote for WisCon 19 GoH, and was therefore nearly as baffled as you by the slate of guests, when



announced. In recent years, the tradition of inviting "special guests" has begun, and so this year, we budgeted a bit more money for that than usual, voted, and *voilà* have added Nicola Griffith to the list of WisCon 19 guests. As author of last year's Tiptree winner, *Ammonite*, I think she will add the element of visiting-radical-feminist-guest that many of us associate with WisCon.

*Victorian Sisters* sounds like an interesting book. Reminds me a little of the wider-scoped book on women and art by Germaine Greer, *The Obstacle Race*, which revisits assumptions, history and assessments in the field of painting.

I laughed at your method of coping with the various kitchen duties. "Skivy Unlimited," indeed! Two personalities divide up kitchen duty at our house too. I cook. Scott does dishes. It works for me.

And an *excellent* hypothesis as to how Republican women rationalize the anti-women message of their party: by seeing themselves as exceptions. That does explain a lot.

I haven't watched *Saturday Night Live* all the way through for years now. I usually get fed up with it and switch it off after one or two skits, they've gotten so lame. But one night a couple months ago, I stayed tuned long enough to see a skit about a group of women friends visiting their dead friend's body at a funeral parlor. No one else had arrived yet and these women stood over the body critically discussing the fact that their friend had never used make-up, and what a beautiful woman she would have been if she had used make-up, and of course, before long, they were all opening their purses and dabbing lipstick, mascara, and blusher onto the corpse's face. It was a fairly gruesome skit, but I laughed; there was something very true-to-life about it.

## Michael Shannon

[SC] Congratulations on the new job. I read Bradley Denton's *Blackburn* and enjoyed it (it was sent in as a Tiptree nominee last year even though it was not remotely relevant.) Tell me more about his other stuff.

## General Comment

[JG] Sorry about the paucity of mailing comments folks. But it's been a really truly busy month for me. December is usually bad, just because there's all the normal stuff, work, freelance, projects, etc., PLUS holiday preparations and an unusual amount of socializing to fit into the schedule.

But this year has the potential to be worse than normal because we're experiencing an unexpected avalanche of work at the DNR. I even had to forgo some vacation time I had scheduled for the month because of December deadlines. One of the big things on which I've been working overtime is the design of the SAVE Commission's report, which must go to press right around Christmas because the Governor has promised distribution to the Legislature on January 10, 1995. The SAVE Commission (or, the Commission for Study of Administrative Value and Efficiency) is Governor Tommy Thompson's toughlove brainstorm for reinventing state government. It's actually pretty scary, with lots of similarities to the current Republican plans for reinventing Federal government. As you might guess, I feel a bit uncomfortable about working on it, and have mixed feelings when told that I am doing a great job of making it look good.

And I face quite a few other self-imposed deadlines this month, too. But I am determined not to drive myself to the point I did last year, where I finished, exhausted, late on Christmas Eve. At that point, Scott and I decided to go out and find something to eat, but discovered that nothing was open and we'd forgotten to schedule time for *us*. That marked a definite seasonal low point.

Of course, by New Year's Eve I had forgotten all about that depressing evening. That was another great party.

The New Year's Eve party always marks a definite seasonal high point for us, and Scott and I hope that all of you will be able to join us that night (and the next morning too). You should find an invitation tucked into your *Turbozine* somewhere. If not, call us, and we will send you another.

Happy Holidays to you all.

Jeanne Gomoll and Scott Custis  
16 December 1994