

It is sometimes charged that thinking about the future is a form of escapism—an attempt to avoid the problems of the present. We should not take this accusation too seriously, even when there is some truth in it; who has not, at one time or other, indulged in that wistful dreaming that has been called “nostalgia for the future”?

Such nostalgia is harmful only when it leads to fatalism and inhibits action. The two decades from 1972 to 1992 present nightmare problems, but also tremendous opportunities. How we face them will determine not only whether we will survive but whether we *deserve* to survive.

—**Arthur C. Clarke**, in *The View From Serendip* (New York: Random House, 1967), p. 104.

# Absolute

Spring 1984

Sponsored by the Institute of Communications and the Arts, **Absolute** presents a collection of original art and literature by students, faculty, staff, and friends of Oklahoma City Community College, 7777 South May Avenue, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, 73159. — Printed at the college, the magazine is issued twice yearly, in the fall and spring.

Cover art by Jim Hysaw . . .  
Frontispiece, a drawing by Leigh Perry . . .

Robin Pierce  
Janice Bates Faulkner  
Helen Cullins Smith (faculty advisor)

—Editorial staff . . .

## Special thanks to

Larry Edwards, Donna Riess,  
Artie Hicks, Teresa Jaime,  
Khanh Pham-Do, Tom Baay,  
and Deborah Hatcher.

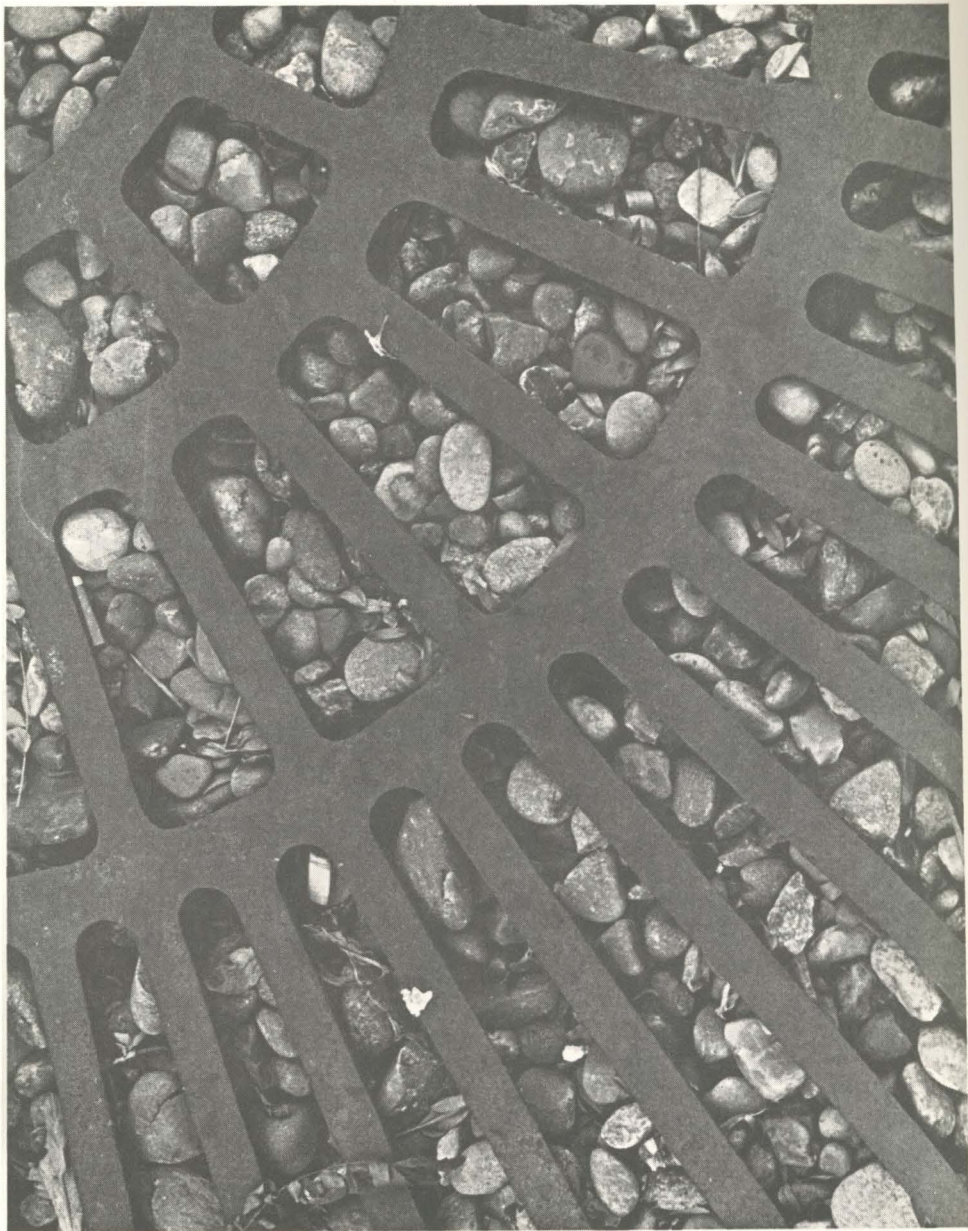


Photo by Janice Fisher

## Yesterday's Song\*

On the hill above the river, the old house  
stands  
Weather-beaten and gray, lonely as the  
barn beyond.  
Outside a tumble-down corral a beheaded  
skeleton,  
Once a windmill, stands guard over prairie  
treasure—  
Clear, cold water.  
Gone the orchard, peach and plum and  
cherry,  
And these locust trees must be neglected  
relatives  
Of those that furnished shade for a child at  
play  
And leafy canopy for nesting scissortails.  
As I turn away, walk down the grassy  
slope,  
A meadowlark's sweet, flute notes remind  
me  
That yesterday's song never dies,  
That it is heard today, will echo still  
tomorrow...  
Like time, like life itself, the river flows.

—Bernice Corby Heisler,  
Chickasha

\*Reprinted, by permission of the author, from *Brook To River — River To Sea* (Nashville, Tenn.: Winston-Derek Publishers, Inc., 1984).



# When We Were Young

When we were very, very young,  
Our only quest was to have fun.  
We romped around like little elves,  
Took pleasure only for ourselves.

There was no piper for to pay,  
And so we whiled away the day.  
These were summers of our content,  
The pay was low but so the rent.

We took our pleasures as they came,  
We cared little if it should rain.  
We were going to conquer all,  
Our dreams were big tho' we were small.

But oh how soon these days did end,  
When we took leave of time and friend,  
And each of us went our own way,  
With dreams to meet again someday.

And now that we have met again,  
We now can talk of times back when.  
And tho' these times we'll surely miss,  
We can look back and reminisce.

—Bill Bishop

Precious moment  
I put it on the shelf  
Tried to protect it  
Spent weeks trying  
to keep the dust off  
Polishing it  
Preventing decay  
Unaware  
My unconscious  
clumsy gestures  
would shatter  
my precious moment.

—Robin Pierce



## Minnie Remembers

God,  
My hands are old.  
I've never said that out loud before,  
but they are.  
I was so proud of them once.  
They were soft  
like the velvet smoothness of a firm  
ripe peach.  
Now the softness is like worn-out  
sheets or withered leaves.  
When did these slender, graceful hands  
become gnarled, and shrunken?  
When, God?  
They lie here in my lap,  
naked reminders of the rest of this old body  
that has served me too well.

