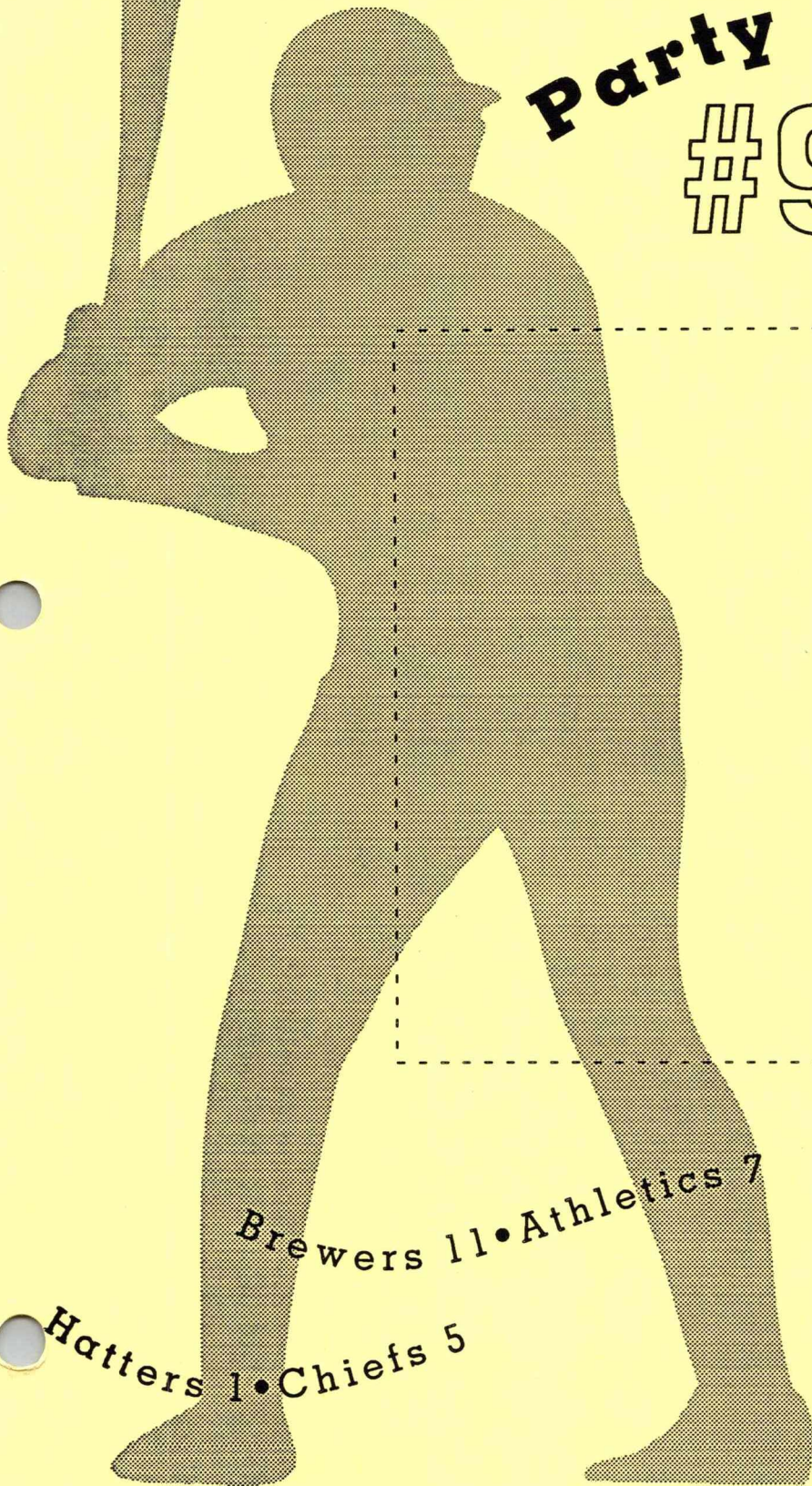


Opening Day • April 3, 1994



Turbo-Charged Party Animal Apa #94



Brewers 11 • Athletics 7

Hatters 1 • Chiefs 5

Old time Ball Park

Gha!





Welcome to Union Street #51 (Obsessive Press [JG] #153 and Peerless Press [SC] #53), the zine with the transmogrifying masthead (Signaling the start of Spring). 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, April 1994 for Turbo-Charged Party Animal APA #94. Members FWA and AFSCME—locals 1218 and 0013.

Official Business

[JG] Clay Colwell sounds like an interesting guy; I second Kim Winz's nomination of him for *Turbo apa*.

[SC] With regards to Jim Brooks' motion. I vote for it. I am having no difficulty sending the apa overseas to the contributors we currently have in England, Scotland and The Netherlands but that isn't to say we might someday have a problem mailing to a new writer in Canada. I also don't know that this language will help with copyright issues, but it seems like a reasonable suggestion.

