



Welcome to *Union Street* #68 (Obsessive Press [JG] #170 and Peerless Press [SC] #70), the zine with the transmogrifying seasonal masthead (this month celebrating both the season and the great mail WisCon has been getting). 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, September 1995, for Turbo-Charged Party Animal APA #111. Members FWA.

Why JG comments are so few and far between

[JG] Sorry for the sparse comments folks. I've been pouring a lot of energy into working on WisCon 20 in the past few weeks, and in general, it's been an incredibly hectic summer for Scott and I. I've been contacting WisCon's past guests of honor and other SF authors, telling them about our upcoming con, and am amazed at the number of authors, artists, and editors who have already committed to join us on Memorial Day weekend next year.

Here's the list so far:

Brian Atteberry, Marleen Barr, Martha Bartter, Freddie Baer, Maya Kaathryn Bohnhoff, Suzy McKee Charnas, Lois McMaster Bujold, Beverly DeWeese, Suzette Haden Elgin, Kelley Eskridge, Karen Joy Fowler, Jim Frenkel, Nicola Griffith, David Hartwell, Steven Vincent Johnson, Gwyneth Jones, Helene Klodawsky (who is working on a video about feminist SF and will be filming at WisCon), Katherine MacLean, R. A. McAvoy, Judith Moffett, Pat Murphy, Deb Notkin, Pamela Sargent, eluki bes shahar, Stu Shiffman, Nancy Springer, Susanna Sturgis, Sue Thomas, Joan D. Vinge, Elisabeth Vonarburg, Chelsea Quinn Yarbro.

This is going to be a big convention, folks. Our first brochure goes out the same week that this apa goes gets mailed, so you will get more information soon. (This list of attending pros is already more up-to-date than the brochure, however, and if you want to keep up-to-date, I suggest you check the WisCon Web page every once in a while: <http://www.cs.wisc.edu/wiscon/>

Georgie Schnobrich

[SC] It was fun to see you and Greg at APT's *Twelfth Night*. I've been very impressed with their season so far this year and have high hopes for *Henry V*.

You bring up an interesting point in your comments on Bashing and Whining. The term "male bashing" is essentially equating a simple insult with physical abuse. One is led by this term to think of insulting a man as being the same as beating up a woman. I hadn't thought of it that way much before you brought it up. I never seriously complain about the term. Whenever I've talked about "male bashing" it has always been in the context of a joke (like Political Correctness once was.) I usually think of guys who complain about woman making fun of men as wimps.

YCT Clay regarding Shooting World, that sounds like a really fun idea. I often think the whole gun issue is way overheated. I'm as much of a fan of gun control as anyone. I don't own a gun and have no plans to acquire one. However, I have done a lot of shooting over the years both for fun and in a professional capacity. I think it's fun. As long as you keep it all in perspective. Getting a group



of casually interested folks together to go out to a range might also be interesting. Don't know if we can rent guns for an afternoon's shooting though.

YCT **Jim Nichols**, aliens in the APA? I think there has been evidence of an alien presence in *Turbo* for years. We have had contributors from time to time, who must have come from other planets.

YCT **Sandy** on the National Honor Society, membership in the NHS might have more real value than just the "little pin rattling around her jewel box." It makes a nice line on an early resume. I have to confess here that I was a member of the NHS in high school. I rather liked the recognition I got for doing well in school. I don't really see anything wrong with that since the opportunity to qualify was open to everyone. I do agree that the NHS is probably part of a general overemphasis on competitiveness and grades in school rather than real learning.

YCT me, "And when does the back start becoming the middle? Shall we find out?" In my line of work, we call this "instigatin' trouble." In the case of an organized mass assault of Iowa jokes, I would have to respond over the course of several issues rather than just one. Specifics beyond that I think I shall just keep to myself.

YCT on thinness, one day soon technology may make it possible that anyone who wants to be thin, can be rather painlessly. In a world where everyone is as thin as they want to be, would our values simply change? Over time, haven't we always identified some physical quality as desirable above all else? Thinness might give way to appreciation for shortness or baldness (!), hey maybe this would be a good thing.

In answer to your interesting questions on people feeling safe to walk around alone,

1. Yes, I grew up believing it was (and still is) my right to feel safe walking around alone.
2. The fear of walking around alone is of crime. I think if the streets become more hazardous, it will be more hazardous for everyone, not just old folks. As our institutions continue to pursue idiotic and shortsighted solutions to the crime problem, people will feel it is more and more up to them individually to look out for their own safety. The strategies they employ will depend on their individual vulnerabilities. I have no intention of getting more fearful just because I am old. But I may have to consider more aggressive strategies for protecting myself in the face of a more threatening world.
3. I think the best long term strategy for everyone is to become more politically active and demand more sensible solutions to crime in the streets. Lowering the threat to everyone is the only rational road to go.

