



Welcome to Union Street #60 (Obsessive Press [JG] #162 and Peerless Press [SC] #62), the zine with the transmogrifying masthead (acknowledging that it's payback time for the Republicans, and now we're all going to start paying). 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, January 1995, for Turbo-Charged Party Animal APA #103. Members FWA.

Official Business

[SC] Jeanne would you like to nominate Lorelei to *Turbo*?

[JG] Why, yes, I would love to nominate Lorelei. I miss seeing her since she moved to Madison, and would like to see her rejoin the apa. For folks who don't know her, Lorelei is a smart woman, a botanist, and a cool person. She once defended Scott in the mock fannish trial against my prosecution of him as a fan. And I don't hold it against her, one bit. The fact that I won the case has nothing to do with it.

Karen Babich

[SC] Your idea of a "butt-saver" is, at the very least, entertaining. I enjoyed your recap of your weekend trip to Madison. I hope your stay here over New Year's was fun too. You are certainly deserving of the title Party Animal. It was fun to see you and Nigel and actually have a chance to talk.

You're moving to New Zealand?

[JG] If everyones "butt-saver" read like yours, we wouldn't even need the phrase. Nice work and fun.

I was glad you could stay to the wee hours of the morning at our New Year's party. I guess that's one way we can get time to talk to you: wait till everyone else leaves! Really it was fun. But what a strangely hallucinogenic ending to the occasion. . . .

Dawn light was beginning to stream in through the windows. You, Nevenah and **Pat Harlo** began to wander in the direction of your coats, preparatory to leaving. Suddenly there was a loud noise from outside. You (I think) reported that someone had run away from our house, and was making a fast escape in a car. I thought: rowdy drunks? Maybe a thief who suddenly noticed the conscious people inside and decided to abandon a break-in? Scott dashed out the side door in brave pursuit of the intruder. Nevenah wandered out onto the front porch. She opened the door, and a moment later, handed me the thing that had been thrown against our house and caused the loud thump.

Our newspaper had arrived.

You're moving to New Zealand?

Bill Bodden

[SC] So Bill, you failed to mention how many rude and "greedy" passes you had to fend off at the Women's Expo. A dapper and charming coffee "Barista" such as yourself must have attracted some positive attention, especially since you obviously weren't "nailed down." C'mon Bill, there must be some romance in the coffee business.

YCT Official Business; **James** and **Alison** are currently sharing a joint account. They will have to contribute a zine or a joint zine as usual next month (assuming they didn't send anything this month.) There is no loophole.

YCT Jeanne; I made the comment about the lack of fiction in the apa. Sorry if I overlooked your piece, but I didn't really mean there hadn't been *any* fiction, just not very much. At any rate, I hope we keep getting more fiction from you as well as others.

YCT **Don**; I thought you were overreacting a bit. I read the piece in Don's zine as simply a humorous response to your article. Sort of carrying on the subject in the same vein. At any rate, what concerns me is that you feel hurt enough to not want to do more work for us. That would be very unfortunate and I



would like to urge you to reconsider. I enjoyed your "Hats" article as did many others and would like to see more.

[JG] The "Women's Expo" sounds like it's for women in the same way that a great many so-called "women's magazines" are for women. They are for women, as defined by the cosmetics, clothing, and diet industries. For many years, *Ms.* magazine failed to get advertising from these industries because it refused to publish the "complimentary" articles that other "women's" magazines published. In other words, to get a cosmetics ad, these magazines have to promise to publish regular "how-to" articles about make-up. To get clothing ads, they have to promise to publish advice columns about fashion. Diet product ads require articles about the importance of dieting. It's not enough to publish articles about the industry. In fact, articles critical of these industries will also cause magazines to forfeit ad revenue. The prerequisite for these advertisers is that the magazine must editorially support the use of cosmetics, the usefulness of dieting, and the importance of fashion, etc. *Ms.* publishers tried to point out that whether or not the magazine supported these products editorially, the demographics of *Ms.* subscribers showed that significant proportions of the advertisers' target market read the magazine and thus would be exposed to the ads. This is usually enough for other kinds of advertisers. (For instance, the automobile industry didn't require *Ms.* to publish regular articles on how to buy a car, or withdraw their ads when the *Ms.* pointed out that pollution is caused in part by automobiles, or praised the advantages of mass transportation. *Ms.* readers are largely middle-class, and so include many potential car buyers and that's all that mattered to the automobile industry.) But industries which sell to a predominantly female market have enjoyed and rely upon a peculiar set of advantages, and they're not about to give them up without a struggle. And so we see so-called women's magazines and so-called women's expos whose very content is orchestrated partially or primarily by the advertisers who support it.

