



# Union Street

A joint zine by Jeanne Gomoll & Scott Custis



[JG] I'm typing these comments on my brand new Mac G3 computer. It's taking longer than usual at the moment because I'm also using a new word processing program — the new MS Word for Mac. There's this very cute little computer frolicking in the lower right hand corner of my monitor screen. (It looks like a sort of chunky Mac SE animated very realistically by Pixar. It's definitely not a PC, since it's got a handle in back. It is, apparently, an "office assistant." (Do the office assistants that come with MS Word for Windows look like PCs?) I can click on it and ask it questions (in the form of English sentences) and get fairly good answers. But the reason it's causing me to slow down is that I keep laughing at its antics. For instance, when I type fast enough, it looks up at what I'm typing. If I stop, it starts tapping its foot, swaying back and forth as if it's getting bored. And every once in a while it will sit down, as if to get a little rest. Once in a while it whistles a (soundless) tune. You can tell it's whistling because these little music notes emerge from its monitor. When it gets really bored it plays with itself ... as if it were a Rubik Cube. Then, when I save, a file cabinet drawer opens and shuts from its monitor window. I will probably eventually get tired of this little guy, but right now, I am quite amused.

I was not so amused by my experience during the first week after getting my new G3. The computer is fine (and incredibly fast; it's lovely), but I had a problem when I installed PhotoShop (the brand new version, 5.0). Something very weird happened. Several of the files within the newly installed Photoshop folder were unnamed (not just untitled; the space below the folder icons were blank and could not retain any text.) Worse

than that, I could not trash any of it. Not when I shut down extensions. Not even when I restarted the computer from another drive. It turned out that the PhotoShop files had been copied onto the root drive of the computer and I had to completely reinitialize the hard drive to get it off. My call to Apple carried me pretty far up the hierarchy of support staff; everyone seemed stumped as to why it had happened. Luckily, I had a back up of almost everything on the computer. (I forgot to copy the email we received during the previous week, which led to a couple minor problems.) And when I reinstalled PhotoShop, it worked just fine. Which is a good thing, since I've got three free-lance jobs backed up on my desk right now which I have to get to right after I finish these comments....

## Jeanne's Readercon

Scott and I went to Readercon last weekend and had a fine time. Readercon #10 hosted the Tiptree ceremonies this year, which is why we decided to attend, and the con did the Tiptree proud. Fund-raising was incredibly successful, Ellen Klages' auction was hilarious, and the ceremonies were lots of fun. We sang songs to the two Tiptree winners (Candas Dorsey and Kelly Link) and also to the Fairy Godmother Award winner, Laurie Marks. Pat Murphy noticed that one could substitute the letters of Laurie's name for "Mickey Mouse" in the Mickey Mouse song, and the rest is history.

### Fairy Godmother Award

(to the tune of the "Mickey Mouse Club Song")

*Who's the winner of the prize  
That comes from all of us?  
L-A-U-R-I-E M-A-R-K-S  
Laurie Marks, Laurie Marks,  
We want to read the next book that you write.  
Come along and sing this song and join in all the fuss.  
L-A-U (pause for Klages impromptu); R-I-E (pause, etc.)  
M-A-R-K-S (slowly)*

A short song was devised for the very short story, "Travels with the Snow Queen," by Kelly Link.

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### **Travels with the Snow Queen**

(to the tune of "Let it Snow")

*The weather, she wrote, was frightful,  
But the story's so delightful  
That the judges said "Let it go  
To the snow, to the snow, to the snow.*

And for Candas' novel *Black Wine*, we sang this song:

**Black Wine** (to the tune of "Bottle of Wine")

*Book of Black Wine  
Fruit of my mind,  
Canadian, sexy and slender.  
Leave me alone.  
Let me go home.  
I'll write a new book about gender.  
Sitting around Edmonton town,  
Writing for nickels and dimes.  
Times have been tough  
I ain't had enough  
To write me a book of Black Wine  
(Repeat refrain)  
Book of Black Wine . . . etc.*

We handed out copies of these lyrics to everyone in the audience, and a rowdy time was had by all.

One very neat thing for Scott and me happened at the ceremony. We were given a special award for our work on the Tiptree—another version of a piece of art by Ellen Klages that I lost in a bidding war at the WisCon auction. You might remember this framed poem:

*James James  
Tiptree, Junior  
A.k.a. Alice S.  
Wrote his books as a man,  
Though she commonly wore a dress.  
James James  
Said to the public:  
"Public," he said, said he,  
"You must never assume  
From a man's non de plume  
That he's not, in fact, a she."*

Many people commented that the influx of Tiptree-supporters added a "fun" dimension to Readercon that has apparently been missing since . . . well, since the last time Readercon hosted the Tiptree Award ceremony.

