



Welcome to Union Street #61 (Obsessive Press [JG] #163 and Peerless Press [SC] #63), the zine with the transmogrifying masthead (—so you can go back home, after all). 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, February 1995, for Turbo-Charged Party Animal APA #104. Members FWA.

Potlatch

[JG] Scott and I thought that Potlatch was great fun: a small, serious convention at which people talk about books and ideas, and panelists prepare bibliographies for their programs, and there aren't any room parties because no one sees the need to escape *from* the convention in order to spend time with a small, congenial group of friends because the convention *is* a small, congenial group of friends. (What might WisCon be like today, if the early Madison SF group had attended and imprinted upon a convention like Potlatch instead of the 1974 worldcon as their first convention?) Potlatch has won me over to the idea of having a "book guest of honor" and I hope that Steve Swartz and Hope Kiefer follow Potlatch's lead on this as Steve has suggested they will for WisCon 19. The panel that discussed the Tiptree short story, "The Only Neat Thing to Do," was a fascinating programming item, made all the more exciting because so many people in the audience had recently read the story and were able to both listen and speak "in depth" about it. Three writers (Karen Fowler, Richard Russo, and another author whose name I forget at the moment) were the panelists and they discussed the Tiptree story in writer's workshop fashion, as if were an as-yet-unpublished manuscript. The experience reminded me of some of my favorite English classes in college when the teacher's lecture set my mind buzzing about a piece of literature I thought I already *knew* (but really didn't).

And of course the fourth Tiptree was awarded at Potlatch. Susanna Sturgis (1994 coordinator of judges) gave a great speech about the meaning and future of the award. Nancy Springer accepted her award graciously and leaked the information that her mother provided the model for the blinking, evil mom of *Larque on the Wing*. So far, Springer has successfully hidden this fact from her mother. Ursula Le Guin was unable to attend but did fax a delightful acceptance speech to Pat and Karen who read it with hilarious effect. (And you can read it to hilarious effect in the next *Cube*.) Ellen Klages again performed as the amazingly funny and talented auctioneer for the benefit of Clarion, and we all had a good time.

Potlatch was also a kind of reunion for me because it's been so long since I got together with many of those west coaster fans. So that was fun, too. And of course the weather was delightful, and the bayside hotel was luxurious and convenient to a lively area of Oakland with lots of good restaurants.

I want to attend more Potlatches, especially next year's Potlatch which will be held in Portland, Oregon, Bill Hoffman's hometown. In fact, quite a few of us Madisonians hope to attend that con, and we're putting Bill on notice right now, that we intend to visit him and orchestrate a great Feast at his house. We will invite many dozens of Potlatchians to the feast and will dig a great pit in his front yard for the ceremonial roasting of a whole body of some sort of exotic meat. We will smoke other kinds of meat in his kitchen and cook food with enormous amounts of oil and generally make sure he never forgets that Madison fans Were There. Are you ready, Bill? No fair moving before next Spring.

Loonie at the Airport

[JG] It is the trip home, however, that provides the best story. For many boring and hideously familiar reasons, we found ourselves stuck in the Chicago airport for hours. Scott and I both had books to read, but as it turned out, entertain-



ment was provided for us and, for a while, we put our books down and watched the show.

After the second or third announcement that our flight was delayed, a man approached the airline staff at the counter at the gate to express his frustration. The man was dressed in camouflage and carried an Australian-style camo hat. Well, actually, he was waving the hat around as he blew off steam at the young man patiently telling him that his plane would depart as soon as possible. Scott and I sympathized with his frustration. I looked down again at my book, but soon marked my place with a bookmark and closed it, as the conversation between the man (who I'll refer to as the "loonie") and the clerk grew more heated.

"What do you mean '*delayed*'?" he screamed. "My daddy is dying, and I am going to go home to see him. Do you understand!" The loonie was getting red in the face and leaned across the counter, jabbing his finger in time with his screams at the very uncomfortable clerk, who was edging away from the edge to the counter, away from the jabbing finger.