Obviously, the power of the advertiser can be seen in many other areas of the consumer world—possibly most obvious not in women's magazines, but in children's Saturday morning cartoons where some shows are barely-disguised, half-hour long commercials. Still, I tend to put my guard up before I accept a label that something or other is for women. It depends who's saying the word when they point.

Now that we know the truth about Steep-and-Brew management as well as Victor Allen from my sister Julie's disastrous interaction with them, it's a little harder to decide where to go for that after-show coffee or tea. I hope that next Spring the early morning Farmer's Market group (*Diane, Kathi, Laura, Ellen, Jim, Steve, Elk, etc.*) will decide to go to Ancora instead of Café Europa, which is owned by Victor Allen.

Until you mentioned the tribute bands advertised at the Austin bar where we went to see Michelle Shocked, and Vijay referred to cover bands in a way that suddenly revealed to me the meaning of the phrase, I don't think I'd ever realized there were bands that copied the style of other more famous bands. What a weird thing, to be sitting in that huge bar and not even understand what was plastered all over the walls around me. Sometimes life is like that:

enormously obvious . . . in retrospect.

Actually, "fair use" has to do with quoting a very small part of the original for the purpose of review or reference. It has nothing to do with making or not making a profit from it, though certainly making a profit from reprinting something without permission would be illegal.

I knew, of course, that *Illicit Passage* was published in New Zealand. I received my copy of it directly from author Alice Nunn from New Zealand and have been corresponding with her, intermittently, ever since. The surprising thing to me about how long it took to get up here was that I had been in contact with the book's distributors in Australia, and they told me many months ago that DreamHaven had purchased copies of it. I didn't realize that merely shipping the books up here might take six months or longer.

With Scott I too am confused about your angry reaction to the Don-franked reply to your hats-in-warfare-history piece. It seems to me that the rebuttal was written in a mock academic style that made fun of the topic and the format, just as yours had done. Are you taking the rebuttal more seriously than it was meant, or did I read your initial article with more levity than you intended?

I'm curious. How can your parents visit you by surprise when you live at home? Do you mean that they drop in at Tracy's or Hope and Karl's place looking for you??!

I am concerned that I'm making the layout of *Union Street* unnecessarily obscure by the fact that you, Bill, but also **Ellen** and **Andy** misunderstood something that either Scott or I wrote for the comment of the other. You attributed the comment about the lack of fiction to me, and as Scott pointed out, he was the one who actually wrote it. **Ellen** thanked Scott for referring **Heather Aynne** to her on marketing questions; but really, it was me that offered that bit of advice. And **Andy** attributes to me Scott's welcome of Carrie's writing into the apa, which is OK since I would also like to urge Carrie to contribute. But I wonder if I have obscured the difference between Scott's and my comments somehow . . . perhaps by narrowing the width of my sans serif type face so that it takes about the same amount of space as Scott's serif face comments. Please let me know if it has gotten difficult to distinguish between Scott's and my comments, in spite of the identifying initials that precede our sections.

Vijay Bowen

[SC] You have my deep appreciation for the honest, open and serious response you gave to my clumsy questions about race and fandom. I feel you've treated me (and the rest of the apa) an enormous compliment by responding so openly in this forum.

You have given me a lot to think about. After several attempts, I have decided to withhold further comment at this time because everything I write sounds trite and inadequate. Clearly I haven't sorted out my feelings and reactions well enough to respond very coherently. I fully expect to come back to this subject. Maybe it will help if I see some of the other reactions you receive.

One impression I will share with you. I am curious about your interest in S&M considering the sexual abuse you suffered as a child. I find it odd that you would be interested in sex

games involving bondage and violence after the violent and nasty nature of your childhood experiences.

[JG] What a fascinating zine, Vijay! Thank you very much for opening up and writing this for us.

Unexpectedly, I recognized in myself a variation of the feelings you described and the reasons you identify more with the SF community than the Black community. And I wonder how many other people have joined the SF community partially in reaction to a perceived rejection by another community. (Lisa Freitag's comment reverberates here: "We [the SF community] are a cult of worship of the Mind, partly inspired by hatred for our bodies. . .")