How long has it been since someone  
touched me?  
Twenty years?  
Twenty years I've been a widow.  
Respected, smiled at,  
But never touched.  
Never held close to another body.  
Never held so close and warm that  
loneliness was blotted out.

I remember how my mother used to hold me, God.  
When I was hurt in spirit or flesh  
she would gather me close,  
stroke my silky hair and caress  
my back with her warm hands.  
Oh, God, I'm so lonely!

I remember the first boy who ever kissed me.  
We were both so new at that.  
The taste of young lips and popcorn.  
The feeling deep inside of the mysteries to come.  
I remember Hank and the babies...  
How can I remember them but together?  
Out of the fumbling, awkward attempt  
of new love came the babies.  
And as they grew, so did our love.

And, God, Hank didn't seem to care  
if my body thickened  
and faded a little.  
He still loved it  
and touched it.  
And we didn't mind if we were no  
longer "beautiful."  
And the children hugged me a lot.  
Oh, God, I'm lonely!

Why didn't we raise the kids to be  
silly and affectionate  
as well as dignified and proper?  
You see, they do their duty.  
They drive up in their fine cars.  
They chatter brightly and reminisce.  
But they don't touch me.

They call me “Mom” or “Mother” or “Grandma.”  
Never Minnie.  
My mother called me Minnie.  
And my friends.  
Hank called me Minnie, too.  
But they’re gone.  
And so is Minnie.  
Only Grandma is here.  
And, God, she’s lonely!

—D.F. Romberg  
Donna Swanson  
Jo Lita Erickson

as long as I

can sit here writing  
yesterday is today      we  
are still together.

—G.K. Williams

Oxford, 9 October 1983

Did God in His infinite wisdom—  
Give a clue to us below  
By setting the world on axis spinning  
Instead of swinging it to and fro?

For just when trials all are ending  
We stop... to start... begin anew—  
Like broken fences, lives ever re-mending  
We hail tomorrow without further ado.

Still circles, cycles, ever spinning  
Twisting, turning, where we've already been—  
Running, falling, losing, winning  
Making prisoners of the selves of men.

—Janice Bates Faulkner  
5 November 1981

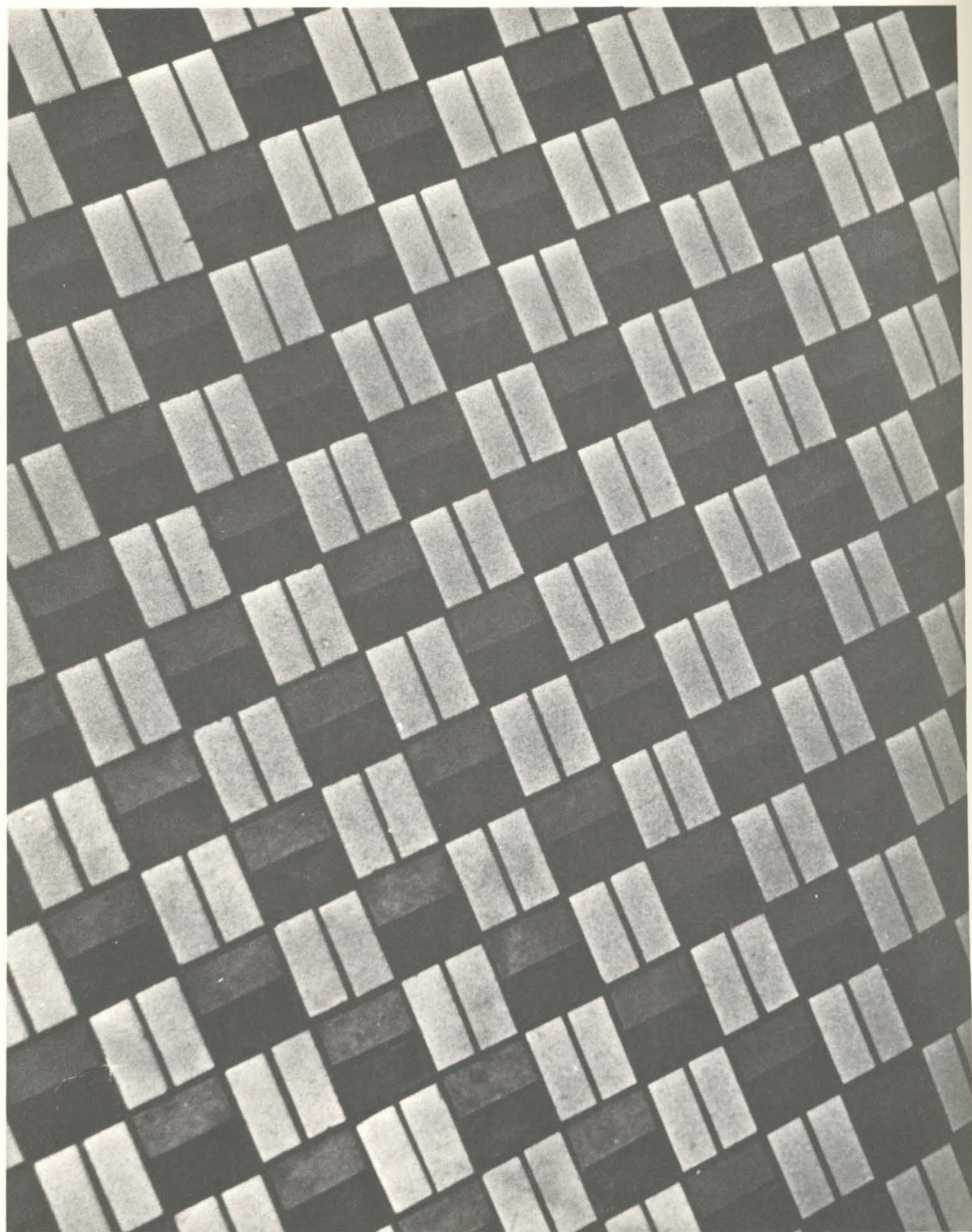


Photo by Janice Fisher

## Momentum . . .

Tomorrow is today unfurled,  
not an exotic, alien, world—  
the familiar moment outward bound,  
the very “Now!”: soundless Sound,  
energy rung to infinity,  
radiant, true, Divinity—  
neither begun nor ever ended:  
immanent, all, and all transcended.

—Helen Cullins Smith  
December, 1983



## No Surrender\*

Within the ashes of defeat,  
A spark  
Kindled by Hope whispering  
In the dark, "Tomorrow!"

—Bernice Corby Heisler

## Bellflower\*

Like an old-fashioned bellflower apple—  
Sound to the core, tangy sweet,  
    and long-keeping—  
Grandmother lived to be ninety-three,  
In love with life and each day's reaping  
Of simple joys; looking to each tomorrow  
With enduring faith that God held in store  
Blessings aplenty for all to share...

Tangy sweet Bellflower, sound to the core!

—Bernice Corby Heisler

\*Reprinted, by permission of the author, from *Brook To River — River To Sea*, 1984.

