



This is the eleventh issue of the AMOR DE COSMOS PEOPLE'S MEMORIAL what-revolutionary Susanzine, a lettersubstitute from Susan Joan Wood, 2236 Allison Rd., Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1T6. Fanzines and non-letter mail go to the Department of English, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1W5, please. This issue will, as usual, be duplicated on the BCSFA Gestetner, with (I hope) the assistance of Allyn Cadogan. Electrostencils are by Victoria Vayne. Coffee by Molly's Spice Shop. October 30, 1976
Lion's Gate Press Publication 9

NEWS DEPARTMENT. : Queen's University finally relented, decided that perhaps science fiction was worth studying after all (though no-one had read the books in question), and granted Doug Barbour his doctorate. I understand that, though the thesis (on Russ, Delany and Le Guin) was accepted several weeks ago, the degree actually becomes Official today. Congratulations to dr. doug. For patience, perseverance, proofreading (and editorial acumen, which doesn't alliterate) this issue of AMOR is dedicated to

SHARON BARBOUR

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A year ago tomorrow, I sat typing AMOR 8, Lion's Gate Publication 1, between intervals of handing out apples to the neighbourhood spooks. Outside, the air condensed it was not exactly *raining*, you understand, but the dampness was thickening in the air, in that peculiar Pacific Northwest fashion which keeps the ferns and firs glistening green all winter. I hadn't published anything for several months. I had, however, had innumerable Experiences which I wanted to write down-- for me, as much as for anyone who hadn't been to Aussiecon- &-onward. (*How do I know what I'm thinking until I write it down and look at it?*) I also had five month's worth of accumulated mail sitting unanswered. (*"Personal guilt is the most useless emotion there is."*--Joanna Russ in KHATRU 3-4, and lookie, I have TWO italic elements! This is Light Italic. This is Courier Italic, a birthday present from Eli Cohen for which IBM is still billing me; the programming in their account department is, uh, inefficient. But I digress.)

This is the first night for many months-- too many months-- that I've had a chance to sit quietly alone with a typewriter and my thoughts, taking random impressions, organizing them, examining them, giving them some form as I (before I, after I?) put them down on stencil. For me, this is the hardest part, the most valuable part, the reason for writing: putting thoughts into communicable and coherent form. Wish I could somehow help my first-year composition class to understand that... Everything points towards evaluation: what's changed in a year? The air is still heavy with dampness: we had a surprisingly dry October, clear and crisp, with the oaks and maples turning red and brown-gold against the dark firs and cedars, the mountains standing out clear against the blue water and bluer sky-- or draped in wisps of fog, which swirled and eddied and tore, and suddenly swooped to wrap the whole of Point Grey in five-minute fogs. I had guests, most of September and October, and Vancouver showed itself off prettily.

The human environment hasn't changed much, either. That is, my house, and the other 78 units of row-housing, have not been torn down for a high-rise luxury apartment building. (*I had a letter from Alexis Gilliland in which he observed-- tongue-in-cheek, I hope-- "Congratulations on you and your neighbours' successful defence of your latent property rights in your homes, against the developer who was trying to create housing to ease the 0.01% vacancy rate and thereby ameliorate the statistical lot of all Vancouverites." Statistics are wonderful... actually he was trying to ameliorate the housing shortage felt by childless people who could afford \$600 a month for a 1-bedroom apartment, and for such I feel little concern.*) Not only has development been halted while the future of the area is studied, but, it seems, that future may be green: despite proposals to the study force that the whole area, or a large portion, be given over to high-density privately-developed housing (which students could never afford), the ousted-NDP aim of keeping the Endowment Lands as a recreational area and wilderness park seems to have won wide support. I would like to think that even the Social Credit government accepts that people need trees, hiking trails, bald eagles and herons in the middle of the urban sprawl that is the Lower Mainland.

