

Union St

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SOME OPENING COMMENTS

(SC) I started comments a few days after WisCon and I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate those *Turbo* hackers who worked on the convention for doing an excellent job. I had a fine time. I especially enjoyed meeting Steve Swartz and Bill Dyer. It is enormously helpful to be able to fix faces and personalities to written zines to get a vivid picture of fellow contributors. It is also helpful to have occasional personal contact in order to keep things in perspective. Nevenah and I talked for awhile about how the APA is an imperfect means of communication. Sometimes you need an occasional face-to-face meeting to bring things back in line. John Peacock, Paula Lewis, Jeanne and I shared a table at the banquet and had a few laughs at a charades panel Dick Russell and Bill Hoffman put on. Although we did not discuss the APA, it was nice to confirm that as heated as our discussion in the APA seemed to be becoming, it had not gotten personal. Nor will it.

JAMES BRON

(JG) The "Chanur" series disappointed me terribly. In contrast with the Faded Sun series, I thought it masqueraded under the appearance of a complex description of interacting species. Finally, it seemed only one, long, boring complaint of a character who never gets enough nap time and is too grumpy to think about the implications of all the stuff going on around her. There was never time for Chanur and the Earth man to sit down and talk and learn about one another and frankly, for a creature drawn to supposedly resemble a cat, Chanur obviously lacked curiosity. A boring and frustrating book. The idea that most occupied my thoughts upon finishing the books was a cynical one: I was curious about the percentage of wordage used to describe the sensation and effects of sleep deprivation caused by too frequent space hops.

(SC) Boasting about your cooking, eh? Gone so far as to print up a coupon for a "Luxurious Banquet" prepared by you and good for ten years. Mmmm. You may have stepped into it this time if you're bluffing James. I can't cook to save my life, but I would consider traveling thousands of miles to try yours. The coupon is the key. Jeanne and I are heavily into clipping and redeeming coupons. We may not be able to resist. Better start planning now.

KIM WINZ

(SC) We are all anxious to read about Durham. I hope you can find the time to write up some impressions. I have never been to "the South" except for Texas which is not really the same thing. Richard and I are addicted to travel stories, so think of us when you go somewhere new and jot down a few notes for us. When do you next expect to be back in Madison (with pictures)?

JOHN PEACOCK

(JG) Guilty as charged, I suppose I haven't noticed you very often in the past, John. Probably the most interaction we've had was recently—at WisCon—because of our apa interaction. But it's true, we don't know one another well. That's always been fine: I've been conscious of neither an urge to exclude you from my conversations nor a sense of being excluded from your's. That's life: no one can expect to click exactly onto every other person's frequency. However, I've made the same effort to be pleasant and polite to you, as I extend to the friends of my good friends. But I'm not going to feel guilty because you felt ignored by me. Neither do I believe you have any justification in accusing me of not respecting you. I simply don't agree with you.

I suppose I should have apologized directly (rather than through Hope) for having typed John Woodford's name instead of your's on the apa cover. I do so now. It was an innocent, late-at-night typo. Hope had been telling me all along that "John" would be laminating the cover and at the last moment suggested that I put credits on the inside front cover. So there I was, after midnight, finishing up the camera-ready art, getting it ready for the printer, and I suddenly realized I wasn't sure to which John she had been referring. I guessed wrong and failed to double check with her the next day. In fact, I forget names quite a lot, even names that I've known well for years in some cases: I'm infamous for it. And I suppose it's only to be expected that once in a while I hurt someone's feelings. I really am sorry.

But all this has nothing to do with our disagreement, you know. My comments to you about NASA/Gallileo/nuclear power come out of real feelings, real opinions, not dislike or petty meanness. For the first time since I've belonged to Turboapa, you've drawn me into a conversa-

tion with you. In your paragraph to Andy, you sounded rather bitter about the paucity of my comments to you in previous apas and yet now you are angry for their tone. You claim that I am talking "at" you rather than "to" you. Well, John, I suggest that you go back and re-read some of your own contributions; you have nearly always written at the apa rather than to its members. (Shall we compare amount of space you and I have devoted to mailing comments?) Your apa writing frequently sounds like professorly lectures to the Slow Class.