To Mister or Sarah Jean:

## Welcome To The World

I cannot guess  
or make calculations  
on what your world  
will be like.

But I have always had faith  
in progress  
and I am optimistic  
with the belief  
that your future  
will be  
much greater  
than my past.

However, do not depend  
on nature, fate, or destiny.  
Progress is *not* automatic.  
Believe in yourself and God.  
You two are the key  
to make the rest  
happen  
as it may.

—Rayfer Earlé Mainor  
3 September 1983

To Mister or Sarah Jean:

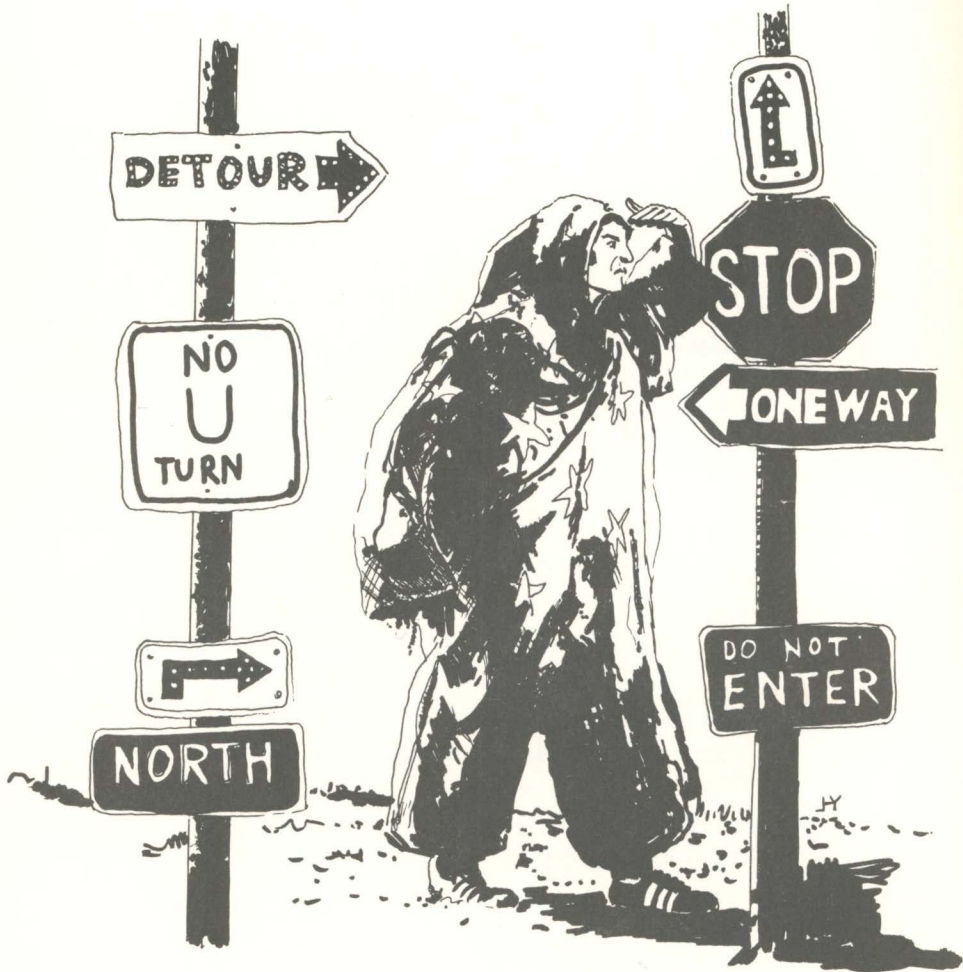
## On Being Brand New

You've joined an extraordinary epic journey  
that began before your momma & daddy & theirs  
& all other generations who inhabited the earth  
& all things of the universe—when there was only  
One

You of course will interpret this later  
just as you will question & discover &  
become aware of *you* & mommy & daddy  
& morals & manners & milk & curls &  
other girls & boys trying so desperately  
to do the same

& if you can be dedicated to the concept & belief  
that on being brand new *your birthright is*  
*equal opportunity*  
then whatever your objectives  
there will be no limits  
You'll be ever evolving on instinct & attitude  
molding character & conduct

—Rayfer Earlé Mainor  
2 September 1983



Drawing by John H. Yost

# Dancer On The Horizon

Leave Tomorrow behind  
and advance  
toward the Unknown—  
don't be restricted by Time.  
Abandon the frustration  
that holds you back—  
don't let it create  
detours that were not there before.  
Keep an eye on  
what surrounds you  
to ensure there is no danger—  
be careful in your pursuit  
of Dreams.  
Reach with your soul  
and touch with your heart—  
develop your senses  
as if they were  
Infinite...

—Wanda Lea Brayton  
10 July 1983

# Acrostic—Beyond Any Realm

W/hen the  
E/arth was young, Change was sincere.

A/lthough  
R/eality has evolved, it is still  
E/asy to follow illusion's force.

T/ime embraces  
H/ope, and Faith will fill  
E/yes with joyous tears.

F/orgive the  
U/niverse its  
T/ransgressions—try to  
U/nderstand the  
R/easons we must  
E/xcel...

—Wanda Lea Brayton  
16 June 1983

# Pirates

We must look beyond the surface,  
envision the deep—  
the face  
does not always  
reflect the Heart.

There is a river  
on which the Soul sails  
to its destiny—  
there are numerous undercurrents  
& progress depends  
on the wind.

We are voyagers out of Time,  
explorers  
that tempt the unknown.

We give ourselves  
to the embrace of the Sea  
and hope the tide is kind.

We glide toward the horizon,  
our eyes on the stars—  
though we may outwardly  
choose the direction we take,  
there are forces that propel us  
toward the light of dreams...

—Wanda Lea Brayton  
2 January 1984



# Effort

Some in their efforts....  
Gain little in the race....  
But never give up hope....  
That effort is yet a something....  
And like a lost prayer....  
That falls back to earth....  
Half-heard, half-answered....  
But sanctified still the more....  
Than one that never left....  
Some bitter meaningless lips....  
Grows into a brighter tomorrow....  
With the tears of today....

—Mike Darwin

Destruction  
Counterproduction  
Unconsciously  
Sliding  
Slipping  
Skidding  
Falling  
Into abyss  
After abyss  
Rhythm  
Destructive rhythm  
Destroy me once more  
Remind me  
That I am the victim  
Remind me  
That I am the aggressor  
Remind me  
That I am nothing  
And everything