Things escalated rapidly. The loonie's face reddened, his voice got louder and his explications grew more colorful. He called the clerk a faggot, and then insulted the women clerks who attempted to reason with him. At this point I noticed one of them making a surreptitious phone call. We assumed that the cops would arrive momentarily, which would be none too soon, because the loonie had begun to really get into the swing of his screeching, angry performance.

"I'm a *white man*, you know! I've got *rights*!!" This was his chorus, repeated frequently after a few stanzas about his dying daddy. Twice he interspersed a coda concerning evil "Jews and niggers" who victimized him. He waved his hat around. He jabbed his fingers at anyone who attempted to talk him down. He began moving around, nervously, angrily, as if he were building up to some physical act. People sitting in the area began to worry, glancing back often toward the terminal, hoping to see cops running toward us. But there were no police in sight.

Scott and I sat quite near the action, only one row of seats away from the counter. "Does this make you feel uncomfortable?" Scott asked me. "Would you like to move away?"

"Oh, I don't think he's even aware that we're sitting here. He's not focussing on *us*," I said. Then the loonie began to edge around the row of chairs toward us.

"I think we should move," Scott said.

"OK." And we grabbed our stuff and moved back seven or eight rows. Almost immediately the guy began jumping up and down on one of the chairs we had just vacated.

"Get me on that fucking plane, right now! Do you hear me, goddamn you!" he screamed. ("Not on *my* flight," I thought.) A guy in a suit with a walkie-talkie tried to calm him down. The loonie pushed him.

Oh oh. I looked back toward the terminal. No cops.

Guys began to drift toward the ruckus. One guy in a trench coat and sunglasses moved in from the corridor. He removed his shades, pulled on a pair of leather gloves, tucked his briefcase behind some chairs, and waited. . . . His

legs bent, hands cocked, he looked ready to leap into the fray the next time the loonie tried anything physical. Other guys edged closer. They all looked eager for something to happen. I groaned and looked behind me again. Nothing. No police.

In fact, that's the scariest thing about the whole incident: how long the police took to get there. The loonie never did anything more than push one man one time, though he continued to screech out his obscenities, jump on chairs, wave his hat and finger menacingly.

The audience wondered where the cops were. The clerks clearly wondered where the police were, and they called frequently on their phones and walkie-talkies. Finally, after about 15 minutes, a group of five Chicago cops arrived. ("Emptied out some coffee shop, somewhere," said Scott.) The loonie put up no fight at all in spite of his dying daddy, and meekly surrendered to the police.

Scott pointed out that he seemed to know the routine—how to put his hands behind his back to be handcuffed, how to stand to be patted down. And a few moments later we heard him say "Take me to jail," and the cops did just that.

Show over. And soon it was time to board our plane.

Clay Colwell

[JG] Welcome to apa, Clay. What an auspicious coincidence, to arrive in the apa in the very month that the initial of your last name comes up first in the roster, thus allowing your zine to be collated first in *Turbo*.

Turbo was founded by Andy Hooper primarily as a Madison apazine, and as some members moved away, they have stayed in touch with the rest of us through the apa. The science fiction group in Madison is known far and wide for its unusually enthusiastic/strident (depending on your point of view) interest in politics, especially of the feminist variety. Our convention (WisCon), for instance, is the only feminist-oriented SF convention anywhere; the Tiptree award was born here, and we published the feminist SF zines *Janus/Aurora* for about 15 years. Not to say that's the main topic of conversation you're going to find in these pages, but I imagine you'll find more discussion of gender issues here than in many other general-interest apas. *Turbo* has always welcomed out-of-towners, including a rather surprising number of people who live outside the U.S. I think most of us admit to being fans, or at least have a good idea what that term means because many of our friends admit to it. I think most of us read voraciously, and a significant amount of that reading is SF. Gaming may be a less common element, at least that seems to be the case to me—a non-gamer.

