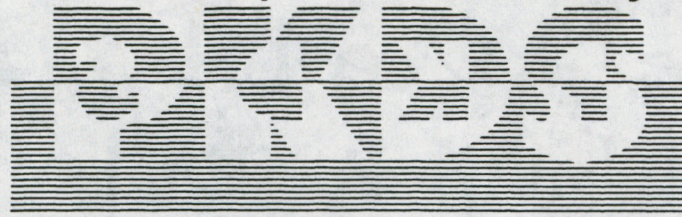


The Philip K. Dick Society



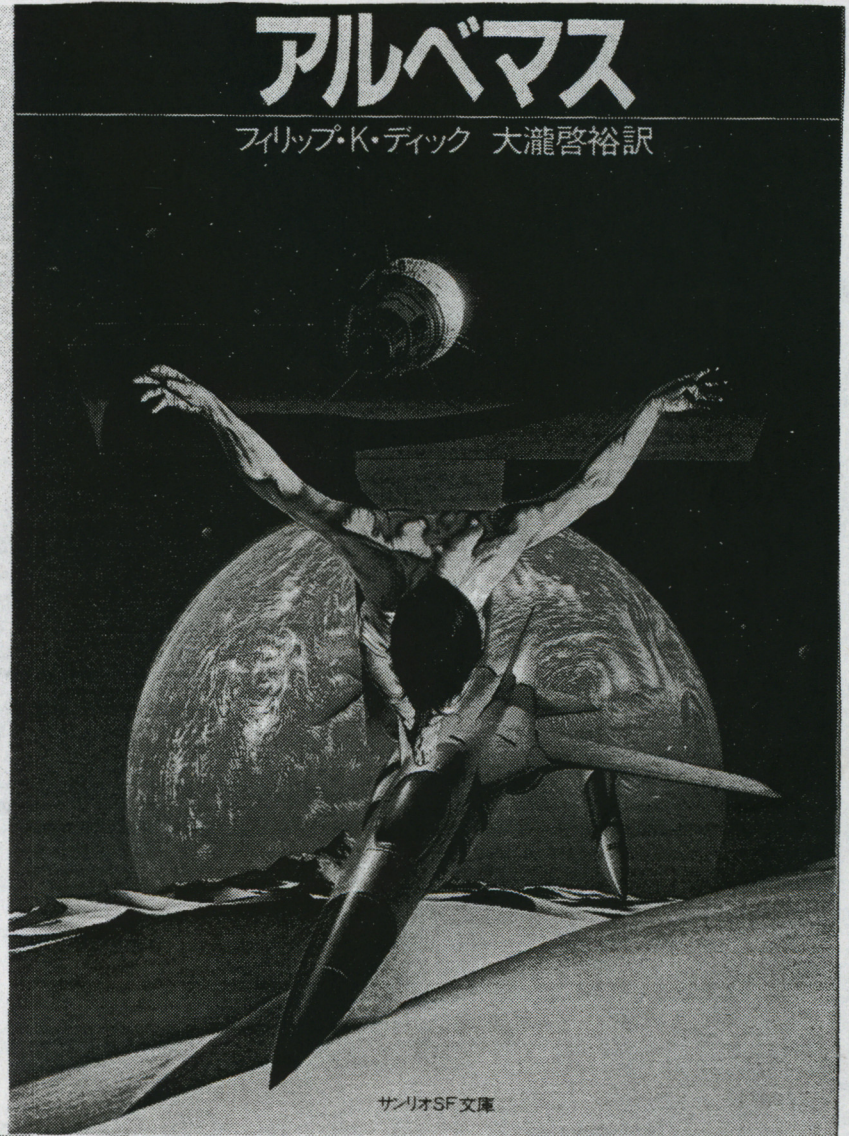
pkds 20, april 1989



Philip K. Dick (フィリップ・K・ディック)

1928年、シカゴに生まれる。カリフォルニア大学卒業後、テレビのセールスマンをしながら、小説を書きはじめる。1952年、F&SF誌からデビュー。以後、精力的な作家活動に入り、現代アメリカSF界の代表的作家のひとりとなった。主な作品には、50年代に『偶然世界』『時は乱れて』、60年代に『高い城の男』『火星のタイムスリップ』『アンドロイドは電気羊の夢を見るか?』、70年代に『流れよ我が涙』と警官は言った『暗闇のスクランナー』、80年代に『ヴァリス』『聖なる侵入』などがある。1982年、没。死後、その特異な作品世界にSF内にとどまらない広範な関心が寄せられている。

カバー＝K・G・ヤナセ



Front cover and inside flap, VALIS (Japan)

A Letter to the Editor

Linda Levy/Taylor:

[The author of this letter first met PKD in 1972, and is a major character in the recently-published autobiographical work, *THE DARK-HAIRED GIRL*.]

Paul, I really appreciated the introduction you wrote to *THE DARK-HAIRED GIRL*. What an insightful understanding of the events and the turmoils of those times; it brought them so precisely into perspective in a way I've never seen done before. It seems like whenever people write about Phil it is usually with an adulation bordering on hero worship or with a sort of hushed reverence for the genius of his work, rarely is it with such objectivity.

I particularly appreciated your note (with apologies to Tim) about Phil's madness. I can't tell you how difficult it was to

communicate that madness to people (like Tim) who refused to see it, who refused to believe that this celebrity living in our midst could be anything but perfect genius. For a time I believed that his madness was mine instead, for how could so many people be wrong and I the only one who ever saw evidence of that kind of behavior? No, it must be me.

It really seemed to anger the biographers who interviewed me for books about Phil that I wanted to insist on painting a true picture of what he was like instead of a romantic one.

I've lived with a lot of the anguish of that madness since then. Interestingly, it was as a result of an article I read in the *PKDS Newsletter*, an interview with Tess where she talks about Phil's visits to a psychiatrist starting at the age of 6, that a big guilt trip got cleared up. When I met Phil, I was 21, he was 42. He spent a great deal of time convincing me that I was responsible for his madness, that until he met me he had never had a need to consider

(continued on page 8)

Today the World

by Philip K. Dick

[Contest: complete the following unfinished story in 70,000 words or less, find a publisher, and win yourself a new-- though not, perhaps, very rewarding--career. The material that follows was typewritten by PKD, fills six manuscript pages, was found among the Fullerton papers, and probably dates from 1963 or so. --PW]

At eight p.m. Premier Joe Martardon awoke and found himself in the bed of his New York hotel suite. Exactly as before, evidently; peering and squinting, he could make out no visible change.

Reaching, he snapped on the com-system control by the bed. "Carpenter?" he said groggily; the effects of the drug had not worn completely off. "Who am I?" he asked, and focussed his faculties in anticipation--taut anticipation.

The com-system tinnily whined, "The August Majesty of Five Lands within which humankind besports and manifests its creative elan. You are--"

"Okay," Joe Martardon grunted, and turned off the com-system.

Failure, he said to himself. Again. Years of fooling around by those nuts at the Coaxial Nexus Institute; years of Taverner's pseudo-scientific puttering and sterile promises. I'll get him, Joe Martardon said to himself. This is it. No more; this try was--is--the last.

To a silent leady stationed by the bedroom door, he said, "Get a ship ready for me. Have dinner aboard so I can eat on the way." "Your usual concoction of soybean curd with beef gravy?" the leady inquired. "Plus springtime-fresh raw apples, vegetables, as well as pure wheatgerm oil mixed--"

"Anything," Joe Martardon broke in. He got to his feet, made a curt gesture; a personal leady wheeled toward him, carrying his shaving and grooming kit: those authentic badger-hair brushes, hair rinses and conditioners, mani- and pedicure implements of finest Swedish steel. All the ritualistic little implements which, over the last seventy- three years, Joe Martardon had cherished.

"Do you wish for a gayer shade of the usual ash-blond tint?" the personal leady asked, as it vigorously massaged his thinning hair.

"I feel angry," Joe Martardon answered. "Make both my hair black and my features troubled with brooding, ill- repressed rage." To a medical leady he instructed, "Inject me with a suitable dose of a mono amine oxidase inhibitor so that I can act out my justified hostility."