—Robin Pierce



STRING OF PEARLS

EQUESTRIAN



Photo by Karl Borum

# Nuclear Waste—Acid Pollution

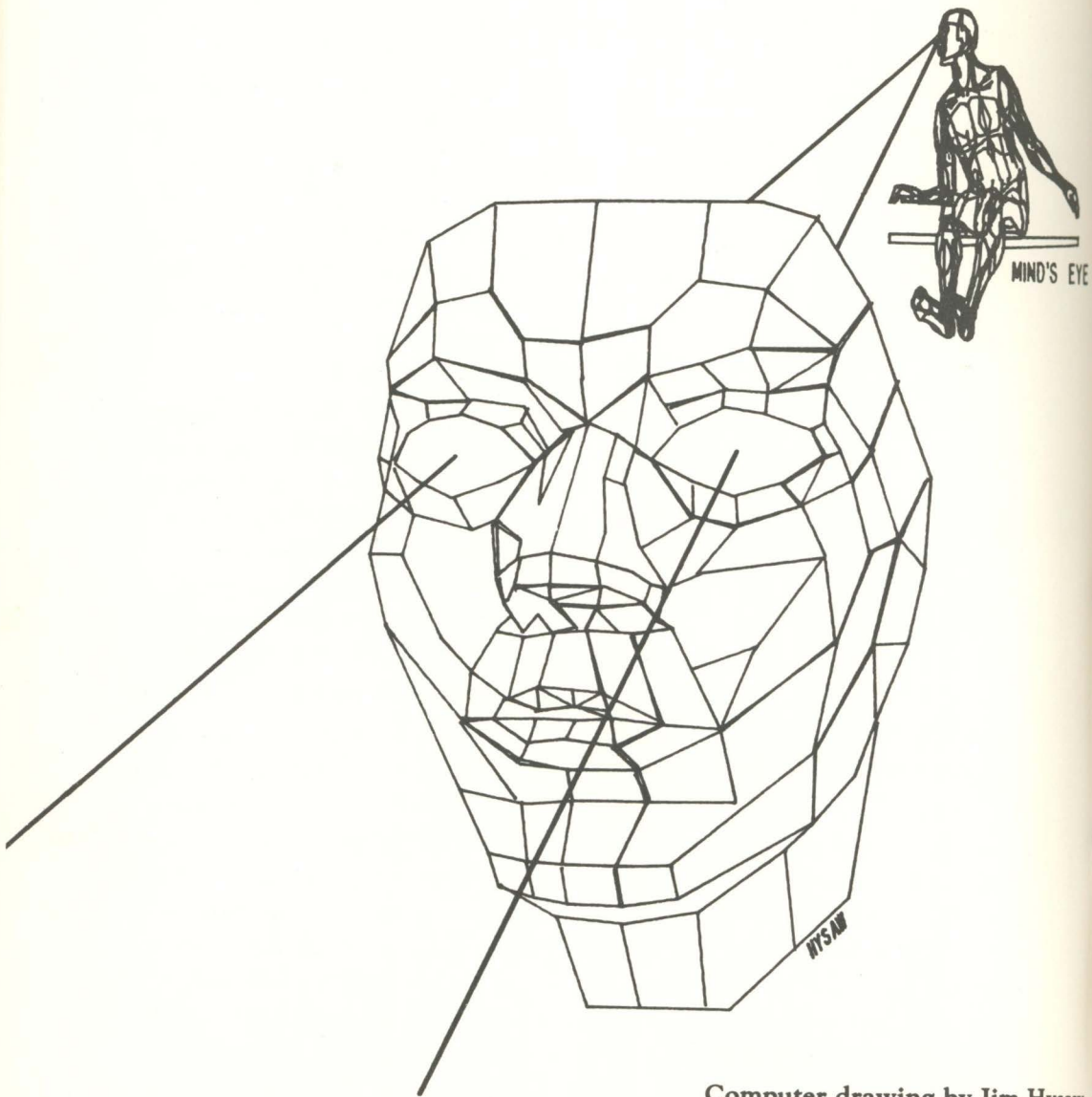
a child plays amid the rubble—  
of acid pollution  
left behind  
by those who did not care  
what kind of world  
they left behind...  
or who would find  
acid pollution

but see the little child—he does not care  
about acid pollution  
he only wants to play  
amid the rubble—  
he doesn't know  
about acid pollution  
for he can't hear it  
or see it...

don't look for the little child's ears  
or his eyes  
it was acid pollution  
that took them away  
now he can't cry  
but it's okay  
he has no one to cry to  
it was acid pollution  
that took his mother  
that took his father

you see it's now 2001—nobody cares  
about acid pollution  
there is no one  
except one small child  
and he doesn't know yet  
about acid pollution.

—Janice Bates Faulkner  
4 March 1984



Computer drawing by Jim Hysaw

## Companion

She has been alone in the house a long while. How long she really can't tell. A few days... a week... two weeks... all spent alone. There she is now — do you see her? — rocking in her chair, waiting for the kettle's whistle to let her know the water is hot for tea.

She is old in her years on earth, but her heart sings with the kettle's tune, rejoicing. She gets up to make her cup of tea and, while the tea steeps, she moves to the door to look outside. Clouds scoot across the sky, making shadows dance through the meadows. Nothing moves on the lane leading to the house but the occasional bloom of the weeds keeping time to the shadow dance. She returns to her cup of tea, strong now, and takes up her vigil, waiting and rocking, in her chair.

Night comes as it always does outside the city. Slowly, easily, the shades of day dispersing before the growing dark. Still she sits, rocking, waiting, and listening in the silence for the crickets and tree frogs. But the silence, as the dark, only grows deeper. As she rocks, the presence comes upon her. She recognizes it as her only companion, but she cannot know what it is. The presence comes and rocks with her and waits.

Before long, she, and the other, go to the door again. No cheerful dance on the meadows greets her. Instead, she sees again the lights beyond the hills. Flashing, pulsing, the lights worm their way through the country dark toward her. The presence inside her now rejoices, growing stronger, more urgent, as though these lights are the food and drink necessary to its existence. She is tired, so very, very tired, and the other is so vital and alive within her. Can you find fault with her, this last, lonely woman? She is tired and overcome. Back she goes to her rocking chair, back to comfort and peace and sleep. But wait, does she really sleep? Check her, quickly; it seems she does not stir, does not murmur in her sleep. Does not breathe. And as she passes, her



head turns and opens to the light flashing through the window as the blooms on the weeds open to the sun. Out of her fractured head steps her companion, the presence, small but humanoid in appearance, and it bows slowly to the pulsing light. Four times it bows and then turns and walks out the door, leaving the lonely, last woman broken in her rocking chair.

—Cara Diehl

*Note:* According to the author, this story, truly a companion piece, is a verbal response to Jim Hysaw's drawing, "Mind's Eye."



Drawing by Deborah Hatcher

## Orwell's 1984: A Warning

George Orwell's *1984* has questionable merit as outstanding literature, but it functions dynamically as a warning. This warning involves political power as well as the corrupt use of technology. One of the most important tools that Orwell uses to communicate these ideas is the setting of the novel. This setting is uncomfortably familiar to a reader who is actually living in the year 1984: several aspects of the novel can be seen in today's reality.

Walter Cronkite states in his preface to the new edition that the novel was written as "a warning about the future of human freedom in a world where political organization and technology can manufacture power in dimensions that would have stunned the imaginations of earlier ages."

1984 was written in 1948. If Eric Blair (Orwell was his pen name) had seen the incredible technology present in the real-time 1984 (and the subsequent increase in the superpowers' influence), he might have been scared witless. Unfortunately, because of the technological boogey-man focus in the novel, many people have mistakenly interpreted the novel as science fiction; fortunately, because of the astounding progress in technology since the novel was written, we are now able to dig a little deeper and see the real boogey-man, Big Brother. Big Brother is often dismissed as merely a symbol of the evil society of Oceania and, more specifically, the Party. But symbols themselves are thematic. Powerful governments often use figureheads (symbols) to unify support and demolish opposition through propaganda. Big Brother is the most famous and most effective symbol in the novel. It seems to work in reality also, Stalin and Khomeini being a pair of fine examples. Eric Blair's hatred of Stalinism is one reason for the many parallels in the book to post-WWII Russia.

