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“HELLO, I'M SCOTT—”

(SC) Reading Steve Johnson's fine first zine reminded me of something I promised I would do a long time ago and never got around to: an introduction. Lately, I've discovered writing comments, there were times I wanted to refer to some past experience but did not want to go into a long explanation where this or that fit into my life. I should provide some basic background information as you deserve to know a little more about me than I've so far shared and it would be convenient for me to set down some baseline facts.

I will be 34 next month. I was born and raised in a small town in Eastern Iowa called Anamosa. For over 25 years, my father ran a small grocery store/service station/tire repair business until about 1976 when he gave it up and went to work as a warehouse supervisor at my hometown's principal business, the Iowa State Men's Reformatory. He is now retired. My mother was killed by cancer in 1983. I am the youngest of three children. My brother and sister are both married, each with two kids, and they both work at the above mentioned Reformatory (Jon is a correctional supervisor, Bonnie is an accounting technician). I graduated from high school in 1974 and worked for a year before starting college. I graduated from Coe College in Cedar Rapids, IA in 1980. I have a B.A. in (shudder) Business Administration.

In 1977, I decided I was tired of being a poor college student and, when I lost some of my financial aid (I don't recall why), I decided to work and finish school parttime. I was hired that summer as a correctional officer at (you guessed it) the Reformatory. In those days it was sort of a family business. My father, brother, sister, uncle, mother and I all worked there at one point. I quit as soon as I graduated and swore I would never go back into that line of work. My next job was with a trucking company in Cedar Rapids until April of 1981 when I was offered a job with Caterpillar Tractor in Davenport. I was ecstatic. It was big money, with a big company, the opportunities were endless. I was 24 and I thought I was set for life. A mere 10 months later the Reagan Recession of 1982 hit and I was swept out the door on “indefinite layoff.” I'm still waiting for recall, but it might be awhile yet; the whole plant has since been closed down. Iowa was a grim place to be looking for work that year. After my unemployment checks ran out I was faced with the decision to either search for work out of state or go back into corrections. In September of 1982 I started again as a correctional officer, this time at the Iowa Medical and Classification Center outside Iowa City. I was working there when my cousin

Spike Parsons invited me to stop in at ICON one October weekend in 1984. That's where I met Jeanne. I have had my share of setbacks, but at least I know a good thing when it happens and Jeanne was (and still is) the best thing that ever happened to me. Meeting her changed everything. I was thinking of going back to school back then but, instead, I started commuting to Madison to see Jeanne. At that point I planned to quit my job and move to Madison in early 1985, but a promotional opportunity came up. I thought it would look good on my resume to have some supervisory experience, the money was substantial, it was in minimum security, and I would be working within 100 miles of Madison. I took the promotion to correctional supervisor at Luster Heights Camp, just across the Mississippi from Prairie du Chien, WI and we commuted back and forth on weekends for next two years.

In July of 1987 I quit and moved to Madison. Jeanne and I went on a three week trip to Great Britain which included the WorldCon at Brighton. On returning I worked temp and LTE jobs all the time trying to get a fulltime position with the State of Wisconsin. After nearly a year of looking I finally broke down and took the first offer I got from the state. So, since June of 1988 I've been working as an Institutional Aide (soon to be renamed Psychiatric Care Technician) at the Mendota Mental Health Institute. My specific assignment is maximum security forensic treatment. It is hell.

At this point I am tempted to launch into a long rant about my job. I'll spare you that right now. I only wished to cover some personal background. I shall now return you to our regularly scheduled comments.

STEVE SWARTZ

(JG) ...No, don't complain now. You've had your turn with creative name manipulation by the Obsessive Press. Once is enough. There are others waiting their turns. (Sorry about the spell-o.)

Do you realize that you used up a whole three-quarters of a page for a joke, for a prelude to a punchline? Of course you know. Well, it was worth it; at least I thought so. I laughed and laughed. However, even your “comments seemingly from left field, responding to some offhand, peripheral remark,” do not exasperate because you can't seem to help writing them well and making them interesting little essays in their own right. I would have been disappointed only if the cat-in-heat story had been the one- or two-liner response to my entire zine. (By the

way, traveling friends never ask me to take care of their cats either, maybe because of my history as the perpetrator of the *Dead Cats through History* slide show.)