[JG] OK, sounds reasonable to me too. Make that one, complete vote, Jim.

Cover

[SC] This month's cover celebrates the beginning of baseball season, a sure sign of Spring. The postcards are all perfectly usable if you care to extract them from the plastic and tape. There are six different postcard versions: Ebbets Field, Polo Grounds, Yankee Stadium, Crosley Field, Comiskey Park, Fenway Park. If you all think it was hard to get Jeanne to work on a cover with a baseball theme, please consider that it actually was *her* idea.

[JG] He's lying.

General

[SC] OK, Whump, Nevenah, Jae, Heather-Aynne and Jim Brooks, what does MFBPA stand for?

For those former Madison apans who now live elsewhere, you may find it interesting that our old Wednesday night meeting place, the Brat und Brau restaurant, has been sold. The people at Upstairs/Downstairs bought it and plan to turn it into an upscale Italian place. They expect to take possession around May 2, so time is running out quickly for us there. A movement has already begun to find a new meeting place.

And finally the dates for WisCon 19 have finally been decided. It will be Memorial Day weekend (!) at the Holiday Inn SE. GoHs are unconfirmed as of this writing.

Bill Hoffman

[JG] Remember, you *did* tell me that I was free to make up lies for your colophon...

Julie Gomoll

[JG] Very, very cool work, Julie.

Pat Hario

[JG] I hope you won't mind that I've used your innocent comment hook to hang an essay, or at least an outline of an essay...

You asked me my opinion of how feminist SF would deal with the "next steps," i.e., figuring out how to change society based on SF's fictional blueprints, and then, accomplishing the actual changes. That's a pretty complex question. I bet that one could spend years working up a thesis in this area. It's probably worth at least a Ph.D. or two... and definitely an article of its own, which coincidentally is exactly the one I was commissioned to write at WisCon by Toni Armstrong, editor of *Hot Wire*. So, I've been thinking about this subject a lot recently.

I don't think that any idea moves through society in a simple, straightforward manner. You can't really say we're all



in this stage or that stage, and sometimes it seems that we stumble backward more often than we stride forward ... we forget what has already been accomplished and end up rediscovering it all over again. We're all aware of this back-and-forth movement with respect to feminist awareness (both cultural and individual): It's amazing to read something written during the mid-1800s wave of feminism (or even during the explosion of feminist SF in the 1970s—take *Khatru*, for instance), and suddenly realize that—in some sense—we've actually *re-treated* from the radical stance of earlier times.

I am convinced, however, that the opposite phenomenon also occurs. All around us, there are thinkers whose radical ideas foreshadow future changes. (I imagine a wave-tossed surf, with bits of foam rocking back and forth on the water's surface. One bit of foam's zig-zaggy course may finally bring it to shore, but the route is indirect.)

Frequently now, we're seeing feminist SF fiction in which the plots concern the act of *getting there*. The authors already know where they'd like go. It seems to me that during the 70s, the revolutionary stories involved imagining possible futures, and that the connection between the here-and-now and that possible future was left impossibly hazy, certainly tenuous. Getting there was not the point. One of my favorite books from this year's Tiptree reading, *Illicit Passage*, by Alice Nunn, concerns the actual mechanics of a feminist revolution. Nunn orchestrates nonviolent action, changes-from-within in her how-we-get-there story. Suzy McKee Charnas obviously believes that same route might entail more blood and anger. Her upcoming novel, *The Furies*, will provide a radical counterpoint to Nunn's book.

(And of course, there are some SF books—not part of the feminist wave—that are also concerned with *the mechanics of getting there*. Kim Stanley Robinson's *Red Mars* and *Green Mars*—especially the latter, which is the second of the Mars trilogy that will end with *Blue Mars*—concern themselves with how we get to a society in environmental balance with its ecosystem.)

Yes, I'm quite excited about feminist SF's (and nonfiction's) role in the discussion of how to change society. It seems as if we're getting close to making significant, permanent changes in society, unless the various waves of backlash once again push our bits of foam back beyond the sandbar so that we lose sight of the shore and a new generation of dreamers must retrace our path. By the way, I think now that it seems that the particular form of backlash which said "feminism happened, but it was just a fad and now it's dead," failed to drown the movement, we're being hit by the newest wave of backlash. It relies upon the criticism of the so-called "cult of victimization," mentioned by Ehrenreich's article that **Bill Dyer** reprinted, and **Karen Babich's** reprint of Gaitskill's article. The new backlash says that feminists are cry-babies. Cry-babies, of course, are best ignored until they quit their tantrum; no need to actually listen to their hysterical words.

My theory about what you called the third stage, the actual accomplishment of change, is that it is hardly a stage at all in itself. The accomplishment of the goal happens invisibly, unconsciously while we devise the tools to create it.