As we came closer and closer to the fatalistic year, 1984, the novel received more and more publicity: 1984 became the target year for WWIII, nuclear obliteration, the Second Coming, and every other foreseeable end of the world as we know it. This year has become the focal point for so many dire predictions that it's a wonder it hasn't

collapsed and had a nervous breakdown. Maybe it just needs a good Two Minute Hate to clear out its system.

In the novel, the Two Minute Hate was used as a valve to release the tension and pressure that built up in Party members living in such a constrictive society. More importantly, it was used to focus this tension and hatred on the “enemies” of Oceania (who could turn into friends at the drop of a hat). Another tool used to unify the Party and control the minds of the people was Newspeak. If Newspeak, an extremely limited vocabulary lacking nuances or shades of emotions, was used by a person to talk (as well as to think), then thoughtcrime became impossible. Ironically, without the concept of Newspeak thoughtcrime couldn’t exist. After all, a norm has to be defined for deviations to occur.

In recent years the United States (particularly government officialdom) has developed its own form of Newspeak; however, the trend is towards the use of expanded fanciful language rather than a reduced vocabulary. “Negative growth” means a decline, “energetic disassembly” is an explosion, and “rapid oxidation” simply means fire. These are all samples of what the media call “bureaucratic doubletalk” and what Orwell would call “Newspeak.”

Do all of these parallels mean that the “real” 1984 is much the same as George Orwell’s vision? We do have remarkable technology—and Newspeak and Big Brother in modern forms. Fortunately we also have democratic governments, free speech, and (most important) a free press. As long as we can publicly and privately discuss the accuracy of 1984, we have escaped the fate of Winston Smith. As long as the novel succeeds as a warning it will fail as a prophecy, which was Orwell’s intention all along.

—Bill Stevens



## Orwell — A Review

*George Orwell: The First Complete Biography.* By Bernard Crick.  
(Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1980. Pp. xxx, 473.)

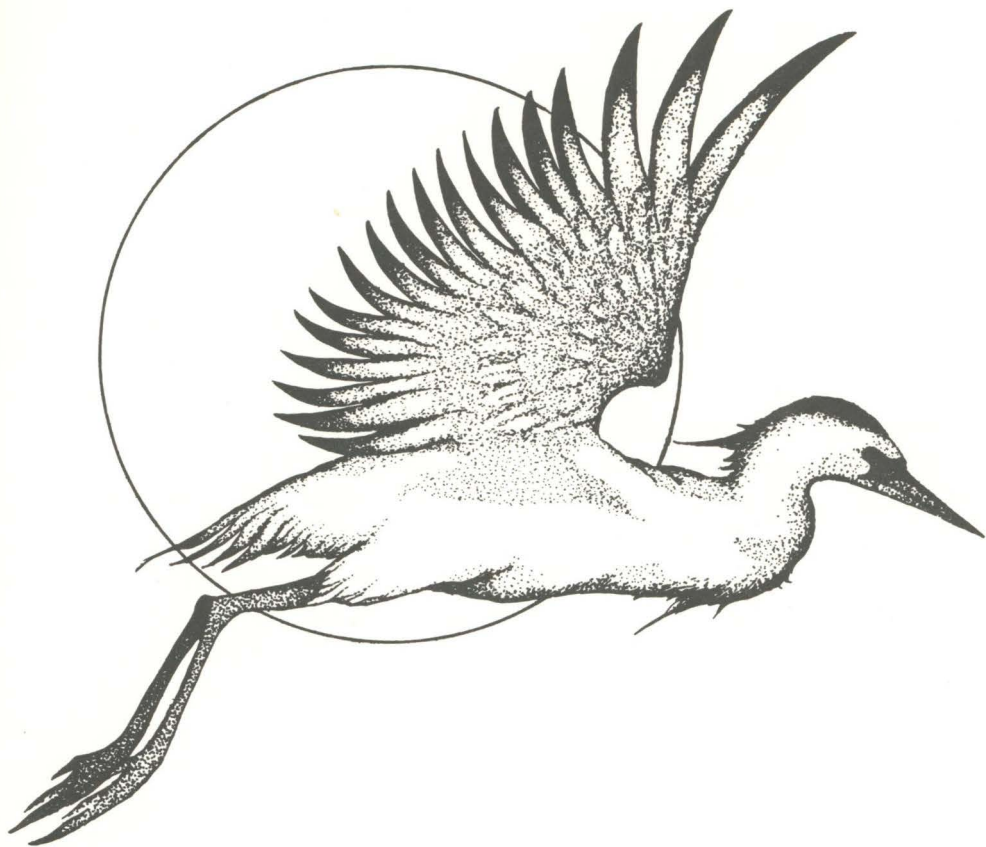
Today in the Orwellian year of 1984, the name of George Orwell is used all along the political spectrum. This use of Orwell by widely divergent groups is strange to those who are unaware that Orwell's political thought was consistent only insofar as it always stood for human decency. He is properly claimed by conservatives and socialists, as well as groups in between, so long as the political ideology in question stands for the fundamental dignity of human life. Orwell was above all a man of character. His genius was his understanding that character was more important than genius. Orwell never gave thought to whether or not his writings were consistent with a particular set of political ideas, but he gave much thought to the consequences of political ideology as it pertained to the everyday lives of individual people.

Those who appreciate the thought and writings of George Orwell are certain to be disappointed with Bernard Crick's "complete biography." The section of rare photographs is pleasing and the introduction concerning "Orwell's Achievement" is good, but the book itself devolves into a rambling compendium of letters from birth to death with editorial comments by Crick. Crick's biography is much like a shortened version of *The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell*. Crick seems unable to accept Orwell at face value. For example, on many occasions Orwell commented on the unpleasant and sometimes brutal aspects of his early school years. Yet Crick spends much time quoting letters of the boy Orwell in an effort to prove that Orwell was happier in those years than he remembered. The truth is that Crick believes that Orwell ought to have been happier than he was. By his own admission Orwell preferred the "dirty handkerchief side of life," which was simply an admission on Orwell's part that he saw more to admire among the low born poor than the high born rich. The preference may have been temperamental but it

was real. Orwell preferred the nineteenth-century because the unmechanized past promised greater importance to the individual than the mechanized, impersonal, twentieth-century. "Christ! What's the use of saying that one oughtn't to be sentimental about before the War? I am sentimental about it...It was simply that they [people] didn't think of the future as something to be terrified of." (*Coming Up for Air*.)

What concerned and frightened George Orwell was his understanding of the essence of modern life. He once compared biting into a sausage made of fish as like "I'd bitten into the modern world and discovered what it was really made of...Bombs of filth bursting inside your mouth." Orwell did not separate thought into separate spheres. He understood that politics, technology, economics and ethics had to be inseparable if human life was to have dignity. Bernard Crick ignores the broad implications of Orwell's thought and feeling in favor of a collage.

