



Welcome to Union Street #48 (Obsessive Press [JG] #150 and Peerless Press [SC] #50), the zine with the transmogrifying masthead (Damn it's been cold!). It comes to you from Jeanne Gomoll and Scott Custis, whose address is coincidentally 2825 Union Street, Madison, WI 53704-5136. Phone 608-246-8857. Union Street was created on a Macintosh Quadra 840AV, and hardcopy was printed on a Laserwriter IINTX printer. Text was created with Microsoft Word 5.1 and laid out with Aldus PageMaker 5.0. The Union Street Logo was designed with Adobe Illustrator 5.0 and Adobe Photoshop 2.5. All contents are copyrighted © by Scott Custis and Jeanne Gomoll, 1994. January 1994 for Turbo-Charged Party Animal APA #91. Members FWA.

Party Season

[SC] It was a busy holiday season for us once again. I was scheduled to work through most of Christmas weekend, so Jeanne and I invited her family from Milwaukee to come to Madison on Christmas Day for dinner. With the help of two rented tables we managed to accommodate six adults and two very active kids. It could best be summed up as an orgy of eating and present-opening. I sort of rolled myself to work that night. We cruised down to Iowa on Sunday and Monday for still more eating and presents at my Dad's house which was packed almost shoulder to shoulder with family. Everyone in my family lives in tiny houses, apartments or mobile homes, but we like to get together a few times a year and no one down there has a large enough place to do it anymore. Ironically, Jeanne and I always travel down to these gatherings, yet we own the biggest house of anyone in my immediate family.

Upon our return, we began getting ready for our Third Annual New Year's Eve Party. It went very well. Thanks to all of you who came. We had about thirty people show up from a guest list of probable and likely attendees of around thirty-five or forty. Many people took the opportunity to dress up, including women in dresses and high heels and men in suits and ties. We even had at least three tuxes-one of those a woman. We had a surprise guest again this year. Bill Bodden made it back to Madison several days early and received a very warm Welcome Back. We gave 1993 a royal send off at midnight with horns and poppers. The house was a grand mess. As always, we forgot to break out in Auld Lang Syne.

Again this year at about 4:30 a.m., one of the most amazing things happened that I've ever seen in my partying career: the last hardy partiers started cleaning up. In less than an hour, the place looked great and a very small hard-core group of us tramped off to breakfast at Country Kitchen. The waitress told us we just missed "a fight." Seems a customer got upset about his check and started loudly hurling abuse at the manager. Police were called with the result that the customer got a \$500.00 ticket over an \$8.00 dinner bill. What an idiot. I think the waitress was relieved to get a group of late partiers in as good a shape as us. Jeanne and I finally made it to bed at 6 AM still talking about doing it again next year. Thanks again to everyone who came, brought food and helped clean up.

Bill Dyer

[JG] We've already received (and replied to) a message from you via e-mail and America On-Line. Looks like you're settling in just fine. I chose AOL from among the other on-line services because it boasted the most Mac-like interface. Since signing up, I've been impressed by their obvious ambition to become a major player in on-line services. AOL has promised to provide 9600-baud service for no extra charge (which directly competes with Compuserve's extra charge for 9600-baud service). And they've promised (realSoonNow) a Mac-like interface for Internet cruising to provide AOL subscribers easy, icon-based access to Internet's forums, databases and services.

I don't find the conversation forums very tempting. The Sturgeon's Crap ratio is a little too high in most of the forums I wandered through during my free introductory period. But I like the access to programming experts for the various applications I use. And the encyclopedia database, Smithsonian photo database, on-line *Atlantic*, *Time*, and *Wired* magazines, and other resources are fantastic. It's really great to be able to download minor software upgrades and fixes, rather than having to resort to telephone, plastic, and mail.



I like it. This huge computer of ours suddenly got Bigger. I wasn't quite sure after reading your comment whether you were asking for information about Internet. (You know, of course, that you have an Internet address because AOL has a port to Internet. Your Internet address is your AOL address plus @aol.com added: "billd11051@aol.com") Anything beyond that, though, you should ask some of the other long-time online hackers here in the apa.