In any case, the style of my comment to you was similar to the style of my comments to other apa members, and it's just that, my style. I'm not asking you to like it, but I certainly think you are wrong in thinking I am singling you out. My commenting style tends to combine conversation with essays: I jump off from other people's comments and connect things they've written about to issues and ideas that I'm interested in. Scott and I have been getting the impression that you are not particularly interested in dissenting opinions on your subjects, that you seem to think of your apa contributions as educational efforts on behalf of us readers. In fact, you use most of the space in your last zine to question the credentials of the *Nation* writer who had the temerity to hold an opinion different from your own.

And not I think I'm getting to the source of our real disagreement. We hold very different assumptions about the trustworthiness of scientific institutions, you and I, John. Science may well be a value-less philosophy: i.e., science strives for truth wherever that may lead it—which certainly separates a pure scientist from a pure politician, which I would define as one who pursues power and uses truth or lies in whatever proportion that will attain that goal quickest. Unfortunately, a scientist employed by a government agency (and few private agencies) can not be considered to be a pure scientist and may frequently bend further toward the political side of the spectrum than the science side. Scientists need grants, they want their programs to be funded again; they fear for their jobs under hostile administrations. In other words they are human, and just as capable of making political judgments as anyone else.

For example, at the beginning of its history, the Food and Drug Commission was generally trusted and relied upon by Americans. But over the years there have been repeated incidents—like the DDT scandle—in which that agency was found to have concealed evidence about the dangers of certain products in order to protect commercial interests. As a result, many people now routinely doubt the FDA's assurances. They accuse the FDA of caving into commercial interests or, in some cases like the AIDS drug development program, they criticize the agency's over-zealousness. This pattern has been repeated in many other governmental agencies and the truth has been hedged by scientists pressured by politicians.

Many times, for good reasons, Americans have lost faith in scientific assurances.

I'm not saying that governmentally employed scientists should not be allowed any tolerance of error, nor that enterprises like space travel can ever—or should ever—be insured as risk-free. These would be ridiculous expectations. However, I do get angry and have become in-

creasingly cynical of scientific/governmental assurances of complete safety when in fact these same agencies have been discovered in the past to have concealed evidence of known-but-inconvenient data.

For instance, most recently (last May) NASA's administrator, James Hansen told congressional investigators that he'd been pressured by White House staff to weaken his testimony on the human contribution to global warming. Another example: Fish and Wildlife Service scientists were warned in 1985 by their Interior Department bosses to quit their memberships in environmental organizations, stop public speaking and restrict their communications with Congress because of their warnings of the effects of irrigation waste run-off on wetland depletion.

John, the thing that bothers Scott and I the most about your essays is that you imply that we do not have a right to doubt or criticize statements made by government scientists unless and until we completely understand all aspects of their work. I will never, ever be able to understand all aspects of star wars technology or the space exploration, or the nuclear power industry. Neither will most people. But people still have a right to be told the truth about things that affect their lives and health. Yet, we have been lied to over and over again. It's not surprising at all that many of us now suspect that no matter how safe nuclear waste dumps or Galileo fly-bys are proclaimed to be, when we look at the impressive array of military industrial interests that support those things, we wonder how much pressure, money and obfuscation is being employed to produce exactly those reassuring messages.

PAT HARIO

(JG) I know what you mean about the attraction of a wonderful male voice: I too like Burton. . . also, Sean Connery for their voices and will usually see any film just to hear them. I've even been attracted to a few men for just that element. There are some wonderful women actors' voices too that can cast a spell over me, Rosiland Russell for one.