—Ray McCullar



**Drawing by Deborah Hatcher**

## 2010: Odyssey Two

Personally, I could never understand why Father De Sales Standerwick, S.A., my high school English teacher, discouraged us from reading science fiction; whatever his reasons might have been, I respected him. Wanting to do what was “right” for my education I carefully avoided reading anything but “quality” literature until I was in college and was required to read *Brave New World* and 1984.

I felt compelled to honor my previous and thoroughly prejudiced opinion about SF, and for several years after only allowed myself the pleasure of an episode of *Twilight Zone* from time to time. After all, I felt I knew what time was and is and will be. “What’s the harm,” I would think, “in bending time rules a little?”

So, I find myself curious about what SF I could have been reading all this time. When I was approached about doing a review of *2010: Odyssey Two*, I balked because I had not read its predecessor, *2001: A Space Odyssey*, had only seen the last fifteen minutes or so of the movie, had some crazy daydreams about it and very little confidence in my ability to understand the science aspects of the story if I ever did plan on reading it. However, I was told and I verify that in the sequel there is enough review of *2001* to satisfy that need to know what happened and what has led up to the events in *2010*.

My lack of confidence has changed now; ever so slightly, but nevertheless that situation has changed. I have read SF with pleasure and with enough confidence to read any of the stories in this genre that are written on the level of my own understanding.

What about *2010: Odyssey Two* makes it a good, intriguing, stimulating, and even great novel?

Detailed chapters developed with elaborate descriptions, narrations, or other expositions do not; the chapters are short, crisp, intimate, cumulative, developmental, and sometimes very mysterious.

The complexity of its scientific speculation does not; the theories and explanations are well within the grasp of even a SF novice like me. The plot, though exciting and plausible, does not; a voyage to Jupiter’s system to legally recover an unmanned spacecraft reaches its potential for excitement and anticipation, but not by itself.



Rather, I think the novel is good, intriguing, stimulating, and great because each of the preceding elements—style, plot, and science speculation—is a part of the whole and because that whole, although greater than the sum of its parts, is contained in each part. The novel's resolution explains that relationship and excites even the relative newcomer to SF to an insightful recognition that one should not be too amazed at finding imagination, mystery, and metaphysics as the principal ingredients of a very pleasurable reading experience.

—Richard Rouillard



Drawing by John H. Yost

## Plato's *Republic*

Plato's *Republic* is not the first utopia in Western literature, but it is the first one to have survived down to modern times. Other ancient Greek political philosophers wrote about ideal states, but all we know of them are the comments Aristotle makes on them in his own book on *Politics*.

For the classical Greeks writing constitutions for new and better states was not really an academic exercise. New cities and colonies were constantly being established because of excess population or as a way of giving the losing faction in a civil war a new start. Another way of ending a civil war was to ask some respected citizen to draft a new constitution in hopes of ending the conflict. Solon, whose name has come to mean "law-maker," was given this task in prehistoric Athens. Plato, therefore, was following a well-established literary tradition when he wrote of his perfect state.

Originally he may have even hoped the *Republic* could be realized. Although sometimes dismissed as an impractical dreamer, Plato worked very hard to make his political dreams come true. He established perhaps the first European university, the academy, to train future generations of the power elite. He traveled twice to Sicily, and even briefly fell into slavery, in his attempts to convert kings into philosophers. And he wrote two utopias—the *Republic* and, the second-best state, the *Laws*. In his introduction to the *Laws* Plato says the *Republic* is the best possible state, but does admit it may not be practical.

Plato wrote the *Republic* in his middle years, and it reflects convictions of his own as well as those of Pythagoras and Socrates. From Pythagoras Plato takes the dictum "Friends have things in common"; from Socrates the belief only the gifted should rule. Sparta was also an influence on the *Republic*. Plato admired Sparta and incorporated many Spartan features into his ideal state.

Plato's own contribution was to design a scheme for grooming and developing two elite classes—the rulers and the defenders of the *Republic*. Plato's scheme is based on the assumption that each person should do what she or he is best suited to do—best suited by heredity, by inclination, by training.

His scheme is also based on the belief that a person's place in society depends ultimately on which aspect of his or her soul dominates. Plato believed there were three aspects to the soul—reason, spirit, and appetite. Therefore, there are three classes in the *Republic*—the rulers, the army, and the producer/commercial class.

Plato hardly mentions the producer class in the *Republic*. The producers and traders are dominated by their appetites. They are “Brass and Iron,” would—presumably—live much like ordinary Greeks. They would be educated, from age seven to twenty, in “gymnastic” and “music,” i.e., the fundamentals for both body and mind. Most of the population would belong to this class.

Above the producers/traders are the men and women of the “Silver” class, the army. Their spirits dominate their souls; they share the communal life assigned to the upper two classes. They have received ten years' training in body and mind beyond that afforded the producers and traders. Since Plato wants the strongest possible army, he draws on both sexes to defend his state.

At the top of the class system, the “Golden” Guardians rule the *Republic*. They are dominated by their souls' reason. They rule the state guided only by pure reason; no law, no constitution limits them. Along with their army, they eat at a common table, sleep in communal homes. They have received another five years of “graduate” education in math and philosophy. They have made their own way in the world from age thirty-five to fifty. Only then do they return to the messhalls and barracks of the Guardian classes.