As the medical leady prepared the injection it remarked, "Do not forget that MAO medications such as you take are highly

liver-toxic. You will probably need a new liver within the next ten days, at the rate you're going. That makes three new livers this year already." However, it rolled up his sleeve and swabbed a spot of his aged, gray skin for the injection.

"And I've got brain damage," Joe Martardon said sardonically. "I know; I'm aware of these technical details. Being unalive, you leadys can't appreciate the vital necessity of yanking the carpet out from under pandering quack research-project administrators such as Ian Taverner and that Southern California dump he operates at my expense. I'm going to withdraw all his funds; I'm going to end this fruitless diddling around that's getting us nowhere."

The personal leady, busily rinsing Joe Martardon's hair, said, "Where did you wish to go, sir?"

"The same place I wanted to go yesterday," Joe Martardon said harshly. "The place I've wanted to go for ten years." The place where I'm dead, he said to himself. Where, in fact, I've been dead for fifteen years; where no one even knows about me. Where I am a nobody.

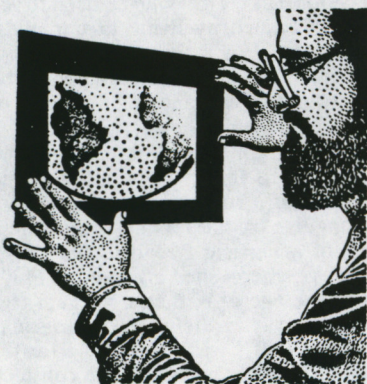
He had begun to doubt that such a world existed.

Confronting Ian Taverner in the Administrator's office at the Coaxial Nexus Institute, Martardon said, "Are you sure there really are coaxial universes? I mean, we're not getting anywhere. I'm ready to give up."

"Alternate presents," Ian Taverner said, "have been proven theoretically possible, as is well-known to both of us. All of Kaltengeboren's papers have been made use of, here; in fact, during the last few months, my own unique, authentic calculations, based on his formula, predict over twice as many alternate--"

"Be quiet," Martardon said, gazing out of the office window.

Fifty floors below, in the Los Angeles streets, a demonstration was taking place. A Randy Clark parade, with the usual banners and slogans, the customary huge pictures of the Vice Premier. Youthful, energetic Randy Clark-- youthful leader, youthful followers. A potent manifestation of conviction: political action flouting the legal restrictions which Joe Martardon himself had signed not more than a week ago. What do they care? he asked himself now, as he gloomily observed the enthusiasm of the marching cohorts, who had, by now, pushed every pedestrian and vehicle off the street below, in their ant-like forward striding. Jeez, he thought morosely. So many of them. And the polls; the latest tallies. Support for Randy Clark still growing--what was it now? Forty-one percent favoring Clark; fifty-five still loyal to himself, plus that strange, pale handful of organisms who didn't seem to have heard about either man.



Distant, chanting yells filtered up from the street below; snatches of words like figments of unfortunate dreams. Hark to Clark, the faithful were dinning. Hark hark! Clark Clark!

Turning away from the window, Joe Martardon said, "Hark the Clark." He's got me, he said to himself. Randy Clark is going to cram himself into my chair like an inexorable flow of wet concrete; it can't be stopped, only delayed. But if I could know...

"I can't step aside," he said to Taverner.

"Of course not," Taverner said, dutifully.

"He'll pull the sky down on us," Martardon said. He felt old, thinking that; he felt the timidity, within him, of an old man. A geriatric case, full of fake organs, wincing at everything vital and new, everything different. "Maybe he won't," he said aloud. "Maybe it's my imagination; maybe I don't really understand, any more. I need a rest." No, he thought. *What I need is proof.*

"Eventually we'll be able to get you across to a coaxial universe in which you stepped aside, back in '92, as you had considered doing," Taverner said encouragingly. "And then you can see; then you will have the basis you need for your present decision. I understand what you want, and I understand your impatience. But--"

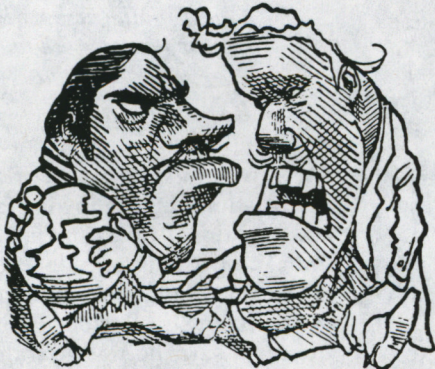
"I'm going to kill you," Joe Martardon said to Taverner. "Within this next month. Consider that."

"If I don't manage to get you across into--"

"Maybe even if you do," Martardon said.

"That's rather unfair."

Martardon said, "I don't feel like being fair. I feel like giving up and letting--what do they call themselves? 'Clark's stark larks.'" He ground out the words scathingly, feeling the venom of his contempt fill his throat. "Clark's stark larks." What a name for an



activist organization. Children; they're nutty college kids. As bad as the peace-marchers back in the '60s." Pointing a weary, agitated finger at Taverner, he said, "We've just about reached the end. I'll give you a few more days; three, maybe four. And then the civil police will come in here and eradicate you and I'll step down, retire, and Clark's larks can handle things and there won't be anything to worry about because you'll be dead and I'll be expiring in a villa on Luna and Clark will have pulled down the sky." He examined his wristwatch. "This is an historic moment," he said. "The moment at which you and I had our last chance."

"I wish you wouldn't put things so dramatically," Taverner said sullenly. "It's un--" He gestured. "It's unfrontal lobe-ish."

"Death is death," Martardon said. "Purges and coups are methods of killing. The old order dies or steps down; something has to give. Once I see what rule by Clark would be like I'll know what to do: hang in there and fight or let him have what he wants."

"Could you make it five days?" Taverner asked. "Instead of three or four?"

"Six," Martardon said.

"Thanks." A little relieved, but still deeply shaken, Taverner began rummaging through the mass of documents on his desk. "I'd like to show you data which we've just recently--"

"Forget it," Martardon said, and stalked out of the office.

At his command headquarters, his homeostatic burrow deep within the interior of a mountain in the Los Padres, Randy Clark faced his senior political and military advisors and said, "The old goat is still trying to rutt and snort his way across into an alternate Earth. He still hasn't given up."

"He'll never get across," Secretary Hammond said.

"But that's not much help to us," Assistant Secretary Bridemore said caustically. "Because he'll stay in power while he's trying. Seventy-three more years? It's possible." He grunted with derision.

Clark said, "We'll have to take a long, long chance."

"Meaning what?" Hammond asked alertly.

"If Joe Martardon can't find his way across into an alternate world in which he stepped down, gave his power to me, then--" Clark plucked at his lower lip, meditatively. "We'll build one for him," he said, and let out his breath in a ragged wheeze, a constriction of unreleased tension. For ten weeks he had thought about this, explored it from all angles. Or anyhow he *hoped* from all angles.

[end of existent text]

--Philip K. Dick

Introduction to "The Riddle of TLE"

by Gregg Rickman

[Several alert and considerate PKDS readers--John Fairchild, D. E. Eley--noticed this article in the *Atlantic* and sent copies to us. The magazine and author Eve LaPlante have granted permission for the Newsletter to reprint the article, so you can read it for yourself and make your own speculations, should you be inclined to; and PKD biographer Gregg Rickman has provided us with an introduction to LaPlante's piece, looking past the most immediately striking resonances (hypergraphia? hyperreligiosity??) to point out other possible links that might or might not exist between PKD and TLE. --Paul Williams]

Eve LaPlante's article on temporal lobe epilepsy, reproduced here in its entirety from the November 1988 *Atlantic*, will introduce to many of you one of the most intriguing "medical explanations" (of several available) that can be offered for certain events in the life of Philip K. Dick. As you read the article you may note connections between what LaPlante describes, and things you've

read about in VALIS or the Newsletter or elsewhere--I gloss some of them below.