I found **Jim Nichols'** statement "It's hard to be a trufan if you are shy," to be a bit ironic. In 40s, 50s, and 60s—even into the early 70s—when fans rarely met because so few could afford to travel and cons were small and sparse—so-called

trufans were *by definition* shy persons. In fact, the archetypal (or clichéd) description of a fan always mentioned "his shy, sensitive face." After all, they communicated almost exclusively through the written word. In my neo days, I was constantly told that I made a very irregular fan. My gender and political interests aside, I was so oddly *not shy*.

[SC] You asked me about what happened with my "female companion" (how carefully phrased, Pat) from last issue. Well, I somehow managed to salvage things that night and we dated through my senior year and for awhile afterwards. Except for a few incidents like the one I related, it was a fairly routine sort of early relationship and I eventually broke up with her when I decided to go off to college. I believe she is happily married with a couple kids today.

Bill Humphries

[JG] I was glad to see that you addressed the common misconception that US citizens are drowning in a sea of nuisance lawsuits (in **Ellen Franklin's** comment). As your research reveals, this is a Big Lie, promulgated by large corporations to invalidate reasonable demands that they take responsibility for their actions. This is an important issue and you've uncovered facts that should be Better Known.

However, I wish that you had expressed your ideas more clearly. Someone who failed to read very closely could even have missed your main points—that in fact the number of lawsuits is declining, not increasing, and that most lawsuits filed against large corporations are most often won by the defendants and are not trivial.

I understand that you enjoy the details of your research. That's a good thing, because work on this level requires a patient, careful attitude. But I feel frustrated, sometimes, when you skip the clear, basic summary statements and cut right to that detail when you discuss your ideas with non-economists. Especially when I agree with you and am cheering for your ideas to have more of an impact.

[SC] You did a fine job on last month's cover and I look forward to the "Bill Conspiracy" effort yet to come.

I missed the Hatter's opening day because we were out of town at a wedding, but we will have to get together for a few games this season. I'd like to see the weather and the team warm up a bit first.

Diane Martin

[JG] I finished Atwood's *The Robber Bride* and second your recommendation to everyone. What a fantastic story. It's definitely my favorite of all the books by Atwood that I've read so far. It's also the funniest, which is surprising because I've never even noticed that she had a sense of humor. I'm wondering if I should re-read some of her other books, though I'm pretty sure *A Handmaid's Tale* was not funny. I especially liked the peculiar specialty—battlefield strategy—of Toni, the historian. And I loved the incident in which the twin girls ask her to tell them fairy tales, but demand that she change all the characters' genders to female. And of course, looking back, this is what Atwood does in *The Robber Bride*: she assumes that all the major characters, good and bad, are women, and the results are...surprising. Actually I was reminded of one of the books we read for the Tiptree Award—an extraordinarily good fantasy novel, by the way—*Dancing Jack*, for its use of female characters in roles that we might expect to be male.

[SC] I have been rather public about my general distaste for cats, but I have to admit Diane that Ted is one fine cat. I think it is almost impossible not to play with him.

Farmer's Market starts April 23. I'm pumped. I know you're ready. Coffee and goodies on the Capital Square on a (hopefully) sunny Saturday morning. One of Madison's special charms. See you there along with the other "regulars."

Jim Nichols

[JG] I really enjoyed your WisCon report, Jim. Thanks. Karen's and Melinda's speeches were great. A wonderful fannish tradition involves asking GoH's for reprint rights of their speeches and then printing them in fanzines. Tracy, Hope, or any other fanzine publishers out there might like to consider asking for permission. I think that both of their speeches would make dynamite articles.

[SC] Re: WisCon. Last year you did Programming. This year you're doing Publications. Jim you sound like a man who has Ambitions. Are you planning to sit in the Big Chair one of these years soon? Seriously, you did a fine job last year and I think you will do very well again.

I enjoyed your WisCon report. I'm glad you wrote about the GoH speeches and particularly Melinda Snodgrass. What a wonderful surprise she turned out to be. Jeanne and I had lunch with her and Karen Fowler on Sunday. She once studied opera, and she has been raising horses on her New Mexico ranch. She has a great sense of humor and she really enjoyed WisCon.

Tracy Shannon

[JG] Odd, isn't it, that though your new address indicates that you now live in a different city, your new apartment is actually more central.

I used to live in an apartment with very thin walls (and I used to survive without a computer). Anyway, in those days, I used a thick pad to muffle the sounds of my typewriter. I still have the pad. Could you use it?

[SC] I will be very, very interested in your Corflu report. Not just because it will be well written. Coming from you it couldn't be anything else. (Pardon the blatant flattery, I feel I should make up a little for my humorous cartoon of last issue.) But rumors abound that Corflu is having some problems this year.