I particularly enjoyed the fact that I could join these groups and not feel forced to run away after a few moments to attend to a responsibility. I was continually aware of how different it was to go to a convention that reminded both Scott and I so much of WisCon, without concom responsibilities. Readercon had just fewer than 500 attendees this year and 4 tracks of programming. The result is less intense than WisCon's programming, but many of the individual programs feel like they would be quite at home in a Concourse Hotel meeting room on Memorial Day weekend. Indeed, one

of the panels on feminist criticism, might have been titled, "The History of Feminist Criticism at WisCon and in publications from Madison, Wisconsin" since that was the focus of much of its discussion. I sure wish we had thought to bring a bunch of WisCon 23 flyers along with us, as I think we could have easily picked up a large number of registrations there. I might suggest that WisCon request to use Readercon's mailing list again this year. Several regular WisCon attendees met at Readercon (Donna Simone, Laurie Marks and me) to discuss the writers' track at WisCon. They are planning to propose some events, including the writers' workshop, for Friday morning and early afternoon.

I did have a few responsibilities at Readercon. I signed up for a few shifts at the bake sale table. I helped Scott at the auction. I was on three panels. Originally, I'd been signed up for two, but when I arrived, Ellen Brody, the program chair, asked me to fill in on another one. That panel, "Single Gender Stories" (with Susanna Sturgis, Delia Sherman, Lawrence Schimel, and Geary Gravel) turned out to be one of my favorites of the whole convention. But as Susanna said after the panel, we really needed the 75-minute length panel that we've gotten used to at WisCon. Time zipped by *much* too quickly. I also moderated "Sheldon's continuing legacy: SF and aging," with Suzy McKee Charnas, John Clute, Connie Hirsch and Stephen Popkes. All my pride in my moderating skills flushed down the drain in that panel, however, as I was completely unable to control the discussion once Clute and Charnas started talking. I was able to introduce the panel and asked one question, but after that, the thing flew out of my hands. So much for the list of questions I'd prepared. I was reduced to complaining, "gee, you guys won't let me do *anything*", when Clute started taking questions from the audience. Everyone laughed, Clute looked abashed, but I have to admit, the panel was a fantastically entertaining one, in spite of its stifled moderator. My last panel was "The Tiptree Shortlists," (with F. Brett Cox, Nalo Hopkinson, and Laurie Marks.) The moderator didn't show up, so Laurie and I co-moderated it together, and despite the fact that it was scheduled very late Sunday afternoon and the audience was less packed than earlier panels, it was lots of fun and again, seemed to end before we'd run out of things to say. Which is certainly a good thing.

Scott and I were able to hear a couple readings, including Pat Murphy's, which caught my interest since it was an excerpt from a very unusual trilogy, in which she herself (as author) is a character. Other characters include the fictional authors of the other two novels, and characters from those other fictional worlds. Those of you who heard her read at WisCon know what I'm talking about. I imagine that it will be a hard book

to categorize, but I'm REALLY looking forward to its publication. It sounds like its going to be funny and daring and entirely unlike anything Pat has written before. Outside the reading, I had some lovely long conversations with her (Ah the benefits of not being on the concom!) during which she told me about her new love (a San Francisco cop) to whom she has just gotten engaged! She's very happy and obviously enjoying all the sputtering ("You're *kidding!*") reactions she's getting from people when she tells them the news.

As I mentioned, there were lots of WisCon-related discussions at Readercon, and in the course of one of them, someone expressed the hope that Ellen Datlow might be convinced to attend WisCon 23. I explained about how we nominate and vote for GoHs, but this person was much too impatient, and there and then offered to pay for Ellen's plane ticket to WisCon and a couple nights in the hotel if I could convince her to attend. Since Scott and I had been talking to Ellen Datlow just a couple hours earlier about that very idea, and Ellen had told us that she would love to attend WisCon someday, but that her finances prevented her from traveling much since *Omnifired* her, this seemed like a do-able task. A few hours later, I found Ellen in the bar, made a brief reference to an anonymous donor, and asked her if she would attend. Yes, please, she said. I felt like such a *wheel*.

There was lots of partying at Readercon, but very few parties. That is, most of the partying took place in the bar. That's where we hung out both Friday and Saturday nights, although Pat and I checked out the parties later Saturday night after hearing rumors of cheesecake in the Philadelphia party. We didn't find much. There was a very, very small room full of Canadians. The room had one large director's table in it and it was necessary to either sit at the table or peek in from the doorway. They looked as if they were attempting to capture Madison's coveted party-into-meeting-power, but they assured us that they were talking exclusively about hockey. We ran into Eric Van who attempted to involve us in the very same discussion about sleeplessness that **Jae** described in her report of last year's Readercon. Apparently, he's still talking about it. I just hope he's had some sleep since then. We moved on ... to discover that the consuite had closed already (it was only 1 am). There were a few other parties with a handful of tired looking people in each of them and the Philadelphia party had run out of cheesecake. Obviously the excitement remained in the bar, so we returned to find Scott and John Berry ordering beers as bar time was announced.