I have commented before that few men have any real understanding about how women feel threatened in our society. But men have been experiencing a rising feeling of fear of crime in the streets. Whereas women have lived with fear for a long time, men have come to it only recently and we have been much more vocal about our anger at this. I think much of the crime hysteria, gun madness and punishment-oriented solutions we hear so much about these days are mostly the result of men beginning to experience a declining sense of personal safety.

[JG] I think the complaints we hear sometimes about so-called "male bashing," has a lot to do with the sort of human rationalization that seeks to turn the spotlight away from oneself. My 5-year old nephew was caught in the act of spraying the inside of a neighbor's van with a squirt gun, and to avoid his mom's anger told on his friend, "Yeah, but Billy *peed* on to the car seats." Not to be outdone, and seeking to turn the spotlight away from himself, his buddy countered with, "Yeah, but Eric *peed into the air vent!*" Imagine their disgust that *both* of them were punished. Well, seriously, I think adult men (and women too, of course) are capable of this same reaction. A local men's group recently demonstrated in Madison against insidious feminists. The guys were protesting the fact that men get blamed for battering women, when the real situation—they said—was that men get beat up by women as often as women get beat up by men, that the situation is 50-50. (*Yeah, but she does it TOO!*) Of course, they were ignoring the fact that women suffered far more than 50% of serious injuries, but to some extent, the strategy works. We end up arguing about who is more at fault.... Women point out the terrible statistics of women being battered, harassed and raped by men. And rather than considering the reasons for that situation and trying to figure out a way to change it, some guys feel only the need to move the spotlight away... *Yeah, but they make jokes about us!*

I was amused by the fact that feminists more often get accused of being complaining than strident these days: "...feminists are rarely accused of being strident these days, since so many right wing radio hosts have made strident their own territory." I actually miss the old days of being accused of being "strident;" it was much easier to laugh off than the newer complaint. I suppose that's one of the reasons things changed.

I agree with Scott's confusion about yours and Sandy's reaction to the National Honor Society. I also was a member of NHS, and received a small

scholarship as a result of my high school work. The program seemed to me like an "extra credit" opportunity: I read some books and did extra work outside of class, took a test at the end of the semester, and as a result was given some money and the opportunity to skip some introductory courses when I got to college. No one in my high school even knew who was or who wasn't enrolled in the NHS program until we showed up together at the test at the end of the semester. Everyone was offered the opportunity to sign up. Actually it felt like a pretty democratic sort of program to me.

Michael Shannon

[SC] YCT me, at least with a suit you have a lot of pockets and the coat can be nice on a cool day. Ties haven't much use, but as decorative clothing goes, they are pretty undemanding. Properly worn you can all but forget you have one on. This is in contrast to panty hose, high heels, skirts or dresses, expensive hair and nails that women contend with.

[JG] Interesting stuff about how music can be used to help some people memorize complicated material. I've heard that before, especially and often from Suzette Haden Elgin. Unfortunately, it doesn't help me much. I think I know only a few (very short, very simple) songs for which I know all the words. Verbal tricks like that have never been any help at all to my memory. In fact, I wouldn't be surprised if embedding information in musical form would actually reduce my ability to recall it. No, my memory tricks almost all involve visualization of the material.

Karen Babich

[SC] Great comments in a great zine!

Re: Howdy Folks, you used to have a job painting needlepoint patterns onto canvas?

"I'd write more about writers and writing, but that would require too many words and too much effort." I love that.

Have you seen Callie Khouri's *Something to Talk About* yet? It's not *Thelma and Louise*, but it's pretty good. Were you introduced to Edward Everett Horton via *Rocky and Bullwinkle*, too? I am always delighted to see Horton in an old movie. His voice is unmistakable. Nicely done background piece, Karen. I've been in this apa with you for quite a while and I still learned some new things about you. Thanks.

Tracy Benton

[SC] Don't drop out Tracy. You and **Karen** are both valuable contributors. Missing comments for awhile or

turning in shorter zines do not indicate to me that you should leave *Turbo*. I know what you can do when you are able. It's worth the wait from time to time.

The "Stuff and Nonsense" piece was a classic big-department-store nightmare. I laughed and laughed.

Cool of you to share the news about you and **Mr. Bodden**.

James Bron and Alison Dawson

[SC] I thought you both sent a fine zine this time. Thank-you.

