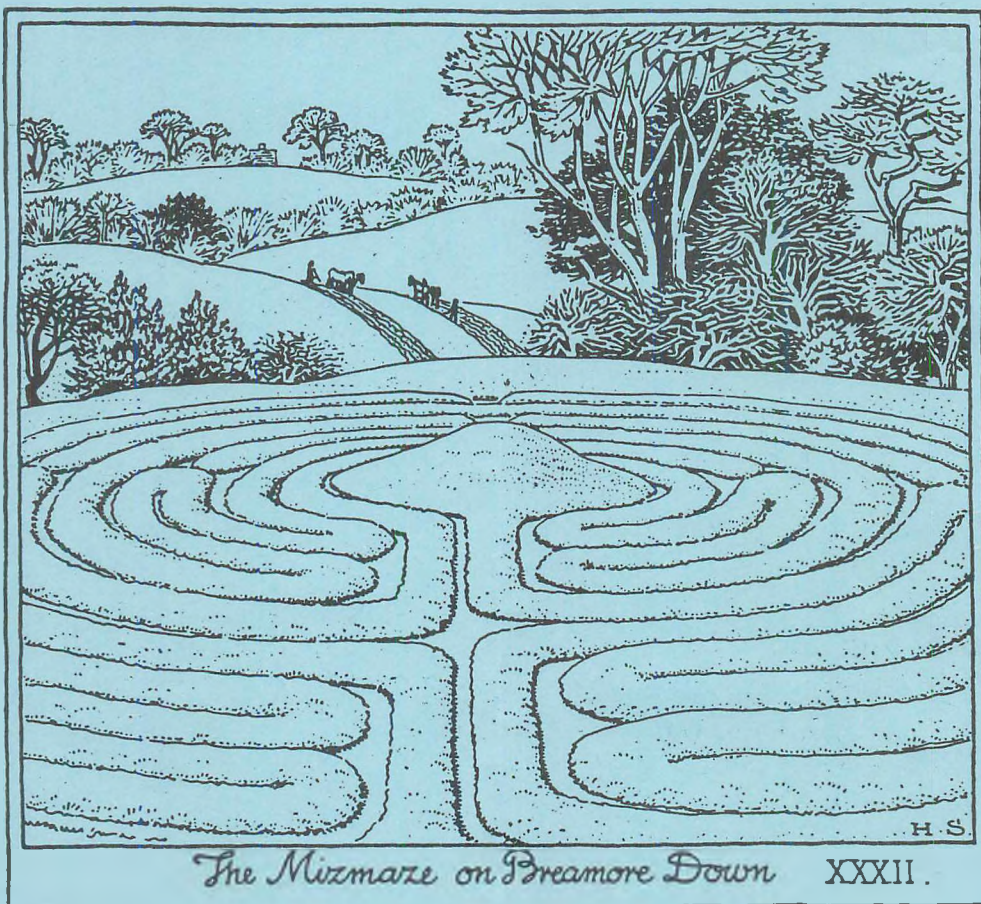


RAW BITS.  
DREAMS & FALSE ALARMS.  
THE METAPHYSICAL REVIEW

August 1986



THE DREAM ISSUE





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This is  
RAW BITS 3  
DREAMS AND FALSE ALARMS 3  
and especially THE METAPHYSICAL REVIEW 9

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August 1986

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## THE DREAM ISSUE: INTRODUCTION

What is very clear is that dreams do have meaning, they are not simply randomly arranged images. But rarely is this meaning a single one, and the meaning is by and large peculiar to the individual who has the dream. If dreams appear meaningless, that is a judgement of our rational minds. They certainly are meaningless in a logical, rational sense, since logic and reason are not part of the language of dreams. Dreams are a symbolic language... a symbol is the best possible expression of something that we have not yet understood...

Peter O'Connor, Dreams and the Search for Meaning, page 2

This issue (of three magazines, yet) is a year late, so I'd better explain what I aimed to do in the original 'Dream Issue'. It ran as a small magazine contributed to ANZAPA (Australia and New Zealand Amateur Press Association); the entire text of the dream section of that issue is reprinted here. I sent out about 100 extra copies to people I thought might send me letters in return. Readers from Out There sent back interesting replies; ANZAPA members were uninterested in the project.

ANZAPA members objected to the Dream Issue for a number of reasons, but they can be summarised as:

- (1) I don't remember my dreams, so I'm not interested in anybody else's;
- (2) The dreams of one person are private to that person and of no interest to other people;
- (3) One's dreams are somehow not very nice things to tell to other people - I'd be just too embarrassed to tell you mine.

I was rather surprised to hear these responses, which seemed banal and mundane to me. Surely, I thought, if readers and writers see themselves as the dream merchants, people who deal with the raw stuff of the unconscious. It appears not. Maybe if fans - or at least the people who were in ANZAPA in August last year - think that sf has something to do with the future of what is called the 'real world'.

The ANZAPA responses seemed to show an overall fear of dreams. This attitude seems to be part of the culture. Jungians accuse Freudians of spreading this



attitude, best summarised in the cartoons of shrinks standing over the patients, hearing all their dirty secrets while analysing their dreams.

I admit that I'm not familiar enough with Freud's works on dreams to know whether or not the Jungians are right. But my own recent interest in dreams stems from reading C. G. Jung's Memories Dreams Reflections, wherein Jung relates a number of the most important of his life's dreams, and the patterns they foretold. Those dreams make exciting reading, whether or not one worries about Jung's interpretation of them. Since I read Memories Dreams Reflections at a time when I was very undecided about a number of things, I began writing down my most memorable dreams, as Jung had done all his life. The two main dreams recorded here come from that period.

It seems essential to Freud's view of the world that dreams tell of internal matters that you don't want revealed. Jung, however, says that dreams tell of matters you do want revealed. It was Freud who did the pioneering work showing how dreams are complex metaphors for unresolved problems of the psyche - problems that the conscious mind would rather not know about. Jung seems to have taken a different line - that dreams show what our unconscious self is trying to tell our conscious self, and for our conscious self to listen carefully is to begin a process of healing and integration. Freud appears to trace the origins of all dreams back to one's early years of life, but Jung was far more interested in the way that dreams can come to terms with current problems and point to future solutions.

Much remains puzzling about dreams. There are behavioural scientists who claim that dreams are merely a way for the brain to clear out its waste material, its unresolved problems from the day before. Psychoanalysts believe that dreams are a way of coming to terms with basic, lifelong problems. Neither explanation seems to come to terms with the way dreams appear to us: (1) almost never do the dreams of a particular night contain images or events derived from happenings of the day before; and (2) in dreams you usually find yourself will-less - unable to direct events, and able to believe things that your waking self would know are not true.

Why are dreams metaphors? Why do they form self-contained short stories? Dreams seem to be the result of the mind's attempt to be its own artist - to go beyond mere day-to-day problems. Dreams are unasked-for, amazing, often more vivid and interesting than any events in one's ordinary life. When remembered and recorded, they can be funny and entertaining. (My unconscious mind often makes me laugh with amusement; it's a pity my conscious mind rarely follows its lead.)

Back in 1981-2, when I first read Jung, I wanted to find out what my more vivid dreams were trying to tell me. I've never succeeded in that aim. In 1982 I went to lectures by Peter O'Connor, a Jungian psychotherapist, and he collected the lectures into a book called Understanding Jung, Understanding Yourself (Methuen Haynes). Later he conducted dream seminars, and thoughts that sprang from that experience resulted in his recent book, Dreams and the Search for Meaning (Methuen Haynes). O'Connor goes to great pains to warn people against trying for literal interpretations of their dreams - which is not much help to the dream-searcher. It's my life, and I'd like to know how better to lead it.

Which is the thought, I suppose, that impelled me to write the original 'Dream Issue'. Since I don't have the money to hire a Jungian psychoanalyst who might help me make more sense of my dreams, I tried to enlist the help of the only group who (I thought) were in the dream-generating-and-appreciating business: science fiction and fantasy readers, writers, and fans. Some of them (ANZAPA members) feel they are not. Some (my correspondents here) feel they are. Most of the letter-writers are in the business of writing or appreciating fiction. Many authors keep dream diaries and use such material in their work. Most creative people know that their only reliable friend is their unconscious - their only helper when strivings of the intellect fail them. These letter-writers didn't solve my problems - they're not miracle-workers, after all - but they revealed a bit about themselves, had some fun, won prizes in my little competition, and (I trust) provided an unusual and entertaining issue of TMR. I wish they had told me about their own particularly interesting dreams; maybe next time. I hope that other people (including FAPA members and new ANZAPA members) will join in the discussion.

- Bruce Gillespie, July 1986

Part 1:  
THE DREAM COMPETITION

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(First publication: Sweetness and Light 3, June 1985.)

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SPECIAL

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FIRST TIME EVER

ANZAPA CONTEST

GENUINE PRIZES

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First, the prizes: either your pick of our throwout records - which are numerous, but none of which is recommended, since I threw the records out - or a couple of cassettes made from records of your choice, provided we have them. There are also some throwout books that you might like to peruse, but I wouldn't recommend any of them, either. (A hardback Dune? Three volumes of Piers Anthony?) I might even buy you a mint, pre-recorded tape or a new book if I like your reply well enough. Or, like any contest organiser, I reserve the right not to award a prize at all. The contest will be judged on letters of comment received by 10 August 1985 or, of course, ANZAPA magazines in the next mailing.

Second, the contest.

Nope. Second, the explanations. Then the contest.

Several years ago, I promised Leigh Edmonds that I would write some articles about my interest in the works and ideas of C. G. Jung. I didn't write the articles, and now Rataplan has closed, so I don't need to write them. I had several ideas for them. Firstly I was going to describe what it was like to attend my first Council of Adult Education class. That was where I picked up many of the ideas. I have my notes somewhere, but I'm not sure where. What I remember most clearly from those lectures was standing on tram-stop corners in freezing Melbourne winter evenings while travelling to and from the CAE.

In another article I was going to describe the results of becoming interested in the works of Jung. These were minimal. I haven't found the answer to living, or anything like that. All I have are 8 volumes of diaries and dream diaries. Jung, like Freud, was big on dreams. There is only one difficulty with dreams - they are very difficult to interpret. The theory is that, if you work hard enough at interpreting your dreams, you find lots of Big Answers about Yourself. I've thought a lot about my dreams, but I haven't found any Big Answers. Maybe I'm backing the wrong horse - sorry, nightmare. Maybe I should follow Freud, who had rather clearer ideas than Jung about the real meaning of dreams. Me, I prefer the idea that some weird idea out of left field might make sense.

So, the contest. Prizes to the ANZAPAn or other correspondent who can provide the most interesting interpretation of the following two dreams. The interpretations do not need to be plausible, and they can certainly be entertaining, even amusing. They can even be very serious and well meant.

A word of warning: it is essential to Jungian ideas about dreams that any figures who appear in them are parts of the shadow (or compensating) personality of the dreamer. Therefore, although figures named 'Roger Weddall' and 'David Grigg' appear in the second dream, the commentator should not rely on his or her view of those real-life people, but try to work out what they mean as symbols in the dreams.

Dream No. 1: 5.30 a.m., Sunday, 18 October 1981

I find it difficult to remember the beginning of this dream. I seem to remember seeking out My Old School. At the beginning of the dream it was clearly a secondary school, but later it could almost have been a primary school. In the dream, however, I had no sense of it being Oakleigh State School or Oakleigh High School.

At the beginning of the memorable section of the dream, I was in an auditorium (after asking the way, joshing old companions in the schoolground, etc.), in the top row of a tiered concert auditorium. The end of the concert was approaching. I was now a teenage boy, and not merely an adult visitor to a school reunion. Everybody surrounding me was also teenage, and all of them were female, wearing elaborate gowns, almost as if this were an American high school graduation ceremony, rather than any occasion that one would ever experience while a student at an Australian high school. The tiers below contained the assembled students of the same school. An orchestra had been playing all night, and was approaching the end of its concert. Just before the last item, the assembly of excited girls, their faces ebullient, mischievous, surged down the tiers and forward to the front of the tier/balcony. They horrified and embarrassed me by beginning to sing sweetly, but irreverently and seemingly irrelevantly, some fol-de-rol song (probably 'The Happy Wanderer').