Reading science fiction—and later, fandom—attracted me because and in spite of cultural norms which describe girls and women as not being interested in science or philosophy. Feeling alien already—among women—the sudden sense of homecoming when I joined an SF group was exhilarating. But more specifically, I have sometimes enjoyed the very fact of my "difference" in SF fandom. Women are not so much the exception they were when I first joined fandom in the early 70s (or even more so in earlier decades), but at the time I was constantly dealing with people who liked to point out how unusual it was for a woman to be interested in SF. In fact, I tended to exacerbate that difference by declaring my interest in "feminist SF" which a lot of people, both inside and outside fandom, declared was an oxymoron. Along with the new writers of feminist SF, feminist fans got a lot of attention during the 70s because we were unusual.

I was and am unusual among traditional women, but my differences were things that—when young—made me uncomfortable, vaguely guilty, and easily sparked my insecurity. I wasn't strong enough, yet, to stand up to expectations that I now believe are wrong, destructive and unfair: that beauty and male attention should be a woman's highest priorities.

However, the things that made me unusual in fandom—that I was an intellectual woman with strongly-felt opinions—were things that made me feel very comfortable, not at all guilty, and sparked greater self-confidence in me. In fact, I now feel very comfortable in groups of more traditional women, even though I don't wear make-up, tend to dress unfashionably and make decisions based on very different priorities than those around me. I am still aware of the ways I differ from those around me, but now I'm proud of those differences. I needed to have gone away to find that strength.

In fact, I think the transformational potential of fandom which helps people recognize their own strengths, is one of the best things about SF fandom. We all know fans who have learned social manners within fandom and now are more capable of functioning in general society. I think that SF fandom has been a really positive experience for many women who have found new role models and practiced new roles here.

I'll be interested to hear about whether you think our experiences have anything in common.

One of the things I recalled as I read your zine, Vijay, was a book I just finished: John Irving's new novel, *A Son of the Circus*. You might like it. The main character, Dr. Farrokh Daruwalla was born in India, educated in Switzerland, and

lives—most of the time—in Canada, though he travels frequently to India. Irving focuses upon this character, and indeed most of the characters in the book, as *anomalies*. That is, they view themselves as outsiders among the people with whom they live. Daruwalla identifies himself primarily as an Indian while in Canada, and as a Canadian who speaks fluent English when he visits India. Even in India, he associates mainly with people who are themselves anomalies in their world: with the community of Indians who still identify with British culture, and with dwarfs who live a nomad existence with traveling circuses. His adopted brother, lives a series of pretended identities, all of which prevent anyone from pinning down his identity, even Daruwalla. Dhar is actually American and looks the perfect, handsome European, but speaks fluent Hindi and presents himself as an Indian while in India. No one but his immediate adoptive family is aware of his parentage. He plays the movie role of the very popular, but despised Inspector Dhar in India, and is applauded for his classical stage acting in Germany.

It's all very complicated, and like all of Irving's books, woven together with wildly hilarious coincidences. But I was fascinated by the over-arching theme that most of us live lives focused upon the ways in which we don't fit with those around us, and that the finding at last, of a sense of ourselves is a long, difficult journey. It's a great book, and if you like Irving you will like *A Son of the Circus*, I think, even though there aren't any bears at all.

Jim Brooks

[SC] I loved "The Messenger." I was completely taken in by it and had a good laugh at the end. Bravo.

[JG] The election has been a boon to stand-up comedians, especially political comedians. I expect that political satire might be one of the few bright spots during the next few years. Both you and Ellen Franklin are already beginning to mine the dark humor of the new regime.

I also enjoyed "The Messenger." Like Scott, I was completely taken in. I made plenty of guesses about what the conflict and the solution was about, but I was never even close. Really, really funny.

I think a wonderful cover for some future *Turbozine* would feature a photograph of you modeling a House of Jaques tuxedo. Got any pictures of yourself like that?

Ellen Franklin

[SC] Thank you for the update on your busy lifestyle. I hope the rest of the Holidays went well for you and that you'll tell us a bit about your travels.

So what does Donna think about *Turbo*?

Thanks for "The Gingrinch that stole Christmas."

[JG] Amazing: my spell checker just offered the word "Jingoish" as a correct spelling of Gingrich!