Michael Swanwick let us know he would very

much like to attend a WisCon and made a joke of how he'd been GoH at Disclave the same weekend as WisCon 20, and kept hearing folks urge others to attend WisCon, not Disclave. He said he finally had to ask folks to at least turn their back to him when they were making such disloyal suggestions.

Harlan Ellison walked through the lobby late Saturday night. Apparently he was in Boston on business and decided to stop in. According to rumors he was heard to mutter "I'm going to punch someone..." Ellison is scheduled to be Readercon's GoH next year (as well as MadMediaCon's).

We had a very nice room on the first floor (out of only three floors), which was very convenient. The hotel was rather small and there was only room for two largish programs to be scheduled in any one hour. There were two small rooms for readings, two other small rooms for the green room and sales/info room (which included the Tiptree bake sale and sales table), and two others set up for interviews by SF TV. And of course, one big room for the book room. I rather liked having only booksellers in the dealers' room. Also there was one room downstairs which Scott and I never got to, for "Kaffeeklatsches." The main disadvantage of this hotel from our point of view was its location out in the suburban boondocks (an hour's drive from Boston), which meant that we had to rely on the hotel restaurant since we didn't have a car. We arrived by taxi and became all too familiar with the hotel restaurant, which wasn't bad, but considering how close we were to extraordinary seafood restaurants, was a bit of a disappointment.

Scott and I stayed through Sunday night and flew home on Monday afternoon via Midwest Express. Scott gushed to the stewardess at one point how much he loved Midwest, and then turned to me and said we should never travel anywhere that we can't get to via Midwest. Indeed we had lovely flights, both going to Boston and returning. We were even served warm chocolate chip cookies for dessert on the trip home. Apparently they are microwaved in the plane just before serving, and I was hit by a brainstorm: Maybe we could apply this technology to Tiptree bake sales! Imagine the reception of warm chocolate chip cookies among fans!

I had a great time. Although I doubt that we'll be able to afford to go to Readercon every year, I sure hope we can go back again.

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### © Scott's Readercon

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This has been the biggest year for cons for Jeanne and I ever, I think. In January we were in Oakland for

Potlatch, in April we attended Minicon, WisCon of course in May, Readercon last weekend and Diversicon in Minneapolis next weekend and I will probably stop into Mad Media Con here in Madison for a day or so in September. So far they have all been wonderful as well as almost completely different from each other. Is that possible?

We didn't see much of Boston, which was a real shame. We saw it from the air as we flew in and out. We saw it from the hotel shuttle as we were hustled through the city from Logan Airport to our hotel, nearly an hour out of town, and again on the return trip. That was all of Boston we got to see this trip. As it turned out, I doubt I would have seen much of Boston anyway, except for a few different restaurants, even if the con had been right downtown. Readercon was very much a "working" con for me.

I knew that I would be running the Tiptree auction at the convention. I sent them a box full of stuff to sell. I was ready for that. I knew they'd have a bake sale, too. We also brought cookbooks, Tiptree anthology sign up sheets, Secret Feminist Cabal tattoos, cumulative lists and other stuff to sell that I hoped to figure out a place to market, at least for a few hours, once we got there. What I hadn't expected was an all-weekend-long bake sale/Tiptree sales table that I was more or less in charge of. I was told about this after we registered. The very nice and wonderfully prepared Diane Kurlitz had organized the table area and acquired and priced food items. We set out a sign up sheet for people to work the table and away we went for the weekend. Apparently this is the normal routine for the bake sale at Readercons. They do it all weekend long. Needless to say, I spent a lot of time working the table. It became a place to sell the Tiptree T-shirts when Pat Murphy delivered them. It was a place to accept last minute auction items (including lots of books). It was a place for people to stop by and get information. It was fun. I only saw the panels Jeanne was on, two readings, and a couple evening events. I had a good time, and I didn't have to deal with the level of responsibility of a WisCon, but it was a lot of work, too.

Make no mistake about Readercon; they were high on Tiptree. They like doing the bake sales every year and they told us they would be ready to host the Tiptree Award Ceremony anytime we wanted. And if there was any doubt about how sincere they were, people are always sincere about money. The bake sale (which included food items and sales of all the stuff I mentioned above) brought in over \$1500.

And then there was the auction Saturday night.

The scheduling was going to be pretty tight for the auction. The banquet was set to start at 6 p.m., followed by the Award Ceremony at approximately 7 p.m., followed by the auction until 9 p.m. when the room had to be

reset theater style for an event called the Kirk Poland Memorial Bad Prose Competition set to start at 9:30. In order to have a decent auction, things really had to proceed on schedule. Of course, it all went to hell.

The problem was the banquet. It was very nice, but it was a sit-down banquet where wait staff serve diners at their tables instead of the more common con banquet where people line up to get their food from a serving line. It took a long time. Finally at 7:30, Pat Murphy started the Tiptree Ceremony even though dessert was just being served. The Ceremony was as silly and rowdy as usual and it ended in about half an hour. Quickly Ellen Klages took the stage and Jeanne and I set up operations on one end and we got started on an auction we thought would last less than an hour. We had a lot to sell and not much time. Ellen started off by holding up a large jar of Tiptree jelly that Spike and Tom and brought back from England (one of four). She growled at the audience, "All right, we don't have much time so I don't want to fool around waiting for people to make little five or ten dollar bids. We have to get good money quickly. Now what is the bid for this jelly?"