[SC] I thought your Thanksgiving Day story was delightful. Nothing like a little cold water to end a romantic moment. Yikes, talk about a cold shower! Oh well. At least you can discern from this experience who your real friends are. Your "friend" managed to keep from laughing at you. To be honest, Bill, I would not have been able to stop myself. Hell I started laughing at you just reading about it. Had I *been* there, it wouldn't have been pretty.

Ellen Franklin

[JG] Pretty good stuff for airplane typing. Episodic and fascinating. (Even your typos provide interest: I especially liked the phrase on page 3, "exhaustion of the sole." With your packed travel schedule, I can well imagine that you suffer this malady. I prescribe slippers in the evening.)

I would love to sit down and really talk with you and Debbie Notkin sometime. That sounds like a great and intense conversation.

So, how serious are you guys about moving to the West coast?

No yuppies in the Midwest? What an amazing notion, though as you suggest it probably is an exaggeration of a smaller, true regional characteristic. I remember when I came to college here in Madison, a lot of New Yorkers lived in the Cochrane House (a rooming house) with me. That was probably my first encounter with the notion that people from other parts of the country had strange pictures of Midwest culture. My New York classmates frequently told me that they were surprised to find actual *cities* out here in the wilderness. Still, it's sort of fun hearing what people from other regions assume about people in your area of the country. One of the most entertaining parts of Rose Bowl week were all the TV interviews with Southern Californians reacting to and talking about Wisconsin tourists. (One guy worried that the Southern California team might have a tough time beating the Wisconsin team, because people in the Midwest could concentrate more easily on football. LA, he said, was full of all sorts of *distractions* like Hollywood, Disneyland, etc., whereas in Wisconsin all they have is snow and football.) Of course, it goes both ways: Midwesterners tend to rely on a their own collection of stereotypes about the coasts.

[SC] Great zine once again, Ellen, especially considering that you wrote it on the plane without a revision. I just can't do that. I'm the sort of writer who throws something down on paper, then constantly re-reads and fiddles with it until it sounds "right." Sometimes it never does and I discard it. That's why my comments are often so short. The idea of writing something once and pubbing it without editing is too scary for me to consider except in the most extreme deadline emergency.

Good luck on your negotiations with the Gay and Lesbian Journalist Association. It sounds like a fascinating project

and I would be very interested in your impressions of the conference if you wind up working with them and attending it.

YCT. Diane re: Madison. You said that Madison is starting to suffer the sort of problems that plague larger cities. I agree. An important difference is that Madison, as a community, is acutely aware of our growing problems. We focus a lot of attention on them.. These problems are mostly still in the beginning stage and I think they can be dealt with if we are quick and creative. Madison is a wealthy, activist community. We have the means to do something.

Lisa Freitag

[JG] Yeah, gorgeous font on your masthead. Crayolita Bold, isn't it? Or is it New Crayony Schoolbook?

In the first draft of these comments I wrote that "the Subway restaurant near my office uses rubber stamps on their cards instead of stickers, and there's no such thing as a 'Double Tuesday.'" But earlier today (the day that I quick proofread last week's comments), I happened to get a sandwich at Subway, and lo and behold, stamps. Who knows maybe Double Tuesdays will soon follow. Individual franchises must have considerable latitude as to how they run their business. I don't go there too often. Usually it takes about year before I get enough stamps on my card for a free sandwich. But then, I don't need to carry a beeper for my job, and a good thing at that. I don't think I'd do well having to punch a time clock, much less having to be on call.

I work for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources as a graphic artist. Most of my work is done on the computer, and there are days when I don't talk to anyone. I arrive at work about 9 in the morning, and leave sometime after 5:30 or whenever I finish whatever I'm working on at the time. There's a lot of work and it's totally engrossing, so I frequently forget lunch hour, and always skip breaks. I can leave early or arrive late as long as I get my work done. I'm not expected to give much notice for using leave, and my supervisor mainly keeps clients out of my and the rest of the artists' hair. We control most of our jobs from planning stage to delivery to the printers. It's a pretty nice job in terms of working conditions.