Phil's "Exegesis" of the matter of the VALIS visions and what happened afterward seldom strays from the theological/philosophical path, to be sure. But many of those who've come after him have shown more interest than he did in compiling, like Jack Isidore, a chronicle of verified scientific fact. Nothing is settled yet, but TLE appears to be a more promising avenue for further research into the mystery of Phil Dick's experiences than some of the other explanations that have been offered. Space precludes my laying down of evidence, but I can say with certainty that Phil was never schizophrenic; that VALIS was not an "acid flashback"; and that the VALIS visions and their aftermath cannot be traced directly, or simply, to amphetamine consumption or to strokes.

Perhaps nothing so mundane as a medical condition, even an exotic one, can ever fully "explain" the source of the continuing

fascination Dick's life and work holds for us. Let no one say TLE, or any other condition, detracts from the magnitude of his achievement. With this borne in mind, let's briefly probe the remarkable issues raised by LaPlante's article, as they might apply to Philip K. Dick.

1) Phil, Inman, and others. Phil was an agoraphobe, less of one than Inman to be sure. Phil, like Inman, seemed to be a hypochondriac, was depressive, attempted suicide on more than one occasion, and left behind millions of words of writing, much of it (after the VALIS event) in journal form. Unlike Inman, Phil was a genius—or at least stands closer to such as van Gogh and Dostoevsky on the scale of artistic achievement than Inman does. One could go on at length comparing Dick's achievement with any of the TLE victims LaPlante mentions, even unto St. Paul, but for now just check out the "multiplication" illusions testified to in both Dick's early story "Upon the Dull Earth," and Dostoevsky's "The Double."

2) The TLE seizure. Phil described what LaPlante calls the "Alice" syndrome to me in his own words, occurring, he told me, as part of attacks of "agoraphobia" that drove him from his classes as an adolescent, and later, from regular employment. At this same time in his life (teens to early twenties) he had bouts with feelings of severe depersonalization, and heard at least one "auditory hallucination." Interestingly, the onset of Inman's illness came just at this age (twenty-one).

3) Migraines. In my book *To the High Castle*, I draw connections between the migraines suffered by Jack Isidore and his friend the UFO believer in *CONFESSIONS OF A CRAP ARTIST* (completed in 1959) and the VALIS event as described by Phil. At the time I completed *High Castle*, I was planning to make an effort to medically "explain" VALIS in the second volume of my biography, in part through the phenomenon known as "aura of migraine"—which may be similar to the migraine headache Inman "probably had," according to LaPlante. It is very well described by Oliver Sacks in his book on migraine. Its symptoms overlap with some of Phil's VALIS experiences—the visual hallucination of "St. Elmo's Fire," for example—although Phil did not experience the blinding headaches associated with classic migraine. A friend of mine has had these hallucinations, but has never felt, as Phil did, that "that shiny fire could think." In this—the way Phil attributed consciousness to his hallucination—we may see the convergence of two syndromes (TLE and aura of migraine) which seem as though they could be connected.

4) The "interictal traits." Phil, arguably, demonstrated all five of Khoshbin's traits, in the years after VALIS at least—absent the bizarre changes in sexual orientation LaPlante mentions.

5) TLE and creativity. I'm with Paul Spiers. More proof, if any is needed, that Phil wasn't "crazy."

6) "Destiny." Phil considered his mainstream novels as chronicles of his age (and they are), and was speaking of science fiction as early as 1949 as a good vehicle for social commentary (which it is). This hardly proves TLE!—but it's interesting that the people who described Phil's attitudes to me used LaPlante's words almost exactly.

7) Seizures. "The brain structures that can be affected by TLE are so heterogeneous—they control the senses, memory, learning, heart rate, and blood pressure—that a seizure can be experienced in any number of ways." TLE could be linked to Phil's life-long tachycardia (rapid pulse) and hypertension (his blood pressure was so high at the time of the VALIS events that he was hospitalized). Temporal lobe seizures directly affect the hypothalamus—central to the brain's fear arousal circuit (thus Phil's panic disorder?) and the hunger drive (thus his bouts with anorexia?) and anger arousal (thus Phil's flash rages?).

8) No, I do not think Phil should have had surgery.

Much more work needs to be done, on TLE and other workable explanations (LaPlante's article, excellent as it is, barely scratches the surface—of the phenomenon of TLE, or of Phil Dick). In particular, I am exploring the ramifications and possible connections between the events of Phil's dreadful childhood (gone into at great length in *High Castle*) and his adult experiences—including the VALIS vision. How TLE fits into this calculus is a subject for more research, a lot more research. (I wouldn't be publishing commentary on this now, save that the Newsletter is printing the article, after all, and it's worth thinking about.)

—Gregg Rickman



MEDICINE

THE RIDDLE OF TLE

*A hard-to-diagnose malady
causing bizarre behavior
may be curable*

ARTHUR CREW INMAN was a native of Atlanta who, following a physical and emotional breakdown in 1916, at the age of twenty-one, left college and retired to a darkened, soundproof suite of apartments in Boston. Bedridden for the most part, he was attended by servants, physicians, and strangers whom he paid to talk to him. An inheritance supported this life-style. He complained of crippling aches and pains, extreme sensitivity to light and sound, and despair over the state of the world. Something compelled him to record these complaints and much more in a personal diary that he kept daily for more than forty years. He attempted suicide several times and in 1963 succeeded, after noise from the construction of a skyscraper drove him wild. He left behind a 155-volume, 17-million-word diary—probably the longest ever written—which, greatly abridged, was published as *The Inman Diary* in 1985, in two volumes, by Harvard University Press.

The question is, What was wrong with Inman? Physicians who saw him—including "thirty-four eminent doctors"

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who examined him after his breakdown—concluded unanimously that he had no apparent physical ailment. Inman, convinced that his difficulties had an organic source, rejected the medical establishment and resigned himself to the care of osteopaths. But even his chief osteopath, who is given the name “Dr. Frederick Lakian” in the published diary, and who treated him for twenty-five years, says, “Arthur was a hypochondriac. To a great degree, his symptoms were purely imaginary.” Why, then, did he live the way he did? What made him so susceptible to pain and depression, so driven to write?

A disorder that could explain all of Inman’s difficulties does exist. It is temporal lobe, or temporolimbic, epilepsy (TLE), an often disabling neurological disorder. TLE is manifested by bizarre sensory and somatic seizures that can be triggered by light and sound. In some patients TLE is accompanied by hypergraphia, a compulsive urge to write detailed diaries and poems—and sometimes to draw with similar intensity.

The most common form of epilepsy among adults, TLE is believed to affect 600,000 to a million Americans. Some doctors speculate that if TLE were properly diagnosed, it might be found to affect one in a hundred adults—making it an extremely common illness. Like other epilepsies, it is the result of electrical storms in the brain: abnormal, excessive firing of neurons in the central nervous system. Epilepsy can be caused by congenital abnormalities, tumors, viruses, and injuries to the brain, but most cases of epilepsy are idiopathic: their cause is unknown. Doctors call TLE a complex partial seizure disorder—“complex” because its seizures usually result in impairment but not cessation of consciousness, and “partial” because they involve only part of the brain and body. This terminology distinguishes the disorder from the better-known grand-mal and petit-mal epilepsies, in which seizures are “generalized” throughout the brain and cause either unconsciousness and gross motor convulsions or brief lapses in awareness.

Many historical figures may have had TLE, including such religious and political leaders as Moses, Mohammed, Julius Caesar, and Alexander the Great, and such writers as Dostoyevsky, Flaubert, Lewis Carroll, and Eugene O’Neill. Another possible TLE sufferer is Vincent van Gogh, whose hypergraph-

ia is well documented. In a fifteen-month period in the late 1880s, for example, van Gogh produced hundreds of paintings, drawings, and lengthy letters. The conversion of another great writer of letters, the Apostle Paul, on the road to Damascus, had several of the hallmarks of a complex partial seizure—a blinding flash of light, confusion, a disembodied voice, and subsequent loss of appetite.