The house is littered with the same assortment of unanswered mail, semi-read fanzines, glanced-at books, and essays-to-mark. It's one of the paradoxes of my teaching life that the more literature I teach, the less I seem to read. Certainly now that I'm teaching writing, for the first time, I have almost no time to write (*what freelance career was that, again?*) Any and all tips on how-to-teach-composition will be appreciated. In the meantime, I have 30 papers to mark this weekend-- not just grade, but discuss-on-paper (the classes are too large to actually teach comp. in them. The students write 10 papers, which I mark; they then rewrite them, fixing everything from spelling to organization-- fuzzymindedness and a reliance on clichés from our stupider newspaper rabble-rouseurs are the common problems-- and I mark them again.) Six hundred essays, of 600 words up to 1500 words or more (we are supposed to end up teaching How To Write a Research Paper) means a lot of marking-- that's one class. Oh, what I'm doing is Important and Necessary, I know. What I'm really teaching is not how-to-use-"hopefully"-correctly (as on Harlan Ellison's t-shirt, but that's for another stencil) but a process: the process of thinking clearly, and communicating effectively. Idealism aside, though, it's often a depressing task.

What has changed around here is all internal. The paragraph above is part of it. Sometime last winter, in the depths of rainy February, I turned 30. Metaphorically speaking. (I was 27 at the time.) When I started teaching, I was 21: the same age as, or younger than, the people in my classes. I moved to Regina to start my first fulltime teaching job just a few weeks after my 25th birthday. I had a bank account, I was developing an identity after a period of, well, hiatus, I had A Job (nay, a Profession): but I was still an apprentice, and I still *thought* of myself as Young. A potential, not an actual. Well, sometime last winter, I realized that I was a generation older than the people in my classes-- oh, only 9 or 10 years older, but a generation just the same. (Anyone who was at all awake in the mid-to-late 60's knows what I mean.) The gap involves, not just the quantity of experience and a changed social environ-

ment, but quality of experience, and self-perception. Getting my doctorate, moving to Vancouver, being accepted as a fully-developed member of my chosen community, and beginning to produce work which stretched my skills and showed, at the same time, what I could hope to accomplish, all had something to do with it. I had, in fact, Become. I was a grownup. An Adult. With all the responsibility that implied. --It was eerie, for awhile there. I actually forgot how old I was, and thought of myself as several years older than my chronological age, rather than, as in the past, younger. That was depressing... Yet, at the same time, I remembered what Doug Goodhue in Regina had said when he turned 30: it was a relief to be finished with growing up; it was reassuring to know that whatever happened, he'd probably survive; and it was encouraging to have some perspective on, insight into, himself and his life so far ("so I won't make the same dumb mistakes over and over, I'll make better ones.") This doesn't rule out change; it does, I hope, mean I won't do dumb things for-the-sake-of-change. It's certainly make me think more about the learning-and-teaching process which engages most of my time and attention. Even when I wonder if I really *want* to mark essays and attend committee meetings, the rest of my life, and consider moving back to Ottawa to start a record studio with Brother Bob, the final answer is usually "s--- y." (*Besides, I'd have even less time to answer the mail. I'd like to reopen Le Hibou, though.*) As a final comment: I re-read the Earthsea Trilogy twice this summer, in the course of writing my Le Guin paper (*Voices for the Future, Vol. 2, ed. Tom Claeson, out from Bowling Green U. Popular Press as soon as Tom writes his contribution.*) The Trilogy is, among other things, one of the best comments on this growing-up process I've read.

Another change: I don't feel temporary here. "You can't fly directly to Kansas City from here," said the United Airlines ticket agent, so I gave her a ridiculously round-about route... I left here on Aug. 16 for much-too-brief stops in Regina (where I saw virtually nobody except Eli and Burton Weber, couldn't contact my surrogate-parents, and drifted through the dusty streets like a revenant, feeling I was revisiting more in memory than in fact a place I'd never expected to see again); Saskatoon, or rather Cathryn and David Miller, and the remains of David's musical-instruments-as-art show, where I was duly breathtaken by the Celtic harp carved with dragons, the lute, and the courting dulcimer, double-headed, one head a lion and the other a lioness; Ottawa, where in less than a week I tried to see my family and friends, write a Scholarly Paper, and shake off a cold I acquired somewhere in Richard Labonté's communal farm's neighbour's lake; and Toronto, where I spent the time running a fever, huddled up in misery and not wanting to see *anyone*.