Welcome to the apa!

[SC] Welcome indeed! You gave us a fine first zine.

Fast food has always been important to me. I used to choose apartments partly based on their closeness to a fast food place. I was never much interested in learning to cook, so I made use of these places regularly. McDonalds is always reliable and they have good french fries. I had a bad experience my first trip to Taco Bell and never went back. I agree with you completely about Wendy's. They are the Cadillac of fast food franchise burger places as far as I've seen. What do you do with all the toys?

By way of introduction, Jeanne and I met in 1984 at an ICON and have been together ever since, although we didn't move in together until 1987 when I gave up my job in Iowa Corrections to come out here to Madison. We bought our house here on Union St. in 1989. I work the night shift at the Mendota Mental Health Institute as a Psychiatric Care Technician (a.k.a. nursing aide or, affectionately by some patients, "fucking goon.") I hate my job, but it's a living. I have been OE of *Turbo* for the last five months. It's a lousy living, but a good deal more fun than my job.



I hope you will choose to tell us more about yourself as time goes by.

Julie Gomoll

[JG] We've been reading all about the Williamson County fiasco in the papers. It's refreshing to know that good old American greed can force some bozos to put aside good old American homophobia (she said with heavy sarcasm).

I'm not very good at brainstorming with another person, at least not for visual ideas. At least not with most people. Sometimes it works miraculously: like it did with Georgie Schnobrich and I when we used to lay out *Janus* and *Aurora* together. We communicated with incomplete sentences, but mostly hands-on (with wax, India ink, and t-squares) demonstrations. It was an...exhilarating experience. The only time I've ever felt anything like that almost psychic connection was with Oleo Kevin when he lived with me in Madison for a summer. We used to sit together at the kitchen table and draw together, handing back and forth illustrations, weaving together one another's images, until finally, neither of us could tell whose idea it was or which parts had been executed by who. We seldom spoke at all during those sessions. I think the block I experience with most people when attempting to collaborate on a visual image has to do with the (usual) necessity to translate image-thinking to verbalization. I can explain what I did...afterward (in fact, afterward, it's fun to figure out why something works or doesn't work)...but during the process, if I try to verbalize, I lose the thread of creativity.

[SC] You wrote to Diane, "If logic could rule my emotions, none of this would be an issue." Christ, if logic ruled our emotions, we'd all be a boring lot wouldn't we? After reviewing what I wrote to you, I agree that I was trying to apply some sort of logic to your feelings. That was silly of me. Feelings are real but not logical. It sounds like you are searching for a new direction to focus your considerable talents and drive and I wish you well. I have no doubt that you will be successful.

The Nation recently ran an editorial half seriously suggesting that Texans draft Molly Ivins to run for the U.S. Senate this year. "She could win because beneath her literary genius Molly's tough, and all Texans, including *Redneckus texensis* (as she calls them), have admired their tough women, from Ma Ferguson to Ann Richards."

We missed having you at our New Years Party. Maybe next year?

Bill Hoffman

[JG] Maybe we wouldn't be so burnt out on the idea of the post-WisCon banquet if it didn't always come right after WisCon. But that isn't the main reason we started musing about alternatives to the Union Street venue. I think it's getting too big for our house. Last year I heard several people say that they intended to change their travel plans so that they could stay in Madison for a few days after WisCon—just so that they could be sure to attend your dinner. We've talked about it a lot in the apa; a lot of people know about it, and generally we've made no attempt to limit the number of people invited. It's just going to get bigger every year. And I don't think there's actually a good way to limit the number of people invited. At this point, anyone who is excluded would feel personally slighted.

The banquets have been wonderful, and I hope we can figure out a way to do one next year (and the next).

I'm sorry I didn't talk about this to you directly before you heard about it from Laura.