The list of creativity blocks is an interesting exercise. I think my usual creativity block involves a sort of combination of burnout, deadlines and fear of failure. As the unfinished (or non-started) project's deadline looms, the project itself looms enormous and intimidating in my mind. The best way to combat the problem is simply to dive in and start:



ideas usually start flowing and the organization of the work falls into place.

Lisa Freitag

[SC] You had a terrifically busy fall. I hope the rest of the Holidays were not quite so hectic. You go to a lot of conventions. No wonder you often find the programming lacking. I mean, how many different and interesting programming ideas are you likely to encounter in that many conventions? Our last con was ReaderCon in Boston last summer. Our next one won't be until next month (Potlatch in Oakland, CA.) Jeanne will probably go to Corflu in Las Vegas in April, I'm not sure if I will go. After that will be WisCon in May, then nothing. We will not be going to Glasgow. Reinconation might be a possibility, but after WisCon we have no solid convention plans.

I was envious of the time you spent in New Orleans. I have always wanted to go there.

YCT Martin; I am looking forward to your piece (some-day) on censorship. It sounded like you might support censorship of pornography (on feminist grounds?) if it weren't for the First Amendment problems. I am a First Amendment absolutist, but I also sympathize with the argument that much popular pornography objectifies and, even attacks, women and children. An interesting issue.

YCT me on Orson Scott Card; in the course of his article, Card refers to homosexuals (who are unrepentant) as fools and hypocrites. He talks about them as if they were wayward children for whom no one has set proper limits. His article, quite reasonably, starts out arguing that the LDS church should not have to change its rules to admit practicing, out homosexuals. But about halfway through, he expands that argument to all of society ("This applies also to the polity, the community at large.") where he rejects the efforts of homosexuals to pass civil rights legislation to protect their equal rights as citizens. This takes the debate out of the narrow range of what is just OK for the bigoted community of the church. Card is arguing that homosexuals should not have fair rights as citizens either.

[JG] You may have something there: A parent who won't tell you how long (or how far) till you get home, inspires their kids to learn to read maps. I love maps.

Cathy Gilligan

[SC] What a fine zine you did last month. Except for the Iowa stuff, of course. Let's agree that both of us have lousy German and keep it simple: IOWA JOKES ARE A BAD IDEA. Not that it will do any good, of course.

I think you're on to something with your theory about Greg being your traveling jinx. Why else would you follow up your successful trip to Stevens Point story with the "Scary Rides" piece? (very noticeably with Greg in the car with you) Maybe you should test this theory by jumping on the plane to the Glasgow worldcon without Greg? That would be the acid test (of course, I'd also want to see your trip report from that experience)

Jeanne and I also take turns choosing movies from time to time. We usually are interested in the same sorts of things, but once in a while she will urge me to go with her to a "tear-jerker" and I will make a case for an "action-picture." We stumped each other recently when she failed to convince me to

see the remake of *An Affair To Remember* and I failed to talk her into *Pulp Fiction*.

Pat Hario

[SC] Before I moved to Madison, Jeanne and I wound up driving back and forth to Iowa regularly. During these long car trips we read aloud three of Jean Shepard's short story collections. *A Christmas Story* was stitched together from a couple of these stories. We loved them and the movie.

YCT Jae; whereas I generally agree with you that Jae has been understating the threat to women, I was also impressed with a recent Isthmus article examining crime and the media. They pointed out that the media often trumpets crime stories that scare the public even though the actual crime rate is falling. Of course many of the crimes against women go unreported, but the amount of violent anonymous crime on the street that people are so afraid of is actually pretty low for a city this size.

[JG] Scott and I have got a dial tone phone too, but it has this ingenious little button that you can push and it switches over to tone (until you hang up), so it can be used to block caller ID if we wish and can deal with voice mail routing. I refused to pay extra each month for touch tone service: it should be one charge for switching over, not extra every month. I suspect that touch tone service is actually cheaper to handle for the phone company than dial service. Maybe the phone company has finally dropped the silly monthly fee on tone phones, I don't know. With this cool tone button, it doesn't really matter to us. (You see, people really do read colophons!)