Someone said timidly, "Twenty dollars."

Someone else said "One hundred dollars."

Ellen yelled "SOLD, how many people want a jar of this for one hundred dollars?" We sold three.

It went like that. Ellen was in fine form and the audience was ready to spend money. Other examples of the action included four "virtual" Tiptree posters that Ellen knew about, but Freddie Baer hasn't even made yet, we took orders on all of them for \$150 each. A paperback set of the Women of Wonder series originally found and donated by Steve Swartz sold for \$100. Tiptree posters for year 1, 2 and 3 sold for \$200, \$225 and \$300 respectively. Signed copies of Sheri Tepper books that barely received their cover prices at the WisCon auction sold for \$100 each at this auction. GoH Bruce Sterling, who is not known to be enthusiastic about the Tiptree Award, was sitting (possibly trapped) at a front table. He got into the act when several hardcover copies of his books came up for auction and dropped out of bidding only after the bids rose above the cover prices of the books. Ellen had no end of fun with him when she realized he was bidding on all his own books. I don't think he was amused.

Time went by very quickly but the Readercon conglom, in the form of B. Diane Martin, refused to stop the auction. She'd look at the table of stuff and say, "Keep selling, you still have stuff left." Finally, she and Eric Van came forward, sorted out a pile of things and told us to quit when we sold that pile. We finally shut down a little after 9:30 having sold nearly everything we brought. In an hour and a half, Tiptree made \$4000.

I'd call that a hell of a success. They love us at

Readercon.

Of course it wasn't all about Tiptree. Readercon is full of writers and editors. We went to the Friday night Meet the Pros Party, that really was full of pros. Each pro had a sheet of labels with a line or so of the pro's writing on each label. Each attendee could get a blank sheet of wax paper. The idea was to meet pros by going around the room and asking for one of "their" labels. You could collect the set and rearrange them into an odd story or essay, or otherwise use your wit to create something with them. Jeanne and I got there too late to start this game, but we did get to hang out with some friends. When we finally sat down at an empty table, Michael Swanwick joined us, followed by John Berry and Eileen Gunn, Patrick Nielson Hayden, Jack Womack and his lovely companion Katya and Bill Gibson.

We had a good time at Readercon. I would like to go back, though next year is probably out of the question since we will certainly be attending the Conference on the Fantastic in Florida for the Tiptree Awards (my first trip to Florida, a state I have never cared much about visiting.) I felt I made some friends at Readercon 10, and I'd like to keep in touch.

## Turbo No. 143

### Comments by Scott

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#### © Steve Swartz

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It's nice to have you back.

In your comment to me, you wrote "*Don't you think that there are things that might come down in this country that would lead you to break the law in order to try to change them?*" Sure, I think most of us break the law from time to time for far less reason than that. We speed in our cars, jaywalk, tell less-than-the-whole-truth on our taxes, maybe ingest a less-than-legal recreational substance now and then, etc. These violations have little to do with changing the country and a lot to do with short-term convenience. It's also a matter of degree. I think it's like lying (to address another subject in your zine). A lie that is intended to keep your partner from guessing their birthday present isn't the same as lying to your partner about an affair you're having. And violating parking regulations isn't murder.

In my comment to Lisa, I was talking about murder and violence. In that context my answer to your question is, no. You asked if the country were to go in the direction of *The Handmaid's Tale*, wouldn't I be willing to employ violent means to stop it? Yes, probably. But in that situation we are not really talking about America any-

more are we? In that situation, our whole system has broken down and violence might be a necessary means to achieve a revolution.

I don't think the anti-abortionists are making the argument that our national system is breaking down and in need of revolutionary reform because of abortion. In fact I think they are being quite successful getting their agenda adopted across the country by peaceful means (for example, for a few days last Spring, it was literally impossible to get a legal abortion in Wisconsin). I don't believe they have any reasonable justification for violence and I do not condone their actions even in theory.

The theory in this country is that if you don't like things, then there are a peaceful ways to effect change. Violence should not be necessary unless your goal is to trash the whole system. I can see breaking the law in protest by peaceful means such as non-violent civil disobedience. Certainly the civil rights and anti-war movements of the 60s were serious life and death struggles, but they successfully employed non-violence as a strategy. They understood the concept that things could change through peaceful (if now always strictly law-abiding) methods. The anti-abortion crowd doesn't believe this. They feel that their holy struggle is justified using any methods available no matter how violent.

The last twenty years have been tough ones for left wing sympathizers. We have lost countless important battles across a wide spectrum of issues. I often feel the country is headed for the dogs, but have I ever felt that I could justify killing someone over it? No, and I doubt that I ever will.