You couldn't pay me to live in Regina again; Saskatoon is civilized, and they want a Carlit teacher, but...; Toronto, at least downtown, is glittering, expensive and un-recognizable, and though it was marvellous to see Rosemary again, (under the worst possible circumstances, alas-- I didn't feel I was visiting so much as trying to stay alive) and fun to sit on the subway at rush-hour with mad Derek Carter drawing "The Adventures of Hannibal the Hairy Guppy" on a sketchpad on his knee, with running commentary on at least a dozen of the thousand Carter characters, well... it wasn't a place for me, either. As for Ottawa: I spent 21 years there, but the city I grew up in has vanished, it seems, under shiny mirror-windowed highrises, new roads, parks, and a make-up of chic boutiques and trendiness. So it seems, at least: Ottawa as a combination of developers' spree, faceless-bureaucrats'-warren, and city-planners' half-realized park-endowed dream. Wandering with Elizabeth Buchan Kimmerly through the renovated shops of the Byward Market ("lapin frais" and a bilingual version of the Old Spaghetti House chain-- La Spaghetteria, as I recall), sitting in an outdoor café for tea and pastries, amid the trees and the shops full of expensive Montréal-chic dresses for the hordes of young women the government-warrens surround, exchanging news about friends, I realized Ottawa was the same-- except it had learned a little worldliness, *élégance*. Certainly the countryside was the same (though further away); certainly I felt wistful and envious (even while being misled by Richard, failed boy scout, through juniper and bog as he insisted "The lake's over here somewhere") as I contemplated the hills and fields of Marlborough House's 200-acre farm near Kalabogie.

Certainly I was glad of the time to talk with Elizabeth and Richard again. It was good to see the Clarkes and Will Straw, mindblowing to find that Ottawa has *several* good restaurants and even a cabaret theatre, and nostalgia-making to find, at the end of new freeways, signposted *en français*, the familiar green Gatineau hills. (The Queebshot which resulted will be in the next AMOR, which will be out ~~Real~~ \$ as soon as I get the DUFF ballots from Rusty Hevelin.) My Mummy made me a birthday cake, my brother didn't get much chance to talk, alas, and Hendrix-the-Samoyed welcomed me as a fresh source of toes to lick. Even Puppy the cat seemed pleased to see me. I guess it's still home; but ... (Among other things, my life's work does not consist of being a government report-writer on the fifteenth floor of some office tower, doing meaningless, if well-paying, work.) After a brief interlude of the madness which is worldcon-- saying hello to many, many people but actually making contact with few (a process complicated by the fact that whatever bug I had turned into a fever and laryngitis, a great combination for any worldcon)-- I found myself with a sleepless night, an 8-hour journey from KC, and a whole lot of unsorted experiences behind me: midnight, September 7, Vancouver Airport. Enter heroine, dazed. Door opens. Heroine suddenly snaps awake... Cold, damp night air, clear sky, stars, and a smell-- an exciting smell, one I associate with V-Cons, my hope-filled trip out here from Regina blizzards for a job interview, even with the first trip I made out here from Ottawa blizzards for a newspaper conference 10 years (!) ago. Vancouver: a compound of green, growing things, misty air, and the ocean.

And I was home. I didn't even need to put my own key in my own front door, pick up my mail, and collapse in my own bed (to arise in 6 hours and handle my very own problems of registration, when the 16 sections of 2nd-year Canlit which I "co-ordinate" filled up the second day of registration, and the Canlit Crisis took most of my time, tact, diplomacy and patience, not to mention the remains of my voice.)

So I came home-- felt home--stayed at home: and people arrived. Tuesday night, Sept. 7, as I was trying to recover from registration (during which many people had taken out their frustration with The Canlit Crisis by yelling at me... and all I could do was mutter "I told the department we needed 3 more people to teach Canlit, I told them, muttermutter," and say, politely, "I'm sorry, there's nothing I can do, the classes are full," and "I'm sorry, I know there are 10 more people than you expected in your class and there aren't enough seats, let alone books, I'm working on it") and contemplating a pile of dirty laundry, the phone rang. "Hello," said David Miller. "We're in Golden, B.C. We'll be arriving tomorrow night." After the Millers came DUFF winner Christine McGowan, for two weekends; during Christine's visit came Carey Handfield, who hiked up Hollyburn Mountain with John Berry and Rick Mikkelson, surveyed the country, went east, got as far as Regina, and came back to Vancouver. The Dentons dropped in for potato soup and suggested that I publish the recipe, Paul Williams called to ask me to set up pr-stuff for his visit to publicize APPLE BAY, various other people made bookings at the Wood Hotel... and Harlan Ellison dropped in to my sf class.