The self-proclaimed conservative you met on the net claims that conservatives "expect the best of people and therefore want nothing that would [like welfare] . . . sap their sense of self-sufficiency and the clarity of their work ethic." I think I would answer him/her this way: If assisting one's fellow human beings degrades those we offer our hand to, then state and federal legislatures should immediately re-evaluate the corrosive assistance offered to industry, farmers, bankers, and big business. If \$600 a month degrades a single mother's sense of self-worth, how much more harmful must be the billions of dollars the governments gives out

in the form of price supports, farm subsidies, savings and loan bailouts, access to land for grazing and mining and lumber, and so on and so on. This explanation for refusing to help people who are poor, nonwhite, or otherwise undesirable is nothing but a rationalization for some people's meanness. I really do think the argument between conservatives and liberals (blurry as the distinction is these days)—has more to do with meanness vs. kindness than it has to do with good or bad expectations. To me, the sense of responsibility toward children, the hungry, the sick, and the poor is a sign of humanity.

[SC] Welcome to *Turbo*. You sent us a very fine first zine. It was nice of you to start right out writing comments to other contributors, everyone appreciates feedback, but I was most impressed with how open you chose to be with us about yourself in this first zine. I think you will find that *Turbo* is a pretty friendly place and that we will be hungry for as much information as you care to share with us.

The Austin connection, for Madison fans, is interesting. Austin has become something of a popular sister-city for Madisonians in recent years. The two cities have a lot in common, but also several of us have personal connections with Austin. One of our members, Bill Humphries, is a native of Texas and went to school in Austin. Several years ago, Jeanne's sister Julie (a former *Turbo* member) moved to Austin and started a graphic design business (GO Media) which has become very successful. We've also grown close to many of Julie's employees. Recently two longtime Madisonians, Michael Shannon and Lorelei Manney moved to Austin. We are anxious to keep in touch with them as well as other contacts we've had with Austin fandom via fanzines and Armadillocon. You are likely to have a chance to meet many of us as time goes on.

Bill Dyer

[JG] I'm sorry for your loss. But thank you for writing about your friend, Bill Payne.

[SC] That was a very eloquent piece about your friend. I'm sorry, too.

Lisa Freitag

[JG] I know what you mean about how the maddening holiday schedule drains more and more pleasure out of the season. Nothing else stops; all the other regular obligations are still there. But on top of everything, most of us take on a virtual extra part-time job in the supposed name of "fun." Either the work of preparing for the holiday is fun in and of itself, or we all naturally end up feeling wrung out, stressed out and guilty because of it.

My dad was in charge of decorating the Christmas Tree in our house and I'll be forever grateful that he never heard about tying branches, because that's just the sort of thing he would have enforced. Nevertheless, several of your family's Christmas Tree decorating rules sounded familiar—the lights rule, the ornaments rule, but especially the one about hanging tinsel. Every year it seems, my dad and us kids would gather in the living room and begin decorating in a fairly good mood, but by the time the tinsel came out, dad would start critiquing our style (ONE STRAND AT A TIME!!! THEY MUST HANG PERFECTLY STRAIGHT!!!) and one

or all of us would end up running to our rooms in tears. What happy memories.

Your reaction to De Lint's rosy depiction of street life in his fantasies (which I'm *not* familiar with), remind me a lot of my reaction to some of Doris Lessing's fiction in which she describes institutionalized, mentally ill people as possibly being more aware of (real) reality and more sane than other people (*Briefing for a Descent into Hell, Four-Gated City*). I suspect that sort of romanticized vision.

I liked **Georgie's** definition of "to be saved" too. Maybe the Fall from Grace could be translated as a sort of system crash and Grace itself a sort of spiritual RAM.

[SC] Although I also have big problems with the increasing over-commercialization of Christmas, I don't have bad memories of Christmas as a kid. In fact, my childhood experiences were rather idyllic. My mother liked tinsel, but she was pretty mellow about it. She got to do it her way by doing it herself. The rest of us were too impatient to want to mess around with it. We never tied branches (I've never heard of doing that before) and if the tree wound up a little crooked, oh well. We usually had a good time. Needless to say, Jeanne and I have never had a strand of tinsel on any of our trees. Our tree did fall over this year, however, because we were a little bit too lax about its plumb line.

I enjoyed your review of *Street*. I'm very particular about choosing fantasy. I rarely read it, but I'm willing to try something that is really good. This book sounds interesting. Is it available from Dreamhaven?