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#### © Michael Shannon

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Congratulations on the house purchase. Sounds like a fine place. We've been thinking about all you Austin folks lately in light of all the dire weather news coming from there. How are y'all faring in the heat and drought? Jeanne was listening to a climatologist being interviewed on NPR the other day who was explaining that weather systems are immensely complex and interrelated. He said that the hot dry weather you are having will eventually mean very cold weather for us this winter (and more hurricanes in the Atlantic.) The interview was way too brief to explain why this was so, but his conclusions were certainly unsettling.

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#### © Jim Brooks

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I enjoyed The Homily for the Evening. Amen.

Good luck playing the dating game. I look forward to reading all about her.

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 © Karen Karavanic
 

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I was very moved by your excellent piece, "Five Minutes on a Bus." Your comments on living with fear in New York and the change since moving to Madison (now threatened by the senseless bus fire incident) were insightful. I saw the bus fire from a different perspective than yours. I worked at Mendota Mental Health for many years. I have long been aware that Madison is home to a large number of mentally ill people who are in various stages of institutionalization or release. A casual walk down State Street can confirm this state of affairs. I never doubted that the cause of the fire would turn out to be someone who was mentally ill and for whom the system somehow failed or they fell through the cracks. Although there are plenty of crackpots who want to evaluate the tragedy in terms of "evilness", the crime makes no sense unless it is seen as the act of a crazy person. As you correctly pointed out, anger and attention should be directed at the mental health system and how to improve it, rather than to abandon the bus system.

Finding a feeling of safety in hyper-violent modern America is getting to be a hard thing, but I always laugh at people who think that the answer is to move to the country. I have never been mugged or burglarized, but back in my little hometown of 5000 people my brother once had his garage broken into while he and his family were asleep upstairs. I worked in prisons and mental institutions for 16 years and that burglary seemed so typical of criminals I knew. Although brother Jon kept a lot of stuff in his garage (he used it more as an extra room on the house and rarely parked his car in there) there wasn't anything that was exceptionally valuable. Not only that, but Jon, as an ex-Vietnam infantry vet, ex-cop, ex-prison firearms instructor and always heavily armed in his home, was about the last person on the planet I would want to meet in the dark while trying to rob his garage (and potentially endangering his wife and daughters.) Obviously the burglars were idiots who did almost no prior research into the potential risks and rewards they were embarking on.

Jon always felt weird about the burglary. He felt more fear than anger that someone would try something like that while he and his family were home. It took a long time for him to recover and feel safe in his home again. Crime can happen anywhere and it is often crazy or very stupid.

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 © Cathy Gilligan
 

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Welcome back. Nice first zine.

Dinner parties have a way of turning into an unexpected amount of work at our house too. We tend to leave

things go until we are suddenly faced with dinner or houseguests. Then we have to go into a full court blitzkrieg to get everything cleaned up. It would all be a lot less work if we cleaned on an orderly schedule. That would be so nice.

Fat chance, too.

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 © Michael Rawdon
 

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I wanted to be sure to thank you for the review of the GrimJack comic in your otherwise fine zine for this month. I enjoyed it very much. I wonder sometimes how many comic fans there are in *Turbo*, but if in doubt, you can count on getting at least my attention for your comic reviews ( I read them in *Isthmus* as well, though I think yours are far more informative.)

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 © Julie Zachman
 

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I also wanted to tell you how much I enjoyed your Jazz Report. It is so cool that you are playing jazz in public. Keep us informed on how it is going.

In your comment to us on minac, yes I imagine it did feel weird. In my time as OE, I wanted to eradicate Grace like a weed. I think ultimately it is far more of a pain in the neck for the OE than it is worth. But even I extended Grace a couple times during my tenure so I wouldn't want it to totally disappear as an option. Every OE has to deal with granting extensions to members. It was never an easy thing for me, so I am reluctant to criticize others too severely about their decisions.

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 © Tracy Benton
 

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With regard to your comment to **Pat**, questioning her choice to move to a cash-based lifestyle; do you really want to go down that road?

In your comment to me on clothing size hassles for men, I pretty much have been taken to task for my position on this subject, though I would like to clarify that I didn't mean that men have NO clothing hassles, only that they don't have them to the degree women do. In my own experience, more often than not when I pick up something with my size on it, I take it home without trying it on. It usually fits. Jeanne has told me many times that she can never do that even when she is purchasing stuff from the same store.

About the only time I ever have a problem is if I buy something really cheap, or my weight changes significantly.

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 © Angie Moore
 

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Welcome back, I am glad you have not dropped out after all.

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 © Vijay Bowen
 

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My sympathy to you on your breakup with Mark. Good luck.

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 © Mike Peterson
 

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Congratulations on the house purchase. Keyes Avenue is a familiar address to most *Turbo Apans*. Nice neighborhood.

And isn't yard work lovely? Every year I start out in the spring wondering if I could get away with paving my yard.