Your response to my Richard-lecture prodded me to think through that theorizing further than I'd done before, and I appreciate the push.

I don't really want to argue against hierarchies and rules *per se*, although I admit I may seem to have been suggesting that underlying bias in my essay. I definitely *do* want to argue against the creation of hierarchies and rules for their own sake.

Jobs should fit the skills of the worker, and *visa-versa*. The various scenarios in which the fitting takes place (or doesn't) makes a big difference when it comes to what is considered first, the job or the person.

For instance, I think that a volunteer group (in which members cooperate for other reasons than wages), works very differently from a work-for-pay situation. In a company or agency there is always an individual or a group of people who have already defined the goals—to make widgets (or the moon) and sell them for a profit, or to provide a service for a profit or for a governmentally-provided budget. Job-searchers may attempt to fit themselves to a job that compliments their perceived self-image, but the main decision is made by the employers who look for and hire individuals who can contribute to the company's goals. Although a company or an agency can re-write its goals, the fact of ownership gives owners more real power than officers of a group of volunteers. Members of a volunteer group continuously create collective goals which reflect the interests of the group as it grows and evolves. A new member joins because they are attracted to the general shape of a group's activity. Then, as time passes, they begin to take part in the continual refinement of the group's goals.

Here's an example: The WisCon planning committee has changed composition sometimes gradually and sometimes radically over the last 13 years. It is my opinion that the concom members who consider feminist content to be the single most important component in the convention are fewer in number than they were early in WisCon's history. That component is still one of the important aspects of WisCon, but it is no longer the obvious *raison d'être* of the con. I was and still am one of the people who would prefer that the main focus of WisCon be on feminist aspects of SF, but since I have retired from the WisCon committee, I have relinquished power to help define the goals of WisCon other than the minor leverage possessed by any WisCon attendee. However, while I was immersed in WisCon work, I was very critical of people who were not involved on the concom who demanded that the convention provide something for them. It seemed to me that if fans wanted a masquerade badly enough, and it wasn't currently part of WisCon's scheduled activities, and if no one on the committee was interested in working on one, then those fans who wanted a masquerade should join the committee and create it.

Steve, you offered an argument against such a procedure, and asked what would happen if no one on the committee was interested in hotel liaison work, for example. Well, it seems to me that if no one on the committee was interested in talking to hotel management, or if

nobody cared to work on the budget, or on any of the other crucial jobs required to run a basic, stripped-to-the-bone convention, that would mean that the group had evolved to a place where it no longer wanted to do a convention, and it would be unfair to people who paid for their memberships to continue as a *convention* committee. It would be time for the group to redefine itself or to disband. That's not likely to happen with WisCon right now; it seems to me that the convention committee still possesses considerable inertia and arguments about its goals concern peripheral matters. However, there is one subgroup of SF3 that *did* lose critical mass.

Aurora (the SF³, feminist SF criticism genzine that used to be called *Janus*, and had 26 published issues) has a publishing committee that refuses to die, but which gradually ceased to produce a zine because nobody possessed the massive amounts of time required to coordinate its production. Again, if there is no one in a voluntary group able or interested in doing the necessary work on a project it does not get done. If the editor of *Aurora* had earned a salary and stopped working on the zine, they would have been fired and a new editor hired. In our group, however, we could only ask the existing group members if any of them wanted to do the work. Although some members still think the *idea* of *Aurora* is a very worthwhile one and that we should not announce the zine's demise, The zine effectively died a long time ago. And personally, I wish it would be given a proper burial.

When the voluntary model works well and the individual group members' enthusiasms constitutes the activity of the group, the result is truly amazing efficiency and frequently exceptional quality. This makes me wonder if some of the lessons of a volunteer group might not be grafted onto structures in the private and public sectors. You suggest this too: that inflexible job categories results in management losing important information and access to all the skills and capabilities of their staff, like—as you say—building the house before seeing the site. If management defines the long-range, general goals, and allows the process to retain a little flexibility and allow for the fact that people work differently—though better—when they do it their own way, things will get done well, even if that happens in an unexpected manner. **Bill Humphries** alluded to the way codification of rules discourages intuitive decision-making. On this subject—and to get back to the specific topic of hierarchy—Semler organized his company with only three layers of hierarchy. He acknowledged that *some* direction from above is necessary, but felt that each layer of hierarchy tended to dilute the directives and added counter-productive expectations and structure. At the beginning of Semler's experiment, he says that he expected that the complete lack of official job descriptions in the lower (and largest) level of hierarchy would eventually have to be refined with at least a few defined positions, but they went with no structure for a year and when—at the end of the experimental period—they reassessed, they discovered that no refinement was necessary.