In a typical complex partial seizure a person stares blankly, smacks his lips or swallows, performs an automatic motion such as shaking a limb or picking at clothing, and is then bewildered and unable to speak for several minutes. But variations abound. The brain structures that can be affected by TLE are so heterogeneous—they control the senses, memory, learning, heart rate, and blood pressure—that a seizure can be experienced in any number of ways. Physical changes, such as irregular heartbeat and sexual climax, can occur. Some patients report intense emotions—fear, for example, that “something terrible is about to happen,” or tremendous, unexplained joy. Dostoyevsky wrote, “I would not exchange for all the happiness life could give me the bliss” that preceded his seizures. Others experience a particular vivid memory every time they have a seizure. Still others enter into a “dreamy state,” in which their emotions and memory are temporarily shut off. Altered sensory states are common. They include the “Alice in Wonderland syndrome,” in which objects appear shrunken or enlarged; auditory and visual hallucinations; and “depersonalization”—the feeling of being outside or above one’s body. Some seizures are preceded by pain, nausea, a foul smell of “burning rubber” or “dead skunk,” or a “funny feeling” in the chest or stomach. Inappropriate laughter or crying may follow seizures. Many patients sleep for several hours afterward and then feel better.

More even than with most diseases, deciding whether or not someone has TLE is like doing detective work. To diagnose TLE, doctors look for an apparent clinical seizure as well as a “spike focus”—a region of the brain where abnormal electrical discharges begin, detectable on an electroencephalogram (EEG). TLE seizures are often not recognized for what they are, and large areas of the temporal lobes are inaccessible to the EEG. So although a positive EEG during a clinical seizure is the best

indicator of TLE, a negative EEG does not rule it out. Only in the past ten years have medical researchers been able to use sophisticated diagnostic tools such as EEGs with electrodes that can be implanted inside the brain or on its surface. These techniques, however, are expensive and still not widely used. As a result, many people with TLE (including roughly 30 percent of those with TLE being treated at the Beth Israel Hospital, in Boston) are first misdiagnosed as having a psychiatric disorder. The prevalence of psychosis seems much greater in people with TLE than in the general population, however, for reasons that are not yet known.

IN INMAN’S CASE, the best evidence is in the diary. The EEG was not invented until 1929, long after Inman swore off medical science, so he never had one. His scanty hospital records and autopsy report are unrevealing. But his description of his 1916 breakdown, which involved bizarre sensory and emotional states and culminated in an attack while he was at the home of friends, is consistent with a TLE seizure. “My whole nervous system went on strike,” Inman wrote.

Specks of light zigzagged in front of me. My ears whistled. . . . The room began to circle with a curious rotary motion, very bewildering. I heard them talking, asking questions, but my ears were full of noise, and I could not understand. Suddenly. . . I began to cry long, racking sobs, without any end.

His friends were frightened and tried to put him to bed. After lying down for a while, Inman was able to join them for dinner.

This was the first of many such attacks. Inman wrote in 1919, “I feel as though I were undergoing a change such as occurs in a violin string when the pitch is raised. This condition has occurred to me time after time. . . .” Thirty years later he wrote,

I live in a box where the camera shutter is out of order and the filter doesn’t work and the film is oversensitive, and whatever that is beautiful or lovely by rights registers painfully or askew. . . . The simplest factors of existence, sunlight and sound, uneven surfaces, moderate distances, transgress my ineffective barriers and raid the very inner keep of my broken fortifications, so that there exists no sanctuary or fastness to which I can

withdraw my sensitivity, neither awake nor asleep.

A medical report appended to the published diary suggests that the 1916 breakdown could have resulted from a viral infection, such as mononucleosis. But since no fever was reported, a virus is unlikely. Inman's sensitivities to light and sound and his visual and auditory hallucinations suggest migraine headaches as well as TLE. Migraines, thought to result from the expanding and shrinking of blood vessels to the brain, are more complex than other headaches. They share symptoms with TLE, including nausea, numbness, and temporary speech difficulties. Migraines are much more common among epilepsy sufferers than in the general population, and have on occasion responded well to treatment with anticonvulsant drugs. Inman probably had migraines. "But migraines alone could not have accounted for his unusual personality," says Shahram Khoshbin, a neurologist at Harvard Medical School and the Brigham and Women's Hospital, in Boston. "TLE could have."

PEOPLE WITH TLE, according to Khoshbin, tend to demonstrate five interictal traits (that is, traits in evidence *between* rather than *during* seizures). The first of the traits is hypergraphia. The second is hyperreligiosity—an unusual degree of concern with morality, philosophy, and mysticism, sometimes leading to multiple religious conversions. The third is "stickiness," or clinginess. People with this trait are often reluctant to end conversations. Doctors say their patients with TLE characteristically prolong appointments by returning to or repeatedly telephoning their offices. The fourth trait is altered or decreased interest in sex. The fifth is aggressiveness—usually undirected and transient, and rarely leading to violence.

The prevalence of this interictal behavior syndrome in people with TLE is controversial. No hard figures exist, and estimates vary widely. Some people with TLE do not have any of the traits. But "a large proportion" of them have some, according to Paul Spiers, a neuropsychologist at the Beth Israel. David Bear, the director of neuropsychiatry at the Vanderbilt University School of Medicine, agrees that the syndrome "could be very common." Bear says that he finds the syndrome in "a large percentage" of his TLE patients, many of

whom are referred to him because of his interest in behavior change and epilepsy. However, Thomas Browne, a neurologist at the Boston University Medical Center and the Veterans Administration Medical Center in Boston, says that in his experience the syndrome occurs in a "minority" of people with TLE—by his estimate, some five to 30 percent.

Pierre Gloor, a neurologist at the Montreal Neurological Institute, known throughout the world as a last stop for "untreatable" epilepsy patients, says that the syndrome may not be apparent unless doctors search for it. "It hits you in the eye in less than ten percent of cases, but that doesn't mean it doesn't exist in a somewhat hidden form in some other patients. Sometimes you have to dig for it."

When the behavior syndrome does occur, it is likely to arise abruptly and uncharacteristically. Researchers at the Beth Israel report the case of an athletic instructor with no previous intellectual interests who became consumed with the idea of writing something important. Another patient there, a middle-aged, semi-literate laborer, "started to keep a minute-by-minute log of his feelings and their relationship to God." Sexual changes occur just as suddenly. The most common is the loss of interest in sex, notable because it is not accompanied by loss of sexual function. Other patients undergo changes in sexual orientation—for example, alternating between homosexuality and heterosexuality as the frequency of their seizures changes. Though rare, deviant sexual practices—pederasty, bestiality, and fetishism—have also been reported. An extreme example of this is a man with TLE who became sexually aroused only at the sight of a safety pin, an involuntary response that must have resulted from faulty wiring in the brain.

THE NEUROLOGICAL mechanism underlying the behavior syndrome is not clearly understood. The late Norman Geschwind, a renowned behavioral neurologist at Harvard, hypothesized that the syndrome occurs not as a result of seizures but rather as a consequence of changes in the brain which can themselves cause seizures. Too many and too rapid electrical connections in the brain's temporolimbic structures may bring about the behavior changes. David Bear calls these brain structures "gatekeepers to consciousness," for in them the sensory world meets our emotions and re-

lates our sensory experience to biological drives (aggression, fear, hunger, and sexuality). If the structures are damaged, these connections can be altered, producing what Geschwind called "an excessive investment of the environment with limbic significance." As a result,

external stimuli begin to take on great importance; this leads in turn to increased concern with philosophical, religious, and cosmic matters. Since all events become charged with importance, the patients frequently resort to recording them in written form at great length and in highly charged language.

Many neurologists, however, consider the behavior syndrome questionable—and even pernicious—as a diagnostic category. Robert Feldman, the chief of neurology at the Boston University Medical Center and the Veterans Administration Medical Center in Boston, says that although some patients with TLE "do exhibit these personality traits, serious questions still exist about how specific they are" for TLE. Feldman speculates that the syndrome results not from neurological changes in the brain, as Geschwind proposed, but from the psychological and social stresses that all epilepsy sufferers experience. Seizures often "interfere with interpretation of environmental cues," he says, adding that people whose seizure disorders began in childhood tend to have the greatest social maladaptation. But the neurologist Martin Albert, also of the Boston University and Boston VA medical centers, is not convinced that the behavior syndrome is entirely the result of external factors. "Children with serious chronic illnesses other than epilepsy are also excluded and stigmatized," he says. "Why don't *they* develop this cluster of traits?"