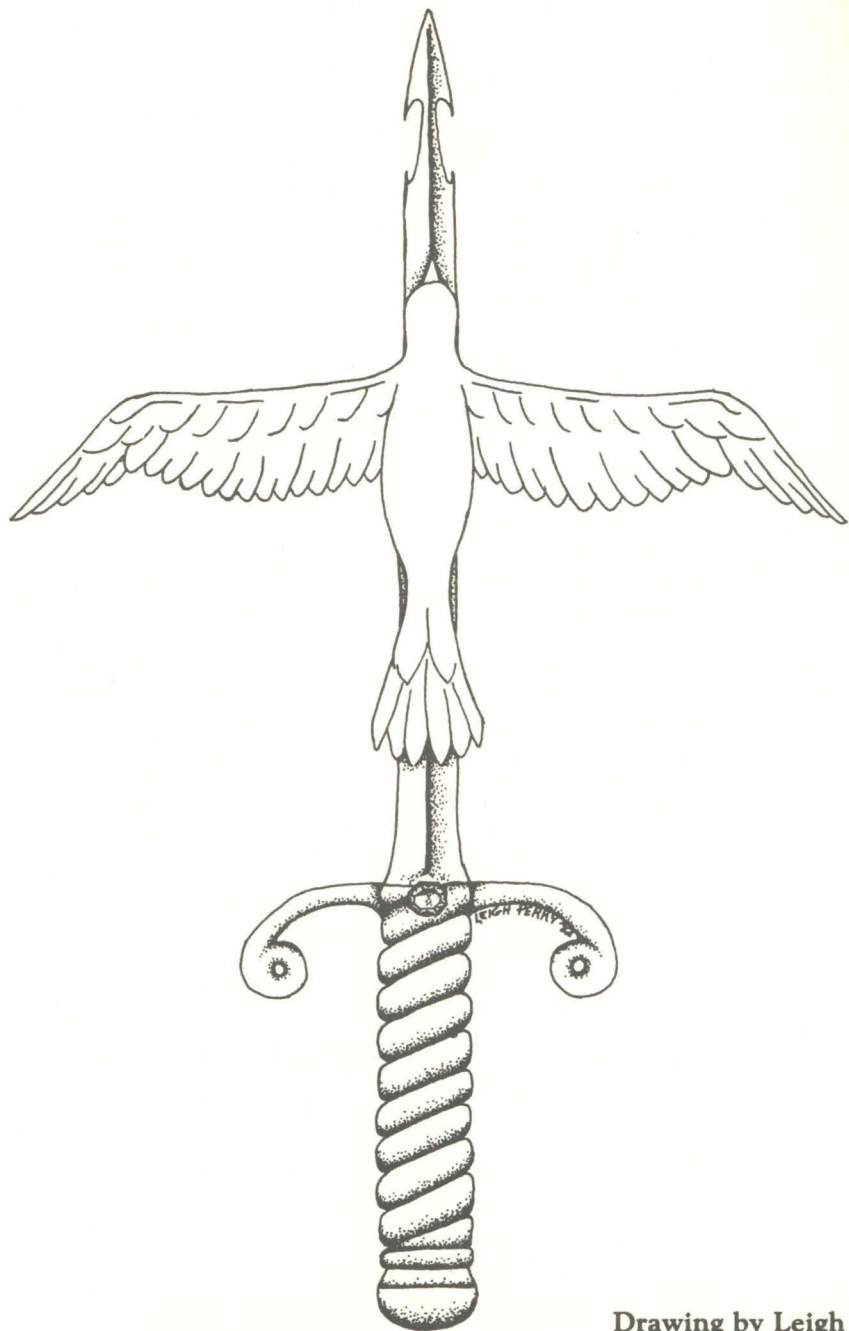


Members of neither the “Golden” nor the “Silver” class have private property or family. All their physical needs are provided by the state; gold and silver are forbidden in their camps. Their marriages are temporary and are arranged by the state with an eye to producing the best possible offspring. Freed from the concerns of wealth and family, the Guardians avoid the internal strife so common in Greek cities. Unhampered by selfishness and desire, guided by wisdom and reason alone, the Guardians would rule and defend the *Republic*.

These two classes represent Plato’s political ideal—the union of power and wisdom he calls the “Philosopher-King.” If his Guardians are trustworthy, Plato’s logic is tight. What general regulation or rule can match a truly wise and unbiased mind in deciding issues of fairness? Yet the problem with the *Republic* is as old as the extension of political authority. “Who guards the Guardians?” Is Plato’s educational system sufficient to place each person in the proper niche? Are his regulations concerning the Guardians sufficient to prevent the abuse of their power?

Perhaps Plato had too much faith in his own searing vision. Perhaps his desire to strengthen the state led him to enslave the individual. Overall, the effect of the *Republic* appears to have been one of strengthening those who claim the individual exists to serve the state. It is too extreme to have otherwise had much effect. The communism, the destruction of traditional family and property systems, the equality of opportunity for the sexes, and the abandonment of the certainty of law in the *Republic* remain part of a distant dream.

—Larry Edwards



Drawing by Leigh Perry

# The Dove

The children of the 60s  
came of age in the 70s  
raising families of their own  
in the 80s

Their parents worried  
about dope, dropping out  
and our nation's international peace-keeping policy

The kids worried  
about freaking out, getting pregnant, hanging loose,  
not getting drafted

Between Viet Nam  
and El Salvador, Lebanon,  
we watched friends and family die  
in the name of world peace

On and on  
in a never ending circle  
the dove keeps right on flying  
pecking itself to death

The children of the 80s  
come of age in the 90s...

—Leigh Perry  
6 December 1983

# Silent Holocaust

Little child, cry no more  
No one hears your weeping  
Your life was taken away  
Before you had a chance  
To be...  
By foolish men  
Who thought they could  
Treat a symptom  
And cure a problem  
But, instead, for all eternity  
We'll hear your silent cries...  
For yet another Holocaust  
Of the unarmed—  
This time, unborn...  
Merciless murder.

—Janice Bates Faulkner  
22 January 1984





Photo by Karl Borum

Worthless integrity.  
Keep your smile fresh  
Your slate clean  
Your heart in one piece.

The ground creeps closer  
Your head drops  
Knees sink into brown mud  
Smothering the beat of your heart.

Worthless integrity  
leaves you free  
to fall.

—Robin Pierce

# Lee's Dream

For Kim.

Moonlight  
Much too bright  
Coming through  
My window tonight

Moonlight  
Petal blue  
Always makes  
Me think of you

Iris  
Dreams of bliss  
In the net  
Of your gentle kiss

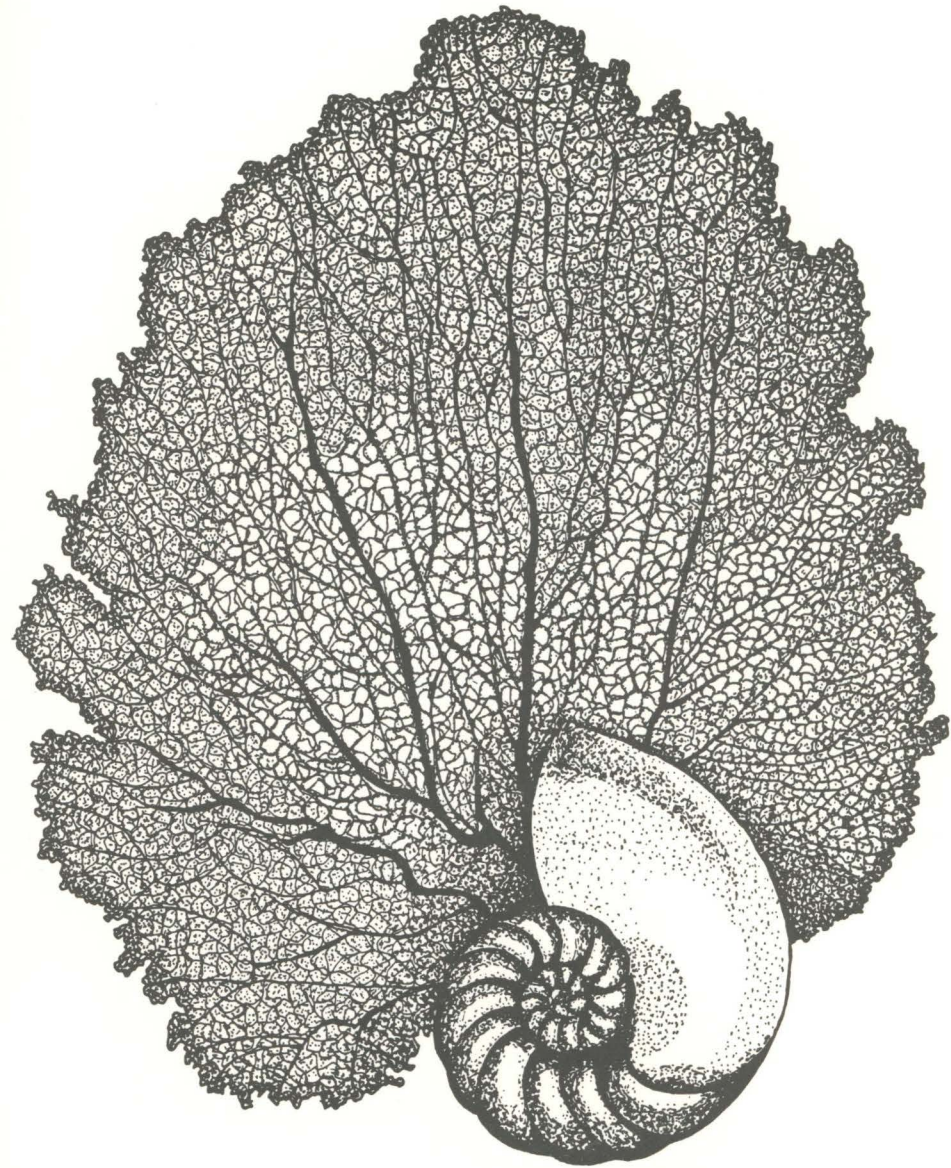
Iris  
Feeding wet  
*Gleschu* lakes  
Beyond sunset