I don't happen to believe that Quentin Tarrantino is a genius. He does not yet deserve to stand in the same room as, say, Martin Scorsese. But I thought *Pulp Fiction* was a very good movie. It certainly wasn't a film I would recommend to everyone. The violence did nothing for me, and the plot was clever but not utterly fabulous, what worked for me about this movie were the characters and the dialog. I loved it when the characters sat down and talked to each other, which they did frequently. The dialog was more than just offbeat, it was really different, cool, unpredictable yet it managed to seem realistic. I felt I've known people very much like these characters. Maybe that's the result of working so many years in corrections and mental health institutions, but these folks were oddly familiar to me. I did not find them sympathetic (I was rooting for the Bruce Willis character a bit) but I did think they were interesting, unusual and even realistic. A rather dark and twisted sense of humor is required for this film I must admit. But that's been second nature to me for many years.

It just struck me how odd it is that I am praising this movie after writing you negative comments about *The Crow*. For me, the very cool look of *The Crow* was not enough to offset its drawbacks. *Pulp Fiction* had less violence than *The Crow* (though more graphic) and I thought everything else about it was interesting, different, unusual, unpredictable, and funny.

Hope Kiefer

[SC] So what do you think about the airlines deciding to cut commissions to travel agents? I was a bit surprised that so many major airlines jumped on the bandwagon so fast since so many of their ticket sales come from agents. It looks like it's shaping up to be a real knockdown dragout fight. Good luck.



Congratulations on being mentioned and quoted in *Isthmus* about *Cube*.

Pat Hario

[JG] I heard part of a *Fresh Aire* segment on NPR about *Quiz Show* and the supposed liberties taken by the film makers. Some people are very upset by the depiction of the CBS president (I forget his name.) Apparently, there is no evidence that he was as directly involved as depicted in the film; there is, in fact, no evidence that he instigated the firing of Herbert Stempel, or even knew that the quiz show was a hoax (though I can't imagine that they're defending that last point too vigorously, since the guy is responsible regardless of whether he "knew" or not). Anyway, the ex-president's survivors are mostly upset because the actor chosen to play his part resembles him to an almost eerie degree, and the movie presents its charges in an almost documentary way, using real names, dates, etc.

Andy Hooper

[JG] I was cautiously optimistic about *Voyager* after seeing the premier movie, and have gotten happier about it since I saw the first episode.

This is amazing since I found Kate Mulgrew's quoted (almost angry) statement that she was not a feminist pretty irritating. Especially since she based her abhorrence of the women's movement on a misconception that all feminists believe all women are superior to all men. The interview went on to a discussion of her Catholicism, and I grumbled at the not-very-interactive printed page that I'm not a Catholic because they're all plotting to kill non-Catholics in their sleep and take over the world.

But I'm beginning to wonder if she takes that anti-feminist line just to smooth the feathers of conservatives nervously eyeing the actress playing the first (staring) captain on *Star Trek*. (Or maybe the writers are simply ignoring her stated political views and are finding it *trés* amusing to turn her character into a feminist in spite of the actress.) The reason I say this is that I was so impressed at a couple scenes in the first episode in which Janeway interviews and interacts with the half-Klingon woman who eventually makes Chief Engineer. First of all, I thought Torres' self-doubt about her achievements at the Academy and her surprise that her professors had actually praised her was true-to-(our) contemporary life. She'd quit because she doubted herself and needed some help in rearranging the assumptions that made her bitter about herself. And then, later in the episode, we got that wonderful, amazingly *new* scene in which Torres proposes a solution to the black hole problem. (Let's just ignore the physics of that black hole with an actual, physical shell representing the event horizon, OK?) First of all, it was neat (though predictable) that she came up with the solution; but even so, the memory of Spock made me half expect the Vulcan to get involved in the discussion. But then that electric moment when Torres and Janeway *connect*, when the two women suddenly figure it out together and jump out of their seats so they can talk eye-to-eye, and the solution explodes between them, while the guys sit around the table *just watching* was just such an amazing and different scene, that I found myself bouncing

up and down on the couch laughing. I don't think I've ever seen two women on a TV show get involved in a purely intellectual and very excited exchange like that with no guys involved (much less watching with nothing to contribute!).