[SC] I thought it was very shrewd of you to end your comment to us (and your invite for a new dinner location) by describing your menu plans for solstice. The meal sounded wonderful on paper, but I know, that is I *know* from personal experience, that the actual meal must have been utterly fabulous. It was, wasn't it?

Bill Humphries

[JG] Great zine, Bill. What a gonzo, frenzied description of a stressful time in your life. You have my sympathy! I'm really glad to hear that you and Joel Rogers worked on that paper exposing the myth of "Tort Explosion." Concentrating on the facts, exposing the myths of the right wing, is a powerful way to combat the reactionary tide. (It's the weapon people like Susan Faludi uses well.) Good for you.

I liked and agreed with your comments about "This Kid Business."

I found Blumlein's *X, Y* an incredibly uncomfortable book to read. The S/M reaction of the man in a woman's body (or the woman who suddenly realizes she's a man) to his/her subjugation, did not follow for me. I wouldn't have finished it, except for the fact that it obviously covers Tiptree material.

[SC] I was also impressed with your Week In Hell piece. It probably didn't help that I was giving you conflicting signals about just how sick I was over the apa deadline weekend. Clearly the last thing you needed was to come down with some nasty flu. Still it was weird how it worked out. For two days there, I was sicker than a dog. I didn't have any chest congestion or indigestion. Instead I had this roller coaster fever and aches. Then suddenly on Sunday, a miracle happened and I was Well and ready to go mud wrestling. I can't explain it, but I wasn't surprised that you were leery about coming over.

I also liked the 'Dillocon piece. I have decided that I like reading about Armadillocon from friends who really enjoy going, more than I care about going myself. It would be great to connect with our friends and relatives in Austin, of course, but I don't need to go to a con to do that. And I'm still not sure that the things people seem most to like about 'Dillocon appeal to me. The programming sounds very uneven in quality and I've never been wild about hanging out with pros. But I like reading about it.

Lynne Ann Morse

[JG] I like the Berkeley font too. It's calligraphic properties (especially in display weight, "Black,") worked well for the Tiptree Quilt brochure, I think. And obviously, for you.

I also liked your woven format. I used to do that in previous apazines (when they were from me alone. It's much harder to do in a joint zine.) It flows well.

Actually, from Scott's and my experience, you *can* call a Realtor and ask them for as many addresses as you like. That's their job. The payoff for them is rare, but big time.

I've never claimed to be antagonistic to spiritualism. Indeed, you might be right: Buddhism might well fascinate me. I've only claimed not to believe in god. But in fact, I think that it's possible that the act of discarding pre-packaged spiritual "sets"



(organized religions) on which we are raised, makes it all the more difficult to avoid spiritual contemplation.

It's like this: The process of discarding society's definition of a "good citizen" (who goes to war without questions), or of a "good woman" (who...well, you know), inevitably requires one to invent new ways to interact with fellow human beings and live one's life. Discarding institutionalized structure doesn't free one from structure; it simply makes one responsible for building one's own structure. And so, discarding the stories and explanations provided by religion when I was growing up, left me with all the questions that religion supposedly answered... In some cases, I've decided that I can live with the uncertainty (or even the certainty that I will never know something) more easily than I can live with the knowledge that I have constructed a fiction, and chosen to believe it in order to make my psychic life more comfortable.

On another subject: Apparently I confused you about my comment on spiritual SF fans vs less spiritual religious groups. I was just making a joke—referring to the cliché that many SF fans don't seem to have much time to actually read SF. The joke: if religious groups lack spirituality and SF fans don't read too much SF but do think a lot about spiritual issues, I suggested that it would be ironic if religious persons tended to read a lot of SF. Sorry for being obtuse.

Interesting medicinal use of a boiled egg. This should go in a home remedy book along with Elk Krisor's use of frozen vegetable pouches as ice packs.

[SC] Jeanne and I recently went to see Oliver Stone's new movie *Heaven and Earth*. In the movie the main character is a devout Buddhist. She makes some terrible choices about her life based on the idea that she might as well suffer now because her bad karma would only end up following her to subsequent lives. I'm not sure this movie does justice to Buddhism, but I thought several times while I watched this film that she wouldn't have been much worse off if she were a devout Catholic instead. Buddhism doesn't hold much attraction to me.