China Beach looks like—from the previews—a show I'd like. But I've missed too many episodes. So I'm hoping to see it as I saw *St. Elsewhere* when it went into syndication—all at once. For a year and more, I taped and saw 3-4 episodes a week. Anyway, I hope *China Beach* will eventually be syndicated.

(SC) Jeanne and I enjoyed HENRY V at the Majestic. I have never read the play and Jeanne hasn't in a long time yet this version carried us along quite well. We missed a few things, but part of that was poor sound quality at the preview showing we attended. Branagh was very impressive. I have never seen the Olivier version. Will you give us a some comparisons when you see it?

Is it postmodern or post-modern? I suggest you fill in the blank Nacho Cheese Anarchists(With Oat Bran).

ANDY HOOPER

(JG) Nice tribute to your grandmother. I admire the way you've been able to "construct" a real personality from the few hints one normally learns about a grandparent.

I tend to apahack at the kitchen table with a pot of tea. Clothed, usually. I prefer opera for music as I write, but this time am enjoying a rerun of a Peter, Paul and Mary TV special. The weirdest thing about the writing I do for the apa is that it's the only writing I do any more by hand instead of by computer. (It gets typed into the computer then and revised a bit, but most of it is done as I read, with a felt tip pen.)



The recent covers of Turboapa may well have been lacking in originality; I'll admit that about my own, certainly. But you're being a bit narrow-minded about the media, I think. I've pretty much thrown out my technical pens at work because I can do as much—and frequently much more—on my Mac than I can by hand. It's just a tool, just like a charcoal pencil, or a paintbrush, or a felt tip pen is just a tool. And believe me (or don't—I'll be showing you eventually, I'm sure), the Macintosh is a great graphic tool.

(SC) I also write fully clothed. I usually spend a day doing this in between small projects around the house and running errands. Usually I will have read the whole APA once, then I review and comment taking frequent breaks. Obviously doing this naked would not work.

JULIE SHIVERS

(SC) Congratulations on stretching your Oregon trip to so many installments. I have enjoyed it as a sort of *Turbo Perils of Pauline*. You even provide previews of coming attractions at the end. The only thing you need to work on to perfect this style is to leave us at a cliffhanger. For instance, last time you could have told us how you stepped off the line to make the final game-winning shot at the bowling match. Suddenly you discover your fingers are stuck in the bowling ball and as you are dragged down the alley toward a horrible death and a mangled hairdo. . . *Continued next month* So what if you have to stretch the truth a little? Jeanne does it all the time.

COLIN HINZ

(SC) Welcome baaaaaack! The red metal monstrosity was a clothesline. Not like any clothesline you have ever seen. It was built out of 3 inch pipe and angle iron, stood six feet tall, eight feet wide and almost 35 feet long. It looked very much like a big red bridge in our back yard and was sturdy enough to handle laundry for the whole neighborhood. It was built 40 years ago and looked like it could last another century. Its ugliness was reason enough to get rid of it, but when our "friends" and relatives started making suggestions as to what we should do with it, I couldn't stand it anymore and hired someone to cut it down with torches. Yes, it's gone, but we have pictures.

VIJAY BOWEN

(JG) Poor Scott, he keeps making what he thinks are ironic/humorous comments and gets taken to task for them... Perhaps he'll have to use the ":-" mark.

Sure, quote me. Thank you.

I was amused that you and I had the same reaction to Ali's pregnant Barbie, the horrified desire to have one.

BILL DYER

(SC) A pleasure to meet you at WisCon and talk shop briefly. You wrote some wonderful comments last month my favorite being yct. to Cathy Gilligan about relationships being like cars. You may catch hell from someone about it being pretty labored, but I laughed and thought it was great. I agree with you that we are living in interesting times, keep in mind that that is an old oriental curse. With Bush and our Morons-in-Congress at the helm, I figure there is plenty of opportunity for disaster.

BILL HUMPHRIES

(SC) After successful completion of your dissertation, do you plan to teach? What does the future hold? I like your alternative zine titles and the impressive layout. About your dissertation on procurement at DOA, will politics enter into this? I suspect that at least some of DOA's buying decisions will be made for political reasons and not strictly economic reasons or they will circumvent the system to award bids to political friends.