Nevenah Smith

[JG] Great zine, Nevenah. I really enjoyed reading it—and looking at it, too. Your typeface has lovely, elegant, tall ascenders (which could have benefited from a bit more leading for readability, but that's a minor quibble). Is it a Garamond variant? I don't recognize it.

Interesting comment about Wilhelm's novel, *Death Qualified*. It's exactly that sort of minor element in Wilhelm's writing that initially made me uncomfortable about her attitude towards gays and lesbians. I reviewed *Let the Fire Fall* in *Janus* 5 and complained about a minor character described very briefly as gay and evil, as if each aspect "explained" the other. After that I noticed her sidelong comments more often. (We sent her a copy of that issue of *Janus*, but Wilhelm did not respond.)

Here's a quotation from that novel, in which Wilhelm very briefly describes a minor character: "He was a pansy, she

thought in disgust... Wakeman was forty-two, athletic, sunburned, virile looking and a pansy—who knew that she knew, and hated her for knowing."

[From my review:] Colonel Wakeman and this characterization have no importance in the novel; the description serves merely as a facile, cheap and rather disgusting denigration of a character Wilhelm wishes us to dislike. ... [And later in the novel] Dee Dee, the mistress of one of the main characters, emerges from his bed and a brutal session with the man "aching, bruised, and happy..." "Boy that sure must have been a ball!" quips Merton (another of Dee Dee's lovers) when he sees her battered body. "There were red marks from pinches and bites, and a bruise on her thigh, and another on her shoulder. When her gaze reached her face, she was startled: she had never looked prettier." At this point, I paged back to check the copyright date, but no, it wasn't a 50s reprint; Kate Wilhelm had written *Let the Fire Fall* in 1969...

Then, after hearing her bluster angrily in reaction to questions about—what many of us assumed to be—healthy homosexual relations in *Where Late the Sweet Birds Sang*, I've come to the conclusion that these hints are just the tip of the iceberg. Perhaps she knows that she'd get little support for her attitude if she expressed her feelings more explicitly. I agree that it certainly seems odd that she could support other liberal ideals in her writing and public life, and at the same time display such hatred for gays. I assume her views about abusive sexual relationships must have changed since 1969... Certainly her contributions to the *Khatru* symposium didn't seem reactionary. Maybe a little conservative compared to the others, but nothing like the Dee Dee quote from *Let the Fire Fall*.

I also appreciated your response to my comments to Jae on *A Fire upon the Deep*. How exciting that Vinge is planning a sequel! I think the world in which *Tines* and *Humans* evolve together will make for a fascinating novel. Wow!

I bet that the "oddly dull chunk of Plexiglas with weird accretions" from *Star Trek* that you found in the Seattle second-hand store was created by Virginia Aalko. She ended up doing quite a lot of Plexiglas work for that series and some of the early movies too. Jan Bogstad and I met her down in Florida at SunCon before she changed her name from "Virginia Galko." At that time, she owned a Plexiglas factory. Eventually, I persuaded her to do some illustrations for *Janus*; in fact, we published a whole series of full-page illustrations of hers for a center section in a WisCon program book, the year Vonda McIntyre was our GoH. Virginia was a very confident, bold woman, very much the successful entrepreneur, though she was very mysterious too. She moved on to Hollywood, acted as agent for various new SF artists (even me for a very short time), but we soon lost track of her. Periodically I hear about her through various SF authors with whom she has kept in contact.

[SC] YCT me: I don't think of you as "sexually threatening." I wonder, from your questions, whether that is how you see yourself, or is the image you would like to project. In that case, maybe we have different definitions of what is sexually threatening. In my work, I see people who are very aggressively threatening. Some of them are quite capable of using rape and sexual torture on their victims, who may be women, children, other men, animals and maybe even old folks. My threshold for behavior that strikes me as "threatening" is pretty high. People can get away with acting pretty weird around me



before I decide they are possibly dangerous. (I'm probably a perfect bus commuter, in other words.)

On the other hand, I am a bit old fashioned in that I refrain from discussing personal or sexual matters in front of a large mixed group of people (such as the B n'B). It makes me nervous, as you have long known. It helps that you seem so comfortable with your openness, so I guess I don't mind that you manage to make me nervous and make me laugh at the same time. I don't see you as threatening, I see you as provocative.

I liked your "Obsession" piece. Creepy.

laura spieß

[JG] Gosh, I sure didn't feel gloomy and grim. In fact, I was feeling particularly energetic last month, and a good thing that was, considering the mountain of work I had to do.

I'm glad you enjoyed *The Kingdom of Kevin Malone*. I was really impressed by how Suzy McKee Charnas used the idea that one doesn't ever really escape the real world (or oneself) into fantasy. We always take our selves, our neurosis's, and our strengths along with us. Charnas wove this theme so seamlessly into a YA novel, that—as you say—it makes for good reading for all ages. Kathi and Liana Nash have got my copy of it now and both seem to like it a lot.