It's been Busy, here. Unfortunately, September is NOT a good time to visit me, especially when registration provides unexpected hassles. I've felt very guilty, the past two months, at having so little time to actually TALK with my guests. Still, I've worked the Vancouver sightseeing routine into good shape. (I really enjoy the new perspective that visitors give. I was enthralled by the parrots fluttering wild across Australian roads; Brian Trogood, and then Christine and Carey, were equally entranced... by our squirrels. I spent a pleasant afternoon pushing Christine around our shops, while she admired the 3-storey naked lady in Eaton's glittery main store. Besides, if it hadn't been for Christine, I would probably not have, at last, driven up the highway north along Howe Sound on a clear and perfect day, with a picture-postcard view of snowcovered mountains and blue water at every turn. I'm only sorry we didn't get to do more hiking with Carey: next trip.) Meantime, I've had exactly two "free" weekends: one was our Thanksgiving, which I spent in Bellingham giving the Scholarly Paper I wrote in Ottawa, and meeting the delightful Palmer family at last, before coming home to mark 45 Canlit essays. One is now-- with 30

papers of varying degrees of literacy needing attention... It got to be a major production, planning enough time to get downtown to get new glasses! (One thing about bus rides downtown, they give time to read... I read most of BRIDGE OF ASHES in two 45-minute trips on the UBC bus, and, alas, that was not only all the time but all the attention it seemed to need. The sf class was just doing "Rose For Ecclesiastes," too, and the contrast is painful.)

Meantime, back at the mail... One letter I did write was a note to Dick Geis, who printed, last spring, a Tim Kirk drawing as the back cover of SFR-- a drawing of which the original is on my wall, of which copies were sold ONLY to raise money for the Jersey Wildlife Trust-- a drawing of swamp creatures watching a "Shill Oil" refinery rise, which Tim gave me (croggle) back at Noreascon. It came out about the time of final exams, and I didn't do anything-- got caught up in V-Con instead; then the next issue miscredited it (to Mike Glicksohn's *Energumen*, reproduction encouraged, neither of which I can confirm statement): so I finally wrote to Dick. Not only did he write back, immediately... he enclosed a cheque for \$20, for the Trust. Now he didn't have to do that... but that makes it a purely thoughtful gesture, since no moral or legal pressure prompted it. I (finally) converted the cheque-to-me into pounds-for-the-animals, and sent it off. Many thanks, Dick.

CONSIDERING A DIFFERENT ASPECT OF THE INNER PERSON, AMOR GOES DOMESTIC

From feeding the animals, to feeding the fen... it seemed time to take a break from musings, make some tea (Celestial Seasonings Pelican Punch, a non-caffeine blend of herbs and things: a small sensory delight: recommended), collect recipes.

When the Millers arrived, I called up faithful Rick and Lynne to sample dinner. I cooked salmon; David made his mother's neighbour's German Potato Soup recipe. Thus reminded not only of how good it was, but how irresistible, I found my recipe again and have been preparing vats of it for guests. The recipe feeds 6 people unless they're Carey Handfield; it can be prepared ahead of time and the cream added at the last minute, and leftovers can be re-heated, carefully.

German Potato Soup

3 or more large potatoes, sliced thinly (scrub the skins and leave them on, if you can)
4 slices lean bacon, diced (I use a little more, since "lean bacon" doesn't exist)
6 green onions, chopped
1 yellow onion
6 c. chicken broth
2 egg yolks, beaten
1 c. sour cream
1 tbsp. chopped parsley
1 tbsp. flour

seasonings to taste: salt, pepper, and I use a hint of garlic and some chopped sweet red pepper, mostly for colour

In a heavy pot, fry bacon 5 min. Drain off most fat, add onions, fry 5 min., add flour. Add broth, stirring. Add potatoes (and red pepper and whatever), simmer 1 hour. combine egg yolks and cream' stir slowly into soup. Simmer gently min., stirring. Add parsley and serve.

Collect four egg whites, and you can make a pavlova-- an Australian dessert I made for Christine and Carey, thus adding pounds of Canadian content. It's basically a meringue, with a hollow middle, filled with whipped cream and fruit: quite gluttonously rich. I think I'll take my tea and go to bed, before I raid the refrigerator...