KATHI SCHELLER

(JG) Scott's and my voluminous experience with Escorts makes me wonder why you had your own Escort fixed rather than take the opportunity to get another different car, one with a motor not designed to self-destruct after only a few years.

STEVE SCHWARTZ

(JG) our "dream job"—of creating a computer infrastructure, that you described to Pete—sounds like what my job is becoming. At least I'm becoming the Macintosh infrastructuralist in a mostly DOS agency. Which is good because the Mac network is growing slowly at this point and that allows me to learn fast enough to keep my bosses convinced that I'm on top of it and nearly fast enough for me to believe it. But actually, my dream job would be to have all my time to do art on the computer while someone like you takes care of all the networking plans and mechanical trouble-shooting. The way things are going now, I spend half my time creating and the other half doing computer housekeeping chores, training, researching, etc., and then come in weekends and nights to make deadlines.

The Wisconsin State Capitol Building... I thought it was built as a *shortcut* for state office workers walking between their offices and State Street.

I disagree with you about what you wrote to Kim Winz on the comparative weakness of fiction (as compared to criticism) when it comes to challenging thought. In fact, when written well, I think that fiction and humor gets ideas past the stubborn, mental guard-dogs of habit. Suddenly we find ourselves empathizing with (or laughing with) a character in a situation that we may never have considered our own. And we have to rethink our ideas in that area. Whereas, criticism alerts those defenses at the

beginning and—I, at least—seldom experience my Epiphanies while reading criticism. Feminist fiction, especially, works as mind-limbering exercises, because it's aimed not so much a convincing people not to be sexist, but rather, at how to be feminist in a positive, dynamic way.

And I've been turning your argument about sexism/competitiveness over in my mind too. I don't know what Kim meant to say, nor what the novel, *Daughter of the Bear King* says about the subject because I haven't read it. But here are some thoughts that keep sifting out of the mixture: In my experience, a group of self-confident, independent women, organizing themselves, for an activity for women and about women, tends to naturally be set up in a very very different way than one organized by a mixed group of women and men (or, I believe, of men alone). Hierarchies disappear or become so simplified that they may as well not exist; and work gets done in what has always felt to me, a very satisfying, direct manner. Now, please note, I am a very competitive person: I've always desired to be considered very good at what I do. I am satisfied only briefly by any one achievement; there's always something beyond myself that I strive to accomplish. And yet—in a meeting, or in a team/work situation, I absolutely hate the in-fighting and struggle for symbolic position, credit, and recognition that goes on in most mixed groups. It is this kind of competitiveness, I think, that some fiction writers envision a feminist future eliminating, not individual strivings for excellence.

Well, what a delightful rule change proposal, one that I wanted to vote for when I first read it. Who'd'a thunk it. But it's been a day or so since then, and my scruples are aching and I can't do it. It would be wrong. I can't vote for a rule that is intended to compel any apa member as to the material they print in their own apazine. But it was a nice thought, I appreciate it. So, Kim, record my half a vote as an abstention.

Kudos for another excellent mc-filled zine.

(SC) A pleasure to meet you at WisCon. Sorry to miss the bowling, we didn't hear about your getting stuck in town until after dinner. We were in no condition to bowl anyway. I agree with *Ziggy Stardust* on your list of the top five albums, but not *Desperado*. I nominate *Little Creatures* by the Talking Heads. I vote No on your motion, although I appreciate your intention. It still boils down to two things. Adoption of this motion would involve dictating to Richard what he can do with his zine which I oppose and it would probably involve more work for the OE. The APA is not broke enough to fix this way.