Suddenly I was standing there in one-half of the balcony, which had been emptied when the girls surged forward to the front, clinging to each other. I did not know what to do. I wanted to call out to them, to tell them to be quiet and resume their seats. They did not notice my agitation. To gain their attention, I would have needed to call out very loudly. This would have meant very much greater embarrassment for me, since I would then have been seen as the only person in the auditorium interrupting the beginning of the orchestra's last number. Mostly I was disturbed by the excitement in the air, by the sense of togetherness among the girls, and the fact that I was merely the outraged, isolated onlooker.

I might have done something embarrassing, if only the orchestra had not burst into the last tune, itself the fol-de-rol tune that the girls had been whistling and singing among themselves. I had a great sense of relief - that my notion of decorum had not been outraged after all, that the girls were merely anticipating an item that they knew, anyway, was on the concert program. Now their excited, giggly self-joy did not seem nearly so threatening, but in itself was the kind of reunion/school spirit that I had come seeking. Nevertheless, I was still standing very much by myself on the balcony, so I slipped away.

Of the second balcony down, the dress circle, so to speak, I have much less recollection. Now I was much more part of the school, and now most of those surrounding me were boys. When I looked below, the orchestra, stage, and pit had disappeared and I saw a giant swimming pool. It was not marked in lanes, like a pool used for swimming races. I knew it was that kind of school pool, however, because it shone with the turquoise-green light of chlorine. It looked remarkably cool and inviting, but I heard some fellows nearby say that no one would want to swim in it - it was only recycled sewage water, and if you looked closely you would still see turds floating occasionally in the water. This was disconcerting information, and for the moment it spoiled my purpose, which was to find some embodiment of a School Spirit that was somehow lost in the past, and also simply to find some kids I had actually known when I was at the school. Despite the information given to me by the boys on the balcony, from where I was sitting I could see no sign of turds in the pool. Indeed, I felt an increasing conviction that the pool was still where I would find the answer to my quest. I could now smell, more and more, a crystalline, invigorating 'pool smell', not sewage or chloriny at all, and that lured me on.

This pool smell was quite infatuating by the time I made my way through a labyrinth of corridors at the base of the auditorium. However, it was no simple matter to find the pool. Suddenly, I was ascending a ramp that led upwards from some underground corridor to the edge of the pool. I was running. Above me, schoolboys waved to me. They were the first at the school to recognise me. The school spirit, the source of some great mystic togetherness, was up there. I reached the poolside, and somehow I was in the magic circle, but not completely. I felt a great cold emanation from the pool itself. It lay before me in what seemed like a huge concrete bowl. It gleamed greenly. I gazed on it. What would happen now? Boys talked to me. Now we were all primary school kids. I felt that at last I might be accepted as one of them, in a way I had never been when I was a child. Indeed, it seemed nearly so. But they were far more offhand about the wondrous experience than I was. Indeed, as we found ourselves gazing at the sluice from which the water entered, and the water itself, I heard them repeating the story that it was all sewage water anyway, and you mustn't set foot in the pool, or you would

meet a turd floating by. I gazed at the water intently. The more I did so, the more I became convinced that the others were wrong, and that I should wade into the water. So I began paddling, even as the sense of the cold, concrete, pure sufficiency of the pool overwhelmed me.

That was the end of the dream proper, but I have a feeling that, as I was gaining consciousness, I began to rationalise the experience. Perhaps I had a second, shorter dream. Somebody began to explain to me that the real danger was that the water's source was rock affected by atomic testing. For the moment, they had a technique for purifying the water before it reached the pool, of displacing the radioactivity, but one day all the radioactivity would have been displaced to everywhere else, so there would be no more purifying space...

Dream No. 2: Morning, Friday, 20 November 1981:

I was home at East Preston, and left in the morning to go to University. When I got there, I took a room at the hotel that was on campus. I left my things higgledy-piggledy all over the room. A friend (I cannot remember which one) came to visit me. We had some peculiarly delicate matter to talk over (or was the delicacy the fact that I was undressed to singlet and T-shirt, which appeared clearly at the end of the dream and which, I presume, I had been wearing during all the events of the dream?). We were most put out when the usual morning cleaners knocked at the hotel-room door, then proceeded to clean up everything. I tried to stack up the assorted bits and pieces, but my friend said, 'Let's go.' Only when we left the room did I realise that much of the campus had been taken over by an sf convention, which was the real reason why I was here. However, I thought, as we walked down the corridor, 'Oh hell, I've left everything in the hotel room; I'll have to come back for them.'

I found myself in the Baillieu Library. I was looking at the shelves when David Grigg wandered in. He was carrying a book. I knew immediately that he had written and published it. He had that peculiarly apologetic, yet proud look that David wears when he has written something fine, realises its worth, but can't quite get around to pushing it at you. David was wearing a suit. He handed me the book and waited, strolling past the stacks, while I looked through the book. It was printed in handsome trade paperback size, with thick vellum paper. It was in two parts, both extensively illustrated. The first fifty pages contained an explanation of how David came to write the book. It contained innumerable historical photographs from the late 1800s in Victoria, yet seemed to contain much text as well. The actual novel was also thickly illustrated, but with pictures from a much earlier period - from fifteenth and sixteenth-century paintings. Some pages had a second colour. One, in particular, made me feel particularly jealous that I couldn't gain that effect in my magazine. It showed a block of vibrant brown down one side of the page, balanced against a monochrome illustration on the other side.

I shut the book and handed it back to David. He protested, 'No, it's yours.' I said that I would have to pay for it later, since I had no money on me. (That part of the dream remained consistent throughout - knowing that I had left everything back at the hotel room, but feeling that it was a kind of freedom.) 'No payment,' said David. 'But why did you write and print this book yourself, if it wasn't to sell copies?' I said. 'Oh', said David, genuinely offhandedly, as if he had to try thinking of an answer on the spot, 'because it gives me something to take with me to give me an excuse to see all my old friends.' I thought this was a nice idea, but then I had a strange image, leaping out of sequence like a dream within a dream, of David standing at the door of Lee and Irene's (a handsome inner-city terrace house), and David virtually shoving the book at Irene and turning on his heel, suggesting that he was still too shy and modest to take advantage even of the opportunity offered by the gift to 'go and see all his old friends'.

That bit was out of sequence. In the main narrative of the dream, I looked at the book again and noted with dismay that the only bit of terribly bad taste had been committed on the cover. Underneath the title, The Catch (in some large, ancient typeface), a thick piece of black adhesive had been pasted on to the paper cover. Why was it there? I could only guess that it was there to



obliterate David's name. I leafed through the book and found that, sure enough, David's name appeared nowhere inside. Since it had somehow reached the cover, he had simply obliterated it there as well. By now, David had left the room, so I could not ask him about this matter.

I then found myself holding a very large, awkward book. It contained the large reproductions of the paintings that David had used in his book. A slight, attractive girl came over to me and began to point out various items. It turned out that she was in charge of this section of the Baillieu, and had helped David through all stages of producing his book. She carried an air of quiet confidence, of being equal to every situation.

At that moment Roger Weddall arrived. He said that a group of the convention attendees were going into the city and would I like to come too? I invited the university librarian as well, and we all set off on one of Roger's expeditions. Only when we left the buildings did I realise that I was still carrying the large book (and I must have been still carrying David's book, as it appears again in the dream). It was illegal to take it out of the library, but the girl librarian did not notice, although she was still with us.

We took the tram to the city. In the course of wandering around town, we came upon a shop that was run by a friend of the librarian. The strange impression I had at first was that the friend was male, but, standing closer, I realised that the friend was female, and even slighter and thinner than the librarian, and seemed very mischievous and lively. I had to keep reminding myself that, yes, she was running the shop. At any rate, she and her friend, the librarian, plus Roger buzzing around in his usual manner, gave a remarkable air of festivity to the occasion. We began to try all the gadgets in the shop. I still had the large book from the Baillieu with me. One of its pictures was the same as one of the pictures in David's book. We put the picture under what must have been an 'animator'. (This name did not appear in the dream, but it is the only possible name for what the gadget did.)

The image appeared before us very vividly, seeming to shine in the air. It was the picture of a young girl, stretching and looking upward. The girl wore a blue eighteenth or nineteenth-century dress, and her skin was delicately pink. The picture began to change rapidly, in a series of stills. I had the impression that the picture was going its own way, showing all its possibilities. The girl was made to look disturbingly distorted, like a figure in a Diane Arbus photograph. The face grew both older and younger, the skin crinkled yet became smoother. By the time we switched off the device, the face and figure of the girl seemed both very crinkled and old, and reverted almost back to babyhood. Both processes happened at once, the constant ripple of distortions playing across the face of the girl.

The vividness and disturbing quality of the picture did not seem to dampen the spirits of the rest of the party. Roger suggested that everyone should go somewhere to eat. I remembered that I had to go back to the hotel room at the University to pick up my things (and I think I had some idea of seeing the last of the convention events). I wandered to the tram stop. Nobody seemed to be around, but suddenly I realised that I had been wearing my singlet and T-shirt all along, but that nobody in our group had worried at all. If they had noticed, they had seen my strange apparel as just part of the jollity that had affected everybody. Only at that stage did I feel melancholy that everybody else had gone off elsewhere, and I was left wandering down an empty street. When I reached the tram stop, a tram was coming the other way. A woman ran to catch it, but it went straight past her. My tram was coming the other way, but I ran as fast as possible across the road, and it stopped for me.

(Sweetness and Light, No. 3, June 1985, pp. 1-6)



Part 2:

THE WINNERS

---

I've cheated a bit in the following section. I've awarded two winners, one of whom has already collected her prize. But I've made everybody else a potential winner as well (except for Damien and Lucy, who wrote entertaining letters but did not write about my two dreams). I'm very grateful for the enormous amount of interested effort that went into all the replies. Ask away, people - if I can afford it, I'll send what you ask for.

But the year's suspense is over. There were two Winners, whose letters meant a lot to me for quite different reasons:

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BRIAN W. ALDISS

Woodlands, Foxcombe Road, Boars Hill, Oxford OX1 5DL, England

The dreams are clearly important to you, since you go to the trouble of printing them in Sweetness and Light. But, as you know, Jung places emphasis on the importance of selection. These two dreams supplement each other. They represent a slight progression in the development of the self.

Both dreams begin with womb connotations: the school ('it could have been primary'), the hotel room ('my things all over'), though in Dream 2 you actually get born. You were 'put out', and cleaners came and cleaned everything up. The fear of the female sex is strong. Women are disruptive elements in (1); they are 'excited', they 'surge', they are 'anticipating an item they knew' - clear sexual reference. In (2), the first woman is an authority figure, a librarian, enjoining silence, the second quasi-female is 'mischievous'. The first dream is a bit of a bummer. You are more isolated than in (2) (and 'outraged'). The girls' giggly 'self-joy' leads you downwards till you confront something with an invigorating smell which lures you on. The symbolism is obvious, particularly when we consider that it is 'no easy matter to find the pool'. At this point you think of 'some great mystic togetherness', though this longing is transferred to the school spirit, and the vagina becomes confused with cloacal functions ('it seemed like a huge concrete bowl'). You are now 'in the magic circle but not completely'. A hint of incest here, as you gaze on it - Freud points out how looking rather than doing is the essential stance of incest. 'What would happen now?' What indeed! But you are turned away by feeling that the vagina is somehow contaminated, either by turds or, more dangerously, by radioactivity.

In the second dream, you are still afraid of being noticed or of being obtrusive, and in consequence still isolated. Your friends present you with dilemmas. But David Grigg stands as your double. DG = BG. You worry about your writing; it will 'give you an excuse to see your friends' (of. 'I Must Be Talking to My Friends'). Note the compulsion, must. The book's title refers to the most famous of all catches, Catch 22. Can you publish and make friends while retaining your anonymity (the obliterated name)? The gadgets in the shop represent your attempt to escape via sf, but the problem remains. The end is guardedly optimistic. You're still shy but seem to be popular. Although a feeling of isolation recurs, you are aware you have done pretty well and travelled a long way - the tram will stop for you, if not for some unknown woman. Perhaps you have reached the Jungian stage of individuation.