And I already like most of the characters more than most of the characters in *Deep Space Nine*. So, yes I'm enjoying it. I think they should get some better science advisors for their writers, though.

Congratulations on your GoH gig at Reinconation. What weekend in October is it scheduled? Scott and I have missed it the last couple years because they haven't been able to commit to a specific weekend until well into the year it's scheduled, and Scott is required to schedule his year's vacation before the first of the year. So he's either lost the weekend or we've made other plans (like made campsite reservations). But we'll try to be there if we can. Let us know the dates, OK?

[SC] The jury is still out for me with regards to *Voyager*. One criticism I've heard, and agreed with, was that it seems that *Star Trek* is getting more and more dependent on science jargon in their dialog. People are constantly spouting these preposterous sounding pseudo-technical gobbledygook terms and phrases. On the other hand, I like the holographic doctor a lot.

I doubt very much that I will be joining Jeanne in Las Vegas (if she decides to go) for Corflu. Money is a little tight for me right now, but I have every expectation of seeing you at ReinConation. October is a good month. Congratulations on being named GOH.

YCT Bill Humphries regarding Sharyn McCrumb, lately the WisCon committee has taken a very positive approach to her and I've likewise been looking on the bright side. I remember that some of us had doubts about Melinda Snodgrass, who we knew only as a script writer for STTNG. She turned out to be a fabulous guest, someone I'd love to bring back someday. I doubt that McCrumb will be that successful, but she could certainly do OK.

Your zine looked great, read very easily for being so crammed with text and I liked the paper. Good job.

Bill Humphries

[JG] Did we get a different apazine from Jim Nichols than you read?

[SC] What did you think of Sterling's *Heavy Weather*? I looked over a hard cover copy when it first came out, but decided to wait for the paperback. I have never read anything by him, this looked interesting, but I'd like a solid endorsement before I buy. If this is a loser, which of his other books do you most recommend?

Jim Nichols

[SC] Good zine, Jim. I liked reading about your trip home for Christmas. I can sympathize with your wanting to clarify common misconceptions about Nebraska. I've had to deal with similar problems people have with Iowa.

YCT me, wild turkeys are cool birds. Domestic livestock turkeys are almost indescribably stupid. I've heard of turkey growers having to build round rooms for their birds because sometimes they would crowd into corners and crushing each

other. Of course they have to be carefully kept out of the rain or they will look up, open their mouths and drown.

Except for some details about the makeup of the panel, I don't think we essentially disagree on race and fandom. WisCon has not managed to shed much light on the subject.

Georgie Schnobrich

[JG] We'll forgive you for missing our New Year's party last year. Mark your calendar for this year. We'll be doing it again on December 31.

Good comments about Sharyn McCrumb.

[SC] Great comments, Georgie. A note about your comment to Sandra regarding branding, I just heard recently that the great state of Mississippi has legalized caning as a punishment for some crimes. I can't think of a more apt state to lead the nation back into the past.

Good response to Vijay on racism. Obviously the stigma of race is born of ignorance, but also a determined fear of people who are (or seem to be) different. As our own society splinters and divides into more and more narrowly identified groups, the fear, distrust and anger grow. It seems to be getting easier and easier to pigeonhole people into categories instead of focusing on the great commonalities that should draw us together.

I never responded to your query about writing and work. I don't have a constant demand for writing skill on the night shift, but I would still answer "yes," good writing is important in my job. The reason it is necessary is that in the maximum security mental health setting, we have to document important events in the patient's charts, much as in any hospital. Since we deal with more behavioral activity than medical, what we write is more in the form of explaining situations and events, their causes and outcomes. We should be clear and concise. Everything we write becomes part of a legal document, so care must be taken. The main thing is to be able to clearly communicate information to assist the unit team in making plans and decisions concerning the patients.

Martin Smith

[JG] Knowing the principles of your New Year's Eve story—Avedon, Rob, Jim, and you—made the virtual movie projected by your zine a really funny one. It would be fun to see Rob's and Avedon's version of the episode.

[SC] I like Rob and Avedon a lot, but I can easily imagine a car ride with them being somewhat stressful for the innocent passenger.