An ANALOG writer would probably use a nova as a metaphor for The Experience of Meeting Harlan Ellison. Or perhaps a controlled fusion reaction would be more appropriate: a continuous, controlled release of energy (for the bedazzlement and possibly the enlightenment of lifeforms on circling planets.)

Certainly, over the weekend in mid-October when Harlan Ellison visited Vancouver, and charmed the Vancouver sf community, the sun shone continuously: a minor miracle. Pathetic fallacy

would suggest that it was inspired by Harlan Ellison's energy output-- and his warmth towards the people he met. Experience would suggest that, if Harlan Ellison wanted the sun to shine, he would find a way of arranging that it do so. (If he had time between projects, at least. "Where's the snow on those mountains of yours? I want snow, dammit." "There, Harlan. The nearer ones don't have snow, but those ones north up Howe Sound do, see?" "Yeah, but.. that's dirty snow. Tired snow. I want fresh snow!" "Let's have lunch, Harlan.")

The story begins with me sitting on the #22 Macdonald bus, with John Berry (visiting for the weekend) and a pile of purchases and impedimenta, including a dozen ears of corn and four pounds of honey, from the farmer's market and fair on the Habitat Forum site. From this beginning, how am I going to get to Harlan Ellison?--Well, over the tops of the ears of corn, I saw Ed Hutchings, stalwart projectionist of the B.C.S.F.A., oboeist, and would-be Ordinary Person. Ed was looking Elegant, in a fancy dinner jacket, brocade tie and so on. (John and I, who had spent several hours hiking through the University Endowment Lands forests over to Jericho Beach and the Habitat site, and a couple more nerdling around the site and the bookshops of Kitsilano, looked decidedly Dishevelled.)

"Goodness, you look Elegant, Ed," I observed.

"Thank you," he said. "Are you coming to the dinner too?"

"Huh?" I said, in my best English-teacher-defender-of-the-language manner. We were, in fact, bound for dinner with Rick Mikkelson, Lynne Dollis, and the Dentons, who were in town for the BCSFA meeting, but Lynne hadn't said anything about Elegance, just about cannelloni.

"The dinner with Harlan Ellison. Didn't anyone call you?"

Since I'd been out all day amid the autumn leaves, beside the sparkling water, Back to Nature, I explained, I hadn't received any messages. But whaaaa? --Harlan was in town, Ed explained, to do twelve guest spots as resident science-extrapolation expert on David Suzuki's "Quirks and Quarks" science-popularization show for CBC. He'd gotten in touch with BCSFA members, and several people were meeting him for dinner... "*Sigh,*"

I commented, or possibly "**Arrgh!**" Or "**Croggle!**" Then-- "Please invite him to the meeting, Ed. And please give him this note"-- which said, more or less, "Welcome to Vancouver, you once said you'd be interested in talking to my sf class, please will you come on Monday if you're in town?"

Several hours later, well-fed and redolent of garlic, Rick, Lynne, John and I joined the milling dozens at Startreader, the sf-collectors' shop which recently opened near the university. As I scanned the shelves; talked with Terry Rutherford and Bill Matthews who opened the shop with, basically, a \$10,000 collection of sf from Floyd Pfeil of Morse, Saskatchewan (*another Saskfan!*); and eagerly bought up every *RATS!*, *CIPHER* and *SCIFIC QUARTERLY* in sight to replace my fanzine collection (*there was even something there called EKERGUMEN*), I kept wondering if Harlan would show up. (The club members, meanwhile, were milling about, since most of the members of the evening's panel on sf collecting were still at The Dinner.) He's not a man known for suffering ~~fools~~ fen gladly, after all, and there had been a minor unpleasantness involving a Vanfan...

Then-- "Hey! Hey, Harlan! Hello! Welcome, how nice to see you, what are you doing here, hello!" I may even have added "Goshwow."

"Hello, Susan. Nice to see you. You know, you're the only woman I know who's created two distinct identities for herself: Susan Glicksohn and Susan Wood. I really admire that. And sure, I'd like to do your class, Monday, as long as I finish in time to do Suzuki's show. I'll call ya tomorrow." --There was a whiff of pipe smoke, and he vanished, into a ring of awed and respectful-- and then alive and interested--fans.