## Turbo No. 144

### Comments by Jeanne

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 © Julie Clare Zachman
 

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I hope you've recovered from the doldrums that seemed to have attacked you in your last zine. You're a wonderful person, competent and worthy. Try not to beat yourself up....

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 © Barb Jensen
 

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What a great story! I must confess I didn't read "I Yelled at Yanni" when it was originally published in *Idea*. I would bet that *Idea* sat on my desk for a while and I never got around to looking though it. So, thank you very much for reprinting it here. I very much enjoyed the mixture of humor, introspection and myth making of your story. I was also entirely unfamiliar with the name Yanni, before reading your piece. But I am a little more familiar with the Parthenon, not that I've ever been to Greece. (Your description makes me want to go there someday, in spite of the tourist clutter.) Have you ever been to Nashville? A somewhat scaled-down replica of the Parthenon was built there many years ago, for a world's fair, in plaster-of-Paris (mostly). Of course weather would have quickly dissolved the building, but Nashville residents fell in love with it and it was "restored" using more permanent materials. It's a sort of kitschy building, but awesome in its own way. The scale is a little reduced, for sure, but the enormous statue of Athena was like a visual roar. And then I found myself struck by the elegance of proportions of the

columns, and of the spaces *between* the columns. Suddenly classical form meant more to me than words on a page or diagrams on paper. I suddenly felt how powerful those life-size proportions and forms were to my human perception. For sure, I'd really love to see the real things.

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 © Georgie Schnobrich
 

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In regard to your comments to **Pat** on the subject of the card/cash lifestyle question: It seems to me that we don't actually protect our privacy by using cash. In fact, I wonder if we aren't all being tricked into thinking that we retain power to protect our own privacy by denying some agencies and some companies certain bits of information they want from us. If our privacy is so important, we should be working instead on ways to prevent those agencies and companies from amassing information and using it in ways we don't want it used. As long as people think that they, individually, can preserve their own privacy, people won't get too active in changing the rules that allows *all* of our privacy to be invaded. After all, both you and Pat own houses, own cars, are employed by public institutions, and have publicly available drivers' records. This alone is a huge amount of information. Denying companies a glimpse into your purchasing habits won't change the fact that this information is gradually becoming accepted as being fair game in our society. When the time comes that we switch from a cash society to a credit card society, the precedent will be set. It's not too far away; the Feds have just about given up on preventing forgery of paper money; given the high quality scanners and color printers available, too many people are finding forgery all too easy. It's just a matter of time before cash is outlawed, in my opinion. Information about one's purchasing habits will not be "owned" by consumers but by the marketers.

I would like to see laws that require any marketer to get my permission before they buy or sell my name on a mailing list or data base, other than for a product for which I have actually bought or requested information. Of course this would make mailing list creation, sales and cross-referencing so expensive, that it would probably become prohibitive to do, and that would be fine with me.

On the other hand... I find that I am sometimes on the other side of the fence where, for instance, my access to public media is linked with advertising. I would like to think that my preferences TV shows and movies could be effectively communicated to media executives, so that I could get more of the kind of things I enjoy more. I would actually *like* to provide *more*

information about my preferences in this area, even if that means that some of my purchasing habits would be known.

Your comment to **Michael Shannon** about the different kind of trivia learned by reference librarians made me wonder if reference librarian conferences run their own trivia contests. Do they?

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© **Lisa Freitag**

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I'm so sorry to hear what's been going on for you at work. It must be incredibly frustrating to deal with so-called partners who are out to get you. I am glad, however, that you're going to get a decent payout for leaving, and hope in the long run, that this will lead to a much happier working situation for you. It would seem likely that *any* new job would be automatically more gratifying and less stressful than your current position. It would be great if you could find a job that mixes your medical expertise with your love for photography. I would imagine that there is such a specialty as, Medical Photographer. There must be, since so many medical books are published. I would imagine that a medical background would almost essential for photographers who do electron microscope work for publication.

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© **Andy Hooper**

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It was good to see you at WisCon this year, Andy, though we were disappointed that there wasn't time to get to see you after the convention.

You mentioned that you found the 75-minute programs too long at WisCon. You didn't actually have to go the whole 75 minutes, you know, especially for your solo program. I tried to reassure all program participants that they could end the program when they had run out of things to say, and I'm sorry if I didn't get this information to you before the con. Maybe you didn't get the general program letter? Most of the feedback I've gotten from panelists is that they generally liked the longer format, especially since this year, they received contact information for their fellow panelists. I thought panelists this year were more prepared than they have been in the past, when the first chance for discussion they had with other panelists were moments before the beginning of their panels.