YCT Georgie regarding the Labour Party, what did you mean when you said that Blair's reform clause would commit the party to state ownership? You mean the state would own the Party? How could that be? Please explain. Feel free to carry on anytime about politics in Great Britain, or anything else. We get very poor news coverage over here about anything that happens outside the U.S. that doesn't involve American citizens.

Did I ever mention to you that having Steve Swartz as your mailing agent might involve some surprises for you? He's a playful sort of fellow, as you may have noticed, and he is quite likely to include some unexpected flourishes as part of his

layout of your zine. Such as the color of paper, you see. You seem to have a healthy sense of humor. That is a good thing.

Steve Swartz

[JG] In spite of the seriousness with which you talk about *Why Cats Paint* and in spite of the seriousness with which the authors apparently talked about it on *Fresh Aire*, I can't believe that most of this is not a very complex, deeply researched parody of dense art criticism. I doubt that cat art is the focus of the joke; rather it is on the kind of abstract art that relies less on inspiration than upon accident. (You know, like driving a truck through various glops of paint and then across a canvas.) The same language that finds value in "accidental" human art is revealed for a sham when it can be applied to cat art.

Beauty can be anywhere. A misty morning with light streaming through a stand of birches is gorgeous and may rival any work of art created by any human being for beauty and spirituality. But no matter how beautiful (or thought-provoking, or shocking, or awe-inspiring), it is not art. Art is created by a conscious act of creation. Cat art might be beautiful. I might even want a cat canvas on my wall. But it is not art any more than a lovely sunset is art.

Scott and I were driving in the city the other day, and had stopped behind a car with a dealer's license plate on it, "I got a great deal at Auto Express" Then the light turned green, and the guy in front of us revved his motor and was off . . . in a huge, dense, cloud of exhaust, so big that Scott and I were actually blinded for several seconds and coughed a bit at the smell of the fumes. What a deal, we laughed, and what a great, funny little video that would have made. "Somebody should call up Auto Express and tell them about the bad advertisement they've got driving around town!" I said.

The video of this scene, consciously produced, might have been a humorous and (very) minor work of art. The actual event was simply an event, not art until someone consciously framed it (on canvas, or film).

[SC] I took your zine to be completely tongue-in-cheek. Whenever I thought you might be ready to seriously examine cat "art," you seemed to zoom back off into parody.

Welcome back to *Turbo*. As always with this apa, there is either a lot going on here or not much, depending on how you view the issues being brought to the table. Lately the interaction here has been friendly almost to the point of being bland, which is OK. I prefer that to slash and burn controversy.

Jae Adams

[JG] Your "Spoken Word Recording" CD reminds me of the film, *32 Short Films about Glenn Gould*. It played at the Majestic last year, and was about the life of the composer, Glenn Gould. It was an incredibly interesting look into the theory of music to which I generally don't like to listen, very modern, atonal, non-melodic music. But what was fascinating was that several scenes made it clear that Gould believed that there is a sort of rhythm to different kinds of speech and conversation. For instance, he once produced a documentary on Antarctic explorers for the BBC and we saw him in a sound booth editing various interview excerpts



together while he waved in the air, obviously pretending to conduct the pure sound of the voices (ignoring entirely the content of the words being voiced). This scene was followed by another in which a string quartet was playing one of Gould's pieces. The four musicians sat in a circle facing one another, and as they played they made eye contact, and seemed to play-act a conversation with one another, only they spoke with their instruments, not their words. If I'd heard that piece of music without having seen the film, I would have turned away from it. But having been introduced to it with the idea that we communicate with tones and rhythms (not just words), I heard the music in an entirely different way. It was like the first time I enjoyed opera in spite of the fact that I didn't understand the words. In the case of opera, the words don't matter that much; the pure emotion shaped by the music and the voices and the sound of the words is what matters. In the case of Gould's music, I needed to discard my need for a melody.

It was a fascinating experience, though I doubt that it will translate into a love of that kind of music as my insight into opera inspired a love for Puccini.

Would you lend me Teresa Nielsen Haden's *Making Book*?