Starfire  
Stellar spire  
Burning true  
As my love's desire

Starfire  
Stellar blue  
Always makes  
Me think of you

—Bill Housden

Note: *Gleschu* is a Celtic word meaning "sweet green spot."



**Drawing by Deborah Hatcher**

Oedipus

I have made you  
from paper mâché  
and old drapes.

At seven-feet-five  
you tower over  
mere mortality  
and in their awe  
they do not guess  
that this

Greek-statue-come-to-life  
is I,  
reincarnate.

—Jana Cossairt

# Reach Out

Skin...

Red, yellow, black and white.  
To cry, "I am superior!"  
Who has this right?

"My God is black!"

"My God is white!"

To make such statements,  
Who has this right?

To give little children

Sudden fright

By mentioning another race,  
Who has this right?

To spit at each other

And start a fight—

To kill or get killed.

Who has this right?

No hate, no contempt,

No prejudice, no fright.

If not this—

What is our right?

To join together

Like day and night

And be one big family—

This is our right.

—Patty Hefley



# Three Poems...

## Wisdom

Education is the tool  
That prepares a man to rule  
But wisdom over education  
Prepares a man to *lead* a nation.

## Love

Sometimes it was good  
Sometimes it was bad  
Sometimes it was happy  
Sometimes it was sad  
But at least it was

## Crime

They say crime doesn't pay  
I have to disagree  
Look at those we've sent  
To Washington, D.C.

—Bill Bishop

# Poets, Please...

Verse

Formless and free

Makes very little sense

To me.

Modern bards don't punctuate

Or capitalize;

Rhyme and meter are techniques

They seldom utilize.

The rhythm of their lines

Is discordant to my ear;

Their message is not plain—

Vision, emotion, I can't share.

Poets, please! Spare me,

Dull wit that I am,

And write poetry

That makes sense again.

—Thomas L. Hedglen



# Abby, Sweet Abby

For Abby, who died of Acute Lymphocytic Leukemia, April 1983, aged 13.

Today, for you, I breath the air...  
I tell my lungs it is clean and pure.  
The sky is blue,  
The sun is warm,  
And I am ALIVE Today!  
You are not.  
Tomorrow I may join you...  
But I am ALIVE TODAY!  
And Tomorrow may never come.  
For you, today, I sing a song...  
I laugh with my friends.  
I watch the children play.  
I do not mourn your death today...  
I celebrate the love you gave  
and the Life I knew you in.

—Kaet

# Life After D-Day

For Alan.

I have visions of the future  
Scattered images I see  
Of a life after D-Day  
Under a smoldering tree  
We can have a picnic  
In the ashes and the smoke  
And we can read the treaties  
That they never did invoke

We can dance in the graveyard  
That we used to call our home  
And take off the gas masks  
When we get back to the dome  
We can look at the remnants  
Of a dozen proud races  
We can talk about the humans  
With tears on our faces

We can breathe in the poison  
That we used to call our air  
We can hate the politicians  
And agree it wasn't fair  
But since we didn't stop them  
Now we have to pay  
We must cancel our picnic  
For we're as dead as they.

—Kaet

# Phoenix

Out of Time's darkness....  
On wings of whirling fire....  
Rise, great bird of destiny....  
From deep within death's pyre....

Born again in blazing rays....  
Crystal prisms of the sun....  
Messenger of gods....  
A new life has begun....

Talons of silver sabers....  
Eyes fierce as burning rain....  
Faith, resolve, and strength....  
Wing high above life's plain....

On to forever's tomorrow....  
Great bird of the sky....  
Wing on, eternal wanderer....  
Whose spirit never dies.

—Mike Darwin

# Eternity

One of these days time will stop....  
And my heart will finish its race....  
And I will wing as an eagle....  
To some new and distant place....  
Where minds of mortals have no place....  
In awesome reverence to God's face....  
Where tomorrow and yesterday will meet again....  
Like two lost brothers—as newborn friends.

—Mike Darwin

## A Man's Day\*

Like a good book he stands the test of time,  
The pages of his life reflecting a Godward goal  
As he records his version of an ageless theme:  
A man's day on earth.

As the chapters build to fulfillment  
Of the day's work and its dreams,  
As the last line is written, the book closed,  
Each reader sees himself portrayed there—  
the man he is,

the man he hopes to be,

or the man he might have been—

And makes heart-felt prayer:

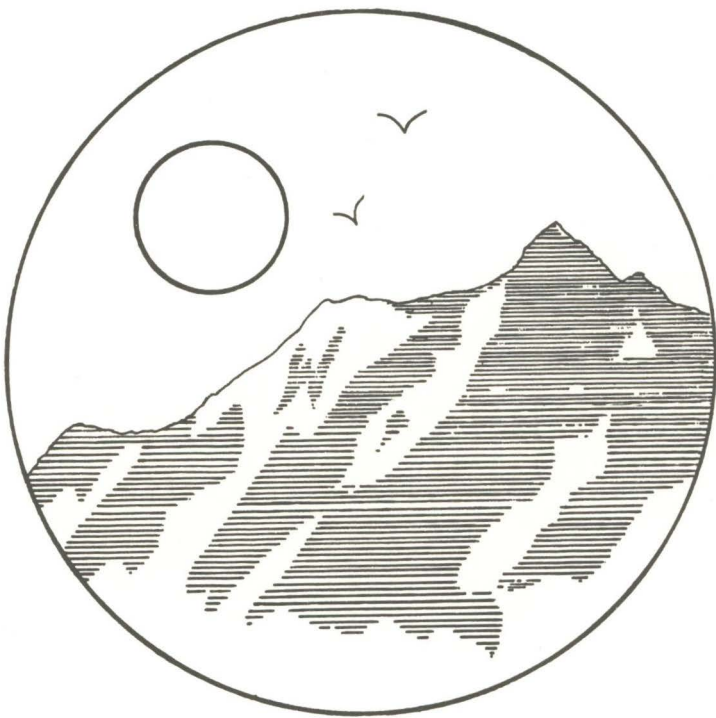
“Like him, O Lord,

Let me fight a good fight, let me finish my  
course, let me keep the faith.”

2 Timothy 4:7

—Bernice Corby Heisler

\*Reprinted, by permission of the author, from *Brook To River — River to Sea*, 1984.



Drawing by Deborah Hatcher