All the best - hold horns high!

(19 July 1985)

\* I think you were the only person to look at the dreams in an integrated psychoanalytic way, Brian, which is why your remarks seem most pertinent. In the first dream, however, there was an enormous sense of bliss and transcendence when at last I waded into the pool. It was this feeling, and its consequent sense of liberation, that means most to me. Liberated - but to do what? There is the same feeling in Dream No. 2. The vision of the girl in blue seemed a great pointer towards creative release, but I wasn't (and still am not) sure which direction to go.

\*

YVONNE ROUSSEAU

PO Box 8, North Carlton, Vic. 3054

The dreams presented for our interpretation in your third Sweetness and Light are insufficient as they stand, because the circumstances of the dreamer are important, whether the interpreter be Crickal or Jungian. Only in the 'Madame Olga's Dreambook' type of interpretation are circumstances relatively unimportant; there, you may look for prophetic communications from the astral plane; had you dreamed of climbing a high tower or mountain and then looking down, you might have expected the death of somebody close to you; only your later circumstances would be relevant for checking what had been presaged took place.

For the Crick-Michelson theory, what happened on the day of the dream is obviously important, since dreams are the dustbin of the mind, ridding the brain of error-causing impressions recorded during the day. D. H. Lawrence, similarly, would have been interested in what you had for dinner; in his view, the labyrinthine corridors of Dream 1 might be 'direct transcripts from the physical phenomena of circulation and digestion' - an idea from his Fantasia of the Unconscious, which is in part an awe-inspiring evocation of Lawrentian dyspepsia.

And how might a Jungian tackle these dreams? The first step is to inform the reader that the patient will in future be referred to as \*brg\*. Our Jungian analyst is naturally familiar with some of \*brg\*'s circumstances (although the patient has not been completely co-operative). The analyst knows that at the time of Dream 1 \*brg\* was a married man. The analyst notes that the schools which \*brg\* mentions as ones he might have sought out for an 'answer' are two schools where he was very unhappy; he does not think of the pleasanter Bacchus Marsh High School, where he had his last two years of schooling. The analyst notes that in waking life \*brg\* takes pleasure in swimming in chlorinated pools (whereas, for certain other dreamers, a longing to immerse oneself in such a pool, or even a conviction of being able to swim, would be a significant deviation from waking characteristics). The analyst remembers a written confession from \*brg\* that he first fell in love with a girl in second grade at primary school; this will be taken into account when considering the elaborately gowned schoolgirls of Dream 1. Similar account will be taken of two other related \*brg\* confessions: that his Christian upbringing has lumbered him with a sense of 'moral rightness', and that even in the audience at a theatre, he becomes embarrassed, because of taking it all personally. Thus, \*brg\*'s sense of outraged propriety and of personal responsibility for other people's behaviour (described in Dream 1) is not a significant departure from his waking characteristics.

The analyst, thus far, is using knowledge about \*brg\* to establish that the swimming urge and the rebuking-and-controlling urge are not dream fulfilments of behaviour or wishes that are repressed or submerged in waking life. The analyst is also establishing the waking \*brg\*'s emotional attitude, in his schooldays, to his school and the girls who attended it with him. The teasing and excluded manner of the dreamed-of girls would have an altered significance if \*brg\* had remembered himself as indifferent to girls throughout his schooldays.

The analyst regretfully decides that the dream has been reported so late that it is impossible to ascertain what the patient had been viewing, reading, or talking about close to the time of the dream. Would \*brg\* have noticed in the Age (a couple of days earlier) a psychologist's opinion that 'a general bankruptcy in our relationships with children' has been caused by women trying to be 'good mothers'? In order to isolate the dream's truly archetypal elements, a conscientious Jungian likes to know which elements are derived from recent waking experience.

What remains, for Dream 1, is a very straightforward explication, if the analyst agrees with \*brg\* that the figures in dreams are part of the dreamer's shadow personality. The females in Dream 1 (still more in Dream 2) will then be \*brg\*'s anima - unpredictable and difficult-to-control elements within himself (in Dream 2, they reverse his apparent self-image by being slight in build, competent, lively, and loquacious). In Dream 1, their other and more significant difference from \*brg\* (as he envisages his part in the world) is their communal solidarity - a consensus to which he is still seeking access. On the next level, among the boys, the dreamer feels himself 'much more part of the school'; but with this achievement he becomes doubtful that the 'belonging' he seeks is really to be found in consensus. Does the mass mind understand the nature of the pool?

Here the analyst, referring to the turds that are said to be in the pool, will quote from Jung's Symbols of Transformation:

the anal region is very closely connected with veneration. An Oriental fairytale relates that the Crusaders used to anoint themselves with the excrement of the Pope in order to make themselves more formidable.

(The analyst will no doubt be pained that \*brg\* himself was not greatly impressed by this very amusing Jungian book when he borrowed it from John Foyster, long after Dream 1.) ((\*brg\* Oh?)) In the same work Jung writes that the

waters of death are the water of life, for death with its cold embrace is the maternal womb... The projection of the mother-imago upon water endows the latter with a number of numinous or magical qualities peculiar to the mother.

The dreamer is first recognised as an individual (schoolboys wave to him) as he nears the poolside. The pool (like the waters of death) is cold, and it is bowl-shaped. The dreamer enters the pool, choosing rebirth and individuation instead of consensus - following his own instincts, instead of trusting the opinions of others. I have no intention of spelling out all that the analyst would read into this pool; but a Jungian would expect \*brg\*'s dream to reflect a new maturity - either achieved or just beckoning.

With Dream 2, the analyst notes that \*brg\*, then living with his wife at Keele Street, reverts in his dream to the home at East Preston which his parents moved to in 1970; thus, the dreaming \*brg\* might even be fixed in the dreadful years when he was teaching at Ararat during term-time. In waking life, in November 1981, \*brg\* had set at least 200,000 words of his magazine's Reprint edition, but had so much more to do that the edition was not to be completed until October next year. The dreaming \*brg\* wishes he could achieve an enviable colour-effect in his magazine - a magazine which the waking \*brg\* no longer produces as fast as he used to. Obviously, the analyst would be interested to know whether \*brg\* had recently been chided by people for going on with the Reprint instead of producing new issues of his magazine, a thing the analyst knows to have happened from time to time. The analyst also knows that David Grigg's first book featured an 'Old Man Gillespie' - 'just a crazy old guy' - who was killed off by the author. This happened in 1976; while in 1977 Roger Weddall, the other known figure in the dream, was responsible (when he moved house) for \*brg\* moving into the house where his wife-to-be was then living. The analyst decides that these facts have minimal significance in this dream. But events in \*brg\*'s life are obviously very relevant to this dream - much more so than in Dream 1. The analyst therefore declines to proceed beyond observing that the David-Grigg figure becomes \*brg\*'s earlier image of himself as a person valued for his publications and not for himself; that it is hard to tell which \*brg\* - the dreamer or the later waking recorder - is trying to impart consistency into the dream; and that in the animated picture \*brg\* has been vouchsafed a vision of the Great Goddess in her manifold aspects. Since this vision is given to \*brg\* alone, and since womblike trams will then stop for him but not for others, the analyst may interpret the dream as an encouraging message from \*brg\*'s unconscious - a reassurance of his ability to cope, even in a lonely venture.

The moral of all this is: do not give these dreams to a Jungian analyst, but to Tim and Debbie - only then will the results be amazing.

(20 June 1985)

\* The results are pretty amazing in the hands of the amazing doctor Rousseau. When I first received this letter, I was astonished at the amount of research that had gone into it. (Imagine reading all those Gillespie fanzines, just to find out some of these biographical details!) Reading the letter again, I'm delighted by the real insight that you gained into the dreams, Yvonne. All the people in the second dream have characteristics I would like to have, but do not find in myself. The dream implies that I do share the muse that one finds in David's writing (even though I heartily detest all of the fiction I've written so far); even that there is something more as well.



I'm not sure where you got the idea that I did not like Symbols of Transformation; perhaps when I was halfway through I might have confessed that I was not up to understanding it fully. But there was at least one passage from it that I copied out entire, and I feel that the book must have changed my life, although I cannot remember many of its details now.

The main events of the period when I dreamed that dream were, as you rightly remembered, the typesetting of the SFC Reprint Edition (and the great hopes I had for its success, hopes that were quite disappointed when the book appeared) and the abandonment of SF Commentary for what seemed then like strictly practical financial reasons - but, as you might have guessed, the far more important event of discovering Jung's work itself. In the same way, the transcendent pool in Dream 1, and the reactions of other people to it, remind me most of many people's reactions to the works of Jung. More is involved, I know; but the feeling I gained from reading Memories Dreams Reflections in the spring of 1981 are rather similar to the ecstatic feeling (I've tried to describe) that accompanied my wading into the pool in Dream 1.

The problem with the images in both dreams, and indeed in most of my dreams, is that they are very active images, while the \*brg\* in the dreams resembles the day-to-day Gillespie only too well, in that the images influence and overwhelm him while he does little. Very few of my dreams vary from this pattern. The only significant variation in recent years has been a dream in which I have burst into song even though (in the dream, as in real life) I know I cannot sing. In the dreams I do what I perfectly well know I cannot do; in real life, I know I cannot do many things, so I do not do them.

Enough for now. Thanks for the unbelievable amount of work that went into this letter, Yvonne, and the gleams of treasure that you unearthed. \*

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Part 3:

OTHER WINNERS -  
AND OTHER FRIENDS

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DIANE FOX  
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Dream No. 1:

'Schooldays are the happiest days of our lives.' Your dream is using this cliché literally. Probably you had a fairly miserable time at school (it's a cliché that fans have lousy childhoods, and especially in their relationships with other kids). Still, the symbolism is still valid. I think that you acknowledge it as a symbolic cliché by including the details about the girls in their 'American high-school graduation ceremony' gowns - an un-Australian detail having the same relationship to your reality as a 'white Christmas' (i.e. snow, pine trees, reindeer, etc.) has to the Australian midsummer Christmas. Were you very uncomfortable with girls at that age? This might be a wish-fulfilment dream (being surrounded by attractive girls) undercut by your realistic assessment that you would be more embarrassed than pleased.

The whole dream is about 'the past recaptured', a search for lost innocence. But it cannot really be regained by turning back the clock, and becoming a child again. Besides, that time of your life probably wasn't very happy - the only real point in its favour is that it had fewer responsibilities and fewer pressures on you from inside. (There were probably a great many more from the outside.) There was some experiment done a while back with two lots of monkeys. One lot got annoying and unpleasant electric shocks from time to time, and couldn't do anything about it. The other lot could avoid getting this miserable annoyance by doing something (pressing buttons or so on) in a fairly complicated sequence - in other words, they couldn't always get it right. Guess which lot developed ulcers - the poor little buggers with limited (and mostly illusory) control over what happened. The other lot developed a fatalistic attitude and stayed healthy. (I suspect this is why many religions, such as Islam, encourage people to

develop this attitude - it's actually healthier).

The scene with the girls seems to be more a 'symbolism of adolescence' than adolescence as you experienced it, and even in your dream you discard it and move on to something more realistic, an illusion closer to reality. Again and again the 'outsider' imagery returns - being a boy in a group of girls; the singing scene, where you feel at first that the group is wrong (I take it that as you were more intelligent than most of your classmates, you were often right when they were wrong), but it turns out that they are actually right in your dream, but that it is a rightness for them, not for you.