Ellen Kushner's and Delia Sherman's work is fairly well known, I think. Ellen Kushner's novels aren't really my cup of tea, being high fantasy with a gender-bending edge, but her work has a lot of fans. (*Thomas the Rhymer* and *Swordspoint*) Ellen does a public radio show out of Boston that has been running for

several years that does interesting commentary on SF, Fantasy, music and history. Delia has only one novel (*The Porcelain Dove*, which I loved and am sorry it is so hard to find now), and several short stories. They have both edited anthologies. Their role in the writers' community out East is, I think, very significant if their reverent treatment by folks at Readercon is any measure. But they were not chosen as WisCon GoHs because they were "babes." I think that's a really unfair statement on your part. However, it is possible that one of the reasons they were chosen was because they have become such good friends to WisCon. (Ellen has attended more than a dozen WisCons, and Delia has attended the last 6 or 7. They have advocated for us and worked hard for WisCon and the Tiptree Award. You may be right that there was more to their choice than the committee's appreciation of their literary contributions, but then WisCon has frequently chosen guests that were not first and foremost authors. Babeness, however, was not a factor, I assure you. I agree with you that Sheri Tepper was an excellent guest and that her comments provided unexpected controversy and thoughtful ideas.

Excellent comments, by the way to **Vicki Rosenzweig** about your impressions of the recent slate of TAFF candidates.

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© **Bill Humphries**

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I have been reading good things about the Palm Pilot. I'd like to check one out some day. If you still have it next WisCon, show it to me, OK?

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© **Vicki Rosenzweig**

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Congratulations on the new tatoo. Are you going to publish a picture of it in the next *Turbo*?

Ah, so you're another potter! I used to pot in high school. I took two simultaneous pottery courses in my junior and senior years and turned out many sets of ceramic dishes whose sales supported me for two years of college. I too used to love to knead clay. I loved how the dry powder combined with water and gradually, under my hands, turned into this incredibly plastic, moldable substance. Kneading time was great for thinking and becoming very, very calm. I suppose I was using it as a sort of meditation. But my favorite thing was focusing all my senses on a ball of clay on the wheel as I centered and shaped it. I still miss working on a wheel. My grandfather actually made me an electric potter's wheel. (He used a frying pan without the handle for the bat!) I did continue to work on it for a couple years after graduating from High School while



I was still living in my parents' home, but it's really expensive to rent kiln space. I soon realized that the only way I could continue to do it was as a sort of business, that I had to sell enough to pay for kiln time and supplies. And once I moved to Madison to go to college, I would have had to rent space for the wheel as well, unless I majored in art, which I didn't, but that's a different long story.

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© Clay Colwell

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I winced when I read your story of how your sister "outed" you as a non-Christian in front of your mom. I hate that when that happens. This is one of the parts in my life when I tend toward support of "lies of omission" to keep the peace in the family (to carry on the discussion about lying that **Steve Swartz** began last month). Your story reminded me of the time my very right-wing uncle and aunt were visiting Milwaukee. I was in town, too, for the family reunion. I hadn't seen them for a long time because whenever I visit Seattle, their home, I very carefully do not contact them. Mom thinks it's my duty as a good niece to call them no matter what I think of their politics. My impression was that mom and I had agreed to disagree. Wrong! Right in the middle of the big family dinner at which everyone was smiling and eating and having a lovely time, Mom says: "So, Ronney!" Ronney is my uncle. "Do you know that your niece, Jeanne, visits Seattle *all the time* and that she *never* calls you when she's in town!?" I'm gaping at my mother. Why is she doing this, I am wondering? She's looking at me with a big, mean smile as if to say that it is my own fault that this news has "got out." The rest of the scene is a blur in my memory. Uncle Ronney glared at me. Aunt Barbara shrieked. They both addressed me as if I were 10 years old and tried to make me promise that I would not only call them the next time I was in town but would spend several days visiting them. I believe that I stuck to completely uncommittal responses. Mom glared at me. I wished I were home in Madison. I swore that I would never again tell my Mom when I was visiting the Northwest.

I really enjoyed *Roxanne's* retelling of the *Cyrano* story. I liked the fact that Roxanne was smart and I even liked the fact that they dumped the tragic ending. The only way that tragic ending can work is if Cyrano is almost as in love with Christian as he is with Roxanne, and that's usually hard to swallow. I'd like to see Cyrano played by a woman, who gives her words to a man to court Roxanne, because she (Cyranette?) assumes that Roxanne would not love a woman. Many endings are possible from that point.

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© Tracy Benton

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You knew that I would respond to your comments about the lack of fannish programming (and of fans on programming) at WisCon, didn't you? Of course you did! But I'm not going to give you a bunch of statistics about how many fans vs. pros were on programming this year. You're probably right that there were few panels with no pros on them. We've got a lot of authors coming to WisCon now, and they are quite enthusiastic about being on programming. However, that can't be the reason you didn't sign up for any of the programs from the list I sent you, because nobody was assigned when that list was published. Apparently it was the subject matter of the proposed panels that turned you off. Fair enough. HOWEVER, you were also given the opportunity (and several months) to give us suggestions for the kind of programs you would have liked to see and participate in at WisCon. And nobody from the concom or the Madison SF group, except Richard Russell, **Jim Frenkel** and me, offered any suggestions for programs.