Many people resist the notion that abnormally firing neurons can alter behavior and emotions. As Paul Spiers explains this resistance, "Who wants to think that a great literary work is based on a disease?" Some doctors, acknowledging the long history of prejudice against people with epilepsy, oppose publicly linking certain personality traits with TLE. That association, according to Thomas Browne, puts an additional and unnecessary burden on people who "already have enough trouble getting along in our society." David Coulter, the chief of pediatric neurology at the Boston University School of Medicine, says,

"The behavior syndrome is a personality disorder, a cluster of pejorative attributes, and gives people with epilepsy a bad name."

But doctors may do their patients a greater disservice by denying that the behavior syndrome is related to TLE. "The fact is that patients who have these symptoms go around wondering, 'Am I crazy?'" Paul Spiers says. "We can say, 'No, you're not crazy.'" Bear emphasizes that the syndrome represents a behavioral change, not a disease. Many of its traits, such as an interest in cosmic issues or a tendency to write extensively, are not in themselves signs of sickness. Dostoyevsky may have written as much and as well as he did *because* of epilepsy, Spiers says. "One of my TLE patients is a published poet who says that when her seizures are under control, the muse leaves her."

AS FOR INMAN, clearly he had many, if not all, of the traits of the behavior syndrome. On a questionnaire designed by Bear and the psychologist Paul Fedio, of the National Institutes of Health, to determine the extent to which the syndrome is present in patients, Inman scores well within the range of people with TLE and substantially above the control groups. The questionnaire was filled out for Inman separately by Bear and by Libby Smith, one of the editors of *The Inman Diary*. Smith, who spent seven years reviewing the unabridged diary and interviewing scores of people who knew its author, had never heard of TLE. Both she and Bear gave Inman high marks in nearly all of the eighteen traits listed on the questionnaire. (Together these eighteen make up a personality pattern quite similar to that described by Khoshbin's five traits.) "Compulsive attention to detail," for example, describes Inman's need to make lists and keep to rigid schedules. His childlike charm and tendency to fly into rages translate into high scores in several categories: "dependence," "deepening of all emotions," "humorlessness," and "paranoia." And his effort to chronicle his era demonstrates his "grandiosity" and "sense of personal destiny."

The syndrome could explain many of Inman's peculiarities—which bewildered his diary's readers. A story recounted by his chief osteopath reads like a textbook definition of stickiness. "I would be sailing off Cape Cod," Lakian recalls.

The Coast Guard cutter would come up. They'd say they had just had a flash that Arthur Inman wanted to see me immediately. I'd have to call him, ship-to-shore, and tell him I couldn't come right away. He'd say, "You have to come." I'd tell him it would cost him a lot of money. He'd say, "I don't care. Just come."

Lakian's description of Inman's sexual behavior fits the syndrome equally well. "Often when I came to see him, he would be sitting in a rocking chair, with these kids—young girls—in his lap, fondling them, his hands up their legs."

Sex held a somewhat intellectual fascination for Inman. He liked to lie naked in bed with women. He begged them to describe their sexual feelings to him. But he disliked sexual intercourse, and rarely engaged in it. Even if Inman didn't have epilepsy, "he must have had some kind of temporal-lobe or limbic disorder," according to Paul Spiers. "He was both detached and intense—in some sense not emotionally connected to the world."

Experts caution that the presence of the interictal behavior syndrome is not sufficient grounds for a diagnosis of TLE. But when the syndrome is present, epilepsy may reasonably be considered. Other possible causes of these traits are repeated use of LSD or cocaine, severe depression, and manic-depressive illness.

IF INMAN DID have TLE and were alive today, he would probably be treated with anticonvulsant medications and supportive psychotherapy and perhaps with surgery. Although Inman was never suspected of having epilepsy, he was in fact addicted to two drugs originally used as anticonvulsants—potassium bromide, first used for this purpose in 1859 and now largely discontinued, and barbiturates, introduced early in this century and still regarded as effective. The most common anticonvulsant drugs used today for TLE are carbamazepine, phenytoin, and phenobarbital. These may eliminate seizures or significantly reduce their frequency and severity in some patients, but have not been shown to affect interictal behavior and do not adequately control seizures for many people with TLE—25 percent of them according to doctors, and roughly 65 percent according to the patients themselves.

After exhaustive two-year surgical

work-ups, a small number of TLE patients undergo surgery to remove the part of the brain containing the seizure focus—often a mass of tissue as large as a fist. This operation has been performed, in conjunction with the EEG, on more than 5,000 patients since 1939, and far fewer than one percent have died as a result, largely because patients are not anesthetized during the procedure. Roughly 40 percent of survivors have become seizure-free and able to go off anti-convulsants. Another 40 percent have had significantly fewer seizures while remaining on drugs, and roughly 20 percent have remained the same or worsened. Worsening usually means more-frequent seizures and the introduction of new kinds of seizures, and rarely it involves lasting difficulties with thinking and remembering. Remarkably, however, a common long-term aftereffect of the surgery is improved neurological functioning overall; many patients' IQs have actually increased, and their moods have heightened. This is probably because epileptic brain tissue interferes with normal brain function.

TLE and the interictal behavior syndrome no doubt deserve much more attention and research. Because the disorder crosses the traditional boundaries between psychiatry and neurology, improved methods of recognizing and treating it may lead to a revolution in the diagnosis and treatment of psychiatric disorders such as manic-depressive illness and schizophrenia. Indeed, some doctors now suspect that many psychiatric disorders are themselves somehow related to seizures. Not long before his death, in 1984, Norman Geschwind wrote,

Behavioral change in temporal lobe epilepsy deserves very special consideration, since it is probably the only cause of major change in behavior for which we have a plausible mechanism of pathogenesis. . . . The importance of this syndrome results from its clinical fascination, its frequency, and from its unique capacity to present to us a clear-cut physiological paradigm for the occurrence of behavioral change after alterations in the brain.

TLE, which permits psychiatrists and neurologists to examine the same problems, may advance knowledge in both fields and lead to a better understanding of the physiological causes of mental illness and mental health.

—Eve LaPlante

THE DARK-HAIRED GIRL

reviewed by Jonathan Lethem

THE DARK-HAIRED GIRL by Philip K. Dick, edited by Paul Williams; Mark V. Ziesing, hardcover, 270 pp, \$19.95 (order from Ziesing, PO Box 806, Willimantic, CT 06226; add \$2.00 postage etc.).

First of all, you ask, which book is it I'm reviewing here? For there are two: the 116-page manuscript entitled "The Dark-Haired Girl" which Dick attempted at various times to publish, and the larger compendium—edited by Paul Williams, whose name is inexplicably missing from the title page—that now encompasses the shorter work. The answer, of course, is both. So bear with me.

I'll strike the sour notes first. The shorter work, considered separately, would have to be called the weakest possible introduction to Dick's work. I'm more comfortable imagining a new reader stumbling across, say, DR. FUTURITY, than this (non-existent) memoir. And for the reader familiar with Dick's work it might still provide a disappointing or uncomfortable reading experience. There's fascinating material here, and some fine writing, but much of it seems undigested and repetitive. Disconcertingly, Dick announces a dual structure at the outset, then only delivers the first half. Readers sensitive to gender issues may come away feeling perturbed—I certainly did. On the upside, the essay provides a clearer glimpse of the relationship between Dick's life and art than we've seen yet, and the final eleven pages, a letter to Tessa (though perhaps altered or expanded for this context; it isn't clear) are a bizarre tour-de-force from a writer always capable of astonishing. Still, I'll go out on a limb and say

I'm thankful Dick never found a publisher for this work, and thankful again that it wasn't offered by the Estate in this form.