When you become a younger boy, you're moving towards realism, towards the past-as-was rather than the past-as-symbol. There's that massively Freudian symbol of the pool - the past wasn't so innocent. At first I thought that the pool was completely a sexual symbol, but it looks a good deal more complex and multi-meaning than that. Its glorious attractiveness is reminiscent of the straightforwardness and freshness of adolescent sexuality, but of course dirty-minded little kids say 'it smells like turds' (compare this with the ancient Latin say that translates as 'between urine and faeces'). At the same time, the pool could be a symbol of membership of the group - the school spirit. The other boy could be expressing your doubts as to whether acceptance could ultimately be a good thing, thought to you it seems, at that moment, an unalloyed and wholly innocent good. You are too much a loner not to have doubts; perhaps there's also an element of the 'what's the catch?'/TANSTAAFL syndrome. But you go ahead and take the plunge ((\*brg\* No; I merely waded into the pool; I did not plunge.)) and it turns out that your fears about filth and uncleanness were not justified. Or were they? The simple image of contamination by shit is replaced by the rationalised fear of invisible, undetectable radiation. Again, your rationality, your urge towards realism, is working. This explanation of your earlier fear triggers off a whole batch of twentieth-century fear images - limited resources, pollution, etc. Your adulthood and your adult fears (responsibilities) are suddenly bursting through the illusion of escape into childhood.

#### Dream No. 2:

More complex, and rather more interesting as a story! Also more realistic - it looks as if you tend to dream in contemporary mainstream novel style. People seem to frame their dreams in particular literary or filmic styles, especially if they read a lot or watch films or tv a great deal.

University symbolises a high degree of intellectual complexity - and a return to youth (though not so far back as in the first dream). You discard your responsibilities (possessions), but not permanently. You are wearing no pants (or underpants, if I read you correctly) - letting it all hang out, a letting go rather than a total loss of inhibitions (normal behaviour at an sf con). Your unnamed friend is indicating to you that you are somewhat vulnerable in your 'open' or 'uninhibited' state, but not apparently attempting to dissuade you.

David Grigg gets a rather nice starring role in your dream, which indicates your friendship. The gift of an obviously valuable and attractive book is a visualising of his friendship, and also a slightly more intensified form of fanac (offering a zine, especially for free, as an offer of friendship). This part of the dream is straightforward. The out-of-sequence bit is your realisation that David is a rather shy person (at least, in your dream you see him as shy) and you value his openness all the more. The name of the book seems symbolic - but I'm not sure of the details here. I see it as rather important, though. Does 'The Catch' mean that friendship brings a certain degree of worry and responsibility, and that this is the 'catch'? Or that your position as a well-known fan brings hard work, responsibilities, and a few problems of its own? Or that intellectuality, bookishness itself, carries its own problems? Or is the book something that was gained unexpectedly, 'caught' like a fish as an unexpected bonus?

Is the girl in the library a symbol of the subconscious? Or is she a real person you and David know and like in real life? Both, most likely. I think the huge book is a symbol of the past, of the support of the past and its value to writers (the historical photographs). I don't mean just one's personal past, but also

the work put in by other people in the past. When you leave the library, you carry not only friendship (David's book) but the past (the large book) with you, and are given permission by an authority figure (the librarian) to do so.

The shopkeeper may be another anima figure and may also be a muse. Her bixexual appearance is interesting (creativity as a matter of the intellect rather than of the body, but powered by sexual/biological forces?) (or is she the transcendent human being who includes male/female, youth/age, authority/playfulness?) The picture under the 'animator' (a neat science-fictional/technological rationalisation of the needed imagery) which shows a beautiful anima woman in the garments of the past, who is suddenly revealed by technology (the future) to be at once young and old - seeing a whole life at once, seeing four dimensions. This is a very science-fictional image, yet sounds like mystical symbolism.

The dream ends with you going back to mundanity and realising that your time of openness is over for now. The tram is your return to mundanity, and your worry over not catching it is your realisation that the party spirit, relaxation and openness of your expedition was a necessary break from routine, not something permanent.

The dreams seem to be a rehash of a 'learning experience', a means of making decisions, an acceptance of how important and valuable is the past, and how valuable is your creativity - but that it can only be returned to for play and knowledge, and not for escape.

(3 August 1985)

\* For Dream 1, you point out the main movement of the action - backward in time. From what I remember of my childhood, there was very little pleasant to recall, let alone some transcendent experience. My only conclusion is that I had such an experience in the years before I have some consecutive experience. My parents tell me that I was very impressed when I saw the sea for the first time; that I called it a 'big bath'. Whenever I go bathing in the sea, I sometimes am overcome by a most peculiar sense of excitement. I don't seem as capable of excitement as I once was; I haven't felt that particular intoxication for some years. However, the feeling I had in the dream - which was closest to the feeling of suspense that afflicts you when the answer is about to be revealed in a mystery movie - was different from my childhood intoxication when surrounded by water. But maybe if I could recover memories from the age of two or three, a clearer pattern would emerge.

But something quite else is implied. Nobody has commented on my main impression of the pool when approaching it - the coldness. Not the warm pleasure of re-entering the womb, or some such standard Freudian explication. The pure joy of intense, invigorating cold. (Heat is always associated with lassitude for me.) What is the great cold pleasure of life? Thinking. If I go back to the beginning of my schooldays, I remember the enormous pleasure of learning to read. I think I've written somewhere that that was probably the most pleasurable and liberating feeling I had in my first 25 years of life. With reading comes thinking, mental exploration. With mental exploration came, for me, an immediate, sharp, impenetrable division between me and all my other classmates. In the end, I've been cut off from most other people. Even in fandom it seems fashionable to be, if not dumb, then ordinary in a bright sort of way. A most pleasurable period of my life was the time I spent getting a degree - it's the only time I've been paid money for learning, thinking, and exploring ideas, without the need to worry about earning a living. A time filled with the lovely cold pleasure of thought.

What all this has to do with today, or even 1981, when I dreamt these dreams, I'm not sure. As you say, Diane, Dream 2 goes back to university days and the feeling I had when I joined fandom - that I had found people who were on my side, spoke my language, with whom I had some affinity. This remains true about some fans. Yet none of that has much to do with the two transcendent, intense images of the dream - the metamorphosing woman in blue, and David Grigg's book. Your suggestions are helpful.

You remind me of the main problem with these dreams - that I can think of any number of patterns that fit most of their details, but I can't connect those patterns with the dreary realities of ordinary existence. \*



RALPH ASHBROOK

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Dream 1:

Before I get into the details, I would like to suggest that dreams are tricky little rascals and that they can look both back and ahead at the same time - illustrated by the 'animated girl' of Dream 2.

The dream reflects your relationship with science fiction which has been to you at times vocation, lover, family, and home. You feel perhaps you should put it behind you - graduate. You regard sf as preparation (school) for something mature, more respectable, more complete. You are afraid you are stuck in school. You want to break with sf, to graduate. Of course, an American graduation. You have been haunted by the unfairly American influences even in your own preferences (Dick and Tucker).

The 'crystalline, invigorating lure' of sf is illustrated by the pool. You see its promise and depth and lifegiving possibilities. Others warn you that it is full of shit, not worth your attention, dangerous. There is another reason that you use water to represent sf. While mainstream literature restricts itself to the perceived possible (the surface), sf potentially offers new depths to explore. The actuality is that many sf writers stay on the surface bumping into turds or even producing them, but you dream of the sf that sometimes is and might be.

You even address fandom toward the end. You see yourself 'in the magic circle but not completely'. The fans are 'far more offhand about the wondrous experience than I was'.

You, of course, decide to wade into the water, with some misgivings, and in the afterglow portion imagine one cure or another for sf's insufficiencies, but you see this correction is not practical.

You have chosen to accept the pool for what it is. You will occasionally be stuck on the top with the real and imagined turds, but you will also explore the depths and possibly, as you dive deeper and farther, you may find that the sf pool leads to and is part of something even vaster. Is the way to that ocean climbing out of the pool or swimming on?

(8 July 1985)

\* Your explanation is so coherent and plausible that I'm kicking myself that I did not award you yet another award officially. My good old censorious conscious mind says 'no' - I know too well the failures and sillinesses of science fiction for it to be that important to me. But the fact is that the three years 1981-4, during which I did not publish an issue of a genzine, seem now to me completely wasted, although I remember writing articles for apazines and other general fanzines. Publishing TMR in a regular way has made me feel a lot better about life in general. And often I do feel like 'graduating' - but where? Anything that earns a crust is boring, because there is no way to find a job in Australia publishing a magazine of or about science fiction. And I've not been tempted to follow some other hobby or interest. So... you just might be the most correct of any correspondent.

But what about Dream 2? Where does that fit into the Ashbrook thesis? \*

DAVID LAKE

7 8th Avenue, St Lucia, Queensland 4067

Before I say anything directly on your dreams, I suggest that you read Ann Faraday - Dream Power (Pan, 1972) and The Dream Game (Harper & Row, Perennial Library, 1976). Ann Faraday's basic principle is that dreams mean what the dreamer thinks they mean. Thus, I can only offer suggestions; I can say what the dreams would mean if I had dreamt them. I am only likely to be right as far as my psyche is like yours; and that's a matter of degree.

Another caveat is the word 'God', which I like to use. I use the word mythically. A lot of people shy off the word, but I find it the most helpful one for the deepest contexts. Synonyms are Jung's 'Self' (always capital S), or Plato's 'One'

(always capital O). But 'God' is nice and flexible. When I feel friendly to God, I call her 'she'. When I feel unfriendly, God is that silly old bugger who designed the universe and then went off and left us to suffer from it (Blake calls this archetype 'Nobodaddy'). Both feelings are quite normal and OK. Maybe there are turds in it, maybe not... God is where the ultimate buck stops. One of the most futile exercises in this world is blaming. I don't blame anyone, not Hitler, not Genghis Khan, not the Ayatollah, not Reagan, not... Everyone is the way they are because of environment, genes, and therefore the Ultimate Necessity, i.e. (as Vonnegut says) You Know Who... God is to blame for everything. That is what the word 'God' means.

Right, then. I'll have a look at your second dream first.

I take it that this is a dream about your own creative powers, as an author and publisher - but more as an author, since as far as I know David Grigg is not a publisher, and yes, in this dream he is a mere cover for yourself.

I say, do you really want telling what this dream means? I put it to you (prisoner in the dock!) that you know damn well what it means. Let me just repeat a few pregnant bits:

'...everybody else had gone off elsewhere, and I was left wandering down an empty street' (p. 5). Yes, we all start from that empty street: that's why we write.

'I was undressed to singlet and T-shirt' (p. 4) but 'nobody in our group had worried at all' (p. 6). Bruce, you need to strip off like me and not worry. We're all much the same, naked. And of course this is at a university/library/sf convention. I mean, that's where we're at, right?

'I left my things higgledy-piggledy all over the room' (p. 4). You are too modest, Bruce; I don't find your things 'higgledy-piggledy'. Let me refer to your remark, pp. 8-9 in the Books section of that issue of Sweetness and Light, where you say 'my own "What God Said to Me When He Lived Next Door" failed miserably'. It didn't fail miserably: I thought it was one of the best pieces in Dreamworks, better than the offerings of the 'great name' authors. Your fiction is better than you say it is. And yet:

'...I couldn't get that effect in my magazine' (p. 4). No, you can't make a magazine stand in for a novel - so why don't you go ahead and write your novel? That is The Catch - the title of the dream novel.

I put it to you that you are busily affixing black adhesive on your own quite legitimate aspirations to be a writer. I know you are afraid of self-revelation, but you should not be. We all share the same Self.

I think that Lee and Irene stand for themselves in this dream: they are illustrious examples of your potential public. But you are still too shy to 'see all your old friends'.

As for the 'animator' and its action (pp. 5-6), you seem to be especially worried about characterisation in your fiction. I tell you, you needn't be. Characterisation is a silly shibboleth in fiction, especially fantastic fiction. Much fiction does superbly without 'rounded' characters - or even consistent ones. As for your girl having inconsistent ages, so do some of Ursula Le Guin's main characters. Ged, for instance, strikes me as about forty, not nineteen, in the first 'Earthsea' book. The point hardly matters.

A hopeful note to end on - though your woman doesn't catch her tram (p. 6), you do. Maybe that's still the characterisation thing. Well, you can catch the tram without her, I tell you.

No catch at all in The Catch.