[SC] I would say you have bought and paid for the privilege to do a bit of bitching and whining last issue. Having seen the hassles you've had to put up with this broken leg, I completely sympathize. I'm glad we could be of some help to you. It was reward enough for me to be able to help you get a chance to enjoy WisCon and Bill's Moroccan feast.

Of course I have to smile every time I think of the unsuspecting restaurateurs in your territory who are soon going to be dealing with a health inspector who has a new personal awareness of handicapped access issues. Give 'em hell, laura.

Kim Winz

[JG] I wonder if aversion to caffeine is a common phenomenon among pregnant women. My mom says she always knew to the moment when she was pregnant. She would suddenly hate the taste of coffee. Since I have always disliked coffee, even its smell, I figure that if I ever got pregnant, I might suddenly crave coffee. Of course, we'll never know for sure.

Your comment to **Bill Dyer** about the Bobbit case reminded me of an NPR news broadcast I heard recently. The Wisconsin legislature has been considering making the insanity plea illegal. And a couple weeks ago, the Montana legislature actually eliminated the insanity plea from the law books. I had wondered if Lorena Bobbit's successful insanity plea had anything to do with these legislative initiatives, but then I figured I was getting a little paranoid and dismissed the idea. But the other day, I heard a news broadcast about the Montana decision, and the announcer stated (with the tone which suggested that this was common knowledge, not speculation) that Montana legislators were motivated to change the law by the insanity pleas of Squeaky Frome and Lorena Bobbit—two women who had escaped punishment for their attacks on men. Whew... Just when you think you're being too paranoid.

[SC] Thank you for the response to my apa vs. on-line question. The general consensus on the topic seems to be that

apas have nothing to fear for the time being and I guess I agree with that.

Jae Adams

[JG] As I mentioned to you at B&B, I liked your essay on Meetings You Have Known. I too, have known many meetings and mostly I haven't liked them. I've got this theory that everyone has greater or lesser amounts of a personality trait that causes them to enjoy formalized social interactions which are encouraged in meeting settings. The more you have of this trait, the more you like (or tolerate) meetings for their own sake. At one end of the spectrum are people who get off on memorizing Roberts' Rules of Order and who think of meetings as entertaining games. (Perhaps they like the feeling that they have more control over the process of interaction than they have in a more casual setting.) They are far more interested in the form of a meeting than its content. The kind of person who religiously attends the WSFC committee meetings at worldcons comes to mind as an example here. Dick Russell comes to mind. There's also a funny passage in Kim Stanley Robinson's new novel *Green Mars* which refers to this kind of personality. Settlers on Mars are gathering for a sort of Constitutional Congress at this point in the story:

The Swiss from Overhangs arrived on the day before the conference was supposed to begin; people said they had been camped outside in their rovers, waiting for the date specified. They brought with them a whole set of procedures and protocols for the meeting, and as Nadia and Art listened to a Swiss woman describing their plans, Art elbowed Nadia and whispered, "We've created a monster."

"No no," Nadia whispered back ... "We need a structure, or it would be a free-for-all. The Swiss are form without content, if you see what I mean."

And since Robinson believes that the revolution will succeed or fail to the degree that everyone's talents are utilized, he portrays the Swiss group's obsession with form as a good thing, an essential contribution to the whole.

I can understand that point of view, but I'm more the kind of person on the other side of the spectrum who feels a sense of accomplishment when the form of a meeting takes a back seat to its content. And I also have this sneaking suspicion (which makes me less optimistic than Robinson) that the longer a group exists, that content people gradually get discouraged from attending meetings, while the form people stay involved, and gradually the meetings become less productive and the group tends to loose productive energy.

I do believe that it is possible to re-ignite a group with enthusiasm and to increase its productivity, and one important element of doing that is to revamp the meeting structure. How it gets revamped isn't as important as the mere fact that it gets changed (preferably to a form that the committee finds easy to deal with). This sort of unbalances the form people who have gotten (too) comfortable with The-Way-We've-Always-Done-Things. And it gives the content people a little elbow room and a greater sense of understanding as to how form facilitates content. Whenever we take charge of the structure of our lives we give ourselves a greater sense of self confidence.

I've been thinking a lot about this issue—how people work together, how meetings work or don't—as I think about

WisCon, especially WisCon 20. I think it might be a good thing if every WisCon conglom reinvented itself to some extent, so that its structure more accurately mirrored the way its members wanted to work. Rather than trying to force unique individuals into pre-defined position descriptions or meeting formats designed by previous congloms, we should start with the people and the goals—and design the decision-making structure to fit the people.

[SC] Great WisCon report.