We've had quite a few third parties in America's history, and what usually happens to them is that because of the popular ideas their candidates espouse, a powerful new voting block is identified. This new voting block which passionately backs the platform of the new party becomes very desirable (at least) or absolutely essential (at best) to one of the older established parties. Of course, it's always possible that the new party could eliminate one of the older parties, but it's more likely that the one of the older parties will redefine itself to include the reforms advocated by the new party. That's how we got child labor laws and the 40-hour week, for instance, because they were advocated by the Wobblies, and a lot of voters demonstrated that they were willing to support the party that promised to pass the laws.

Unfortunately it works with loony, right wing third parties too. The major parties included a lot of Perot's notions into their platforms because they perceived a huge chunk of the electorate to be sympathetic to him.

So I don't particularly care if a new party eclipses the Democrats or if a new party grabs the Democrats by the lapels and shakes some sense into them so they decide to stand for something again . . . either way, things would be better. We'd all feel we were more a part of government.

Bill Hoffman

[SC] An absolutely fabulous zine. I laughed a lot. Thanks, Bill.

What is a gondoura (or gondora?) When you wrote about being called Ali Baba I couldn't help thinking about Ali Baba

and the Forty Thieves, any connection here? What does Ali Baba mean or refer to? I'd also like to know what the little Arabic heading at the top right corner of each page of your zine meant. I'm looking forward to more details about your experiences, I'd also like to know how the project you were working on over there turned out.

My guess is that you dip your fingers in the water, wipe yourself, then dunk your fingers in the water again. Keep the fingernails on your left hand clipped very very short. Not a job for the squeamish.

[JG] What a cool zine, Bill! Great writing, beautiful images, fascinating insights, funny commentary. I too wonder about the details of your project in Morocco. Is there something special about the Moroccan population that makes their study important? Some cross-cultural investigation?

I can see what you mean about the absurdity of French pronunciation. Certainly I never learned to speak it well. My teacher told me I had a Spanish-American tourist accent, probably because I took Spanish for a couple years before French. But written French was a whole other experience for me. I soaked up new French vocabulary like a sponge. I rarely had to see a word more than once to know it. Of course, I've forgotten most of it now; it's been more than 20 years since I studied it in college. But at the time, learning to read French felt more like *remembering* it than learning it anew.

I didn't like Roesner's *Vanishing Point* as well as you did. Especially after the book discussion at Borders where we talked about all the plot holes, I felt it was the kind of book that doesn't bear much reflection. The plot caught me as I read, but it didn't hold together later.

On the other hand, I agree totally with your ecstatic estimation of Beagle's *The Innkeeper's Song*. It ranks as one of my favorite novels of all time.

So, you're already planning a post-WisCon banquet. Would you like some of us to look into a non-home site for the dinner, or are you still opposed to that idea?

Andy Hooper

[SC] Somehow I'm gonna make use of this idea of yours that *Turbo* should be "...a force for good."

YCT Kim and Kathi re: mountains in Wisconsin; I failed to restrain myself from a brief yelp of surprise during the awful movie *Puppetmasters* when the hero is helicoptering into Des Moines, IA with palm trees in the background.

It's nice to know some things never change. Your plan to do a one-shot with Glenn Hackney and John Berry in the wilds of Canada sounded very familiar. Do you suppose **Pat Hario** (the only other surviving Wilderness One-Shot adventurer in *Turbo*) will weigh in with a few thoughts on this idea? Seriously, I enjoyed the party piece in *Apparatchik*. What is afal?

Is it just a coincidence that you chose to run an issue of *Apparatchik* with a long discussion about who is and who isn't a fan? Brings back old memories.

[JG] Your compliment to **Bron and Dawson** for their stereoscopic cover (you called it "appealingly sardonic") reminds me that I wanted to ask them if they were referring to a certain room of torture in the novel, 1984.

Bill Humphries

[SC] I loved the "God is an Open Architecture" pieces.

[JG] Me too. It was a great expansion on the original joke, only more funny.

On the other hand, your discussion of *The Bell Curve* in your comment to **Jim Brooks** makes me want to ask you to write it over again. Your assignment for next issue is to rewrite the essay without jargon. Suzette Haden Elgin says that all academics ought to be able to explain the most complex ideas of their areas of study to someone with no formal background in that area, and to do so without the use of specialized, technical language. Ability to explain it without jargon reveals a clear and deep understanding of the material.

Have you finished *Illicit Passage* yet?

Hope Kiefer and Karl Hailman

[JG] I hope next year is a luckier one for you both.