What we have instead is far more appealing. A compendium of writings—the editor calls it a 'collation'—made whole by a unity of theme. The book as offered includes, besides the work described above, two long speeches, three letters, a poem, a previously unpublished story, and another, related, essay, topped off by a stimulating and useful introduction by Paul Williams. But the larger book is preferable for more than just its diversity; in this form it comes much closer to fulfilling the artistic goals Dick originally set himself. The two speeches go a long way towards providing the undelivered second part of his dual structure. "Man, Android and Machine," in particular, strikes me as an effective and concentrated piece of writing; it may remind some readers of parts of VALIS. The letters help round out the autobiographical glimpse given in the title essay, and "The Evolution of A Vital Love," the shorter essay, explores, with increased perspective, some of the obsessions of the longer one. Finally, "Goodbye, Vincent," the story, perfectly situated at the end of the book, is the real find, and a reminder that Dick was at his best when he transformed the obsessions he experienced into metaphorical terms.

I recommend THE DARK-HAIRED GIRL, then, as a fascinating new piece of the puzzle. It will be interesting to reread after the biographers have helped provide us a broader context for it as a chapter in his life. Until then, buy it, and be sure to read the introduction first.

—Jonathan Lethem



A letter to the editor (continued from page 1)

seeing a shrink. Imagine how I felt when, 13 years later, I read that article.

I was young, extremely vulnerable, very susceptible to the flattery that Phil was very capable of handing out; I bought his story that I was the negative influence in his life, that I was cruel, that I was driving him mad.

I would observe him go from a smiling, communicative extrovert, to completely immobile, eyes fixed, face an expressionless mask, seemingly unable to hear anything that I said to him. Yet, I would only see him do this when he was alone with me, never around other people. The closest I ever saw him come to this quasi-catatonic state around other people would be a sudden turning-inward, an abrupt halt in a conversation, an awkward silence that would last a moment or two; then he would rouse himself, seemingly with great effort, and sometimes resume the conversation where it had left off, sometimes seeming to have forgotten that there was a conversation, and just sit and stare at us. But then, when he had returned, another conversation would begin and he would either be all right or not.

I couldn't always identify the trigger to these...moods? outbursts? A certain one was to mention the name of any male human (other than Tim or Joel, and for a while Tim was a problem); the worst one I ever saw resulted from my mentioning Norman Spinrad's name in the context of "Gee I might like to know him better." This was, of course, before I was aware of how Phil felt about me (and how he behaved when threatened), or I never would have said a word to him.

I couldn't understand how a man who was my father's age could behave the way Phil did and feel about me the way Phil claimed to. As I said, I was young, and really thought that older people had different emotional sets. I tried to ignore Phil's outbursts, using the flawed, but handy, "if I ignore it, it will go away" tack. One night this proved nearly fatal.

Phil and I had been to see *Fiddler on the Roof*. For a change it was I who was subdued on the way back from the movie. The film had been quite an emotional experience for me, and without thinking I pulled into the gas station near our apartments, where I normally purchased my gas, remembering far too late that there was a fellow student working that night with whom I had a date later in the week. I had this sudden premonition of him coming to the window to talk to me, seeing Phil, and, assuming that he was my father, talking to me about the date. To forestall this, I jumped out of the car so that any conversation between us would take place out of Phil's hearing. Of course, this infuriated Phil, who jumped out of the car and stomped into the convenience market next door. He returned with a quart of milk, and got into the car in a silent fury. I pulled out of the gas station and headed up Placentia Avenue towards Quartz Lane, where we lived. Suddenly, Phil reached over with his good arm (the other was in a sling due to the dislocation injury for which he insisted I was to blame), grabbed the steering wheel, and turned the car into the path of the oncoming traffic. There were cars coming; this was not an empty gesture. I wrestled with him to regain control of the car; moments later I pulled up in front of his apartment building on Quartz Lane. I was trembling. "Get out of my car," I said in a voice hoarse from shouting and fear. Phil's only reply was to grab my

windpipe in the slinged hand, and begin punching me in the face with his free hand. I struggled free and threw him out of the car without a further word. I never wanted to see or speak to him again.

I did see him a few weeks later at a science fiction convention. He saw me and remarked to the person he was with (I believe it may have been Tessa, but I don't remember), "That's Linda Levy. I used to be in love with her until she beat me up." I swore off on science fiction conventions after that. I've only been to one since then and only because Tim invited me to one a few years back at which he was scheduled to speak.

When Phil became involved with Tess, and she moved in with him, I continued to keep my distance for a time, feeling more comfortable with Tess the recipient of Phil's disquietingly intense attention, and I began to do things with them from time to time. On one occasion at Tim and Joel's apartment, I remember Tess saying to Phil, "Can I show her? Can I show it to Linda?" And Phil, behaving like an indulgent father, told her to go ahead. From their behavior, I expected perhaps a kitten, a puppy, some new toy. Instead, to my horror, Tess rolled up her sleeves to show me hideous green-blue-yellow bruises as if they were some sort of badge of honor.

It was shortly after that, that an event occurred that Phil's version of reality refers to on page 178 in "The Evolution of a Vital Love." He says that Tessa told him I didn't love him, and when he attempts to confirm this with me, I respond with a Pris-like speech.

What actually happened was that Tess showed up at my apartment one day, covered with bruises, crying and very upset. She described a situation in which, she said, Phil locked the front door, turned up the stereo, turned on the air conditioning, and beat her. She managed to get out after I don't know what period of time, and came to us, she said for help. We advised her to get out; I shared my experience with her, speculated that it was only likely to get worse, and offered to help her. After a time she wandered back out; we expected fully that she would see the reason to leaving Phil. Instead, according to Phil because I never heard anything about this from Tessa, she came home and told him that she had visited us and shared with us her love for him, and we had spontaneously, for some reason, decided to try and turn her against him. Of course, no mention of her obvious physical condition.

Try and tell Phil's fans about the hate campaign Phil waged against me from that point. He put my name on mailing lists and signed me up for delivery of free samples from distributors of marital aids and pornographic material. He put incredibly juvenile notes under my windshield wipers ("Linda Levy has warts and is a hazard to the beautification committee of Quartz Lane"), sent me a postcard with "LRL + LRL" inside a heart with an arrow (as if it were carved in a tree)--directly underneath it was the definition of masturbation cut out of a dictionary. And there was more. But, do you see my dilemma? Do you understand the disbelief that was encountered from those who believed that THE MAN IN THE HIGH CASTLE was the most incredible piece of writing ever and it was written by someone in our very own neighborhood? I tried to catch Tim's eye when Tessa showed me her bruises. I would try to discuss with him things that we both observed, and his response would leave me wondering about my sanity. At these times I felt like I was in some incredibly bizarre movie, in which scenes would stop, and all actors would freeze except for Phil and I who would act out some strange melodrama in front of everyone, who would have no recollection of the experience even though they had been present. What loyalty. But to whom? To Phil? Or to themselves, loyal to the image they wished to preserve, and denying all evidence to the contrary. What an incredible opportunity for me to learn how people behave in the face of unacceptable realities. But, based on my own psychological profile, and my youth and my inexperience, I owned the madness. All these people said it couldn't be Phil's. Therefore it must be mine.

Little did I know until I started reading THE DARK HAired GIRL, how Phil and I matched so perfectly each other's

psychological imbalances. I fit so perfectly the image of the dark-haired girl he sought, and he filled my need for attention from my father, who was Phil's age but had never told me he loved me. Phil knew me two weeks when he told me the first time.

I wasn't ready for it. It was about two weeks after Phil had arrived in town, and was not yet living with Joel. He had been invited to have dinner with Harlan Ellison and Edward Bryant with whom Harlan was collaborating, and with whom Harlan was teaching a writing class in his home. Phil had no car, and invited me to go, and, of course, drive.