So...I agree with you that the "invisible hand" can't always be totally relied upon. In a company that is "owned" by an individual (s) or in government, where the agency responds to elected and appointed officials, long-range

and general goals must come from above. The workers are employed to adopt the goals of their employers. But even then, I think that any hierarchy should be imposed at the level the work is being done. The more levels that separate the actual workers from the designers of hierarchy and rules, the more counterproductive that hierarchy and those rules get. When I was involved in WisCon, I preferred to join a subgroup of activity—program book production, for instance—with no individual job titles at all. We would get the work done as seemed best, and could have drawn you a hierarchy chart only *after* the work had been completed, but the structure evolved organically based on who had the time and skills for each stage of the work.

The brief revolution against hierarchy in the WisCon committee was not against hierarchy per se, but against what hierarchy was becoming in the WisCon committee: a game for its own sake, a fascinating toy that some members of the committee—Dick especially, it seemed to me—were more interested in than the actual work of the convention. (There was the Great Organizational Chart Battle, for instance.) That particular attempt to overturn the way things had been, was effectively voted down by the committee when, the next year, our suggestions were not adopted. I had to admit, that by my own reasoning this meant that the committee (then) chose this sort of organization because they wanted it. There are people who join committees because they honestly like the kind of interaction that occurs within meetings. And that sensibility is as valid as any other.

(Nowadays, at least from what I hear about what happened with WisCon 13's concom, the hierarchy-for-the-sake-of-hierarchy was not a big factor at all.)

Saying you don't like movies probably gets you in trouble more often than my own bias against poetry. I mumble a weak defense when others point out that poetry is merely a *form* and that one can't objectively make judgements about the quality of a whole form in all its permutations. And then they say:

But didn't you say you liked Margaret Hacker's and Marge Piercy's poems? Haven't we heard you quote The Wasteland? There was certainly no mistaking those chortles we heard while you were reading James Bron's chipmunk cycle! And what about the several stanzas you wrote and read aloud at Hope's shower? (Well, never mind that, I suppose that supports your case.) But, how can you say you don't like poetry?

Nonetheless, I mostly skim or skip any poetry I come across. Yet, I find myself wanting to repeat the same arguments against you in favor of some favorite films of mine. But then I think: What if I actually convince Steve? What if he starts to use large chunks of his free time to catch up on recent cinema? And then I think, that will mean good-bye to his long mailing comments, for sure. So I'll just say: You're right, Steve. Movies are a waste of time. It's all been downhill since *Westside Story*.

(SC) Thank you, thank you and, well, thank you again. It's delightful to receive such penetrating and thoughtful commentary and advice. Especially when so much of it was compli-

mentary. Your advice to "create words that I feel good about giving you to read" has been very helpful. Part of the reason writing intimidates me is that, no matter how casual your style, it is a very formal means of communication. In personal conversation you have so many devices and methods to convey your thoughts; voice, facial expressions, pauses, hands, body language, etc. But writing limits you to only words, and they must follow fairly strict and complicated rules. I have a lot of respect for writers such as you who, judging by the length of your zine, can start writing, spend little time rewriting and revising, yet wind up with a zine that flows along so smoothly.

I still play with the idea of earrings and tattoos. I almost always think of it in terms of how such a thing would affect other people rather than how comfortable I would be with it. I know I probably exaggerate their reactions and that keeps me from going through with it. I resent being so concerned with other peoples' opinions, but I'm not sure that I would really enjoy going through with it more than just daydreaming about it anyway.

BILL HUMPHRIES

(JG) Funny fantasy about the *real* reason for the Libyan factory explosion!

(SC) It was Idaho, not Iowa, that was moving to pass the restrictive abortion legislation. As you probably know, it was vetoed by the governor. Now Guam is putting up legislation with the same goal in mind of overturning *Roe v. Wade*.

Nice cover.

The car was not an Encore but an Alliance and I do not know what year, but it was a late model as the state turns over its fleet fairly regularly. Thank you for the comments. Good luck with the Encore. According to the latest Consumer Reports on cars—April 1990 issue—you may need it.