Diane Martin

[JG] Sure, I'll give up (again) on the topic of the importance of fannish projects. Somehow, though, I suspect that you're going to bring it up again eventually.

Your comment to **George Schnobrich** ("As a culture, we have too much invested in the 'Men should do these things. Women do these other things' attitude.") reminds me of one of my favorite scenes in the new movie of *Little Women*. Jo Marsh blasts her circle of (male) intellectual friends who are debating the question of female suffrage. One of the men argues that women should be given the vote because they show more moral responsibility than men, and so can be expected to improve the moral atmosphere of the nation by their involvement in politics. Jo blasts him out of the water with an argument worthy of Katha Pollit (and just as relevant to contemporary debate), pointing out that men do not hold the right to vote based upon their goodness and neither should women.

I loved this latest filmed version of *Little Women*. It's amazing in several ways. I've noticed several articles in the paper in the weeks since it was released about women convincing their partners or sons to go see it with them. Scott was pretty easy to convince and he liked *Little Women* a lot, but I started thinking about what an odd, artificial barrier this story illuminates. Here's a story that is probably one of the most important stories in the youths of not only women of my generation, but of my mother's generation and my grandmother's generation. (I'm curious about whether it continues to be an important book for young girls.) However, because it's been labeled a "girl's story," boys avoid it and men would never think of investigating it. I bet that a lot of women read stories like "Call of the Wild" because they learned at some point that it was an important rite-of-passage legend for men.

Lynne Ann Morse

[JG] Thanks for the Naomi Wolf article—interesting non-USA perspective, especially the comments about how the media treats her because of her so-called (*By Elle*



magazine) "borderline glamour-babe look," an ironic thing indeed considering the thesis of her book, *The Beauty Myth*. [Lynne gave me this article while she was visiting over the holidays. I will lend it to anyone in Madison who wants to borrow it.]

It was good to see you and Roelof in December.

Jim Nichols

[SC] I think you and I are in close agreement about the Great Dane. I'm looking forward to the start of the next brew pub.

YCT Jeanne on Orson Scott Card; we never suggested, nor would we, that Card be muzzled. Both of us are big supporters of the First Amendment. We merely wished to alert readers (and consumers) of his books what sort of views he held and to condemn his support for denying equal rights to homosexuals.

YCT Georgie re: Sharon McCrumb; not every GoH has fit the desired mold (I'm thinking of Iain Banks and Gardner Dozois who were fine guests just the same) but most have been serious feminist writers and WisCon has managed to stay in business as an "intellectually serious" con for almost twenty years. There are plenty of fine, serious, interesting and overlooked feminist writers we have yet to bring to this con, we don't need to change our focus.

[JG] I think Star Trek has done a few good time travel stories, and I liked big chunks of the first two *Back to the Future* movies for the way they handled time travel (the third was devastatingly disappointing), but mainly I've liked written stories the best. My favorite is Heinlein's "—All You Zombies..."

You ask "does every GoH have to have the WisCon-feminist-SF-fan-politically-correct-member-of-the-club-got-to-be-just-like-us official seal of approval?" Do they? Are those the factors you think qualified guest for WisCons past? Scott's already pointed out a flaw of that assumption: there has been a range of guests at past WisCons. Your scornful description of past GoH's insults those of us who worked on early WisCons in that you suggest that we promoted our interests with intolerance and closed minds. In fact, most of our guests—especially the writers who were pushing the envelope by writing socially relevant SF, and discussing gender issues—show us to have been far more open-minded than most of the conventions operating at the time.

You wrote: "We need GoH's who are different if we intend to survive intellectually as a serious con. . . ." And if by different, you mean *not* interested in feminist visions of the future, then I very much disagree with you. We in fact gained our reputation as a very serious, very intellectual convention *because* we probed the area of feminist SF in depth and supported writers working in that field. Our reputation rests to this day upon the fact that WisCon continues to be one of the only conventions at which serious, in-depth discussion of feminist issues is encouraged and supported by programming and guest choices. If we are at risk of surviving intellectually as a serious convention, it is not because we continue on this course. In fact, we risk our reputation if we lose sight of the interests that make our convention singular, and pursue—instead—a convention just like all the others.

Thanks for franking Jim Frenkel's zine through *Turbo*. I hope he gets back in soon.