I stood looking at the bookshelves (stripped of anything Ellisonian, for autographing purposes) and pondered the Ellison Image. I'd never really seen him outside of a convention, outside of a post-*Dangerous Visions*, post-*Star Trek* situation when he expected to be attacked, was thus wary and perhaps hostile, and of course was attacked. (The first time I met Harlan Ellison, in fact, he mistook me for a Trekkie out to attack him. I was neither; he apologized most charmingly.)

The man at the BCSFA meeting was relaxed and friendly. He chatted, he joked, he autographed. He held the floor with publishing stories, but then the conversation flowed back around him naturally (I remembered a party in Toronto, in the era of the Ill-Fated *Starlost*, which--from choice, or audience pressure, who knows-- had turned into a Star Performance, with *Harlan Ellison* reading a new story to the assembled multitudes, all of whom seemed to find it hard to treat him as a human being.) A lot of energy and enthusiasm was being disseminated, in that bookshop, but in a paradoxically low-key way. After an hour or so of conversation, Harlan went back to his wife Lori, waiting in the hotel because fans croggle her a bit, and no wonder: and for the next hour the members of the BCSFA (remember, we have little contact with outside fandom, or especially with prodom up here) stood around going "Hey!" and "Wow!" and "Wasn't he something!" and, mostly "What a nice guy he is!"

Monday saw the debut of The Harlan Ellison Show at U.B.C. Harlan was far more "on" for the class-- striding in with his typewriter in hand, and his t-shirt announcing: "Every day I journey to the market place where lies are bought and sold. Hopefully, I take my place among the sellers"-- a Bertold Brecht quotation, worn for CBC, and illustrating, incidentally, the correct use of "hopefully," grammar fen out there. Unfortunately, Mondays are the optional discussion group, but I'd managed to get hold of a few people who would be interested, so we had a fair-sized audience-- and an attentive one, an enthralled one in fact Harlan strode, he paced, he gestured, he enthused, he scorned, he exulted over victories both real (the breaking of restrictions on writers' imaginations) and Phyrric (the breaking of a contract which constrained him by mailing a dead gopher to NAL's president...) He gave off waves of energy, all of it focussed on the importance of good writing, of freedom, of intelligence.. and the rewarding of honest work by fair wages within the sf community. He was funny, witty, outrageous... and unstoppable, even by the Ubiquitous UBC buzzers

which, straight out of high school like the rigid rows of rigid seats, tell us when we shall learn and when we shall be freed from learning.

Near the end of the first hour, the hall door opened, and a figure slipped quietly into a seat at the back of the room. A light man with an afro, granny glasses and goatee, wearing beads and denim, he attracted no attention from the class, which probably thought he was another student or sf fan. At this point my "goshwow" response hit overload and shorted out. The guest was David Suzuki: just your average local genius geneticist, researcher, media star, science popularizer and all-round superstar. He also happens to be someone I admire tremendously. From a childhood in a Canadian ~~concentration~~ intern camp for Japanese (he was born here, as was, I think, his father, but never underestimate racial paranoia-- or, as one of my first year students said, immigrants should be kept out of Canada "because, face it, all the great empires of the world have been *White*")-- anyway, from this background, he went on to become a whiz-kid geneticist until, oh about eight years ago now, he started thinking about the applications of his outstandingly successful experiments tinkering with *Drosophila* and the like... and dropped out to think about that a little. And dropped back in, with articles on genetics research-- and its applications, benefits and misapplications, aimed at ordinary readers-- with a tv show, "Suzuki on Science," and a radio show, "Quirks and Quarks," both national, both with the same messages: scientific research is not mysterious and arcane, it's controllable, it has consequences which will affect our lives, we-out-here should KNOW what's going on to control those consequences intelligently. To an arts-person, who grew up in the 50s when the ideal of life was mysterious white-coated priests of Science and Technology doing Miraculous Things off in remote labs someplace, this concept of the moral and ethical accountability of scientists, and the moral and ethical (as well as practical) imperative on the public to call for that accounting, is still a new, powerful idea.