Now for Dream 1. If this were mine, I would say the dream is a religious one. The set up is like the one in Dante's Paradiso, with choirs of angels, etc., centring on God. You are wondering about Life, the Universe, and Everything. Maybe there are turds at the heart of things, maybe not. One half of you, the emotional, intuitive side, the anima side symbolised by the girls, is wanting to sing out, to wear the robes, to rejoice in the sweet-smelling waters; the other side, represented by the boys, the blase rational side, insists on the turds. I like your unconscious choice of a swimming pool as the symbol of the

Ultimate: yes, it's partly something we make ('All gods reside in the human breast' - Blake), but it's also something given, like water, which you must know is an old symbol for the Infinite and healing.

Both dreams seem to harmonise well. In both you are struggling out of loneliness towards communion. 'The school spirit, the source of some great mystic togetherness, was up there' (p. 3). Yes, it is, you know, when we all stand side by side, sing our silly little songs without worrying about them, and face toward the One. We must pool our little selves.

Don't believe the boys. There are only turds in the great Pool if you think they are. And radioactivity is only a temporary problem - like our present species, it won't last very long.

And I do think the way to the Pool must be from below the schoolboys (p. 3). You can't make it from up downwards - not from the rational mind. From the depths of your self - and when you have become a 'primary school kid' (p. 3). You must become as a little child to enter the Kingdom... But I don't like the word 'Kingdom'; Blake uses the 'child' image without the King notion in his marvellous poem 'To my friend Butts I write', which has as its climax, 'I remained as a child'.

Did you actually have a bad time as a schoolboy, or is that merely symbolic? I had a fairly easy time at my schools, at least from the other boys. The Christian teachers gave me (literally) Hell. I was rather an introvert and an egotist as a boy, but not actually unpopular. I guess my main problems always have been metaphysical ones.

It's funny how I sound like a cheer-up chaplain in this letter. I suppose I always feel (even about fiction) that one should try to be helpful. Yet I myself often think this is a pretty turdy universe. '9 by 6 = 42' often sounds a good way to sum it up. But there is no rational solution. Good luck with everything (and Everything).

(13 June 1985)

\* I've just looked back over my replies to the other letters, David; those replies, in total, probably answer you. The puzzling thing about Dream 1 is that I had little sense of 'school spirit' when I was at school (except during the two years I attended Bacchus Marsh High School, the one school that definitely does not appear in the dream). I would like to have been accepted by other students, but that didn't happen. It was unforgivable to come top of the class and be hopelessly ineffectual at all sports.

In the end, I can't help coming back to Ralph Ashbrook's notion that all of Dream 1 is about fandom. At least that would be more specific than many of your suggestions. It's a pity that you didn't have access to much of the autobiographical material that Yvonne was able to use. (Much of it was in apazines, and took a fair amount of finding.) Many of your ingenious suggestions could fit the dreams as they are written down, but don't ring true with the rest of my life. Your comment about the animated image of the woman in blue seems inadequate, for example. I thought I had shown clearly that this image was overwhelming - after watching it, I felt that I had seen all possibilities of that image, the book from which it was reproduced, the life of that woman, all life. I seemed on the verge of finding some Operating Principle of Existence, a principle that somewhat eludes me in 'real life'.

As you see, I'm backing away from religious frameworks for those dreams. Maybe I'll come back to your letter some years from now and find that you were right after all. \*

ROGER WEDDALL  
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Part A: Short answer test

Dream No. 2:

Q1: Was the 'delicacy of the situation' in which you found yourself talking with a friend caused by your awareness of being dressed in singlet and T-shirt? (Only in singlet and T-shirt?)

A: No.

Q2: At the time of the dream, was the identity of the friend important?



- A: Yes.
- Q3: What quality, in one word or less, can be ascribed to David dressed in his suit?
- A: Respectability.
- Q4: Was the book David's book?
- A: Clearly, no.
- Q5: Insofar as 'David' can be considered a shell or vehicle for the dreamer's intentions (or a reflection of them), isn't it likely that 'David' shows 'his' book to Irene and turns to leave because 'he' is shy, or modest?
- A: Not at all. In fact, almost the opposite. Once 'David' has produced the book, he is able to do this.
- Q6: Is the title of the book, The Catch, ironic?
- A: It is more a statement of fact. It does, however, have two distinct and completely different meanings.
- Q7: How many books are there in the dream?
- A: One. And then, more as a concept.
- Q8: Pick one word from the text of the dream that best summarises the function and nature of 'Roger' in the dream.
- A: Festivity.
- Q9: Expand on that.
- A: Sociability. In the last paragraph, acceptance.
- Q10: Is the sex of the librarian's friend important?
- A: Not in the end.
- Q11: In the correct manifestation of 'the book', could it be said to be about one person in particular?
- A: Yes.
- Q12: Not including the friend of the librarian, how many women are specifically there in the dream?
- A: One.
- Q13: Does the dreamer feel melancholy because he feels he has somehow 'missed the boat'?
- A: Some boats are missed, but the dreamer is basically content with his lot, or rather, content to act in a way that he feels comfortable with.
- Q14: What do the trams signify?
- A: You have to work hard and/or be lucky.
- Q15: Expand on these answers.
- A: You do that.

Part II: Short essay section. Answer each question in 150-300 words.

- (a) The title of the book, The Catch, could be said to refer to a number of things. Discuss.

The book has, in this dream, two coincidental functions, both of which are described by the title. As a means of gaining social or perhaps professional (or academic) respectability, the 'catch' is that such a book must be produced in the first place. The title announces that the book is a means to an end. On the other hand, the title describes the contents of the book, both with respect to the respectability due to the author, and to the girl who is (or, as happens in dreams, becomes) the subject of the book. It is she who is the 'catch', and the book is about her. The title, then, refers to the subject matter of the book; the nature of the book, itself, and what it represents; what the book can bring about; and the trouble with the book.

- (b) Compare, contrast, and discuss the following two statements:

- (i) All the women in the book could be said to be one woman: Elaine.
- (ii) All the characters in the dream are splintered manifestations of the personality of the dreamer.

Curiously enough, while there are good grounds for arguing that the two named characters represent wish-fulfilment aspects of the dreamer's character, it is not unreasonable that nearly all other characters in the dream are in fact one real person, with a name: Elaine.

When an example of particular behaviour on the part of someone else is called for in a dream, it is not uncommon for the dreamer to select a person or stereotype to act out that role in the dream. Therefore, while the performed actions or

the models may be in good keeping with at least one aspect of the character of the person nominally presented, it is not this person who appears in the dream but the dreamer's perception of the role of that person. So 'David' and 'Roger' fulfil a role. (But why do so many people think of me as a free and easy-going sociable person? I find this perplexing.) 'David' shows - in that strange out-of-sequence image - how the dreamer would feel he could act if he has produced such a book. It's interesting that 'Lee', the obvious object of the exercise, appears not even in a cameo role, but only as a name attached to a house - a desirable inner-city terrace house. (So much for Carlton Street.)

On the other hand, the women of the dream are not so much active characters in the dream but objects of attention of the main character or figures who make a contrast with him. This argues well for the fact that they are not so much manifestations of the personality of the dreamer as a relatively fixed concept of an other person: one other person?

Although the crowd is described as a group of convention attendees, no one is mentioned by name or singled out as an individual. When 'Roger Weddall' is mentioned, he is mentioned more as a verbal shorthand description of the crowd. 'We all set off on one of Roger's expeditions' is a good example. What sort of crowd? What sort of expedition? A crowd that would behave as 'Roger' might, giving a 'remarkable air of festivity' to the occasion. On the other hand, the women are there more as accompanying figures - or one figure - and do not express opinions or take part in actions.

Given the time of the dream, and the prominence given to what is essentially one woman, it would seem likely that this person is Elaine. The fact that, towards the end of the dream, the woman misses the tram, is another example of the quite subtle humour sprinkled throughout the dream, and a further clue that the woman in question is, in fact, Elaine.

(c) Discuss one previously unmentioned feature of the dream.

The way the picture of the woman changes, both forwards and backwards in time, suggests that the picture is more than simply 'seen'. Many facets of that person's personality are being explored or viewed, and the 'image' is a metaphor for this more complex contemplation. This is what the 'disturbing quality' of the picture would seem to suggest. It's odd that the 'vividness and disturbing quality of the picture' do not dampen the spirits of the rest of the party, but have an effect on the dreamer. This point, like all those mentioned, is deserving of lengthier discussion.

(20 June 1985)

\* Somehow I think I failed that exam.

Or maybe Roger did. I would, for instance, answer some of the short-answer questions quite differently. For instance, in answer to Q4, I would answer 'Yes'. It was quite clear to me that the 'David' in the dream did write the book, and illustrated and printed it, but felt ambiguous about his achievement. In answer to Q7, you also miss the point of the dream, that there are two books - 'David's', which is autobiographical and genealogical and personal, and the second book, from which he has used eighteenth- and nineteenth-century illustrations, which can provide inspiration for all readers and viewers. This book is much larger than 'David's', and available to all. The dreamer, however, is the only person who uses up-to-the-minute technology to blow up one of the pictures from the older book and view all its possibilities. I'm still unclear as to what that picture is; and whether it represents something I was looking at in 1981, or should be looking at in the future.

And you can't have it both ways. If the male figures represent unrecognised parts of my own personality, then so must the female figures, including the historical woman in blue. But the female figures are less distinguished from each other than the male figures; on the other hand, I know less about them and therefore they have more potential interest value than the male figures. The dream points to a time in my life before I met Elaine. When Elaine appears in one of my dreams, she is very forcefully there.

Thanks for being amusing and ingenious, Roger. The offbeat style of your letter is rather what I was hoping for when I set up the Dream Competition.

Here are three non-winners - although Michael's letter falls into that category only because he is commenting on a different discussion (in TMR) and therefore does not look directly at my dreams. He's welcome to join the discussion, as are Damien and Lucy. \*

DAMIEN BRODERICK

10 Marks Street, Brunswick, Vic. 3056

Suppose dreams are the scum of daily life. Nobody can do much with someone else's dreams. Suppose dreams are the visible portion of the self's ongoing sorting, appraisal, consolidation of experience. Nobody else has access to the genuine stuff of someone else's life, so another's dreams would be as meaningful as the diagnostics in an unknown computer language. Suppose dreams are a blend of universal structural struts and private ornamentation. Then nobody else can add much beyond a bland statement of these underlying generalities - useful to the ignorant, perhaps, but also dangerously distracting, for surely what most interests each of us in such a quest is his individual self and not the laws of physics which make his blood pump.

What I can comment on is the way you as a mature communicator direct your readers' attention to your little stories, using a common language that is certainly ambiguous but in large part shared and accessible to consciousness.

You've been known to remark that your dreams are the most captivating part of your life, far more interesting than any deliberate attempts to create art, let alone simply get through the day. What you offer here, then, is a pithy summation not merely of your most private unshared moments but, on your account, of your most esteemed essentials.

On what terms do you extend this wonderful gift?

As equivalent to three volumes of Piers Anthony. As the equal of your reader's pick of throwout records. As a pile of mouldering junk.

Interesting, Bryce, very interesting.

So. Now we may perhaps to begin. Yes?

(27 June 1985)

\* No - not unless you allow me my little joke, then read the rest of my statement, which allows the prize-winner to pick a prize. (Besides, some people like Piers Anthony books, which is why I mentioned them.) :: One reason why I typed up the dreams in the first place is that I seemed to write better prose when scribbling them down at 5.30 in the morning than I do when writing deliberate fiction. Nobody has confirmed or denied this suspicion. I suspect ordinary literary criticism of the most nitpicking kind would yield a lot of meaning in these dreams/stories. \*

LUCY SUSSEX

Kensington, Vic. 3031

Thank you for the copy of Sweetness and Light (really?). I regret, though, that I have to plead 'no contest' in the interpretation of your dreams. I have avoided other people's dreams ever since I worked with a woman who used to recount hers over the morning-tea table. As they were remorselessly gynaecological, we were rather put off the coffee, which was real coffee, freshly percolated, and for morning tea only. There was instant in the afternoon, when it wouldn't have mattered so much, but Rosemary could never wait that long.