Georgie Schnobrich

[SC] Excellent rant about the lack of visibility of the Left. Erwin Knoll's loss was a great blow. I've been a subscriber to *The Progressive* for several years and his voice was brave and lonely cry for reason. I never heard him on the radio, so my experience of him was strictly through his writing which I found to be sensible and passionate. I didn't always agree with him, but I respected him enormously.

Where is the Left? It's still out there. Just look at the number and popularity of Left and alternative periodicals, especially *Mother Jones* and *Utne Reader*. The great independents (of large corporate advertisers) like *The Nation* and *The Progressive* are struggling but still in business. The Left is still alive, but its voices are being successfully muted, I feel, by growing big corporate ownership of the major media. Conservative voices have always favored big business and the effort to move America to the Right is clearly about further empowering and enriching the wealthy class.

People are not all buying this message. A look at election results shows the continuing decline of voter turnout because real choices rarely are offered. People are not all lining up to buy Rush Limbaugh's message of ignorance and hate. But getting the truth out about alternative ideas to the people desperate for them is getting harder and harder to do.

YCT me; so far my huffing and puffing hasn't succeeded in deterring many Iowa jokes (sometimes they show up in *my own zine*, courtesy of my lovely co-contributor) but I always hold out hope that the fashion will die out. In the meantime, if you wish to translate Iowa jokes into North Dakota jokes, or Missouri jokes or Nebraska jokes be my guest. I won't mind at all. Jim Nichols may start giving you some static however.

[JG] I agree with Scott that the left is still there, but I think you've got something too, in that the media seems to perceive the left as having disappeared. Maybe it's because those ever-present left-wing agitators of the 60s and 70s came to be defined as anti-war demonstrators and (earlier) civil rights supporters. When those issues lessened in importance, the phrase "left-wingers" was perceived to have been drained of significance. Feminists and gay rights activists have taken the place of left-wing activists when it comes to being blamed for various ills of the nation, but they're seldom labeled with that old name tag.

I need to write well in my job since I deal with clients all over the state and I deal with them often, by mail or electronic messages. Clarity saves money in the long run. And I need to write well for all the things in my life that are not job-related. I think, in fact, that most people need to be able to write well. If they don't, their work suffers for it.

Sandra Taylor

[SC] I think your idea about branding has possibilities. I think it would be a lot more fun to suggest brands for other people followed by a vote for where the brand should specifically appear. For instance, I don't think I'd want myself branded as a member of *Turbo*, but I think it's a dandy idea for our founder Andy Hooper. Any suggestions on where it should go? All in favor say "aye."

Kim and Pete Winz

[SC] Welcome Nicholas Benjamin (Spud) Winz.

Jae Adams

[SC] Growing up in my hometown (Anamosa, Iowa, pop. 5000 counting the inmates in the local medium-security prison) I loved going around looking at the Christmas lights every year. We had a nice variety from the tasteful to the tacky in a trip that usually took us all over town in under an hour. We had one street in a newer housing area where virtually all the homes were elaborately decorated as if required by zoning ordinance. I'd have no idea where to start such a drive in a city the size of Madison (well, I suppose I'd start at Warner Park, but where then?)

I have always wondered about people who went to great lengths to put up elaborate Christmas displays. Religious or seasonal passion somehow never quite made sense to me, but the idea of being driven to create "art" is more understandable. Christmas decorations as sculpture is an interesting way to look at it.

I thought your general comment about writing for the apa at the last minute was well stated. It would be nice if we all took the apa more seriously as a writing project. I feel that the tendency to write at the last minute is really an indication of how high a priority the apa is for many writers. For Jeanne and I, sharing an apa encourages us to have an ongoing conversation about it through the month. As each of us finishes it and passes it to the other, we talk about what we liked or didn't like and what sort of comments we plan to write back. We don't do as much original essay writing as you or some others do, but we try to engage people in a conversation with us about what we found most interesting each month.