DON HELLY

(JG) I enjoyed your WisCon program descriptions. I wish now that I'd attended the artists' panel. Sounds interesting. My own preparation for doing art is more mundane (some would say more "virgo") than Georgie reports her's. I feel compelled to neaten the room or desk at which I work before I start a new project. Maybe I'd sound less compulsive if I referred to it with Georgie's phrase, "putting myself in a state of grace."

Barb Gilligan says she feels more involved in a book by reading it slowly; I feel opposite. Stretching out a book puts too many other thoughts and activities within the experience of the book and I lose track (and sometimes interest) in the story. A book that grabs me and makes me stay up all night to finish it connects far more powerfully to my psyche.

You were a good friend to Pam; she's lucky to have had your company that evening when she needed to talk.

I liked the artwork on page 3: nice texture—it struck me somehow as a musical composition.

(SC) I also enjoyed reading your contribution. I admire your ability to share with us such personal stuff. It is interesting, but I'm never quite sure how to respond. This time you ask for reaction and I feel I owe you something. Hmmm, well, I think it is perfectly OK to seek her out if you are really obsessed with seeing her. Probably by the time you read this, you will have at least talked with her again anyway. I think everything you wrote

was clear enough. I don't think anyone in the APA is any position to judge whether your actions were appropriate or not. I would just like to repeat what Jeanne said above and wish you good luck.

KAREN BABLICH

(JG) It was quite a trick to discover your picture ("here somewhere" in the zine, you hinted), but I finally decided that the greatly enlarged, rasterized portrait of your chin on page one did not do you justice and that I would rather see a photo snapped from a slightly greater distance.

ALGERNON STEWART

(JG) I've heard that the only thing really necessary for a legal name change is lack of criminal intent. Without that, one can simply begin using a new name on all legal documents and that's it; you've changed your name. Only the intent to defraud by that change makes the action illegal. So, I suppose, if you want, your name change is permanent already; all you have to do is start using it on licenses, book jackets, contracts, media interviews, etc...

(SC) I also taught myself to drive a stick-shift. My father wouldn't take the time to teach me, so I went out and bought myself a car with a standard transmission and learned the hard way. I was about eighteen. I remember spending a long morning out on a quiet country road practicing until I thought I had it. I needed gas so I went into town to my dad's gas station to fill up. Dad wasn't there, but Kenny, the attendant and an old family friend, was curious as to how I was making out. I boasted that I had everything under control, filled up the car and jumped in to take off. Unfortunately, my hard-earned self-confidence failed to jump in with me. I eyed the busy street that ran in front of the station knowing I would have to move into traffic quickly. I felt Kenny watching me as he leaned against a gas pump. I started to sweat. I started it up, let out the clutch and it died. I turned red, I sensed Kenny smiling at me. I started it again, and jerked to a stop. In the next 20 feet, I killed it in this manner twice more. Kenny was chuckling now. I was violently embarrassed. I cranked it over one more time, saw an opening in traffic, stood on the accelerator, dumped the clutch and left the station in a cloud of tire smoke and screeching tires. In my rear view mirror, Kenny was doubled over and slapping his knee. I went back out to the country road for the afternoon.

(JG) I guess that's how come Scott was so understanding during my own "episodes of learning experience" when he taught me to drive stick. I don't think he slapped his knee even once.

JAMES BRON

(JG) I don't think who's on top of the hierarchy indicates the structure being sexist or not. The structure *itself* is part of the patriarchal society and women often buy into it, just as minority members sometimes buy into or are bought by a racist system.

Good, I'm glad you got the tea. I was a little afraid that international inspectors might consider it to be a suspicious substance! And, yeah—let's continue the trades. I'd like that.

Enjoyed the Wisconsin article by the whimpy re-

porter. Us upper-midwesterners are proud of what we endure during our infamous winters. (Though, of course, there's been little hardship to endure these last few warm winters.) One of our chief winter sports involves bragging about how cold it is and making rude remarks about the silly Southern U.S. drivers shown in newscasts during their infrequent blizzards.

(SC) I enjoyed the "poems." I'm sure Alison A. deeply appreciates your sharing her experience with an international crowd of strangers in such a sensitive fashion. Perhaps she will want to return the favor sometime. Tell her I would be glad to print any totally unsubstantiated smut on you she can come up with. I'll even do it in a nice type style.