It sounds like you and I have similar perceptions about the work attitudes of Jeanne and Roelof. She represents to me the near ideal of someone who found their life's work and enjoys doing it independent of reward. Jeanne would still do the graphic art thing even if she had to work a different job to make a living. It's just the best of all possible worlds that she can make a living doing what she likes. That's what I want for myself.

So I take it *DAPPER* is still in existence. I appreciate your and Jae's view of apa recruitment. I am always on the lookout for hot new prospects, but I think *Turbo* is currently quite healthy in spite of the high turnover rate we've had of late.

Thanks for the help collating last month, it was a real treat to see you for awhile. I hope the next time you're in the country it's under happier circumstances. Your zine was fabulous this month. It's not quite as good as having you here in person, but it sure helps it seem that we are in close touch for being thousands of miles apart.

Jim Nichols

[JG] I hope you're recovered soon. We all miss your long and mc-filled zines!

Michael Shannon

[SC] Congratulations on the new project and good luck. I hope this doesn't mean endless extra hours at work and impossible deadlines. That might really contribute to your feeling of being "cut off from the social fabric of the group." I think you are right about it being a busy holiday season this year for a lot of people. Everyone I talked to this year seemed to be spread pretty thin. January will come as a nice relief before the glut of conventions begins in February and running through the spring (Potlatch, WisCon, MiniCon, etc.)

Tracy Shannon

[JG] Interesting comment about *Nightmare Before Christmas*. And intriguing too. My memory agrees with yours, that Halloweentown (as opposed to Christmastown) was filled mostly with male creatures. But after I talked about it with Steve and Elk, they went to see the film and disagreed entirely with me, saying that they saw lots and lots of female creatures in Halloweentown. I figured I must have been mistaken until I read your comment. Hmm. I'm gonna have to go see that movie again. Maybe I'll wait for video and do a freeze motion census.

Funny story, Tracy. It had a vaguely Connie Willis feel (and I mean that entirely complimentary, I promise. Willis is great with dialog and comic situations.) But have you seen the new Ms? There's an article on the health hazards of make-up. They say the makeup industry is almost totally un-regulated by the FDA, and have lots and lots of very scary statistics and information about the contents of a lot of substances used on faces, hair, etc.

[SC] Except for the title (yet another pun), I also liked your story. You're a natural at this writing thing Tracy. Have you ever thought about...there I go again. Suggesting to someone that True Happiness lies in the direction of giving up their life to try writing professionally. I'm sure everyone would like to get paid to do something they enjoyed. But do the only truly good writers have to always be the professionals because they get paid? Can good writers find sufficient rewards writing in the amateur press without always seeking to become pros? Sorry, I almost took off on a tangent. It was a fine, funny piece Tracy, thanks.

Kim Winz

[JG] Scott and I published that Orson Scott Card article. I'll try to remember to dig it up and send you a copy. Funny poem!

[SC] It was great fun to see you two at the Essen Haus celebration. I hope the rest of your travels went well. I think you should reconsider moving to Madison. The weather gets a bit nippy, sure, but think of the friends, the beer, the cheese, the Badgers. What more could you ask for really?

Jae Adams

[JG] I admire and envy your ability to pay attention to and examine the detail of life. Specifically, I'm reacting to your essay, "Inventing Traditions," but really I mean it in a much more general sense. You've given us some wonderful essays about a book-making conference, travels, paper making, convention reports, and raising Matthew—and all these essays share a sense of intensity and complex cross-referencing with

everything in your life (your experiences, family, art, literature, ideas). It's really quite a pleasure reading this stuff.

I think your ability to see and cross-reference experience and idea in such an aesthetically pleasing form, may be what some people are fumbling to describe when they tell you that they envy your position, i.e., not having to work for a salary. This is not what I am saying, however: I think you would continue to make insightful comments and find time to write observational essays no matter what your "job" was. Comments that you hear on this matter, however, may be based on the unarticulated rationalization: "if I had to spend less of my time working for other people, maybe I'd have time to be *see* life like Jae does."