It's possible that some people think that if a panel was popular one year, then it will automatically added to the program the next year. Or maybe some people assume that if there are a bunch of people who attend WisCon who like a certain topic, that the programming staff will automatically add a program about that topic. Maybe I should have been clearer about my philosophy of doing programming, because I don't do that. We always have too much programming, after all. We had to ruthlessly eliminate about 50+ proposed programs to bring the schedule down to a manageable size. All these programs were ones that had been advocated by someone who we had to disappoint when we crossed the idea off the list. There's no way we were going to add a panel on, say "giants," because we suspected that there is someone out there who would like to see such a panel. They've got to come forward and propose it. They're not required to be a panelist necessarily, though if nobody signs up for it, it gets axed. But someone has to want it enough to at least mention it to us. So, why didn't you suggest some of the panels you feel all nostalgic about, Tracy? We would certainly have added one or two "Threat or Menace" author discussions to the list of proposed panels if you had suggested it.

And by the way, there was a midnight vampire panel at WisCon 22 ("Blood Suckers"). Well, OK, it started at 11:30 p.m., but it was still happening at midnight. The panelists wanted to change its name, that's all, though it was still clearly the midnight vampire panel.

Yes, there were WisCons at which I felt nostalgic for early WisCon programming. But since I've gotten re-involved in the last few years, it's felt to me that we've gotten close again to the spirit of the early WisCons. Except bigger. I would bet that if you got involved on some level (even as an active suggestor) with WisCon programming, you'd probably feel as if WisCon felt more familiar too.

I agree with you. Tepper's speech at WisCon was an astounding thing. Certainly it made me realize how strongly she feels the ideas that fill her novels. The surprise in *Family Tree* took me completely by surprise. I was on the bus when I got to The page and probably shocked my seatmate when I shrieked. The thing I liked best about the surprise was the realization that it was mostly my fault for all the assumptions my mind made when it made images of her words, despite clues about the true situation. Wow. However, I would have liked to have found out how the plants in the first part of the novel evolved (or devolved) into the trees in the end of the book. Or maybe I'm mistaken; maybe they have nothing to do with one another. But yes, it was an irritating dangling loose end. Usually there are a lot more of those in Tepper's books, so I in fact appreciated the fact that this novel was a bit more focused than her earlier novels.

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© **Jim Frenkel**

"Nanny Peters and the Feathery Bride" turned out wonderfully! Good job, Jim! (I heard from some sad fans who had returned program questionnaires, and wondered why you hadn't contacted them about joining the cast when they'd indicated their willingness to volunteer.)

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© **Jae Adams**

You might consider sending your zine to Suzette Haden Elgin, or at least that part with the comment about how you think touch dominant imagery has improved your writing. It's an interesting idea – that one might vary sensory styles for aesthetic reasons, above or instead of improving the chances of accurate communication.

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© **Jim Nichols**

Welcome back, Jim. I hope the Variety Show comes back again, too. Barb Jensen has told me though, that she may not be interested in coordinating one next year (although she and David would like to perform again). She also said that the next time she

does coordinate a Variety Show at WisCon, that she will need someone who knows lighting and sound equipment to be the in-town liaison. Certainly we need someone to deal closely with the hotel staff if we ever do this again. As I'm sure you're very aware, a production like this takes a lot of legwork.

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© **Ruth Merrill**

Excellent insight, Ruth! Why indeed does the media not talk about girdle-burning feminists!? That's probably the more accurate description. No bras were ever actually burned. (The myth comes from a bit of bad reporting at a Republican Convention, according to Susan Falludi.) Many women held onto their bras in spite of their desire to be free of them. But almost all of us during the 60s and 70s ditched our girdles. It would certainly be more evocative of the freedom won during that era.

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© **Michael Rawdon**

I agree with you about the not-very-revolutionary changes in System 8. But like you, I do like it. I have more problems with the extended memory of the G3 (which I guess is pretty essential with multi-gig memories.) I don't like the fact that Norton's Disk Doctor fails to run on my computer, and hope they work out whatever bugs prevent that soon.

Bill Caldwell? Hmm... I can't place that name. I've been part of the Madison SF group since the beginning, but I can't recall ever meeting him. Maybe he was involved with the game-playing folks?

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© **Pat Hario**

We're still catching up with you on *Babylon 5*, as we're not quite through yet with Season 3. I've become entirely obsessed with it, but we're about to catch up to the point where we started watching it originally, and I expect to feel less obsessive at that point. Maybe we'll finish with season 4 just about the time when season 5 starts re-running. That would be seamless. I like DeLenn. I like her complexity – not all good, but willing to admit to her faults, and absolutely dedicated. I loved her warning to the earth ships right after B5 broke off relations. I whooped. That's the only word that describes it.

No growth = death. It's not just in Madison, of course. It's an essential "truism" for American and most capitalist societies. It is, I hope, a lie, one that we figure out before too long, before it kills us all.

—Jeanne & Scott, 7/18/98