Karen Babich

[JG] Good luck on your search (and finding the energy for the search) for a new job.

"And why shouldn't everyone help out with child care?" you ask. If you define political/monetary support for child care and education as "help," then I agree with you. Cliché or not, children are one of the most valuable resources of our world; we all depend upon their healthy upbringing. But if you are referring to a more tangible definition of "help," then no, I don't agree. I don't feel any responsibility to help directly or peripherally to child care. There are many vitally important things that individuals can do to make our world a better one, but "cleaning the play room or doing extra laundry" aren't intrinsically more important than working on a recycling campaign, voting responsibly, joining the Peace Corps, or defending an abortion clinic, to name just a few ways some people choose to contribute to society. We do what we can, but should never—in my opinion—require others to contribute energy to our own priority causes.

No, I haven't read the *F&SF* review of Disney's *Beauty and the Beast*. Actually, I rather liked that version of the B&B story. I liked the image of Beauty as a bookworm more interested in ideas than flirting, and contemptuous of judging a person's looks over their humanity. Yes, she's "a girl who changes a beast into a man through the power of love," as you say, but I guess I don't see this as a particularly dreadful aspect of sexism, if it is that. Maybe I'm misunderstanding your (and the reviewer's) point. Would the opposite be objectionable to you? "...a boy who changes a beast into a woman through the power of love."

I also like Emma Thompson a lot. Listening to some interviews she's done on various talk shows convinces me that she is really very intelligent, though I agree with you, I might prefer not to know if I was wrong. I really hated to hear Melinda Snodgrass's comments about Patrick Stewart, that he is a rather stupid man. (He got mad at her when she put words into the script that he didn't know.) Still, this means that Stewart is an even better actor than I originally thought, and I have always thought he was good.

Mary Gaitskill's article "On Not Being a Victim," was certainly interesting, and it sparked some ideas that I'm using in the article I mentioned to **Pat Hario** that I'm writing for *Hot Wire*. Mostly I was fascinated, though not often very sympathetic, with Gaitskill's opinions on victimization.

But what did *you* think of Gaitskill's ideas? You didn't say.

[SC] I enjoyed seeing you and Nigel at WisCon. Sorry if I wasn't too coherent or social, my work schedule was throwing a hell of a wrench into my weekend.

I thought the Gaitskill article was interesting, but I had a lot of problems with it. Like Jeanne, I would like to have a clearer idea of what you liked about it before I respond in too

much detail, but I'll give you an idea where I'm coming from by writing here about one small part of the article.

At the very end of the piece, Gaitskill relates an incident where she got drunk with a male friend at her apartment and started "floundering on the couch" with him. He started coming on to her pretty hard and she eventually called a halt to things by pointing out to him the situation would get very ugly before he got what he wanted. She stood up for herself and clearly said No. She felt good about how she finally learned to handle these situations.

It strikes me that here, as throughout most of her article, she assigns to herself the responsibility for handling these situations. The implication I got was that men cannot control themselves and, in certain circumstances, all men should be expected to behave like animals. Women are responsible for the outcomes of these encounters. In this case, the man she was with said some things that "alarmed" her and eventually frightened her. She doesn't say exactly what he said or did, but I'm left to believe he was edging toward rape. Instead of assigning some responsibility to him for his increasingly bad behavior, she writes in the last paragraph, "And I respected my friend as well by addressing both sides of his nature." So men, by nature, when presented with a drunk and possibly helpless female will try to have sex with her or rape her if necessary unless she stops him. That's the way men are and women must decide whether sex is appropriate and clearly signal YES or NO. Men cannot be expected to think for themselves that an inebriated female might be an inappropriate sex partner whether she signals to him or not.

This is also the problem with the opening experience where she beats herself up over how she failed to handle a similar incident when she was 16 and high on acid. She never assigns any blame to the guy who clearly took advantage of her.

Vijay Bowen

[JG] I never knew what a grace note was. Thanks. I like that idea, maybe because I add what might be called grace notes to many of my own illustrations. I like to put tiny jokes or details into a drawing that might only be noticed if someone takes another look, or at least does more than merely glance. Paintings or novels which contain more than what first meets the eye delight me, and interest me more than works that can be encompassed with one look, or one quick reading.

I seldom watched Letterman when he was on late at night. But now that his show airs earlier in the evening, I watch him much more often. However, I don't think it's the convenience that tempts me to switch on his show. Letterman seems to have located a sense of delight in what he does and communicates that joy to the audience. Frequently, he is wonderfully creative and playful, and I enjoy seeing that (in anyone). For a long time, after his new show started, his contagious laughter kept reminding me of someone and I could never figure out *who*. I finally located the source of this aural *déjà vu*: his laughter, when it's spontaneous and real, reminds me of Robert Preston.