The above is not intended as a put-down, simply an explanation. My dreams, when I remember them, have extremely complicated plots. I kept a dream diary in 1976, largely out of boredom - nothing else in particular was happening at the time. However, I never went to the lengths of Mary Shelley (?) who ate raw meat at night to stimulate the subconscious. (Hm - the subconscious didn't exist in Mary Shelley's days. I should have recast that sentence.) Myself, I wonder how Mary S. avoided the stomach ache.

On the subject of literary dreams, one might also mention Harold Munro, Edwardian



man of letters and poetry fan, who dreamt he was falling down the inside of a narrow tower filled with books, which he clutched at to arrest his fall. In another dream, John Galsworthy belaboured him with a table-sized beefsteak!

The above two anecdotes come from a fascinating book, Charlotte Mew and Her Friends, by Penelope Fitzgerald (London: Collins, 1984). Mew was a minor English poet of whom I had never heard until, while searching for a reference for Yvonne Rousseau, I came across a review of Fitzgerald's book. It is one of the few cases I have encountered where the review was almost as entertaining as the book reviewed. Charlotte Mew was not a great poet, and lived a life of almost unrelenting awfulness - and yet the account is unputdownable. This is partly due to Fitzgerald's lively writing style, and because while recounting the grim facts of Mew's life (madness in the family, poverty, a clinging respectable Mamma, and an unfortunate propensity to fall madly in love with heterosexual women) she includes snippets like Munro's dreams and the time that Walter de la Mare argued for two days over whether marmalade was jam! Try it and see what you think.

(29 June 1985)

\* I've never seen the book, but it sounds like one that I'd like to read.

I'm surprised that you didn't participate in the Dream Contest, or at least tell a few of your own, since the best of your short stories have a satisfying dream atmosphere. In fact, much remarkable fiction gives the reader the impression of travelling through the writer's dream landscape. \*

MICHAEL HALLSTONE  
PO Box 193, Woden, ACT 2606

So you're interested in dreams? Maybe you would like to know about my trip to Mars... In the dream I landed on Mars and was astonished to find that it was nothing at all like the Mars the scientists have told us of. This Mars had breathable air and a pleasant climate. The red deserts were there, but there were also snowcapped mountains and a kind of jungle of an unearthly kind of vegetation of an unearthly green colour. Yet in the dream I was as rational as ever, really puzzled why it differed so much from what the scientists had told us.

There are at least two kinds of dream. In the more normal kind, one usually remembers the dream on first awakening, but forgets it soon afterwards. In this case, I didn't even remember having the dream until about half an hour after waking; it was just like remembering something that had happened the day before. Even odder, a friend of mine here in Canberra, somebody I didn't know when I had the dream (when I was still living in Sydney), quite independently, with no knowledge of my dream, last year painted a picture of what I saw: the red desert and snowcapped mountains, the pink sky with the forest in the foreground. The only thing wrong with her picture is that she has painted earthly trees instead of the more beanlike plants of my dream.

(23 June 1985)

\* I don't know what to say about that dream, except that it's obviously one of those Big Dreams which, if you believe Jung, dip right into the store of what he calls the 'collective unconscious'. (I say this because you did share it with another person; this may in fact, with variations, be a fairly common dream.) On its own level, it points to some territory or activity that you would find very beautiful and invigorating, but from which you are probably shut out now because of rational doubts about the possibility of reaching that state of being. Even if you achieved it, you would still have reasonable doubts about what was happening to you, but you would enjoy the experience anyway.

I agree with you about the great differences in quality between dreams. Often I wake up in the morning, knowing that I've experienced a very complicated and interesting dream, but I cannot remember it. Other dreams have very simple images and clear meanings, but I can remember them well enough to write them down. The great dreams, which rarely arrive, are the very complex and vivid dreams which just present themselves to you whole, waiting to be written down. Such were the two dreams at the beginning of this issue. I hope other people send me accounts of theirs. \*

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Part 4: .

DREAM POSTSCRIPT

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A few weeks before I began to type this issue, I wrote down a dream that seemed to answer Dream 1 - the pool dream. I'm not saying that it's a literal answer, but it seems to take up the central images of the end of that dream and carry them on in a progressive way. Maybe you'll agree; maybe you won't see any connection. Maybe you're waiting for the next bit of the magazine to start.

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Dream, 5.15 a.m., Friday, 23 May 1986

I was on a summer walking tour with my father through the Dandenong Ranges as they used to be (forest lands easily crossed by bush tracks, with lots of cleared valleys and settlements). We came upon a little bush swimming pool, entirely surrounded by a wire fence, except for a wire gate. A few of the locals were wading in the pool, which was very shallow. The sun was warm, but not too hot.

I stripped (but must have been wearing or carrying something I could use as swimming trunks), and splashed around in the pool. The sunlight was so pleasant and the water so warm that I dozed in the water while resting my head against the side of the pool.

When I woke, I felt remarkably refreshed and invigorated. However, the sun was low in the sky. I woke with a start, realising that by nightfall my father had planned to reach a train or bus that would take us back to Melbourne. I got out of the water, and found I was the only person in the pool enclosure. The gate was shut and locked. How would I get out?

There was a little hut outside the gate. A local bloke came out of it. 'Sorry you got locked in,' he said ruefully. 'Climb over the fence and you'll be right.' The wire fence was quite low. Any of the local kids could have clambered over it easily. I knew that I was so awkward that I couldn't climb over anything, let alone a wire fence.

'Sorry,' I said, after a few halfhearted tries. 'No go.' The bloke stared at me in disbelief. However, he was a kindly type of older country gent. He called into the hut, and one of the local boys came out. He was told to take the utility from near by and drive to a local person's house to get a key to the pool enclosure.

At some time in all this, I must have got dressed. The local bloke and I started to chat desultorily, me on one side of the gate and he on the other. The next moment - although I also realised that it was quite a while later - the ute rumbled into the clearing carrying six of the local lads, all (no doubt) wanting to take a look at the idiot who couldn't even climb over the fence. As they pulled to a stop, I realised to my mixed pleasure and acute embarrassment that suddenly I was standing outside the enclosure. Somehow, while chatting to the local bloke, I had forgotten my awkwardness and had found a way to climb the fence.

Or had I? To me, it felt that one moment I was on one side of the fence; the next moment I was on the other.

The blokes in the ute were all grumbling because there was no reason for them to have travelled to the pool. However, they were pleasant about the whole thing, and agreed to take me to the nearest railway station.

(But I'm not sure when my father disappeared from the dream, or where he went...)

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\* Dreams and False Alarms is/was my FAPA special magazine, but so far it's been neglected, except for the first two issues. I became more and more interested in the possibilities for The Metaphysical Review, and put less time into my apazines. All I can do is to apologise to the members of FAPA, thank them for the high placing they gave me on the most recent apa poll, and promise to do better in the future. Meanwhile, here is the (non-FAPA) letter response to the first two issues of Dreams and False Alarms, which featured bits of my autobiography. \*

RICH BROWN

1808 Lamont NW, Washington, DC 20010, USA

There are similarities and differences between us which struck me as I read your autobiographical material in Dreams and False Alarms. One of our major differences would seem to be our respective backgrounds: My parents were not well educated; my father graduated eighth grade, my mother left school earlier than that. They were genuine 'Okies' - they came to California from the 'dust bowl' of Oklahoma (my father) and Texas (my mother) in the late 1930s on 'plug' nickels when the farms their parents lived on played out. I should perhaps explain the 'plug nickel' route, since you'll find nothing about it in The Grapes of Wrath, the Steinbeck book that is generally regarded as one of the finest works of fiction about the Okie migration. My parents set out for California in a ~~Corvair Model-T Ford~~ Model-T Ford with a bushel bag of 'plugs' - bits of metal scrap punched out in making electrical outlets roughly the size of a US nickel (five-cent piece). When they needed gasoline or something to eat, they would stop at a pay phone and make long-distance phone calls which (by pre-arrangement) would not be answered, so their money would be returned. The difference between doing this in the 1930s and doing it now is that in the 1930s (1) five cents would buy about what a dollar would now; and (2) the coins would be returned from the bottom of the stack accumulated in the phone - which meant my parents got back real money for the plugs they put in. In fact, I suspect the widespread nature of this scam is what prompted the phone company to devise the mechanism presently in use, which returns the same coins you inserted should you fail to reach your party.

Although uneducated and bigoted against non-WASPs, they did place a high value on education - which I suppose is what prompted my mother to teach me some math and how to read before I went to school. This leads, in a roundabout fashion, to one of our similarities. When I first entered school, though, I was something of a bully - for a couple of reasons. First, my birthday was in July, so I was slightly older and bigger than most of my classmates. Too, I wanted to impress them - and as all we did in kindergarten was play 'horsy and ducky', I couldn't do so by showing them I could read - so I tended to do so physically. Well, if the truth be known, I did tell them about it when I wasn't pushing them around. I was quite proud and bragged about it constantly. So, when I got into first grade and they brought out the Dick and Jane primers, I was anxious to prove it; when the teacher asked if anyone in the class already knew how to read, she could hardly call on anyone else, I was jumping up and down in my seat so hard. I opened the book to the first page, which contained only one word. I was mortified. I couldn't, simply could not, decide what the word could possibly be. I sat in silence, wracking my brain, trying to figure it out. The teacher eventually had to tell me what it was: 'Dick.' My own nickname! Argh!

Still, from this safe distance, I suppose it was Fate giving me my Just Desserts for being such a little braggart. I didn't get my Just Desserts for being a bully until later. Halfway through first grade, my teacher noticed (my initial setback in the matter of reading notwithstanding) that I could read, add, subtract, multiply, and divide, so I was catapulted into second grade. This meant I was thereafter younger and smaller than most of my classmates. Although I thought myself reasonably intelligent, I wanted to impress them too - and since intellectually I was only ahead of them in the matter of short division, I



simply didn't think matters through, and decided to impress them in my by-now-familiar physical fashion. I still recall, some thirty-five years after the event, strutting on to the playground on my first day in second grade, looking for my chance, spying it in a group of my classmates playing with a ball and bat.

'Gimme that bat,' I said to the kid holding same.

'No,' he said, with some annoyance. 'It's mine.'

'Hey,' I said, taking a firm grip on his shoulder. 'I want that bat. Give it to me.'

He seemed to be considering it. He grinned. 'Okay,' he said.

\*S\*P\*L\*A\*T\*

I got up. Eventually. With a knot on my head the size of a golfball - no permanent damage... unless, that is, you consider that I subsequently became a fan. The teacher scolded the other kid about hitting people with baseball bats, even though there were witnesses to say I'd brought it on myself. However, I soon discovered that, with or without baseball bats, I was no physical match for most of my classmates. This was not merely in matters of fighting, where I rather quickly underwent a change from bully to bullee; over the next few years, it applied to any competitive sport. I couldn't catch or throw or hit a ball. I couldn't jump or run or climb. As others got taller, I got thinner. I was checked by any number of doctors throughout that period. All agreed there was nothing 'wrong' with me aside from the fact that I was a very skinny kid. But, of course, I developed a 'sour grapes' attitude toward sports generally - I couldn't have 'em, so didn't want 'em. When other kids went out to play, I went out to the public library. Where, as I've recounted elsewhere, I went through all the science books in the 'kiddie' and 'junior' sections and scared the librarians so much by asking for 'adult' science books - I honestly believe they were worried I might take out a book on (horrors!) biology - that one of them got me addicted to sf instead. Still, my aversion to sports persisted into high school, where 'gym' was a mandatory subject; I may be the only student who, without 'medical' support for it, got through the California high school system refusing to do more than show up at those classes.

Eventually I went from skinny kid to increasingly heavy adult; my first wife was skinny because she was hyperthyroid, for which she was successfully treated - but not before I tried to 'keep up' with her eating. Thus, I went from skinny and weak to somewhat fat and weak.