On the way to Harlan's house, Phil handed me a thick envelope. I couldn't read it while I was driving, and did not have a chance to look at it for several hours because of all the excitement when we arrived at Harlan's, what with my getting to meet someone whose work I admired, Harlan and Phil getting (re)acquainted, looking at Harlan's artwork, playing with his Pachinko machines, meeting his date, a woman named Emerald who was an editor at the *LA Free Press*, and then trying to follow Harlan to the restaurant, Ting Ho's on Highland. (I was very interested to note that Harlan's 1967 Camaro was a brother to mine and that his license plate was HE. I realized that it was his initials but also speculated on what it said about his ego in view of the fact that that night at his house was the first time I had seen a bed on a raised platform.) It was quite heady stuff for me, who had been a mere English major at Cal State Fullerton the month before. When we arrived at the restaurant it was no less hectic, with Harlan making loud and obviously unwelcome comments about the anatomy of a young woman sitting at the table next to us, and waiting for Ed Bryant to arrive. According to Harlan, Ed was responsible for picking up The Toad, a young woman who was in Ed and Harlan's writing class. It seems that they had had a contest in the class to see who would win a dinner with Phil Dick, and this young woman had won. Harlan assured us all that she was a real toad; when Ed arrived with this young woman in tow, Phil said loudly, several times, "Where's the toad, Harlan? Harlan? I don't see any toad." The thing about Phil was that he just didn't stop when it wasn't funny any more. He kept saying it and saying it until it was just about as funny as a decaying body there at the table with us. Harlan looked like he would have cheerfully done him in. I took advantage of the discomfort to bury myself in Phil's letter. The letter that I got that night is the one that starts on page 57, and ends with the P.S. "...will you marry me?" I giggled out. I couldn't bring myself to look at Phil, I just wanted to get away, run to somewhere where I could be alone, figure things out, sort out my thoughts, find out what I was feeling. All I knew was that I was terrified, I did not know how to respond, I was in a restaurant 60 miles from home at a table with a man who loudly leched after neighboring young women, another who plaintively wanted to know where the toad could be found, the toad herself who seemed quite nice and possibly equally as bewildered as I, Emerald, who acted as if nothing unusual were taking place, and Ed Bryant who seemed far too normal to be occupying a table with the rest of us. It progressed, painfully for me, with us all returning to Harlan's house. I asked Harlan if the picture in his bathroom was a Georg Grosz. He stared at me as if I had six eyes, all yellow but one. (He had been looking at me like that most of the evening. I could tell he definitely did not share Phil's attraction.) "That's Picasso's *Guernica*," he spat disdainfully. Harlan could do disdainful like no one I had ever seen before. (Phil was so impressed that I knew who Georg Grosz was, that he promptly gave me two Grosz prints that had been gifts to him from an ex-wife.) I'm afraid that I was not sophisticated enough to take Harlan in stride; that, combined with my intense discomfort over the coming ride home in which I imagined I would have to give Phil my reply to his proposal, made for a very disturbing evening.

At the time, I had only marginal knowledge of the term "communication." I had only recently come from a home environment in which we did not talk about how we felt, so I didn't know how. It never occurred to me that people did that. I don't know that having that kind of knowledge would have made a difference in view of Phil's psychological condition; I think the

difference it would have made would have been in how I feel now, looking back 17 years. I would have liked to have felt prouder of myself and the way I handled this.

Unfortunately, Harlan observed my discomfort and worried me like a puppy with a sock, until he provoked an outburst between Phil and me. Later, I wailed to Will McNelly, "But he baited me!" Will replied, "Yes, Harlan is a master baiter."

After reading that magnificent letter to me, do Phil's fans want to know what my response was? Do they imagine a romantic scene in which Phil waits breathlessly for my answer? Rather, I withdrew, unable to speak my feelings, until Phil, irritated to frustration at not knowing why I was behaving the way I was, finally forced me to explain my behavior. I tried, and succeeded badly I'm sure as I didn't begin to learn that art until nine years later. When he finally determined that I was wiggling out about how to answer his proposal, he underwent an incredible, instantaneous personality change. "Oh that," he said offhandedly, almost disinterested. "I just threw that in because you said you'd never been asked before. I didn't *mean* it. Surely you didn't think I *meant* something like that?" And he continued in that vein until I felt humiliated at the thought that anyone, anywhere, at any time would ever want to marry me. Just my madness again, I thought.

I would like to get over this feeling I have of guilt about relating my experience of what it was like to know Phil, fearing that it just doesn't match the picture that people have in their minds about him whether they knew him or not. I feel so apologetic. It helps so much to read statements like the one you made in the introduction to *THE DARK-HAIRED GIRL*. He was mad as a hatter. In the 17 years since I first met Phil, you are the only other person who has flatly stated that. I have searched through others' writings and have not found even an allusion to the possibility that reality and Phil were, at times, only remotely acquainted.

It's not that I alone possess this incredible clarity of vision. I think it's more that most people viewed him affectionately as an eccentric. Few had the opportunity to be on the receiving end of his dangerous affection. Only dark-haired girls got close enough.

And, there was this duality (or schizophrenia?) in his nature that held most people at bay, eliciting at most a puzzled amusement, a vague uneasiness as they were alternately drawn in by his expansive nature and then repelled by his sudden changes of mood.

I see this duality illustrated in *THE DARK-HAIRED GIRL*. Compare the marriage proposal letter with the story that Phil wrote for me that concludes the book. Compare the beauty of Phil's expression and the content of the letter with a character in a story who gets a ticket for driving an ambulance without a bra, or whose lifework is polishing gravestones. Behind Pizza Huts for God's sake! Contrast the beginning of the story with its description of the Linda doll with the end of the story. The story is beautiful and touching, then changes abruptly in the middle of a paragraph. On page 243, the paragraph starts, "That part is blurred by myth and legend" and ends, "Like going without a bra." Boom. Abrupt change. Why? Was Phil tired of the direction he was going with the story? Did he get up and walk away and come back to it, having forgotten what he intended? Did he suddenly change the way he saw the character? Did a synapse misfire in his brain and lead him down a new path contrary to the first? Could he see the difference? Was it organic, creative, or possibly emotional--was he capable of getting this close--no closer!--and so used the nearest material at hand to maintain the distance he was comfortable with? (In this case, words, but sometimes, unexpectedly, physical force.)

While Phil and I remained friends during the nearly ten years until his death, it was at a distance. We would talk about once a month, that was about all. The conversations had to be timed carefully, sometimes the person I would reach on the phone would be expansive, talkative and jolly, sometimes the person would be silent, heavy, oppressively dark. Occasionally, I would forget about his mood swings and resulting vicious attacks (wanting, I guess, for him to be okay), and I would make the mistake of calling again

within a few days when the person I had reached was a positive one. Maybe a thought had occurred to me about our conversation, or I would have more information, or an amusing anecdote. Invariably the person I would reach on that second phone call was not happy to hear from me; the personality would be 180 degrees opposite. I would feel chilled and angry, and then finally, accepting. Because that was all we could do. If we wanted Phil in our lives we had to accept him the way he was.

A lot of years went by with those monthly phone calls in them. I think it is only recently that I have stopped missing them. For a long time it was like an alarm would go off, and I would realize that I had been saving up stories and anecdotes and intellectual musings to share with Phil, only there was no outlet for them. I talked to Tim about this once and he expressed a similar sort of frustration. "Might as well whisper them into a shoebox," was how he expressed it.

In spite of the craziness, once I learned how to have a relationship with Phil and was able to place it in a workable perspective, it was extremely valuable. It was unforgettable.

The last time I talked to Phil was about three months before he died. I had just read VALIS, and was so moved by it that I decided damn the timing, I don't care if this is an "okay" time to call Phil or not, I just have to talk to him. It was the first time in ten years that I called Phil to talk about his work. It was a great conversation with a sane and rational Phil. It meant a lot to me, thinking back on it, that our relationship ended on that note. It was moments like that that kept the relationship alive, that sparked the hope that maybe, just maybe, Phil would be okay someday. Maybe someday you could have a normal (?) relationship with him. Maybe he was growing up.

Something happened on the day that I went to Phil's memorial service that I would like to relate to you, unbelievable as it may have been. The memorial service was late morning, early afternoon, I believe; I had to leave work in the middle of the day.

I got into my car, turned it on and started driving. Up until then, the radio had been silent. Suddenly, it came on. It was the opening notes of "Vincent" by Don McLean. I hadn't cried until that moment.

You know, Paul, it's impossible to read anything by or about Phil without having an emotional reaction, having spent nearly ten years involved in some way or another. *THE DARK-HAIRED GIRL* and the *PKDS Newsletter* fill in a lot of missing pieces for me. I know what Phil was saying and writing to me; what I didn't know was what he said and wrote to others. For example, it was quite enlightening to discover in Phil's letter to Tessa from Cleveland, that I was the butt of family jokes! (The reference to third prize in the StinkBug lookalike contest.) So, I thank you. The effect your work is having on me may not be what was intended, but I appreciate it nonetheless.