Heather-Aynne Brooks

[JG] You have my sympathies for your hand injury. However, your story of how you were hurt definitely was missing something. You say only that "someone hit a locker door. About half a second later, I realized it was my locker."



Who hit your locker door? We need a villain here, someone evil or at least stupid. Why do you leave us hanging like this? At least, this is your chance to make up a story of suspense, intrigue and action.... Just kidding. Hope your hand is much improved.

Map? What map?

[SC] Ah, the early days of parent-supervised driving. I think parents have to have nerves of stainless steel to do this. Not that you're a bad driver, Heather, you seem to be doing fine. But just the idea of riding with an inexperienced driver around Madison during Friday rush hour is really scary. I don't like driving around at that time myself.

I remember a trip I had with my mother when I was still on a learner's permit and she was letting me drive around my hometown back in Iowa. I had been at it awhile and I was feeling pretty confident. We were planning to head out of town that morning (to Cedar Rapids? I don't remember for sure) and decided to stop in a drive-in for some lunch. It was an A&W type place where you drove into a stall, called your order in through a speaker by the driver and a waitress brought your food out to your car. When we finished I put the car into reverse, draped one hand on the wheel, slung one arm out the window like an expert and proceeded to back out too quick while turning too sharp. I jammed the left front fender into a big red pole in full view of the lunch time crowd and the drive-in staff. Many of whom I knew, of course, because this was a small town. I didn't do much damage, but I was too flustered to get the damn thing unwedged from the pole and eventually had to give up and let mom drive us out, with some help from the manager. I wish it had been my only car accident.

Does your mom suck in her breath when she's riding with you and something bad almost happens? My mom used to drive me nuts with that. She wouldn't shout or say anything, she would suck her breath in through her teeth that made this loud hiss, almost a whistle, that used to straighten me right up in my seat like an ice cube down my spine. Christ I hated that.

Jim Brooks

[JG] I just howled at your story about the dumb truck driver who complained that his boss gave him a truck too tall to squeeze under the bridge. And since then, I've told the story to several non-apans, swearing each time that the story was absolutely true.

I heard on the news that Spielberg made a personal visit to the school attended by the kids who apparently laughed during his film, *Schindler's List*. You mentioned the laughing incident in your last zine. Spielberg brought the film and lead discussion. Must have been quite a day.

As you may have realized with the last issue of *Union Street*, I'm not one of the pun-haters. Most of the time I'm not in your's and Tracy's league, but once in a while I dabble.

I agree totally with you that too many people have children for the wrong reasons, which makes it all the more important that the decision to become a parent not be encouraged as a right, a duty, a fashion, or even an essential experience.

[SC] A fantastic zine this time, Jim. I particularly liked the little comments in the boxes and the racing history. My youngest niece just got married to a fellow who works on midgets and has talked about coming up to race in Sun Prairie.

I'll have to go out and see what all the excitement is about if they manage to make it up here this year.

Who knows, maybe your enthusiasm for racing will draw a few folks from the local group to try something new. I know I haven't thought much about going to stock car races for years, but I started missing it as I was reading your article. Like baseball, I was never very knowledgeable about the sport, I mostly like to see the event and enjoy the experience.

Lilian Edwards

[JG] You Brits use the word, "whinge" fairly often (and you personally used it at least once in your last zine, *In Bed with Michael Portillo*), and every so often I've wondered about it. I've wondered if it's pronounced the same way as our "whine," since you use it in place of that word. But then the other day I saw some show on Public Television, originally produced for the BBC, and someone actually said "whinge," rhyming with "hinge," not with...well...rhyme. Is this a colloquialism? Or is whine a derivative from whinge? Where did that "g" come from (or go to)?

[SC] I just started reading your zine when I decided to take a break and walk down to Monty's Blue Plate diner. Over coffee and an enormous hunk of Monty's famous pie (peach today), I came to your TWP mailing comment to Jane on fat. Oh well.

I've gained about 15 pounds from what I was before I moved to Madison seven years ago. More importantly I'm farther out of good physical conditioning than I have ever been. As a man, I realize that I am not in the same situation that women are with respect to the pressures and messages society sends them about weight. But your comments to Jane resounded with me anyway.

I feel very much the same way about my 15 pounds as you do about "these six or seven pounds...[that] make a complete difference to my mood." I have never done much dieting and I know that dieting is not really the issue I'm struggling with. I am out of shape. I know that if I work on getting back in shape, my weight problem will take care of itself. (It'll either go away or else it will change into muscle.) My weight gain is a daily reminder that I need to do something about my conditioning and that is why I refuse to try to diet the weight off.

Like you, I am uncomfortable at my current weight. My clothes don't fit as well as they should and my self-esteem in social situations and at work have suffered. I feel "fat." I agree with you that I could never just let myself go and be happy wherever I ended up. I know I would feel better about myself 15 pounds lighter even if I was still out of shape. I also know myself well enough to understand that I won't stick with a major lifestyle change like a diet or a new workout routine unless I am sufficiently motivated and I just haven't reached that point quite yet.