One other 'similarity', though: When I was in Germany in the USAF, recuperating from a passing kidney stone, I asked a friend to get me a book from the Base Library to help me pass the time. Since there was some worry he might get something I'd already read, I suggested he go to the non-sf section and 'just pick up the biggest book you can find'. As it turned out, the book he came back with was at least borderline sf - the 1084-page (1393 pages in paperback) Atlas Shrugged. It, as they say, Changed My Life. It said something I felt needed to be said, and did so better than I felt I could. 'I swear by my life and my love of it that I shall not live my life for the sake of another man, nor ask another man to live his life for me.' Carlos Domingos Andres Sebastian D'Anconia! Of course, though I was (even as I read) transforming into an Ayn Rand fanatic, I thought the book a bit too repetitious. A character would come on stage, give a 20-page speech on Objectivism, then walk off; subsequently, the same or another would come on stage, repeat at least 18 pages of the previous speech, and then go on about it for yet another 15 or 20 pages; sooner or later someone else would show up, repeat the major portion of the previous speech, adding to it by a proportionate amount, et cetera, culminating in John Galt's 100-plus-page radio broadcast. There were, even then, a couple of disturbing elements - the killing of philosophical innocents, 'rape' = 'good sex', etc. - but it took me about five years to work myself out of the Objectivist bag. Numerous happenings in the real world brought me about - Vietnam, etc. - and made me see the lack of humanism in Rand. While I still abide by many Objectivist tenets, I no longer call myself an Objectivist. 'Anarchist' is about as close as I can come - I'm civilised and waiting for the rest of the world to catch up to me - and I find myself leaning further and further left as time goes on.

(28 September 1984)

\* Thanks very much for your long letter, rich. It should have appeared some time ago, but it's worn well.

In the meantime, I've forgotten what I said originally (in my FAPA magazine) about my childhood. I still have the same feeling of burning hatred when I remember the torture of compulsory school sport as I had at the time. Some wounds never heal. It took me a long time, however, to realise that most other kids hated school because of attempts to make them learn spelling, arithmetic, social studies, or the like. The number of years I wasted in school! - on the one hand, slowed down by those who were behind me in academic school subjects, and, on the other hand, enduring many hours of humiliating torture under the guise of phys. ed. and sport. In all the debates about education that have taken place during the last twenty years, only a few people have really asked kids what they want to do, and have set up school programs that don't amount to a compulsory prison sentence.

I still have ambivalent feelings about the work of Ayn Rand, although I haven't read any of her books since 1966, and couldn't face the thought of rereading Atlas Shrugged and The Fountainhead. She took some psychologically sound ideas and covered them with a shroud of megalomania. Unfortunately, she also sprayed the lot with the colours of hick-conservative eco-politics, which are not implied by her most central ideas. The real giveaway, which is somewhere in Atlas Shrugged and I'll have to paraphrase, is when Rand's main character praises the other okay characters by saying that haven't changed any of their ideas since they were sixteen years old. (Or does she say it of herself?) And that's it. Some of Rand's ideas set you free when you're sixteen (unless you've already got an inflated ego, in which case you have real problems), but there's nothing to offer for the next steps in life. Rand tells teenagers that they too can be heroes, but that turns out not to be true. On the other hand, one doesn't have to stay an emotional cripple all one's life, which is what can happen if one stays forever hampered by the ideas handed down from parents, relatives, and (in my case) fundamentalist religion. All Rand says, after all, is 'Think for yourself.' Why this should lead to a great new apparatus of right-wing claptrap, just as debilitating as any of the claptrap of an 'umble childhood, is beyond me. Which is why, I suppose, having been affected by Rand's timely magic wand (the liberating idea of freedom hidden within those giant books) I did think for myself and discovered ideas that John Galt and his crew wouldn't have liked much. \*

RALPH ASHBROOK  
(address already given)

Thank you for the autobiography in FAPA. I agree with you about current sf, but not about current music. I like about as much music now (about 20 per cent) as I did then. The Cars, Huey Lewis, ZZ Top, Culture Club, and Talking Heads cover as much range as the Animals, Buddy Holly, and the Temptations, and I think about as well. The music comes from the heart and the balls, not from assumptions or requirements. Maybe you don't have an emotional investment in it the way you did.

However, I agree with you and Panshin that something is wrong with current sf. He suggests an assumption lag. I like it because it allows my exceptions. Think of what On Wings of Song and Valis have in common. I appreciate your not liking Valis, but I think Dick was working on the next metaphysics. I laugh at the atheistic mechanical model of evolution (and also at the fundamentalist creation model). I believe in teleology, but think we needn't be hasty about defining it. See W. I. Thompson, The Time Falling Bodies Take to Light for some unstuck ideas.

Your writing continues to act as a trigger for me. Thank you.

(1 November 1984)

\* And thank you.

It's hard to defend views on popular music, because much of it picks up its appeal from the circumstances under which it was first experienced. I like most the pop music of the years 1959-62 because they were years when I felt I was heading towards something. I didn't do anything great - mainly schoolwork and listened to pop music on the radio. But from fifth form onwards (Year 11), the noose tightened; the world narrowed into a funnel of greater restrictions. (But maybe Roy Orbison was better than anyone who came later. That's what I really think)\*



SYDNEY J. BOUNDS

27 Borough Road, Kingston on Thames, Surrey KT2 6BD, England

Dreams and False Alarms is good stuff; reads like the old-time SFC downbeat Gillespie - so you can still do it!

This is the first time I've heard of your sisters, model railways, or Enid Blyton; perhaps there are still secrets to reveal?

I, too, have long had a longing for a model railway - alas, never achieved, and the desire is no longer with me.

'Born-again' Christians: did you really have this phrase way back then? It's new to me in this country - recently leaked from the US of A.

But Enid Blyton! Over here she is frowned on by librarians and teachers. (I'm not quite sure why - possibly because she's popular with kids.) However, all the children's departments of bookshops still carry a sizeable stock of her work.

And yes, I do remember private lending libraries; in fact, we still have one locally (the only one I know of). In my youth there were a lot of them. Private libraries are coming back - not for books, alas, but for videotapes. About a dozen in Kingston.

Music: I suppose you reacted against classical music because your parents liked it. Mine had no interest in it, so of course I took to it early! (Have you heard Carl Orff's Carmina Burana - the most exciting piece of music I've come across lately.)

Page 9: Have you got those dates right? Or should 78 read 68?

(18 November 1984)

\* I skip decades easily these days, when writing about the past.

Again I have the problem that I can't remember what I said about various topics in 1984, and run the risk of repeating myself. (Wouldn't be the first time.) One sister, Robin, is fourteen months younger than me. She met John when she was fourteen and he was sixteen, became engaged a few years later, and she and John married in 1969. They have two boys, Colin and Philip, who grow very fast. Jeanette is four years younger than I am. She has never married because she's always having too much fun. She is the music teacher for a well-off state primary school. I seem to remember that we did nothing but bitch at each other when we were kids, but we've been good friends for many years now.

Not much more I can say about model railways, except that Gerald Murnane, told me recently that he once came across a book showing fifty model-railway layouts of America. There's no room at our current house for a layout, but when we win TattsLotto...

The notion of being 'born again' is central to evangelical Christianity, and we always thought of ourselves as such, but you're right - the media didn't use the phrase until it was associated with Jimmy Carter in 1976.

It's most frustrating reading the biography of Enid Blyton (as I was when I wrote my piece for FAPA). On the one hand, she knew better than anyone how to write a story. On the other hand, she had no idea how she did it. She said (and this was confirmed by an interested psychological experiment to which she submitted herself) that she wrote very fast, almost automatically, 'reading off' the pictures in her mind. In effect, she transcribed her waking dreams.

I've looked back over some of the books I read as a child. Sure, they contain the rather squiffy middle-class dialogue and assumptions to which the massed librarians of England and Australia have long since objected - but they also contained the essential story-telling element: that the events you are reading both arise naturally from what has gone before and impel you on to the next series of events. When I was a child, I looked in vain for other writers who could do the same. (The late 1950s, early 1960s boom in children's writing had, of course, not yet happened.)

What happened to book-lending libraries is already happening to videotape-lending libraries: retail sales of new tapes are undercutting the trade of the lenders. One statistic I saw was that video-lending outlets have halved in number in the last two years. Meanwhile, new films on video cost only \$19.95 each.

Lee Harding introduced me to Carl Orff's music way back in 1968, when I was first becoming interested in 'classical music'. I've got a bit sick of it since then, but still have a sneaking desire to hear a performance of Carmina Burana that is equal to the music. In every version I've heard, the musical forces seem too mighty for the recording engineers; they take back their microphones a little too far, and the result is almost always fuzzy, less exciting than the promise of the music itself. On the other hand, if you want perfectly recorded and performed Orff, try Orff's own ten-record version of the Musica Poetica, which is on German Harmonia Mundi. \*

TERRY CARR

11037 Broadway Terrace, Oakland, California 94611, USA

There were some interesting similarities between your life and mine, and in general I thought it was a thoughtful and reasonably honest account - by which I mean you sensibly refrained from mentioning the names of a couple of women (though I can guess at least one of them easily enough). Sometimes I think about writing my own semi-autobiography, but I never do because it would take too much wordage - I'm almost exactly ten years older than you - and have been in fandom and sf that much longer, particularly in this country, where I was involved in more events of wider interest than one could be in Australia. Anyway, I've written about so much of it already here and there in fanzines. If I ever find myself unaccountably as famous as Asimov or Pohl, maybe I'll write a book-length autobiography, but let's not bet on it.

(22 November 1984)

\* I can't see any necessary reason why more would happen to a fan in America than here, except in the matter of convention reports. (We had only one major convention per year in Australia until the mid-1970s.) After the mid-1960s, there was a lot happening here to anybody fully involved in fandom. There was, after all, a whole new fandom to create, after the lull in the late 1950s and very early 1960s. But let people like Foyster, Harding, Smith, Bangsunč, and co. write their own autobiographies. The last time I started on a real autobiography, it had reached 20,000 words, and I'd only just reached my fourth birthday. \*

MIKE SHOEMAKER

2123 N. Early St., Alexandria, Virginia 22302, USA

Thanks for sending Dreams and False Alarms 1. There's little I can say. Our development has virtually nothing in common. For example, sports, music, and games (chess, go, cards, etc.) have had at least as much influence on me as books.

(28 November 1984)

\* You must be one of the few sf fans who could say that. (I should point out that Mike's letter was nice and long, and dealt, among other things, with the last SF Commentary. One day I'll run that letter - when I publish the really last SF Commentary. \*)

PAUL ANDERSON

17 Baker St., Grange, South Australia 5022

Your autobiographical piece reads like a heavily edited-down version of some of your much longer accounts. Also, it shows some purpose to the various Crushing Blows in your life. Each of them pushed you on a slightly different path to a much better future.

(14 December 1984)

\* There haven't been many Crushing Blows since 1976 (says he with fingers ~~frashed~~ maimed from crossing them) - but I've not sailed into any better futures, either. It's been pretty much the same old pleasant future for some years now, which is why I tried to jump-start the old Gillespie by becoming interested in dreams and Jungian analysis. The old Gillespie didn't jump-start; he pattered on in much the same way. I feel most at ease at life when I'm churning out fanzines, but that's an expensive business, and I was never too good at earning or keeping money. Now there's a real challenge for the rest of my life: find a lucrative, satisfying career. Any suggestions? \*

DIANE FOX

(address given already)

Your autobiography sounded typically fannish. ((\*brg\* That bad?\*))

My nearly two-year-old niece is fascinated by trains, and will probably grow up to be a real train fan. One of John's former workmates was an enthusiast. One time he showed us slides from a trip to England and Europe, and many of them were of famous trains he had seen or ridden on. You can also get records of train sounds.

I know what you mean when you talk about being lousy at sports, and only the kids who were good at sports being at all popular. Whenever I went in a race, I always came last, and I was hopeless at everything else. I turned out to be good at swimming - but slow. I had plenty of abilities and none of them useful - in a way, this was more frustrating than not being good at anything, because I not only am unsuccessful in life, but feel that I should be more successful than I am - and that it must be my fault.

\* That sums up my autobiography perfectly. Thanks, Diane. \*

It sounds bloody awful not to like trees, flowers, and scenery. I've always liked this sort of thing, almost as much as books. I can't remember when I wasn't quite fascinated by insects. I'm not an outdoors person because I'm fat and out of condition, but I'm quite as happy doing something outside the house as inside.

I'll have to read Tamarisk Row. Anything by the author of The Plains would be interesting (even without your recommendation).