Thank you for the Wisconsin article in your second contribution last month. I enjoyed your whole zine. Great cartoons, too. "Co-fornicator?" It must be awkward doing introductions with relatives. I think I will enjoy corresponding with this frank law graduate, Alison. (By the way, James, what is it with you and women named "Alison?") I may as well take this opportunity to invite her to share any juicy poop on you with us in her first zine. As indicated above, truthfulness is purely optional.

LUCY NASH

(JG) Congratulations on the new job. You and Scott may be able to commiserate with one another, being in such similar lines of work now.

MIKE DUCHARME

(SC) Good zine. I think. What I mean is, I haven't been to a rock concert in years and hadn't really missed it until I read your zine. Rats. Enjoyed reading about it anyway. I know some people at work who went to Zevon and everyone seems to share your opinion. Also liked your WisCon Wrap-Up. I agree about the Holiday Inn deteriorating. It is time to think about moving on.

STEVE VINCENT JOHNSON

(JG) That was quite a wonderful introduction, Steve (from one priest to another). Even though I've known you for a long time, I appreciated hearing more details of your background. Nice Pacman metaphor. I wonder, however, if it isn't a metaphor for only one type of person. The particular process model you described sounded more like my sister Julie than it did me. Julie tends to get involved and stay involved in a project only as long as it's new and her learning curve moves sharply upward. When the curve shows signs of flattening out, she tends to start looking for a new challenge. I like the learning stage too, though I'm far less brave than she is about embarking on a new project if it means taking a lot of risks. The more skilled I become at a thing, the more interested I am. I don't tend to throw the old thing over and start looking for a new thing when I've mastered it. Rather, I tend to be more interested in a thing that I feel more confident about, and when the learning curve flattens, I look for a way to build a new skill on to the old one. That's how I see my progression in the graphic arts field.

(SC) Congratulations on a great first zine. Welcome. I see you also opened fire on Nigel. His response should be interest-

ing. As you are an artist with professional credentials, Nash will be hitting on you to do a cover for him. Take some advice: make him beg.

ANDY HOOPER

(JG) I've definitely noticed a shift toward interaction from the nearly total performance mode of earlier *Drag Bunt* zines. (What does "drag bunt" mean, by the way? A cartoon series of hilarious Gomoll misconceptions might be obtained from me at some point.) It's like you've been dimming the house lights a bit and responding to the audience (and hecklers) more than you used to. I like the mixture.

I liked the Trek story too: *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern on the Enterprise*. Funny. And a jab at other Trek fan-writers, pro and fan, who never give much attention to all the spear carriers in the background.

(SC) In ten years of working with criminals of various types, I long ago discovered what your car theft experience taught you. Some folks think they were born Criminals, when they were really born Idiots. I managed to catch *Drugstore Cowboy* and thought it was terrific. I did not take Jeanne, however, as I did not think she would like it. I second Jeanne's praise for your *Star Trek* takeoff. I don't know why the series even bothers with a massive faceless crew. The new series has so many regular characters to juggle, they make even less use of the rest of the crew than the old series did. I was most struck with this image of the Andy Hooper Story Machine. We'll just strap you into a chair in front of a computer, put on headphones and invite people to throw on music and see what "retrograde lunacy" you come up with. We could have some fun with that! I'll borrow my sister's Slim Whitman albums...

ALI BRON

(JG) The Italian culture provides the most bizarre, unbelievable, nightmarish images! First, the pregnant Barbie Doll, and now this tits'n'ass *Wheel of Fortune*. Weird.

(SC) Yeah, I agree. How disgusting. In fact, I'm not sure I can really believe it without seeing it myself. How about sending a video? VHS please. What other crude, disgusting things can you tell us about Italy?

(JG) ...Luckyly, I know that Europeans use a different video recording standard. *phew*

(SC) I hope you don't get bummed out by all the fancy computer zines in the APA. It's what you write that matters and on that score, you're doing great. I don't know how long you will be able to indulge your hostility toward computers in the future. You should give them another chance. Some (Macintosh) are pretty friendly.

HOPE KIEFER

(JG) Gosh, Hope, I can't understand why you don't have the time to do long mailing comments to everyone. Good luck with the wedding countdown... I doubt that you'll be reading this till after the big event, and by then we'll all know if you survived or not, won't we?

So—is this Hotel spying job of June Michelson's your dream job? I get tired of Hotels after only a few days at Worldcon; I can't imagine living in a succession of hotel

rooms more or less permanently.

KARL HAILMAN

(JG) And farewell to you, Karl. Will you be secretly reading Hope's copy after you no longer feel the obligation to pub your ish?

KIM NASH

(JG) Why is it that when people we know for a long time as stable, familiar couples—that their splitting is so upsetting to us? Your family depends on you and Lucy both in major ways. Your friends depend on you both too—in less major ways. You're part of the structure of our world, somehow, and when that changes, that world seems less stable. I hope you and your family manages to get through this time whole and without major injuries. I admire and cheer both your and Lucy's determination to remain friends, no matter what.

BILL DYER

(JG) It's too bad you didn't go ahead and write a con report, Bill. You had all the ingredients at hand; the only thing missing was a heading, "Con Report." Or was I mistaken: was that first column in your zine not-a-con-report in the same way that Scott claims his 2-page description of our trip to Northern Wisconsin was not-a-trip-report?

Great photo of Kim N!

(SC) I have to put off a rant about my job for the time being. At least I can no longer be accused of keeping it a secret. Thanks for the compliments on the trip...uh...notes. That Renault was quite a car. I imagine that had it come with a combination emergency brake/ejection seat, they would have failed to cut a corresponding hole in the roof. Too bad about your trip back to Lansing after WisCon. You would have been better off staying here. We ate, drank beer and partied some more. A few of the crazier ones went bowling.

JULIE SHIVERS

(SC) I think I'm getting hooked on this continuing storyline of your trip out West. What are you gonna come up with after you finally finish the last installment of this adventure? We're not going to let you rest, you know. There were a couple of times I thought I was reading something by Bart Simpson ("Impressed the hell out of me. 'Can we go now?' I asked.") I'm ready for "Oh no, FOG in Chicago."

CATHY GILLIGAN

(JG) I sympathize with your experience of getting lost in Madison. My own familiarity with my adopted home town grew every time I gained access to a new form of transportation (usually closely following a move to a more outlying area of town). When I first moved into town as a student, I lived at the Cochrane House on Francis and Langdon streets, two blocks from Science Hall in which most of my geography classes were scheduled. It took me barely five minutes to hike to my first class in the morning, and I walked everywhere. The "known Madison" map in my mind was small and restricted, and full of hazards for

unsuspecting motorists who asked me directions, because I would inevitably direct them the wrong way down a one way street, because that's the way I walked. I was loath to move off campus when I graduated because it seemed so far away from everything, but my first apartment now seems almost as convenient to downtown as the Cochrane House. (My second address was on Mound Street, only a few blocks away from your old Brooks street apartment.) When I moved a couple miles east of downtown, I thought at first I'd never get used to living so far out, but soon I had the bus system down pat, and owned my own bike and once again, began to feel that I lived right in the midst of things. In fact, each time I've moved, I readjusted and decided that I wouldn't want to live any closer again. It's only been six years or so—since I met Scott and his car—that I've gotten comfortable and knowledgeable about beltline territory. And once again, I feel quite comfortable living where I do, about three miles out from the center of town, and don't think I'd like to move any further out or in... Well, at least now I've stopped giving people in cars how-to-get-there-on-foot-or-on-bike instructions.

(SC) I thought you had a fine contribution until I got to the last paragraph. Hey, don't get so excited about a little blank space and a few comments. Don't drop out over that. I enjoy what you write, we know you'll do some comments when you're able. You are hardly the first person who skipped. Relax.

DIANE MARTIN

(JG) Rather than keeping track of your staff's total work time, on various kinds of services you perform, a different kind of accounting might be more...um, *enlightening* to your boss... How about this?—

Maybe you could follow a few specific accounts for sales and keep track of how much time/money is spent to get an individual sale or keep one Valued Customer happy by each of the three sections, sales, support, administration. After all, when a moon gets sold, all the sections spend money (on salaries, travel expenses, and administrative costs). The expenses belong to the whole team; the sales are the result of everyone's work, and it would be great if you could devise an accounting system that showed how you all work toward the same goal.