You seem to have decided that you will deal with this by dieting, possibly on and off forever depending on your priorities. My solution is to make a major lifestyle change that I will have to stick with permanently or quickly backslide into worse shape than I'm in now. Neither solution sounds very inviting or easy to me. Maybe Jane is on to something after all.

Ellen Franklin

[JG] Your schedule doesn't seem to be slowing down at all. I rarely expect to find you home... Call me when you're back in town.

Lisa Freitag

[JG] I went to Colorado a few years ago to celebrate Christmas with my family. My brother Steve and his wife Betsy had a condo up in the mountains and we spent the week skiing. I took lessons on the bunny hill, then skied down the mountain a couple times, mostly in a state of barely numbed terror. It almost felt like a reprieve to find out at the end of my first day that I'd been fitted with the wrong size ski boots and had torn up my feet quite badly. I spent the rest of the week cross-country skiing through some of Colorado's flatter areas, and it turned out to be a thoroughly wonderful way to spend my time. Colorado X-C ski trails, ironically, are far tamer than Wisconsin X-C trails, which was OK, since I could spend more time concentrating on the gorgeous country around me. I guess I'm just not that Type A kind of person; I never caught the thrill that attracts so many people to downhill skiing.

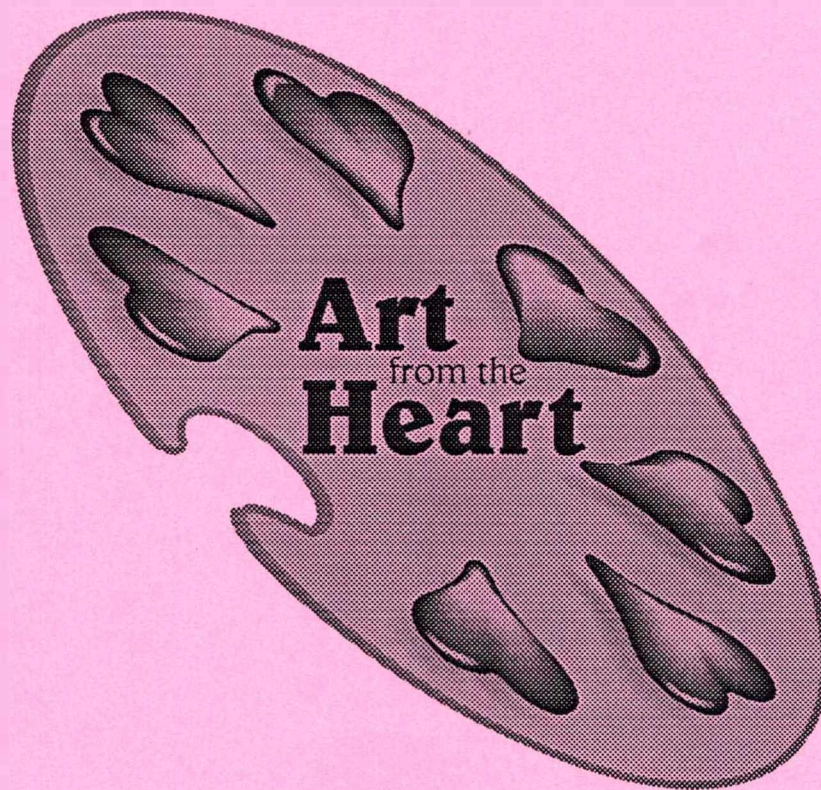
Keep us up to date on what's going on with Dreamhaven and the crazy landlady.

Peoria does have a couple good things going for it. Every couple years I go down there to attend classes at DGEF, Dynamic Graphics Educational Foundation. They do the best electronic graphics workshops I've ever attended. And there's a restaurant down near the river, in an old converted railroad station building that's incredibly wonderful. But I forget its name....

[SC] You did a very fine intro. piece on yourself. Thanks. I also thought your mailing comment to Julie for #91 was excellent. It's really a pleasure to have you onboard *Turbo*. You should not listen to any "tape" that tells you that you can't write. This is a pretty casual, conversational apa. You can get as heavy or as light in your choice of subject matter as you like, governed only by the quality of the feedback your work inspires. Puns are discouraged. Really bad puns may be actionable.

Our convention planning for the rest of the year includes ReaderCon in Massachusetts in July (any chance you will be there?) We would like to do Reinconation too, but I currently can't get the weekend off. Perhaps that will change. If it does, can we expect to see you there?

Scott & Jeanne
April 15, 1994



Painting a Brighter Future for Our Children

From a recent free-lance job of Jeanne's for the Exchange Center for the Prevention of Child Abuse, Inc.