Add to this the fact that I have a personal interest in genetics research: I suffer from a couple of inherited, genetic defects (knew it all the time, didn't you? hmph. One of them's amblyopia, which is not in my dictionary: anyway, "lazy eye," nonfunction of the eye muscles, producing blindness; another's varicose veins. Wouldn't it be nice to have those traits edited out of any genes I might pass on?). Add to this an interest, thanks to Ursula Le Guin's "Nine Lives," Kate Wilhelm's WHERE LATE THE SWEET BIRDS SANG, and Pamela Sargent's CLONED LIVES in cloning and its possibilities. Add to this the fact that David Suzuki, drawn into the discussion with Harlan, is saying casually that yes, they're cloning frogs, and if human cloning is possible "we should be able to do it within two years." Add to this the man's authentic Star Status as scientist and science communicator-- and you come up with me going "Goshwow" a lot (as in "Goshwow, that is David Suzuki talking to Harlan Ellison in *My Classroom*!)-- even though what Harlan-and-David are now talking about is the acute discomfort they feel at being treated with Awe and Reverence.

I did not, alas, get to have lunch with David Suzuki, since Harlan continued to talk about *The Last Dangerous Visions*, his latest tv project, and the veniality of sf publishers, for another hour. At the end of the experience, the audience was exhausted, saturated with words, ideas, enthusiasms; Harlan kept zapping along right through lunch, after which the faithful few escorted him over to the BioScience Boulding to rendezvous with Suzuki, to do the series of shows which had been the *raison d'être* for this whole gig. (Harlan, by the way, kept his typewriter close by through all of this; I had half-hoped he would start a story, right there in the Faculty Club.) The sun obligingly shone on Howe Sound, illuminating the (rather tired) snow on the far-off mountains; oak leaves rustled to the ground in crisp, movie-set heaps; students swarmed by, smiling (midterms were weeks ahead), or intent. "They look healthy, happy, content," said Harlan, making some comment about the overwhelming Pleasantness of the whole scene. "Yes," I commented, rather bitterly, thinking of smugness, élitism, insularity and downright vicious prejudice, as exhibited by English 100... "They really think this is the best of all possible worlds." Harlan looked quizzical... some remarks about 60's activism passed... and suddenly I found myself bursting out into an angry: "What did we do it all for, anyway? Why did we fight so hard? Nothing's changed, and

these people don't want it changed. There wasn't any point in trying..."

Harlan looked at me. "Susan, when you give a gift, you don't ask for anything back. And what any of us are doing, we do because we have to. And it's not wasted." Clichés, maybe, but as Howard Cherniak guided us through the maze of the BioScience warren, proving that some town planners can de-mystify buildings, I thought about it all, about the waves of energy and enthusiasm we'd all been feeling emanate from one man for nearly five hours-- and gathered a little of that freefloating energy around me like a blanket, to keep off the winds and the fog of depression, for another hundred termpapers...

Thank you, Harlan.

Footnote: Al'n Cadogan, who is one of the BCSFA's nicest and most interesting human beings (after all, she's helping me slipsheet) is auditing my sf class. She came along with the Harlan Ellison Show entourage; afterwards, we stood around going *croggle*. "Gee" I said, wistfully, "also wow. I wish I could ask more people to do my class. David Suzuki, f'rinstance." "Ask him," said Allyn. "Oh, but he's famous and important and *BUSY* and..." "Ask him!" said Allyn. "You heard what he was saying about hating people treating him like a Star instead of a person. Anyway, all he can do is say no." So (remembering Harlan, and the concept that some things are Worth Doing Well if you believe in them) I asked.-- and David Suzuki said "Sure, on condition you give me two full hours, not one. How about an evening?"--and so English 314 will have, next week, Dr. David Suzuki, genetic researcher extraordinaire, doing a guest presentation on cloning, genetic research, how English-student-wouldbe-sf-writers can get scientific background, and anything else that he cares to talk about. That's Wednesday night. On Tuesday, they're getting Paul Williams talking about his *Rolling Stone* interviews with Dick, Sturgeon and Heinlein. I think my class is fun.

WORLDCON

I have always disliked the convention reports which faithfully detail how many times the reporter brushed his/her teeth, and the 27 people with whom he/she consumed grungeburgers at 5:30 am. (You will pardon, please, the technological missaplication above, when I forgot to switch pitch when I switched elements. It's midnight on Nov.3, after a full day of classes, and I'm in a rush to finish before the next avalanche of termpapers hits my desk.) I am also running out of space to discuss Mid AmeriCon. I do, however, want to talk about energy transferring...