As promised, my 1994 booklist, the five best (not counting the *Left Hand of Darkness* or *Lathe of Heaven* which I'd read before) denoted by an *:

Drawing Blood, Poppy Z. Bright, *The Secret History*, Donna Tartt, *The Children of Men*, P.D. James, *The Businessman*, Thomas Disch, *Crashcourse*, Wilhemina Baird, *Dancing Jack*, Laura Marks, *The Left Hand of Darkness*, *The Lathe of Heaven*, *The Dispossessed**, *The Earthsea Trilogy*, Tehanu, Ursula K. LeGuin, *Take Back Plenty*, Colin Greenland, *Beggars In Spain**, Nancy Kress, *Last Call*, Tim Powers, *Smùla's Sense of Snow*, Peter Hoeg, *Virtual Light*, Bill Gibson, *Deerskin*, Robin McKinley, *The Female Man*, Joanna Russ, *Dangerous Visions*, edited by Harlan Ellison, *Songs of Chaos*, S.N. Lewitt, *Trouble and Her Friends*, Melissa Scott, *Green Mars**, Kim S. Robinson, *The Innkeeper's Song**, Peter Beagle, *Moving Mars*, Greg Bear, *A Plague of Angels*, Sherri Tepper, *The Crow Road**, Iain Banks, *The Book of Guys*, Garrison Keillor.

[JG] Your essay on holiday lights' sculptures reminds me of the lights' sculpture that my dad apparently constructed in his front yard. I didn't actually get to see it, as we didn't go there for Christmas; we all gathered at my brother and sister-in-law's home instead. But my brother Danny told me about it.

Apparently dad decided to do something different. He hung strings of blue lights vertically from the ends of the branches of the trees in the front yard. They've got a big yard: about 2½ acres total, with about 1/3 of it in front. And the

trees are large, deciduous trees spaced out across a wide lawn. The lights were hung so they touched the tree only once, at the point they were attached to a branch. The strings' lengths were adjusted (during weeks of wiring work down in the basement) so that they ended just a foot off the ground.

I imagined a landscape filled with big, blue jelly fish floating over the lawn. But Dan said no, what it looked like as they turned the corner into mom and dad's subdivision was of enormous, hovering UFOs. Very bizarre, and not at all Christmassy. My dad's very enthusiastic and says he plans more weirdness next year.

I wish I could append my 1994 reading list to this zine, but I don't have one. I meant to keep a list last year, and even noted down the first three of four books I read, but then I forgot about it. I'm going to try to keep a list this year.

By the way, I liked what you said about writing early and often rather than late and minimally. Bravo.

Jeanne and Scott
17 January 1995

1995 Tiptree Winners Announced

[JG] For the second time in the four year history of the James Tiptree, Jr. Award, this annual prize will be bestowed upon two authors. Sharing the 1995 award are, Ursula K. Le Guin (for "The Matter of Seggri," *Crank* #3, Spring 1994), and Nancy Springer (for *Larque on the Wing*, AvoNova/Morrow).

Susanna Sturgis, chairperson of the 1995 Tiptree judging panel, sent me the scoop via e-mail on Wednesday, January 18. She said "This is the first time a work of short fiction has won. And the first time a work published by an independent press (Broken Mirrors Press) has won."

If they are able to attend the ceremony, Le Guin and Springer will accept their awards and checks at Potlatch, February 10-12, 1995. For more information about the con, write to Potlatch, c/o Spike Parsons, PO Box 20132, Castro Valley, CA 94546.

MAD LIB RESOLUTION from Jenne & Scott's New Year's Party →

(1) TRACY BENTON's New Year's Resolutions:

- 1 For the sake of my health, I resolve to work on my (2) eye and (3) finger nail this year. I will (4) dance, (5) 14 times a week, and begin an all-(6) cheesecake diet.
- 2 In order to get my act together, I resolve to organize my (7) basement by alphabetizing my (8) PC's, sorting my (9) chairs and tossing out all (10) lamps. I will give all my (11) Knick-Knacks to (12) Planned Parenthood.
- 3 To reduce my stress level, I resolve to say "no," from now on when (13) Dudley Moore asks me to (14) play the piano. I will sleep (15) 2 hours every day, (16) lift (17) 100 times a week, eat lots of (18) smoked salmon and will go to (19) the Union Terrace for my next vacation.
- 4 To improve my relationship with (20) Scott Custis I resolve to stop calling ~~her~~/him a (21) book, to listen when he/~~she~~ wants to talk about (22) the defecit, and not get mad when ~~she~~/he forgets to clean up his/~~her~~ (23) scissors s.
- 5 To broaden my horizons, I resolve to take a course in (24) math and to learn how to (25) repair cars. I will read a biography of (26) Sox the Cat and learn to play (27) "Two Princes" on the (28) mandolin.