NIGEL ROWE

(JG) Thank you for the bit of New Zealand history. A pity that it's so familiar to so many of us here in North America. I'm sure I won't be the only apa member to remark upon the similarity of the Wisconsin Indian/Spear fishing situation to that in New Zealand. The effects of those century-old treaties are still with us, getting more expensive, complicated and difficult to untangle as time passes. It's no good to say "it wasn't me that signed that treaty." We live with the grandchildren of those that signed and those that were signed upon and we need to accept and deal with the world that the signing created.

The revolutions against authoritarianism will be

recorded as part of the 90's, I bet, not the 80's. The decade of Big Changes, she said hopefully.

(SC) I found your whole zine interesting and thought provoking. I must admit to being envious of your year spent travelling. At this stage of my life, I wish I had taken advantage of opportunities to travel when I was younger. To spend nine months out of 12 travelling now would mean probably giving up my job and having to come up with vast sums of money to meet my commitments (mortgage, car payment, etc.) One should take advantage of long travel opportunities before getting tied up with too many long term commitments. Maybe I'll hit the lottery, that's the only way I can see going on any world tours in the foreseeable future.

Your statement that, "Americans were able to relive the sixties during the eighties, albeit a gentler version," was wrong in my opinion. There is virtually nothing about the eighties that resembles the sixties except for a few pockets of nostalgia (music and some clothing styles). Your remarks, "Anyway it seems that Americans no longer care what their government does," and "The only good thing to come out of all this is that at least Americans are now killing each other rather than the rest of the planet's population," show a surprising ignorance of the subject, especially from someone who spent so much time here. I think Americans care a lot about what their government does. Americans are extremely frustrated at the lack of real statesmanship and responsible decision making from our political leaders and the inability of the system to handle the great issues of the day. A lot of Americans don't vote because the political parties are not offering real choices. I feel we are on verge of a great populist uprising in this country, but as long as the economy stays in check, that uprising will be delayed. As for Americans killing Americans, the people dying in the streets here are mostly the poor and the powerless, same as everywhere else. This is not particularly good news for foreign countries because it means the politically powerful remain unaffected and our mostly fucked up foreign policy will not change. I do not share your optimism for the future. The changes occurring in the world today require vision and courage from political leaders. In this Gorbachev stands alone in the world. It is not wise to bet on the sixties reformers changing things once in power; many of them have long since sold out. What's needed is a new radicalism spearheaded by today's youth. Pressure for change must come from the grassroots level.

Pardon my rant.

DON HELLEY

(JG) Reading your zine this time reminded me of Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse Five*—the way time shifted back and forth, or was that a result of an OE whim? Weirdly, since you stayed one one thematically related subject area, the reversed format actually seemed to suit your zine's style.

(SC) It was good to see you at the rally. It was fun. I wish it was more effective, but only time will tell how things turn out. I think in Madison we are mostly preaching to the converted. The real struggle lies out in the hinterlands. Until we can bring a pro-choice message from the folks "back home", the legislature and governor will remain mostly aloof to these demonstrations.

KAREN BABLICH

(JG) *sigh* The seventies were the years when modern feminism came of age. When more women started to take control of their own lives. We'd worked on the sidelines and in the background during the sixties revolutions and in the seventies we made our own—in politics, in the workplace, in fandom, in the home. And for some odd reason, the decade got to be called the "selfish decade." There were a lot of disgruntled guys who were pissed off at the growing scarcity of subservient women who tried to write them—and their movement—off with an insulting decade moniker. I find it disheartening to see how easily these put-down phrases catch on.

(That's the short version of this particular rant of mine. Most people in the apa have heard or read or heard of the long version, "An Open Letter to Joanna Russ," published in a few places a couple years back.)

(SC) Kudos first to the look of your zine. Very nice. I particularly like the way you break things up with the headings. Very readable and visually inviting. Of course I also enjoyed what you wrote. Hope your mom's recovery is proceeding smoothly. Parents sure know how to get even with their kids for the stress we cause them.

I have some trouble with your statement implying that unions are automatically bad for small business. Many small businesses operate successfully as union shops. I assume there is more to the story of the bakery closing than that.