This letter came out in response to your invitation to set the record straight and add my perspective. I still feel this hesitation about telling the truth about Phil as if the world needed to be protected from it somehow. I will leave the decision about whether or not to publish this in your hands.

More letters

J. B. Reynolds (Sebastopol, California):

Ziesing has mailed me a copy of *THE DARK-HAIRED GIRL*. I'll confess to you and only you, Paul [J.B., who typeset the book in question (but not the intro), has since relented and allowed me to share this good letter with y'all], that I was rather somber and gloomy about that book, and not just because of the energy let-down after typing it out at crazyass speed (I did the whole damn thing in about 26 hours). My mood was not improved after discussions with Andy about it, who seems to think that whatever he just finished reading is the best book around and his favorite of the oeuvre. My problem, I think, was in my inability to reconcile the dual nature of Phil's more obviously confessional writing (and letters are, we all suppose, the soul laid bare, eh?); a

tortured spirit, really reaching out in the most direct way he knew how, to relieve his terrible feeling of pain, and then practically in the same breath a manipulating tyrannical wacko, out to pronounce ferocious justice on those he "loves" and at the same time thoroughly absolve himself of any responsibility. And as I said, misguidedly, to Tim Powers a long time ago, "a man who talks to god is just lonely, but a man who hears god talk to him is disturbed." I wondered if Nice Books could really be written by someone who is not really a Nice Guy...that is, does someone really need to be good to effectively communicate goodness? Well, your introduction did a lot to heal over my wounded devotion to Phil and his work...although I do still maintain a mental division between Phil and His Work; this is not really so absurd, I think, because my immediate idea of someone who could actually write (and publish) dozens of books was that he was having a great life--and I think Phil did *not* have a particularly great life. He suffered too damn much, far more than he deserved, and he made a lot of other people suffer too; but he hunkered down and left a tremendous legacy. Was the sacrifice worth it? Obviously he thought so. He kept flinging himself down onto the altar, cutting out his own heart and offering it to a barbie doll. Which makes me angry--but I like his work too much to stay angry.

It's impossible for me to dislike a man with this much feeling in him, but I still want to give him a smack upside the head and tell him to treat himself nice for a change. Even now!



Adrian Clay (Bristol, England):

I am struck by the many similarities and coincidences between the *VALIS* CD and one issued and purchased at the same time, Michael Nyman's "chamber opera" *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for A Hat* (CBS Mastwerworks), based on the novel/case study by neurologist Dr. Oliver Sacks. It investigates the world of a gifted composer/teacher, Dr. P, who has visual agnosia (mental blindness)--he sees lines, shapes, colours, patterns, movement but cannot put these details together into a total picture. He is as lost as any PKD character, only able to "return sense to the world by putting it and his actions to music," drawing from Dr. Sacks the diagnosis, "My only prescription is more music! more music." Similar to "You're the authority," isn't it?

Schumann's works here do the job of Wagner's in *VALIS* (a song and fragments), and as in Phil's works zen, art, music, reality

& perception, and caring are main themes.

Michael Nyman composed the brilliant soundtracks to Peter Greenaway's films, *The Draughtsman's Contract* ('82), *A Zed and Two Noughts* ('85), and *Death by Drowning* ('88), all highly acclaimed and recommended experimental music using western classical music as source material. He wrote *Experimental Music--Cage and Beyond* ('74); his live gigs are amplified and often described as "demonic," "raucous, hell-for-leather pace," "total refusal to acknowledge any sound level but loud," and he draws classical, jazz, and Zep fans. Check it out!

PS--How about a listing of Phil's lp collection?

[Phil's record and tape collection has been distributed to his children and a list would be difficult. Wagner, Weill, Ronstadt, Neil Young, Beethoven, Gilbert & Sullivan, and Gordon Lightfoot were certainly included. But to reinforce your first point, I just received a postcard from Thomas Egan in Springfield, Illinois, who says, "Re: the search for a reality. A serious scientific book that I think would appeal to P. K. Dick fans is *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for A Hat (and other clinical tales)* by Oliver Sacks. The real people in the book sound as if they belong in a P. K. Dick novel." Some kind of convergence going on here... --PW]

Jim Taylor (Warren, Ohio):

I am compelled to write you to relate my profound experience upon finishing *THE DARK-HAIRED GIRL* at four o'clock in the morning (I thought it was great). As often occurs when immersing myself in any PKD writing, I found myself wonder-wandering in ever-tightening circles of frenetic philosophical contemplations. It is only music that may soothe the meta-physical beast within to sleep. And so I select a recording (totally at random) from my massive music library to relax with before retiring for the night. On this particular day I happened to pull out Ken Nordine's *Grandson of World Jazz* album of "talking songs" (poetry over background jazz music) and played "The Seasons," an album-side-long epic poem. Much to my surprise, I find the material mysteriously reflects what I had read in DHG, especially the speech "Man, Android and Machine." At the time the coincidence seemed almost mystical. Maybe I didn't pick that album at random after all. (Right brain guidance?) The following day the similarities became less mystical, but remained. Obviously, Dick and Nordine worked a common source and arrived at the same conclusions.

If you have never heard of Ken Nordine, allow me to turn you on to him. More than his name or face, you would recognize his voice, for he is a prominent announcer on various TV and radio commercials. It is Ken's deep, resonant voice-over on the wildly animated Levi's ads of the 70's and early 80's, plus the Taster's Choice (AAAH! Freeze-Dried Decaffeinated Coffee) spots and numerous others.

Nordine is less well-known for his creative recordings (distributed on his own Snail Records label) and his "Word Jazz" radio programs (aired on N.P.R.), all produced from his home studio in Chicago. "Word Jazz" began when Ken frequented certain jazz establishments in the days of the Beatnik. When the band would take a break, the piano player would invite Ken on stage to recite his abstract, free-form poetry to piano accompaniment. From 1957 to 1960, he released his first four "Word Jazz" albums which were very unusual and off-the-wall, especially for the 50's. He has released at least five albums since then, all containing philosophical and mystical material that often runs parallel to PKD's writings. (For information: The Ken Nordine Group, 6106 N. Kenmore Ave., Chicago, IL 60660.)

Bob Hare (Woodland Hills, California):

I am a recovering alcoholic (two years) who finds a quality high sobriety reading PKD's "living information." He is my A.A.

I owned a world-class coffeehouse, bookstore, gallery in the late 50's and 60's called the Insomniac, located in Hermosa Beach, California. (Incidentally, I discovered Linda Ronstadt in 1959.

(continued on page 20)

THE PHIL WARS

A Discussion

James P. Blaylock, K.W. Jeter, and Tim Powers

[The program of Armadillocon 10, a science fiction convention held in Austin, Texas, in October 1988, included a panel discussion on the subject "Memories of Philip K. Dick," featuring K.W. Jeter (Guest of Honor at the convention), Tim Powers, and James Blaylock, all highly regarded young authors who were friends of Dick's during his southern California years, 1972-1982.]

[We are grateful to PKDS member Marty Halpern, who taped the panel and obtained the panelists' permission for portions of their discussion to be printed in the PKDS Newsletter. I edited and transcribed the tape and am responsible for any errors in transcription.--Paul Williams]

Powers: I want to start by contradicting a certain cliché about Philip K. Dick, which was most clearly put forth in a Barry Malzberg afterword to, I think, *CLANS OF THE ALPHANE MOON*. He said that Philip K. Dick in his last years believed that God talked to him, especially at the latitude and longitude the crosshairs of which was Phil's apartment, and so Phil wouldn't move because of that, because if he moved God wouldn't be able to talk to him any more. There is a cliché about Philip K. Dick that he was a crazy, drug-ruined fanatic who imagined that God talked to him, and wound up his life in sad, insane poverty. That's kind of a *fun* cliché in that it's colorful, it's like the vague ideas you get about van Gogh or Toulouse-Lautrec or somebody, it has a certain color. The real story I think was less melodramatic, but at the same time more interesting. At this point I'll hand it to our Guest of Honor here, K. W. