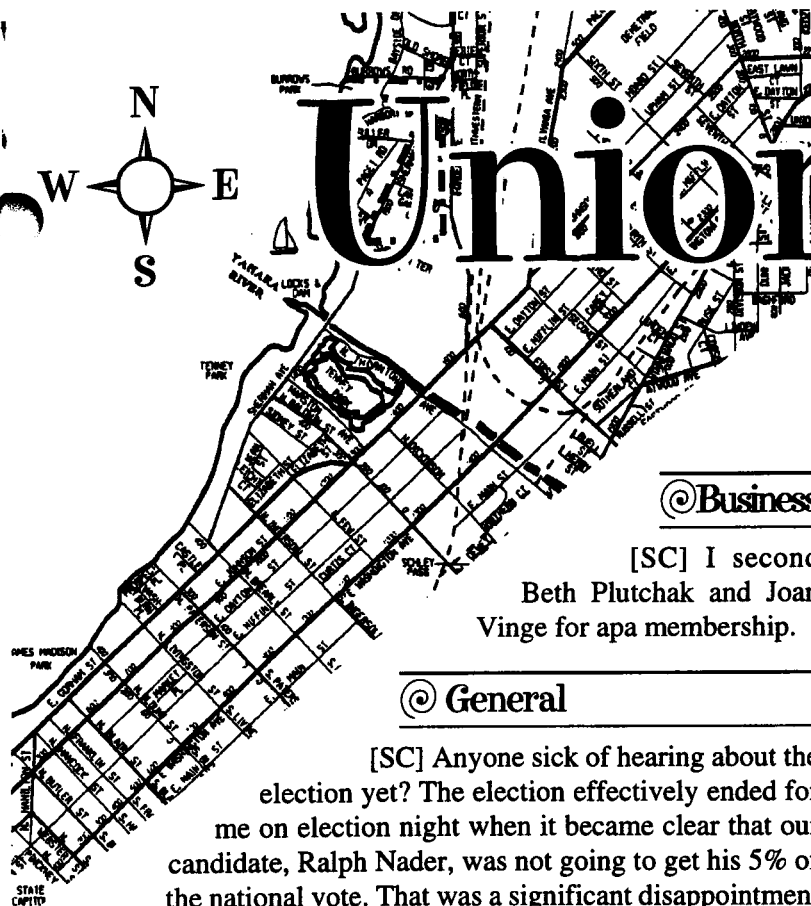


# Union Street

A joint zine by Jeanne Gomoll & Scott Custis



## © Business

[SC] I second Beth Plutchak and Joan Vinge for apa membership.

## © General

[SC] Anyone sick of hearing about the election yet? The election effectively ended for me on election night when it became clear that our candidate, Ralph Nader, was not going to get his 5% of the national vote. That was a significant disappointment for me, though I was happy to see that our House Representative Tammy Baldwin, the only openly lesbian member of Congress, won in a close contest.

As I write this, the outcome of the presidential race is still hotly contested, now in the courts instead of at the polls. The country is locked in a holding pattern waiting to find out if tweedledee or tweedledumb wins the White House. Personally I don't think it could matter less. Both candidates are middle of the road leaning to conservative. Both candidates will have to contend with a divided Congress. With the Senate at a nearly 50-50 tie, neither candidate will be in a position to change much of anything or be inclined to try. Both candidates will be paralyzed on the supposedly "big" issues like gun control and abortion that they supposedly differed on. Supreme Court nominees, in order to pass the divided Senate, will have to be totally bland to stand a chance of being confirmed. Nothing will be done about education, the environment, health care or campaign finance reform. The military will still get vast sums of money, executions will carry on across the country and there will be plenty of support for the continued growth of corporate power and tax breaks for the rich.

I have good reason to be pessimistic (sorry Julie, I know you have little patience for pessimism). This isn't the first time a presidential election has hung in the

balance and our experience has been that it never turns out well. In the election of 1824 Andrew Jackson was leading in the popular vote but the Electoral College was split among four candidates (Jackson 99, John Quincy Adams 84, William Crawford 41 and Henry Clay 37). The decision went to the House of Representatives, but the House rules only allowed the three top Electoral vote getters to be considered. Clay, who violently opposed Jackson, threw his support to Adams securing his election on the first ballot. A few days later, Adams made Clay his Secretary of State, which resulted in charges of corruption and bargaining that dogged the rest of Adams' administration.

In the election of 1876, Democrat Samuel J. Tilden seemed to be winning the popular vote, but the Republicans contested Democratic claims in South Carolina, Florida, Louisiana and Oregon. Two sets of Electoral votes were sent to Congress from these states. Ultimately an electoral commission of 15 men from both parties voted 8 to 7 along party lines for Republican Rutherford B. Hays. The Electoral College votes, when they finally finished counting them in March, went 185 for Hays and 184 for Tilden. It was eventually discovered that the Democrats went along with the appointment of Hays because Hays promised to remove Northern troops from South Carolina and Louisiana and to give cabinet and other federal appointments to some Southern Democrats along with other promises. This bargain was controversial even within Hays' own party.

In the election of 1888, Benjamin Harrison lost the popular vote to Grover Cleveland, but won the Electoral vote and the presidency, 233 to 168. Harrison's administration was hampered by the close election and the scandal of his having had a child out of wedlock.

In all the cases above, the winners had unremarkable terms in office and were ousted after four years. The future does not look bright for either Gore or Bush administrations, or, for that matter, the rest of us.

This issue of *Union Street* is brought to you by Jeanne Gomoll and Scott Custis, who live at 2825 Union Street, Madison, Wisconsin 53704. 608-246-8857. Jeanne's email is ArtBrau@gdinet.com; Scott's email is sec@gdinet.com. This is *Union Street* #122, Obsessive Press #241, Peerless Press #122. *Union Street* was created using a Power Macintosh G3, Pagemaker 6.5 (next time: InDesign!), Illustrator 8.0, Photoshop 5.5, and a Laserwriter Select 360. Display font is Elroy. All contents copyright © 2000 by Scott Custis and Jeanne Gomoll, November 2000 for the *Turbo-Charged Party Animal* #173.

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 © Comments No. 171
 

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 Calvin Powers
 

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[JG] I agree with you about the wonderfulness of *Chicken Run*, but have been amazed at the reaction of others who failed to find it funny. Scott and I have been recommending it highly to everyone. I would have been willing to bet that it was one of those universally-loved films, but I would have lost my bet. I still don't understand some of the reactions from folks who claim they didn't find it funny. On the other hand, I did not share your positive feelings about *The Patriot* for reasons already published here in *Union Street*. But I feel a similar sense of amazement bordering on disbelief to yours, when I learn about how people throughout history have accepted the necessity to give up their lives and/or family's lives and/or property to the demands of war. Last night, Scott and I watched the last part of a PBS biography of Napoleon, and I had a hard time focusing on anything else but the apparent willingness of thousands of common people to march into battle without any other reason than that their emperor had declared war. The lives of their family weren't at risk; their homes were safe. They didn't even have the motivation provided by more "democratic" wars like the American or French revolutions in which the common people might have been convinced that their world would dramatically change for the better with victory. It was just that the crowned princes of Europe were quarreling and Napoleon convinced his soldiers that they could win. I would have thought that one whiff of the horrors of a 17th or 18th century battleground would have turned most commoners into pacifists or draft resisters. Obviously I am missing something. Obviously I have always been missing this thing.

I also saw the artwork by the collage artist at the Chicon art show. The text stuff, especially, was an excellent illustration of how, in layout, you must consider blocks of text as if they were blocks of gray color, very much a part of the visual impact of a page.

Scott and I visited the Japanese bid party too. The snacks there were really good and the hosts were really nice people. I am very excited about the possibility that they will win their bid for a Worldcon. Mari Kotani, a feminist SF scholar and a member of the bid committee, asked the Tiptree committee if we would consider staging the Tiptree Award in Tokyo if they win! We said yes.

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 © Vijay Bowen
 

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[JG] Sorry to hear the bad news about the play. At least you won't be required (like movie stars do) to go

out and hype it with lies on talk shows during the mandatory weeks of publicity prior to opening. And I'm glad to hear that you feel you're getting *something* out of it, since you are spending a lot more on it than the audience's 2 hours and \$12 each!

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 © Georgie Schnobrich
 

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[JG] I think you may be on to something in suspecting that fannish conversation patterns differ significantly from mundane patterns. You point out that one area in which mundane styles are like fannish ones is when the subject is sports. I think there may be some other topics too, that inspire fannish-style conversation patterns—for instance, politics (sometimes). Certainly these last couple weeks of post-election confusion have inspired hundreds of conversations about civics lesson ephemera that would normally never be considered. Pregnant chads, dimpled chads, electoral college rules, overseas non-resident ballots, voting technology. I've noticed quite a few conversations involving out-and-out extrapolation! There may be other subjects, too, which will inspire non-fans to analytical sorts of discussion. But I think you're right that fans often exhibit the enthusiastic ability to turn that analytic sense upon any subject, even roadkill. Nevertheless, I think *every* special interest group has topics which its members will gnaw over for hours, and which will immediately bore to tears anyone not part of that interest group. I'm thinking now of groups of computer programmers and other intensively geek groups. The fact that many intensively geeky groups overlap with fandom, perhaps explains part of the fannish tendency towards this sort of conversation patterns.

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 © Diane Martin
 

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[JG] I know what you mean about feeling a mixture of guilt and joy in certain circumstances when all of one's attention seems fixed on a single person or project. The guilt comes from ignoring so much else; the joy comes from focusing on the moment, on what is inarguably important *now*. I've always had the tendency toward a kind of obsessiveness in love and work, and I know the feelings well. But for the most part, after it's all over, I'm really glad I gave all to that person or that project for a while. It seems to me sometimes that real depth of experience is only possible in periods of obsession. It's probably true that living, long-term in such depths is bad for one's health, but frequent excursions — like long, driving vacations to new territories — help put the rest of life in better context. At least I think so.

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 © Sheila Lightsey
 

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[JG] Sometimes the chance juxtaposition of zines in a an apa, provide some really amusing contrasts... Here I was just praising the benefits of obsessive, single focus work/love in response to a comment **Diane** made while reminiscing about the time when she fell in love with Jim, and then, BAM! Here you come, Sheila, celebrating the exact opposite. "My whole personality works against me if I try to concentrate on one thing, it says MORE! Different! Hurry on! You may be missing something else." Nevertheless, I have to say that your war against the slugs, with all the battles and strategies and thousand of slug fatalities — sure sounds a lot like a sort of obsessive activity, a concentration on one thing, so to speak. Anyway, a great story, especially with the interwoven story of Claire! Thanks.

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 © Ruth Nichols
 

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[JG] Mia is lucky to have a mom like you who is open to her confusion and desire to change genders. Good for you. And good luck with those pronouns! I was interested in your theory that teenagers today are more supportive of fuzzy gender lines. That can only be a good thing for individuals searching for identity on untraditional paths.

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 © Pat Hario
 

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[JG] Good suggestion for a WisCon panel, Pat (responding to the WorldCon zero population panel). Please suggest it to Debbie and Jane! I love the fact that you thought of me at the panel, even though I wasn't there, and imagined me giving the guys hell.

I am reading Patrick O'Brian's first book (*Master and Commander*), which takes place in the early 19th century aboard British sailing ships. So now I am envious, reading your description of your tour of the tall ships in Chicago. I would have liked to have some concrete images to go with this novel. (Besides hearing good reviews of O'Brian's books from friends, I was curious to read what life was like in Jane Austen's world, from the point of view of the other gender.) I'm glad you got the chance to climb on board those ships and hope that one day your dream comes true and you get to live onboard a sailing ship.

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 © Jerome Van Epps
 

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[JG] Avery Brooks wants his flying car. I want my vacation on Mars. And I want aliens.

Great con report, Jerome. Epic of the Cow.

Reading your comments about the 1968 presidential campaign was interesting/horrifying in light of events going on as I read (that is, the weeks of confusion following our 2000 election).

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 © Tom Havighurst
 

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[JG] Good comments on **Barb's** class paper. I agree with you that anti-intellectualism is not restricted to upper classes. In fact it's interesting how signifiers of class get shifted around from generation to generation. I wonder if some people assume that the signifiers don't just represent class but equal class. And — this is surprising to me — a lot of times, the signifier that moves from one class to another is an apparent lower class signifier that moves into popularity with upper classes. Being tan or sun-burned used to mean a person was a day-laborer. Eventually it meant that the person had time to lay around and get a tan. Lacking proficiency in Latin or Greek or classical literature or historical expertise used to mean that you lacked upper, formal education. Now it sometimes means you are too cool to pay attention to such stuffy knowledge. Wearing clothes of undyed, natural materials, or furnishing a house with rough-hewn, unfinished tables and chairs used to mean you were too poor to pay for synthetics and plastics. Nowadays, a home furnished in hand-made cabinets and closets filled with cotton and no synthetics would mean you were richer than most....

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 © Julie Zachman
 

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[JG] We may have to agree to disagree on the question of whether religion provides comforting answers for people who need answers. You say that your conception of religion is that it provides connections, stories, ritual and culture. In my mind, the essence of religion is specifically answers to life, the universe and everything ... some of them in the form of connections, stories, ritual and culture. The answers may not be easy ones, and they may even be rather vague (along the lines that all humans are a part of a web of life, or something like that), but such metaphors *are* answers if you are wondering if there is any purpose to life. I'm losing track of the beginnings of this conversation, though, it has stretched through so many months of *Turbo* zines, and I have gone two months now without getting involved in conversations. Maybe you and I will eventually find each other at a party or something and talk this through in person. I suspect it could be a fascinating discussion.

My impression of Camille Paglia is much less positive than yours. She's been thrust into the spotlight, I think, mostly by people who like the fact that she's an educated woman willing to attack feminism and feminists. I think she's willing to say controversial things because they get her publicity; to that end she is inconsistent and it's hard to actually pin her down on basic philosophical statements. I don't think she offers many particularly interesting ideas and I am irked that feminists are so often goaded into responding to her, rather than to the guys that use her as a smokescreen, to avoid confronting feminists and feminist ideas for themselves.

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© Lee Murray

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[JG] I really enjoy your writing style, Lee. Welcome to *Turbo*. It's fun to see my world through the eyes of a new-comer.

If you are impressed with the openness with which people here in Madison speak about religion, you would be bowled over by the public importance of religious affiliation in other parts of the U.S. In parts of the South, the first or second question you would be asked when you moved to town, would be which church you were planning to attend. On the other hand, I suggest you keep looking (or smelling) with respect to good, strong cheeses here in Wisconsin. They can be found. I am most fond of very strong Brei that practically liquefies at room temperatures. Bellville area farmers make some excellent Brie cheeses. And you can get some incredibly sharp and very strong cheddars. (Please don't judge us by Kraft Macaroni and Cheese!)

Also, be careful about plans to fill your freezer with deer roadkill. I believe that DNR regulations require that deer killed by cars must be reported to wardens, who then pick up the carcasses and donate the meat to local food pantries. A couple years ago, a tape recording was circulated in the DNR offices. The recording was of the 911 call made by a guy who'd stuffed what he thought was a road-killed deer into the back seat of his car. Well the deer revived and started kicking this guy in the back of his head. He just narrowly avoided a collision with another car and managed to drive to the side of the road near a pay phone. When he got out of the car he was confronted with a growling dog — possibly attracted to the smell of his blood (caused by deer battering) and the deer itself. The dog actually bit him and he saved himself only by running to the phone booth and closing the door against the dog. In the taped phone conversation, and between the most effusive swearing I've ever

heard, he begged to be rescued from the dog and the deer, which he carefully specified he'd been on the way to dropping off at the nearest warden's office and definitely had not been planning to take home.

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© Hope Kiefer & Karl Hailman

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[JG] So, will American Girl dolls appear under your Christmas tree this year?

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© Jim Frenkel

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[JG] Congratulations to both you and Vernor!

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© Jae Adams

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[JG] Thanks for the recollections touched off by **Barb's** paper on class. There's an ironic double-bind in the typically American goal to see one's kids, the next generation, do better than oneself. The dream disconnects from the reality, because when the goal is achieved it often seems like the "promotion" of one generation over the other causes an estrangement, when the dream implied a gift, a growing-closer, a general improvement.... I think a lot of what the boomer generation called the "generation gap" was caused by the success of this particular American dream. The generation of parents who married in the late 40s and early 50s were indeed able to give their kids a life and choices that they themselves hadn't enjoyed — more education, more wealth, better health. And the result was that in a huge number of families, the kids were learning to fit into a different class than the parents felt comfortable with. In my own family, my father's career took him and the rest of his family from a solidly working class identity to middle class. This scared my mother, whose family, friends and connections tied into working class culture. She hated meeting socially with dad's customers and co-workers and their spouses. She hated the fact that her eldest daughter, me, didn't get homesick as she did when she first left home. She hated that I went to college and she wasn't very enthusiastic even when my brothers followed me. Our arguments often ended with her accusing me of trying to belittle her with my "college education." Dad, I think, made the transition easier, but even so, the "generation gap" seemed to cast a dark shadow in our family.

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Covers

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[SC] Thanks **Hope** and **Karl** for the party announcements. Putting them on the covers is one good way

to get the word out. I am sorry we missed the Halloween bash, but thanks for the great election night party. I had a lot of fun and we ended up staying longer than we expected.

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© Michael Lowrey

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[SC] Welcome. Very nice first zine. **Georgie's** artwork was a particularly nice touch (but isn't it always?)

Thank you for the Cherry recommendations.

What surprised me about "Survivor," and what kept me watching, was how similar the politics of the situation resembled SF fan politics and how a little sophistication in interpersonal politics made all the difference. What was happening in the group dynamics seemed so obvious to Jeanne and I and was so invisible to the contestants there were times we wanted to scream at the TV. Now that the game has been played once, I doubt subsequent versions will be as interesting because everyone will know how the game needs to be played to win. It was only really interesting the first time as everyone discovered together what the winning strategy really was.

[JG] Excellent zine, Mike, and welcome to the apa!

I was glad you emphasized the sincerity of the Japanese fans in your comment to **Jerome**. I agree with you that they are trying really hard to communicate their enthusiasm for the SF community, and though the language differences make their approach seem unfamiliar, I think they're going to enrich our world. I am really looking forward to getting to know them better. I agree with your comment about Paglia and religion to **Julie**.

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© Calvin Powers

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[SC] Thanks as always for the reviews. We have not seen either of the movies you mentioned, but I like Kevin Bacon and may have to search out *Hollow Man* sometime. Movies we have seen lately; I liked *Meet the Parents* more than Jeanne did and she liked *The Legend of Bagger Vance* more than I did, but we both enjoyed *Men of Honor*, and *Two Family House*. Neither of us were impressed with Arnold Swartzenegger's *The 6th Day*. Thanks especially for the piece on Gibson's new book. I have been looking at it in the bookstore but wanted to read some good things about it before picking it up.

Thanks also for the piece on Napster. I can honestly say that I am undecided on this issue, though I like reading the various points of view on it. I look forward to the responses you get.

Regarding the Olympics, I don't know what to think of your suggestion that we dispense with national affiliations of the athletes at the Games. Seems to me the athletes themselves might object because they would like to represent their countries as much or more than themselves, but I also wonder if eliminating national identification would only lead to the substitution of corporate sponsorship for national affiliation. The money to fund teams has to come from somewhere, the athletes can't do it by themselves and governments would have little incentive to fund teams that simply appear at the games representing themselves. Corporations would step in and you would have the IBM hockey team competing against the General Motors hockey team (big yawn.)

Your criticism of the US, Soviets and others who boycotted the Olympics for political reasons was right on, but I thought you were way too nice to the International Olympic Organizing Committee which is notoriously secretive and corrupt.

Regarding the Nation article on lead, taking a point of view ("axe-grinding") does not necessarily negate the facts presented. I think "objectivity" in reporting is over-rated. Objectivity usually means the facts have been filtered and rendered bland and inoffensive. I often prefer to read pieces by people I don't agree with to a supposedly "objective" treatment.

I don't share your enthusiasm for large cons in general, but I thought the reasons you gave for liking big cons were entirely understandable. Thanks for answering all my questions. The biggest convention we are likely to attend next year is WisCon 25.

[JG] Interesting essay about the Olympics. I'd love to see the games changed so they're less nationalized and more of a celebration of individual talents, but I've got the feeling that they've been bought and paid for and are now hopelessly intertwined with nationalism and corporate sponsorship.

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© Georgie Schnobrich

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[SC] Tough luck about your furnace. I have no love for spiders either.

Great piece on Toronto, a city I have wanted to visit for years, especially since I found out how often movies are filmed there. It must be both beautiful and well preserved. I will need to keep track of your piece so I can use it for suggestions of things to see if we go.

In your comment to **Jim** on music, it doesn't sound to me like you were ever much of a fan of rock music. My sister is ten years older than me and my brother is seven years older than me, so I was exposed to popular music at a very early age. Some my earliest memories are of

singing along to records by Elvis, Buddy Holly and the Everly Brothers who were all very big when I was very little. I literally grew up with rock and roll music. I thought the lyrics of many songs during the 60's and 70's were much more political than they have been since. There were a lot of important issues young people cared about, and were protesting about, in those days and the music often reflected that. I agree with you that today the lyrics are frequently about much more bland subjects although the music itself may be just as good.

[JG] That was a scary furnace story. The closest thing we got to it was the bird that found it's way into our furnace. Fortunately it did much less actual damage to the furnace than your spider did to yours.

You make me want to visit Toronto — especially for it's lack of USian urban crabgrass franchises. But you left us hanging — How does Toronto (or is it all of Canada) avoid WallMartitis?? Any theories?

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© Lisa Freitag

[SC] Fascinating piece on mortality and your breast biopsy. I am, of course, relieved that it turned out normal though I wish you hadn't had to go through that experience. I seems grimly humorous to me that you wrote that you will have to think carefully about going to see a doctor again when you ARE a doctor.

[JG] Congratulations on a clear biopsy. I went through all that a couple years ago, although my biopsy was done under anesthesia and I got the results as I came back up into consciousness, which was nice. Still, the week or two beforehand wondering if you are going to have to make some major life decisions in short order was something I hope not to experience again anytime soon.

Excellent essays/stories on the African refugees in Minnesota and the story of Jacob's abduction. The stories are open-ended but that's the essence of such stories since we don't have solutions for the victims....

I am hoping that Vicki Rosenzweig will reply to your question of how one offers one's writing for publication by Salon. Vicki had an essay published there. Its web address is <<http://www.salon.com>>. And information on how to get published on Salon can be found on: <<http://www.salon.com/about/submissions/index.html>>.

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© Michael Shannon

[SC] In your comment to Clay you wrote about SUVs, "The roads are certainly getting more dangerous, so people are looking for any advantage." I agree. I am

often amused at how often I see the biggest monster SUV on the street driven by a small woman. Is this the revenge of women drivers who can now purchase all the road respect they ever wanted? Who can blame them?

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© Julie Zachman

[SC] On your reactions to Barb Jensen's paper, I hope Barb responds to the concerns you raised. The issue of class in America is a touchy one, as was apparent in your response. I, in turn, tried writing a response to some of the things you brought up but tossed it out when it came out sounding unexpectedly angry and snippy. One of the weaknesses of Barb's paper is that she failed to carefully define who the working class is, leading to a lot of misunderstanding about who exactly she is talking about. For example, I felt there were a lot of things about her article that I recognized, yet I would describe myself and my family as lower middle class rather than working class.

In your comment to Clay on C.J. Cherryh, I was intrigued by your description of the political sophistication of her novels. I like novels that have a good grasp of politics. Do you agree with Mike's Cherryh recommendations?

[JG] I'm sort of confused by the anger I hear in your comments about Barb Jenson's paper. Do you see yourself as working class? It seems as if you are saying that since you did not have to "change class" to find an intellectually satisfying job that Lucy should not feel this is necessary either. I don't see your situation as being very similar at all to Lucy's. It seems to me that you and Lucy are very far apart from one another in terms of class. Your class may not have changed in your lifetime, but I think that if Lucy gets the kind of career she wants, her class will most certainly change. I think that both you and Ruth Merrill are correct in saying that there might be a lot said about non-urban class differences (and indeed, I bet there are some studies about the rural working poor). But I do not think that Barb's focus on urban class differences discredits any of the insights that Barb finds in her stories of the urban poor, and in fact I find a huge number of parallels to my own experiences and historical cultures.

I felt uncomfortable with your comparison of people who live together in working class communities to people who build garages close to the street in order to reduce snow shoveling work. Class, I think, is a huge, important issue in the world, including this country. In no way is America immune from class consciousness and effects. Pretending that it doesn't exist only makes its effects more profound. I felt uncomfortable at the message I read in your essay that seemed

to suggest that since you don't feel much affected by class differences in the U.S. that it is laughably absurd that anyone should claim such real trauma (like post-traumatic stress) from it.

You're right, we only met at the Terrace once this summer. How sad! (Really!) And now it's getting too cold for sitting outside.

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© Lee Murray

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[SC] More great stuff. I laughed loudly at your description of getting dressed in the women's locker room. I am really looking forward to your formal membership.

Cars in America are really a function of economics. Owning a big car is not so much a character thing, or wouldn't be if economic circumstances were different. (I feel I can say this because I lived through the gas "crisis" of the late 1970's and it was amazing how quickly people changed their attitudes when given the right incentive.) We have huge vehicles in America today because gas costs under \$2.00 a gallon and has been cheap for many years. If gas were priced more realistically to what it actually costs in environmental damage and more consistently with what it costs in other countries, gas would be closer to \$5.00 per gallon and cars would be much smaller here. Also urban sprawl would decline in popularity. Until that happens, we will continue to have big cars, big houses on the edge of the city and pathetic mass transit options simply because we can afford it.

I also like to go to Chicago. Minneapolis is fun, too. In fact, I rather like going on trips to large cities in general. There is always so much to do there and it is always so nice to come home again.

[JG] Thanks again for your wonderfully entertaining writing.

Like you, I'm one of those people particularly attractive to mosquitoes. I'm sorry to say that in my whole life I haven't found anything that's really useful in keeping the stingers away. Repellant with 100% DEET works to some degree, for a while, but it also makes one feel sticky and smell bad. Heavy clothing covering every inch of one's body works OK too, but leads quickly to overheating in anything approaching summer weather. And just in case you're tempted, let me tell you ahead of time, that neat little machines that emit a high-pitch scream (supposedly audible only to insects) doesn't work either. It would have been cool if it did though, so I played the sucker and bought one. No luck.

Celine sounds wise and funny. I loved her review of *the Little House on the Prairie* books.

I like the way you say tube and music better than the way we say it. I bet people are always telling you that they like your accent. There used to be a restaurant near my office called *Souçon*, and since they served soup and other quick meals, I suppose it was meant to be a pun of sorts, and certainly meant to be pronounced "Soup's on." But though we Midwesterners love to hear British and Aussie and French accents, most of us think it would be putting on airs to speak in any other way than we always have. And so, despite the owner correcting folks on the pronunciation of his restaurant's name, people persisted in calling it "Soup Con," and the place quietly went out of business much too soon after it had opened. So much for our admiration of exotic-sounding pronunciations.

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© Carrie Root

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[SC] Wow, good to hear from you again. It has been a long time.

Regarding your comment to **Julie** about keeping your work life and social life separate, I am that way too. I usually avoid talking about my work to my friends, even back in the days when I had more entertaining stories to tell about my job. I also don't talk much about my personal life to my co-workers. I never invite my co-workers to our New Years party for example. It wasn't always this way. Years ago I used to hang out with my co-workers, play poker, drink and smoke. I guess I haven't felt I had much in common with most of my co-workers in a long time. I also feel like it is somehow cleaner to keep my two lives separate. A dramatic change in one part of my life, like a job change, doesn't have to affect my social life. I have been through a lot of job changes and it can be extra painful to leave a job when it means leaving behind strong social ties, too.

[JG] Such a nostalgic zine, Carrie. It's good to hear from you though!

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© Tom Havighurst

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[SC] I can see your point about Halloween, but my favorite holiday for many years has been New Year's Eve, even before we started throwing a party every year. I like New Years because it always leaves me feeling personally optimistic about the coming year. I make plans for the new year (not so much "resolutions," because that is just setting oneself up for disappointment) and take stock of what I have accomplished in the year just ended. My birthday always threatens to leave me feeling depressed. I always feel the march of time more acutely on my birthday, but New Years always feels more hopeful and fun. It is also not much of a kid's holiday (like

Halloween and Christmas.) New Years is an adult's time to celebrate.

[JG] So, keeping in mind your poetically mordant interpretations of the dark holiday ... what did you dress as at Hope & Karl's Halloween party?

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© Maureen Kincaid Speller

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[SC] You don't suppose we could import your man Clive to come do a bit of work on our place, do you? I mean, it's a bit far to travel, but good, handy contractors willing to work on older homes are hard to find. Really, really hard to find.

There is no nice sort of natural disaster, but flooding is really awful. I have been through it a couple times (though luckily never in my own home) and I can say that I hate flooding. For one thing, it is deceptively dangerous. Unlike fire which is obviously dangerous, it is easy to not take flooding seriously enough and end up getting killed by it unnecessarily. And the clean up of a flooded house is truly unpleasant. I am very relieved Folkestone was spared.

I was fascinated by your article about fox hunting and the fuel crisis. I recognized some familiar issues such as the transformation of the countryside (it is an ongoing problem here, too) as well as public outrage over dramatically rising fuel prices (big drama here last spring when prices suddenly spiked for no apparent reason.) You Brits seem to have a more civilized (and ultimately more practical) way of mounting protests and blockades that get the job done without losing public support or getting people beaten up by the cops. But I think your conclusion that the fuel protests were connected to the plight of rural Britain was shrewd and completely on target.

I was surprised that fox hunting is still such a big a deal. I imagined it was rare and exotic and only still done by the very rich because they were the only ones with big enough estates. Obviously we don't have a similar tradition here, but we do have deer hunting in Wisconsin that is posing increasing problems. For one thing, the state deliberately manages deer herds to provide maximum hunting stock. Wisconsin considers deer hunting a major local activity as well as a significant tourist event. People come from all over the Midwest to hunt deer here. Unfortunately hunting is declining in popularity, so every year the hunters fail to "harvest" enough deer from the vast herds to keep the herds healthy. The deer are also becoming pests for people who live in the country and a major danger for drivers on the roadways. Not only that, but every year we are treated to the annual casualty count of hunters shooting themselves or each other and, of course, the stories of various other non-deer targets that manage to get hit by drunk or incompetent hunters (like

cows, tractors and homes). I am not ready to call for an end to deer hunting, but I wish the state of Wisconsin would face facts, start treating the deer sensibly and begin looking at the sport as something that is slowly but surely dying out.

[JG] Thanks for telling us what the fuel crisis has been like in Britain. We don't get anywhere near that kind of detail. And your theories regarding the importance of the countryside issue in it were especially interesting. (I noticed an odd thing about your description of the countryside issue — which I assume is much like the U.S. issue of urban flight. In the U.S., people who flee the cities and buy lots in the country normally bring urban services *with* them. Shopping malls are built out among the subdivisions; schools are built too. So the problem is not so much that the original denizens of the countryside don't have these services, but that the tax base depended upon in the cities has moved outside it. In both cases, though, both U.S. and Brit, the effect seems to be that the wealthy people move in and make life too expensive for the original inhabitants who must then sell out. In the U.S. the side-effect of this is that especially productive farmland is rapidly being transformed into suburbs.

I hope all your cabinets (closets?) are built now and your are looking forward to a quiet holiday.

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© Clay Colwell

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[SC] How did the Halloween costume turn out? I'd love to see a picture.

Regarding your comment to Georgie on "Survivor," as I mentioned above, Jeanne and I were big fans of the show because it quickly stopped being about surviving on a primitive island and became about surviving a complex social situation. It was not a popularity contest. Being popular and/or physically competent could actually be a handicap at various times. The ability to form a group, loyal to each other and the group's common goal, is a truly ancient human survival skill that no one, certainly not the show's producers, expected to make all the difference. Even Jeanne and I don't agree on all aspects of what happened and what it means. I like to say that "Survivor" was a much better game than it was a sport, because it was much more about strategy than it was about physical ability. I believe most of the people who went into it thought it was more of a sport of endurance and physical ability, and they were very slow to realize that it wasn't. I really think that, even knowing the outcome, most folks in this apa would get drawn in by the original "Survivor" series if they started watching it from the beginning.



We saw a story on "60 Minutes" a few weeks ago that mentioned that awful sex-offenders website. As I said last time, I have no particular sympathy for sex-offenders since I have personally known a number of them (I can honestly say that I have met, and had conversations with, the lowest form of life on Earth) but a website that lists sex-offenders for the clear purpose of encouraging harassment or violence, especially a site that fails to even get its facts straight, is a danger to our whole society and not just the people listed.

[JG] I'd love to see a photo of you as a B&W Dorothy! What a great idea!

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© Pat Hario

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[SC] Congratulations on your house. It's a lovely place.

Regarding the Directory, Jeanne did 99% of the work on it this time. If I had had to learn how to manage the SF<sup>3</sup> database, it would have never gotten done.

Regarding your comment to Calvin on going to NolaCon, I have always regretted not being able to go to that convention. I completely agree with you that one of the charms about going to WorldCon, or any con, is the place it is held. Every year we go to Potlatch and we never stay much longer than the weekend of the convention, largely because January and February are lousy times to visit the Pacific Northwest. If Potlatch were held in the summer, I would be strongly motivated to stick around

for a week and make a longer vacation of it. Anyway, going to a great city to a convention is a good excuse to visit a city or a country you always wanted to see (like Australia). I have yet to visit New Orleans. I hope I am able to go there before the next WorldCon bid finally provides me with an excuse. The first time we attended Readercon was my first visit to Boston, which was a great trip. Not to mention our trip to the WorldCon in Brighton in 1987. Even if the con itself doesn't turn out to be a perfect experience, the trip to a great place can make all the difference.

[JG] Your move went smoothly. Thanks for doing such a great job in preparing for it all. And I hope you're very happy in your new place!

You saw *Remember the Titans*? We missed it, but I heard a review on NPR this morning that it was supposed to be a tear jerker for guys. More guys acquainted with the reviewer apparently cried at this movie than any other. He said that a friend of his actually studied the behavior of crying and found that the easiest way to get men or women to tear up was to show them a sad film. Films for guys were inevitably sports or war movies involving buddies who supported one another through tragedies. He said he was going to recommend *Titans* to his friend as an especially good guy tear jerker. Did you hear many manly sobs at the showing you attended?

—Scott Custis & Jeanne Gomoll  
20 November 2000



*The Second & Only*  
**Millennial  
New Year's Eve  
Celebration**

*at*

Jeanne & Scott's house  
2825 Union Street

December 31  
Sunday night–Monday morn  
8 p.m. – ?

*We're doing things a little differently this year. There will be a special midnight supper served directly following the explosions and throwing of streamers. There will not, therefore, be a groaning table of snacks available beforehand. Too much has gone to waste in previous years. So, please do not bring food unless you have spoken first with Jeanne or Scott. Thank you.*

*Beverages served will be: champagne, beer, soda, and cider. If you want something special for yourself or to share, please bring it along.*

**Special Guest Storyteller  
Elizabeth Matson**

RSVP (please!)  
608-246-8857  
artbrau@gdinet.com



No Confetti