And maybe I'm completely off base. But it's a theory.

I *do* feel that I am under attack for choosing not to be a parent, though this sense has decreased a lot as I pass child bearing age. My parents, my mom especially, called me "selfish" pretty often for this choice. And I think the weight of popular culture these days comes down pretty firmly in favor of families with kids. I'm sorry that my struggles and the struggles of other single people to express their right to make this choice (and to get respect for it) is perceived by you as an attack on the choice you have made.

I have never been really enthusiastic about C. J. Cherryh's writing, but your description of the "Divine Couple" element in the Morgaine trilogy reminded me a lot of a couple books I just finished, one right after the other: Mary Mackey's *The Year the Horses Came* and Sherri Tepper's *A Plague of Angels*. Both books concern a hero—a young woman on a quest—who is assisted by a young man acting the part of a servant/knight pledged to her aid. Your explication of this literary tradition helped me better understand these novels. It would actually be very interesting to consider these books together from the point of view of this tradition. Care to borrow them?

Well, I'm less unhappy to have missed the *Red Mars* book discussion now. Both Scott and I read the book, liked it a lot, but felt it would have been inappropriate for us to attend this BotM meeting after having skipped so many others. But I think Dick would have infuriated me, too. I was fascinated by the extrapolation of the political microcosm into interplanetary exploration. So often in SF, politics are so ridiculously simplified—in order to focus on ideas, technology, character—that the story may as well be total fantasy because it seems to assume that in this other world, everyone will think the same way, that there will be no power struggles, that it's as simple as good guys vs the bad guys. I really admired the extrapolation of different political "types" and understanding of how power plays a part in culture in *Red Mars* and am very much looking forward to seeing the next two books and watching this society evolve on Mars. After a particularly "heated" discussion with Pat Harlo, I found it extremely interesting that most people had fastened upon different characters as *the* sympathetic character. Pat, for instance, thought that—without question—Anne was the only sympathetic character. (I, on the other hand, thought Anne would have made a good Nazi.) I've forgotten now, who I asked and which characters they chose as their favorite (or at least, most understandable/sympathetic) character, but I polled a surprising variety of choices.

No character in *Red Mars* could be viewed as entirely good or right, which actually made the story more believable and interesting to me. All characters had skills or abilities that were essential to the community; all had potential flaws that could prove disastrous to the community. These flaws were

held in check only by the competing desires and beliefs and actions of others. Disaster flowed from any one individual or faction gaining too much power.

My favorite character was Arkady, the anarchist.

Your comment to Bill Humphries on the subject of household economics offered some reasonable ideas of how to estimate the value of housework in our economy. Such definitions would, I think, be especially useful for women re-entering the job market (spiffing up resumes) and for women exiting marriages (defining their economic contributions to the marriage more accurately). But such definitions would also have some unpleasant side-effects. For instance, if year to year, a family had to report the contributions of non-salaried family members, would the value of those contributions be taxable? If not, then shouldn't single persons be able to hire in-house help and deduct money spent on those expenses from their taxable income?

I enjoyed your thoughts on Diane's potatoheads. And a good name for them too.

It seems to me that complex tax forms aren't entirely due to a government that doesn't want us to be independent and enterprising (though there's some of that, too). Big Business has worked and still lobbies real hard to make sure that tax forms are complex enough to hide the loopholes it depends upon to protect its profits.

You write, "Once women with careers head for the workplace, who raises the kids? or as Joni Mitchell says, 'Who ya gonna get to do the dirty work after the slaves are free?'" I am confused here. Do I understand you to say that you think women-with-careers should stay home until men come around to the notion that they should share the responsibility for their children? And until institutions change? And until the workplace allows for employees who are also parents?

[SC] I also enjoyed your "Inventing Traditions" piece and your analysis of C. J. Cherryh's work.