If it weren't for the fact that you are so firmly committed to Wisconsin, what with two houses, etc., I'd suggest you talk to my sister Julie. Her business has been growing by leaps and bounds these past couple years. She's hiring her third em-

ployee now, is considering purchasing a linotronic image setter and enlarging her production studio by offering imagesetting services, and is looking for another bigger office. She is beginning to look for someone like *you* to work on the administrative side of the business. She swears that she will be paying that person very well and will begin with a healthy respect for the central roll of administrative skills in her business, because presently, she's trying to do it all herself. Not that I'm trying to get you out of town, but I think it's really important that you get the recognition/salary that your skills entitle you to. And if your present employer doesn't give you that, perhaps you should look around at other possibilities. You are a highly skilled person; you know it and your salary should reflect that. (Part of this, you understand, is a pep talk for myself. As a public employee, I can't ask for individual raises, and I envy you that. And I feel that I should be making some similarly tough decisions soon too.)

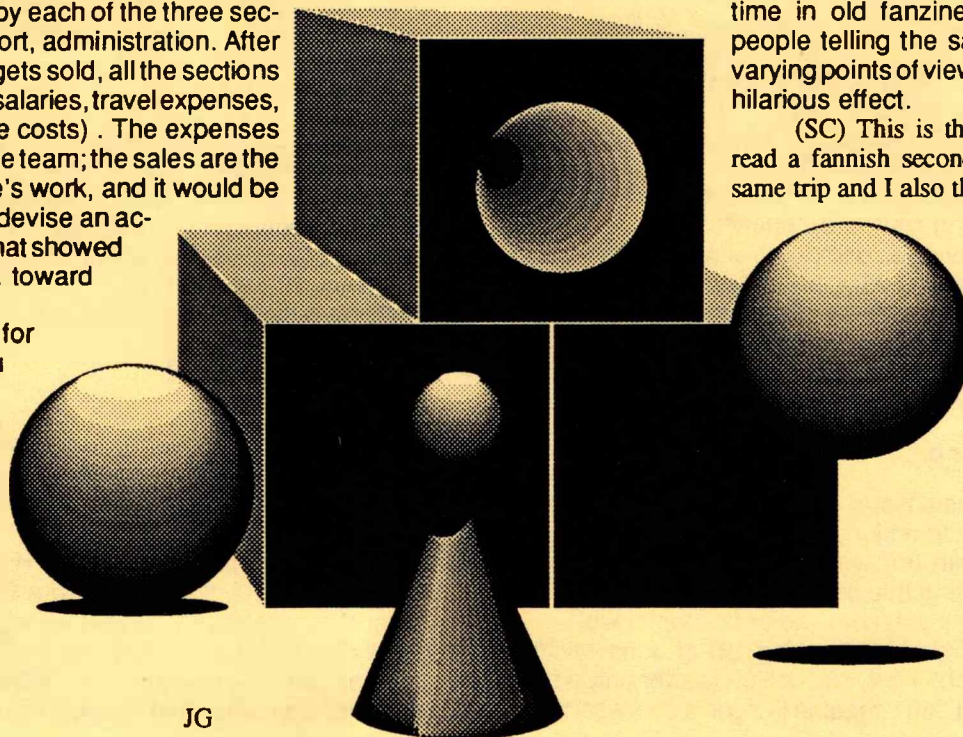
(SC) Really liked your sales-process scenario with the "moon". I think it is perfectly OK to write about your job. After all, this is an important part of your life that seems to be causing you a lot of stress and writing about it is perfectly natural. I wish I could come up with some solid suggestions on how to impress your boss with your true value, but it has been my experience that support services are typically undervalued in business (and government) and it is hard to change that perception. The hard truth is, they probably will never really get a grasp of how much they depend on you until you leave them. I agree with Jeanne that it is never too late to think about making a change.

Terrific pictures on the back cover. I wonder if everyone will be able to figure out who is who without captions.

NEVENAH SMITH

(JG) Good trip/con report, made especially enjoyable because we read the same story from two perspectives. That used to happen all the time in old fanzines, with lots of people telling the same story from varying points of view, sometimes to hilarious effect.

(SC) This is the first time I've read a fannish second version of the same trip and I also thought it worked very well. I would not have thought of trying that myself. Good luck with the agent and the Chicago galleries. Thanks for the compliment on our trip thing and all the egoboo.



JG