For me, as for any fan, worldcon provides a chance to renew contact with friends-- generally thirty seconds in the lobby during registration. (Every time I saw George Barr, every single time, elevator doors were closing between us.) This con was the Falls Church-Bay Area Fannish Axis at Terry Hughes' and the Luttrells' parties; Aussiefen, at Jan Finder's reunion party; Tim and Alicia, in a corner of the huckster room, with Andy and Father William across the way; Le Front de libération de la piscine initiating new members at 5 am: that sort of thing. It also meant meeting Sean Summers, formerly 1/3 of Saskfandom-- and Ro and Lynn Lutz-Nagy (with whom I did not spend nearly enough time, in their Neo Fan Room)-- and Aljo Svoboda, for, literally, 30 seconds--and Avedon Carol-- and some Big Name Pros who are also really nice human beings, like Gene Wolfe, Damon Knight and Kate Wilhelm (with whom I missed the Hugo awards...) (Hugo nights are always weird.) Mostly, though, the purpose of MAC for me was the presentation of the women's programme.

I chaired a women-and-sf panel at Discon II. It was not, um, wildly successful in content (I didn't choose the panelists, and I only met two of them as we went onstage); it was allotted an hour, and ended just as things got interesting. It did, however, make people-- especially women-- think about sf as a male-dominated (14-year-old-male-dominated) field; and it did give women a focus, a place/time to come together, to find each other, to go off into groups and share. I wanted that to happen again--to happen more fully and easily, in a more supportive, satisfying way. So I proposed and organized a women's event.

It worked. You know, it worked. The problems piled up: writing endless letters to get panelists together (many women writers and fans weren't going to worldcon because they'd given up on the sf community, I think; on the other hand, they were all supportive and helpful, even in the letters saying "sorry, I'm not going, ask so-and-so"); using all the patience and restraint and diplomacy I could muster, to get this thing on despite the attitudes of the concom, who treated the "girl's panel" as either a joke or a threat ("We don't want any screaming Joanna Russ types on the panel, remember"); dealing with the cold which turned into laryngitis on the morning of the panel (I forced my voice, which meant I couldn't be as flexible, or in control of tone and nuance as I wished, and meant too that I lost it completely for the rest of the con, but kept talking with people anyway...) Well: even if the inherent sexism of fandom, of this concom, raised several hundred consciousnesses (ask Dena Brown, disenfranchised Hugo co-winner); even if the new ugly anti-woman threatened mood of sf-dom was voiced loudly from the platform by Jerry Pournelle, and echoed in a hundred ways, from the masquerade to the "Lighter Side of Sexism" panels (at one point, the "real" women's panel was threatened with cancellation, but there were slots open for dirty jokes: is racism funny? are you going to laugh at a problem to pretend it isn't a problem, forever?)-- even if sf's vision of human potentials is still distorted: we did come together. The panelists-- Kate Wilhelm, who is one of the most gracious people I've ever met; Suzy McKee Charnas; Amanda Bankier; and Marta Randall-- were articulate, reasoned, interesting, and kept an audience of, I estimate, 300 people quiet and fixed in their seats for an hour and a half. Then-- and I had been insisting, quietly, on this-- we adjourned to a smaller room, for informal discussions. And in that small, stuffy, unbearably hot little room, we talked, and talked, and talked... The discussion, of 75 people or more, tended to be too general-- I had hoped for a workshop situation, lots of separate groups, but that didn't come about, people tried to make me into Teacher, a role my throat and I rejected. Some people got off onto, for others, irrelevancies (The Pronoun Issue), though there was a recognition I think, that each one of us has a specific chosen battlefield. I got to meet some good people; we all got to meet each other. Everywhere I went, for the next four days, was someone-- man or woman--to say "Hey. That was great-- to meet people who feel the way I do." And we would talk (or I would croak) as long as we could...

Isn't that what fandom is all about?

For me, the sense of support and shared energy is the finest memory of worldcon. Today, I got a fanzine from Denys Howard (hi!), met too-briefly, which says that the panel and discussion was important to him "as it gave me material evidence that feminists find something of value in attending sf cons. It gave me validation for trying to be principled in my relationships within fandom; it gave me evidence that fen can have a political consciousness."--That's what I hoped the shared experience would produce. Let's keep in touch.
--Susan--

oops: art credits: p. 1, Harry Bell; pp. 5-6, Alexis Gilliland

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