James, it was nice of you to diffuse the seriousness of your research project accident with a little humor, but it's clear that you had a close call. I'm very glad and relieved that you are all right. Be more careful next time, OK?

Both of you seem to be facing some uncertain times ahead with James' funding cut and Alison finishing up her dissertation. I hope things work out for you. We'll be looking forward to (good) news when next you write in November.

I have a modest request. If it is convenient for you sometime, would you mind sending me a picture of the two of you? We sent a wave of fans to the Glasgow Worldcon and it seems that ALL of them put their cameras away when they got to the con. I was expecting at least a few convention pictures, but I have yet to see any.

Jim Brooks

[SC] Thank you for the cover salute to the good ol' Iowa Hawkeyes. I can't think of a finer subject for an apa cover. It was especially satisfying to have two versions of it colored for me, one by Jeanne and one by **Steve Swartz**. Both of them have verbally assaulted my home state at various times so spending a few minutes on an Iowa tribute was good for them.

I thought your tribute piece to the cheese harvest was wonderful.

YCT me, "We give this choice to the State every day in both large and small ways." It is true that many actions of the State can have the effect of hurting or even killing people. But killing people is never the intent of the action except with war and capital punishment. In both of these last cases, we cannot trust the state to make good judgments. Both should be illegal.

I also liked your comment to **Georgie** on respect and prestige.

[JG] What an evocative, sensual description of the cheese harvests. I think this would make a great documentary film, don't you think? Animated, of course.



Clay Colwell

[SC] Yes, we'd like to see some reviews if you care to run them for us.

Very interesting piece on your Dad's surgery ("Under the Knife.") You talked about losing a sense of familial closeness and love. I am unable to offer much advice or help other than to hope you are able to work through this.

Dr. Hoffman turned us onto *Sandman*. I have yet to actually buy any collections, but I think it's very good.

Bill Dyer

[SC] Once again, Bill, we are very sorry to hear of your loss. I have also lost a parent I was very close to and I know it is a very hard thing.

That was a nice little comment you wrote about the apa. It's nice to hear once in awhile that the apa actually is a pleasure and a help to read and not just Another Thing To Deal With Every Month.

YCT me for #108, you said, "...I feel some individuals can present such a threat to other people and the state, that the state is obligated to act to ensure the safety of the people." I agree that the state has this duty. But I feel the state can do this job and still avoid executing people. Every other advanced industrial nation in the world agrees with me. As long as the state executes people, it cannot avoid sending the message to the populace that murder is acceptable if you have a good enough reason. The sanctity of human life is enhanced when even the state recognizes it cannot take away life. No matter the reason.

YCT Diane for #109, we recently saw Claudia Schmidt here in Madison at a benefit for the local women's bookstore Room Of One's Own. She was fabulous. We bought one of her CD's.

Lisa Freitag

[SC] Someday I hope to progress enough as a writer to be able to write about my family and make some sense of their nonsense. You did a fine job with your Parents: The Visit piece.

Good luck with the world of high finance. Of course we know that large companies don't have these sorts of problems. They are in a position to grease the wheels and exert pressure to get what they want. Ordinary folks and small business people are more at the mercy of others. I hope at the end, you will still feel it was worthwhile to buy.

Cathy Gilligan

[SC] I was amused that you think I might know who to suggest for an article on issues facing feminists. Sorry, as so often happens, I haven't a clue.

Tom Havighurst

[SC] I liked your Interludes a lot. I think Butch's casualness may have been due to his having seen jail before. I think for most folks, the first trip to jail is the worst. Once you've been there and you have a record, it's not so scary (at least out here away from the big city.) I think my favorite was Tom B. "Life is strange. Once you accept that, it was completely natural." Cool.

Nice picture.

Bill Humphries

[SC] Great trip report/travelogue. Thanks for writing it all up, I really enjoyed it.

[JG] I liked your trip report, too.

Computers, you observe, seem to be for either playing or working. The little kid assumes you must be playing and her parent assumes you are working. There are similar sorts of bizarre assumptions made when people read in public places. Most often, I've been amazed that a lot of people assume that I am reading because I am bored, and will be grateful to them if they interrupt me and relieve me of the necessity of reading.... The computer thing comes from the same place, I think: the assumption that there is no such thing as a kind of work that is play.

Whew, I never knew there was such a thing as an ultimate mailing list. But of course there would have to be one. You know, the AMS lists might make privatizing a rather profitable thing if the post office is allowed to sell it. I sure hope that never happens.

I hope your boss was impressed by your resourcefulness in getting the mail test done. I was certainly impressed. Good job.

Jeanne & Scott
16 September 1995