[SC] I think the idea of an apa picnic this spring or summer is well worth promoting. Shall I open the floor for input on dates and other specifics? I expect we will have some sort of apa party at WisCon once again, so maybe early spring or midsummer would be good?

Interesting and unusual booklist, I suspected it would be. Thanks for running it. I do enjoy the reviews you run in your zine throughout the year, but it's fun to look over other folk's lists now and then, especially to see what they most enjoyed.

In a zine brimming with fine comments, I really liked your comment to Tracy about safety. You and I haven't always seen eye-to-eye on this issue, but your point as stated here is one I'd like to agree with. We are becoming a nation, state and community obsessed with the fear of crime that is pounded into us by a mass media desperate to hold our attention (have you noticed in the recent State Supreme Court race, almost all the candidates ran a "Vote for me, I'll be tough on crime" message even though they sheepishly had to admit that Supreme Court Justices have almost nothing to do with criminal cases or sentencing offenders?) There is a very fine line between what are prudent and reasonable safety precautions (complicated for women because the fact of their sex alone can attract criminal attack) and the simple freedom to move about as a human being. Where women should draw that line is a very difficult thing for me (as a man) to suggest. I tend to advise eliminating risks and putting safety first and foremost. Yet I have rarely felt personally constrained by the threat of crime, so I don't really know what it's like to deal with that all the time. I'd like to encourage women to "be brave, don't let fear rule your life." But I'm afraid for them myself (the media's hysterics have surely worked on me, too.) All I can do is say "hear, hear" to your well phrased encouragement to "be smart . . . but be brave too."

Karen Babich

[JG] Looks like we might have several interesting films coming out in the near future that will let people know about

feminist SF. There's Friedman's *Left Hand of Darkness* and eventually there may be a documentary on feminist science fiction by Helene Klodawsky. She's a Canadian filmmaker who thinks she can get matching funding from the Canadian Film Board and is very excited about doing a film on the subject. She contacted me after reading the piece in *Ms.* Exciting, huh?

[SC] It was good to see you again at Potlatch.

Tracy Benton

[JG] Another one of the myriad of contradictions brought to mind by the right-wingers' proposal that we stockpile poor kids in orphanages is that we fund these orphanages with the generous funds wasted upon AFDC moms. I really want to see what private companies will be able to buy (buildings, legal help to fight Not-In-My-Backyard protesters, staff, supplies, and care for these kids) with the "luxurious" subsidies which AFDC currently allots: \$100 per kid per month. As Katha Pollit points out, the moms are already caring for their kids, the AFDC checks subsidizes not these moms who are doing a lot of work caring for their kids, but the delinquent dads. Pollit reminds us that a mom who abandons her kid at the hospital after giving birth is so rare that it makes headlines when it happens, but that the names of delinquent dads would fill the NYC phone book. If we take the kids away from the moms, we've first got to pay to replace the work of the only parent who generally does not abandon their child.

Good comments about McCrumb.

[SC] Congratulations on the new job. You deserve a change and this new job sounds very exciting.

Have I told you lately that I think you're doing a fine job of piloting WisCon 19? Well, suffice it to say, I seriously doubt we could be doing it this year without you. I hope you are managing to have some fun doing it. It's all going to work out very well, you know.

Vijay Bowen

[SC] Wonderful comments from you yet again. I'm still chewing on the information you gave me in December. Part of the confusion I'm struggling with has to do with the fact that race is only one element in the complex mix that is you. I'm not sure I can go from the specific to the general in a discussion of race and fandom because you are such an untypical person in so many (interesting) ways.

When you write, for example, that you are "a less likely black woman than I am a fan" I find that astounding. I take that to mean that you tend to identify yourself first as a fan before your sex and race. I still see fandom as a hobby, well down the list of my own self-identifiers (and yes, Jeanne, I am calling myself a fan at this point, even I can't deny it.) I suspect that I've misinterpreted your statement. Please clarify?

If you are still interested in those old back issues of *Turbo* that I got from Lorelei, I'm ready to send them to you. I'm just not going to have the time to go through them any time soon. Let me know if you are still interested.

—Scott and Jeanne
February 1995