You mention (in Dreams and False Alarms 2, this time) the way your formerly countrified suburb gradually became an inner-city slum. In Sydney, Mt Druitt and the Penrith area will be the slums of the future. So will the Emu Plains area. It was once beautiful, but is now miles of 'little boxes, all made of ticky tacky'. I remember as a child being scolded for yelling and fighting. Said my mother: 'Don't shout like a hooligan; you sound like Mrs Surry Hills.' Surry Hills is an inner-city suburb. I envisaged it as a terribly slummy place (as I'd never been there), and Mrs Surry Hills as a huge, fat drunken woman with beefy arms, a red, ill-tempered face, and a rolling pin. Today, Surry Hills doesn't seem a particularly unpleasant place - it is full of interesting shops, ethnic restaurants, and terrace houses that seem to be popular with students and trendies. Ashfield, where my mother grew up, is now close to being a slum.

I remember Davy Crockett! Mum made coonskin caps out of a furry velveteen for Sylvia and me. That was a great craze of the time. The Phantom was my favourite comic book then. When you talk about comics and films, it's a great dose of nostalgia for me, although I don't think I ever swapped comics as a child.

(13 February 1985)

\* Thanks for all those comments, Diane. At least a few other people lived through the same decade I did. (Everybody who said they grew up in the 1950s did not live in the same decade as mine.) You must have something in common with Elaine, who has always been a great fan of plants and animals. Her mother insisted on using Latin names for plants, and Elaine used to collect and read about insects. Me? I spent my time trying to avoid outdoor activities and get back to the book I was reading.

Comics and films did a lot to make me an Americanophile when I was a kid - but not completely. Ironic and sardonic humour seemed the province of British films - especially Genevieve and some of the early Peter Sellers films. At one time, we were only allowed to see British films (at a rate of about one a year), except for Disney cartoon features. I didn't really discover the American cinema until a few years ago, when Elaine's sister gave us a little black-and-white television set. \*

MATS LINDER

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I don't believe I've ever really written to you before, except about SF Commentary, so I feel I know you very well, and you don't know anything about me. I was

surprised to learn that you are younger than I am (I was born in 1945); I've always thought of you as more mature and sort of more sober. (But then I seldom think of myself in those terms. It seems that the older you get, the more you realise that youth/age is a state of mind, not a physical inevitability.)

So what else is new? Let's try this: married formally since 1975, in reality since 1972, since Karin. Two children: Liv, almost seven, and David, four and a half. Living just outside Stockholm, which is fine with us: close to the sea (the Baltic), yet only thirty minutes from the centre of the city. And a cat, about four months old; the ordinary black-and-white type, very nice and personal.

Work: Karin is at home with the children; I try to make us all a living working at the Swedish Standards Institution standardising data communications and data terminology. Plus working spare time with translations (mainly from English, and from French and German if needed). And with editorial work, and doing diagrams and such drawings. (I'm not very good at more arty things.)

But after five years of this I would like to do something else. Most of all, I'd like to be able to face my children when at some time in the future they ask us what we did to stop what's going on and to leave them something but leftovers. Easy it is not; the snag is I have to make some money, too. And it's a very well-paying market. So... I don't quite know how to go about it, but I shall try.

What I'd like to do more is to play the guitar really well, and the small organ (not that kind) and the flute I've got... Music I love very much. I played the piano a couple of years when I was about eleven or twelve, and the guitar some eight or so years later, but nothing came of it, sad to say. I keep trying from time to time to take it up again, so far without noticeable success.

Science fiction: You may remember Summa, an excellent fanzine, if I say so myself (others did, too), which is very nearly dead now, because of lack of time. I still have the material for the last issue (17/18/19/20). Not only the numbering of that issue was inspired by SFC, I am happy to say; among all the fanzines/magazines yours is (was) my favourite, closely followed by SF Review and Foundation.

What more? I don't really know. The original version of this letter was quite a bit longer, but the damned computer chose to garble it all; when I tried to print it I got the message DISK READ ERROR OCCURRED, which meant that only some fifteen lines remained. And the procedure to recover damaged files did not work, either. There are drawbacks to these machines.

(27 February 1985)

\* And here I am trying to get Elaine to pawn her soul so that we can have a word-processor on the premises. My pet WP at work, an IBM-PC (not a compatible) does not play up. The only faulty discs we've had have been IBM's own; the Wabash discs we're using at the moment are reliable.

Thanks for the nice comments on the late-lamented SF Commentary. I still like using the name The Metaphysical Review, if only so that I can do non-sf issues like this one.

Creepy feeling to hear from someone how you appear to them, especially as you haven't met me in person. I was reading just today (in the O'Connor book on dreams, mentioned on page 4) that a person will appear older than his or her physical age when functioning well in his or her 'superior function' (Jungian jargon - read the book), and much younger when forced to operate in his or her 'inferior function'. Superior = publishing fanzines; inferior = everything else. Although I'm at least 15 kg overweight, to many people I seem younger than my physiological age. That's not necessarily a good thing. \*

SYDNEY J. BOUNDS  
(again)

Thanks for Dreams and False Alarms 2. I was glad for the bit on Melbourne - makes it easier to visualise.

I never before associated you with comics! Well, well...

What do you put in the middle of a novel? Well, it seems to me you couldn't have planned out the complete story in advance. Personally, I consider it vital to

work out a chapter-by-chapter outline before I start writing. A useful tip to remember is to change your basic situation a couple of times, because readers lose interest in one situation after 15,000-20,000 words. So a short novel may require three situations, a full-length novel four. And, of course, each situation must be capable of development to 15,000-20,000 words.

(13 March 1985)

\* My original query was a bit tongue in cheek; I didn't expect such an explicit answer. Most sf novels - most novels - contain sections of makeweight writing - stuff to 'kick the plot along'. Words as plastic filler between the planks. I've wondered how to fill a novel entirely with material that is really interesting. One possibility is to leave out the plot. This practice has its drawbacks - for instance, you couldn't sell such a book in the current sf publishing climate. Another possibility is to make it all plot, for the kind of author who can make intricate knots of events. This practice sells better, but leaves a reader like me breathless and dissatisfied. Yet another possibility, which your thoughts suggest to me, Syd, is to make up a novel of three or four novellas. Lots of sf writers have tried this, and the joins between the bits show. But some classic authors, such as Henry James, can get away with books written in what are really long stage-scenes of 10,000 words or more each. Thanks, Syd. I must go back to my intractably unwritten novel and type a few more pages. \*

DOUG BARBOUR

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I found your autobiography in Dreams and False Alarms fascinating when placed alongside your recent complaints about sf. But of course, you never did like Delany, whose work I still find to be the most interesting (in all the Chinese overtones of 'interesting', too) in the genre today, and I am finding the political thinking in the last two 'Dune' books provocative in the best sense, and well embedded in a brand-new narrative of real power for this reader, anyway.

I have had a great year. Last fall I did a poetry-reading tour of Eastern Canada, visiting some old haunts in the Maritimes I hadn't seen in twenty years, and meeting some old acquaintances from those long-lost times, and finding, always to my delight, that we hadn't seemed to change much and could get back into the flow of conversation with little difficulty.

New York for the Xmas holidays was very expensive, but Broadway is exciting, even if Cats was an overblown bore to Sharon and me. Sunday in the Park with George, on the other hand, was truly interesting, a musical with real intelligence - very rare, I suspect. And Tom Stoppard's The Real Thing is just that, a glimpse of how good truly understood artifice can be on stage.

This spring, I toured Northern Europe, usually with fellow Canadian poet, Stephen Scobie, lecturing on Canadian poetry and reading and performing our own work throughout universities in West Germany, Denmark, Sweden, and Austria - and I had a side trip into Hungary. We met lots of new friends, and I saw an immense amount of great art, heard a couple of fabulous concerts, saw three fine plays in London, including Maggie Smith as a lustrous Millamant in a superb production of The Way of the World. Coming on top of my trip to New Zealand and Australia last May and June, this made for one of the fullest years I've had.

(10 May 1985)

\* Elaine and I enjoyed meeting you, Doug - and thanks for the phone call when you were in Melbourne again early this year. Drop in again anytime. You are yet another Canadian who makes me feel exhausted just to hear of your adventures. To me, it's a big event to travel the two miles into central Melbourne to pick up the mail. \*



ROBERT DAY

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In answer to your autobiography in Dreams and False Alarms 1: I was born 1957 in Nottingham; moved at age 18 months to Derbyshire; grammar-school education; first-ever sf novel read, Anderson and Kurland's Ten Years to Doomsday; first sf novel read that turned me on to sf, Aldiss's Report on Probability A, at age 14 - I kid you not.

I went to Newcastle upon Tyne for higher education in librarianship, which has done me very little good. I left in 1978, had one temporary job, one job as a wages clerk for six months, then joined the civil service in Social Security.

Nowadays, I still work in Social Security, but not with money. I organise medical boards for persons claiming benefits related to disability. Unfortunately, my colleagues at work are not the most stimulating of people. They want mainly to discuss their boy/girlfriends and their drinking habits: hence my brain-damaged state when I get home of an evening, and possibly my lack of lols to everyone. My last office wasn't like this!

TMR I found very interesting: a sort of SFC writ small and fannish. It was TMR 3 that boggled me, where you hinted that you'd like a fanzine article on Shostakovich. Sobeit. How would you like 'Now the Great Work is Finished: A Fan's Thoughts on Completing His Shostakovich Cyle'? Will start work at the first opportunity...

Re. TMR 4, the Magic Pudding Club issue: On one level, this meant nothing to me: just names and events. But on another level, this was a piece that touched a chord in the fannish mind. I think back to Ian Williams's 'Now We Are Ten' (ten years of Gannetfandom) in Maya 9, one of the first two fanzines I ever had, way back in 1975. What both of these articles did was to open my eyes and mind to a whole way of life. In England, it changed irrevocably when hit with a Worldcon - over here, it was Seacon '79. I seem to remember doing minor things for Seacon. Now the new bid appears totally professional - or is it that I'm not involved? But that anarchistic, fannish way of life existed, and can still be brought back to life by good fan writing.

(25 December 1985)

\* Yes, the above actually filled all the spare spots in a Christmas card; sorry this is the first time I've replied properly.

I'm still waiting for the Shostakovich article. It should fit quite nicely into TMR 10/11(/12?).

I seem to remember that David Grigg once mentioned, either in person or print, that Report on Probability A was one of the books that made him an sf reader. Since I'm ten years older than you, Probability A was one of the books that seemed really interesting when I was entering fandom; books that made me an sf reader include Phil Dick's Solar Lottery, Jack Williamson's The Humanoids, and, a few years before that, all the Edgar Rice Burroughs 'Mars' books. Cordwainer Smith next (in one of the first Galaxy magazines I bought)... J. G. Ballard in the early-1960s Carnell magazines... and Aldiss when Lee Harding introduced me to his books in 1968 (especially Hothouse and the wonderful short-story collection, The Saliva Tree and Other Strange Growths). John Bangsund can claim to have discovered Ursula Le Guin's works before anybody else... even before the publication of The Left Hand of Darkness. I noticed Tom Disch before most people did (as early as 'White Fang Goes Dingo'), but it was Mike Moorcock who really brought him to our notice (with the serialisation of Camp Concentration in New Worlds). George Turner discovered my fiction in 1979, but so far nobody else except David Lake and Carey Handfield's father has followed his lead. Maybe I'd better write something so there'll be some fiction for someone to discover.

\* LATE BITS (22 July): Thanks for all the letters and fanzines... and luncheons of comment... and books (particular thanks to BRIAN EARL BROWN for the American paperback edition of Lake Wobegon Days)... and tapes (thanks to GREG EGAN for sending 90 minutes of Laurie Anderson). There are many statements of fact in TMR 7/8 that have been superseded by events, but I don't have room to correct them here (but I do now have my own copy of Lake Wobegon Days, and 'A Prairie Home Companion' is going to suffer three weeks without Garrison Keillor as compare). Next issue will either be 80 pages of this 14-pitch face, or 120 pages of the usual 12-pitch Cubic Elite. State your choice... (Seeyuz...\*brg\*)