As Jeanne stated above, I also take issue with you for writing off the seventies. I remember the seventies as being a time of great optimism—the fall of Nixon, the end of the Vietnam war and the rise of human rights as a top national priority. Given a choice, I would take the seventies over the eighties any day. It has been pretty much downhill since Reagan's election.

MIKE DUCCHARME

(SC) After attending Dick's annual film panel at WisCon, I decided I agree with your opinion on some of last year's SF and Fantasy films more than Dick. *The Navigator* and *Earth Girls Are Easy* were much better than Dick rated them. I disagree with you both on *Baron Munchausen* which I thought was terrific. I just saw *Drugstore Cowboy*, it was very good. The most enjoyable film event for me of last year was seeing the new version of *Lawrence of Arabia*. It was awesome.

HOPE KIEFER

(SC) Thank you for the compliment.

We are concerned for your mom and for you. You seem to be handling developments very well even though the news has been consistently disappointing. Hang in there. Do what needs to be done for your mom now and let the rest go. You have the rest of your life to catch up on other things. Time spent now with your mom will always be important to you no matter how things turn out. I'm sorry if I'm preaching or giving unsolicited advice, I'm just speaking from my own experience.

On movies: The "senselessness of the blood and violence" in *Glory* was part of the point. This movie was rare in presenting Civil War battle realistically. The movie's credibility depended on recreating the time (though not individuals) truthfully in order to understand the sacrifice they made.

Kenneth Branagh was in *Henry V* not *Henry IV*.

I agree with your opinion of *Driving Miss Daisy*.

Yct Andy Hooper: *BNF Wanna Be* would be a great phrase for a T-Shirt. Personally though, I'm thinking of one for myself that says "Scott Gomoll" or "Mr. Jeanne Gomoll".

(JG) I want to second Scott's advice to you with regard to your mom. Take all the time with her now that you can. It will create the most valuable memories you own.

Well, there's apparently a "real Jeanne Gomoll," a "new Jeanne Gomoll," so why not a "bearded Jeanne Gomoll"?

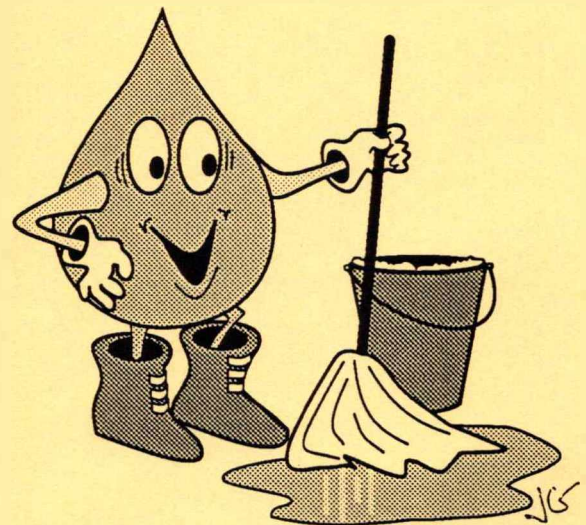
Reprinted from *Apa-Jeff 1*, 1980, by Jeff Smith:

A Plea for Some Continuity in Mailing Comments

OOPS #13, Petunia—Yes, you are right, I had not thought of it that way before, but now that you mention it I can see the logic of it. Re your other point, I'm not sure that I agree; you appear to be letting your personal prejudices cloud your judgement. McGee is not, after all, Mike Hammer!

OOPS #13, Petunia—I am inclined to agree with you that the absence of hereditary aristocracy in America was probably one reason why the classical school of detective novels soon gave way to the hard-boiled. I had not thought of it that way before, but now that you mention it I can see the logic of it. I'm not sure that I agree with your contention that women are treated solely as sex objects in the John D. MacDonald series. You appear to be letting your personal prejudices cloud your judgement! McGee is not, after all, Mike Hammer.

Water Drop



Sophisticated artwork Jeanne is doing these days at the Department of Natural Resources