I'm not hip enough on what's happening in the art world to hold forth on who's work I find radical. What I was thinking of was the public and political controversies surrounding the work of Robert Mapplethorpe and the cup of urine with a cross in it piece that attracted so much attention a few years ago ("Piss Christ" I think it was referred to in the press.) This sort of thing pushes the limits on what people are willing to accept as art. I think we need those kind of challenges to established norms and standards of taste. Even if the art does not turn out to be very good or lasting, it serves a purpose to keep reminding us what freedom of expression is all about.

Your suggestion that seconds to apa membership nominees also submit a paragraph in support, is a good idea. I'll push this and see what happens. Of course you'll note that you didn't write much yourself when you seconded Jim Frenkel last month.

Red Mars was a terrific book, in some ways one of the most impressive SF books I've read. Robinson's insight into the conflicts, personalities, motivations and feelings of his characters was sensational. I have never read a more politically sophisticated SF novel. It wasn't as urgent a page-turner as *Fire Upon The Deep* or *Doomsday Book*, but it was so realistic and meticulously researched that I became completely immersed in it. My vote for the best novel of those nominated last year would have been a hard choice between *Red Mars* and *China Mountain Zhang*.



Vijay Bowen

[JG] I liked your visual image of singing. ("I sing harmony, and I think that because of the unfocused and fuzzy edges to my voice, I often sound better on harmony than on melody; the fuzziness allows me to blend better.") This is almost an exact description of *anti-aliasing*, a technique used in video graphics to blur the borders of objects into one another, so that rasters are eliminated and the image looks more realistic! Paradoxically, an antialiased object creates the illusion that it is more sharply outlined than one that is not.

I suppose you are right that some of us women, me too certainly, have felt "allowed" to be smart because at one time in our childhood, we felt as if we'd failed the admission requirements of so called "real" women. But this shame-of-brains phenomenon seems more prevalent than just status-conscious girl children. Boy children seem equally, if not more affected. I find this very scary. Kids pretending not to be smart, pretty quickly are able to achieve the real thing.

[SC] "Nevertheless, I am still around and not planning to minac out of these pages any time soon." Damn straight. I'll not have you getting us all addicted to your exquisite writing just so you can drop out and go charm some other bunch of bozos. You're staying right here if I have anything to say about it (please.)

I hope you're feeling better by now. I admit that I was intrigued by your comment to Ellen regarding stuff you and Mark "are going through." I still have my doubts about just how far one can talk about details of a relationship in this apa.

When will we next get a chance to see you? ReaderCon perhaps?

Jim Brooks

[JG] I loved this zine of yours, Jim. It reminded me a lot of Bill Humphries' zine this issue, for its frenetically paced diary. Since so many people have been suggesting that we should all write new "introzines," I was thinking about what makes a good introduction in a situation where many of the people listening already know a great deal about you. Your zine convinces me that different formats can be just as effective as a formal introzine.

I agree with your comment to Pat Harlo about the distressingly frequent tendency of strong, competent women to nevertheless exhibit low self esteem. It probably has a lot to do with the phenomenon Vijay commented upon, that many women succeed intellectually, career-wise, etc. partially because in their youth, they were persuaded that such achievements are "fall-back" skills for girls deficient in so-called womanly characteristics. Grown-up, successful women who accepted this bunk must then backtrack and confront this lie before they are able to feel comfortable with their own success.

[SC] I don't know if you actually keep a diary that you used for your "Cactus Rose" piece or whether you managed to reconstruct events from memory, but I found it very engaging in the same way I would find stealing a look into someone's personal diary. Life stripped down to short sentences and sentence fragments, scattered impressions and reactions that may or may not make much sense. The punchy style made me feel like I was following you around on a serious caffeine binge. It was a very interesting piece and a very interesting slice of life.

YCT me: yes but setting you and Tracy in front of the class would only feed into your attention-seeking behaviors. If you two persist in this pun war, I'm not sure what I will do. But I'll come up with something.

Good comment to Jae.

Scott & Jeanne
January 1994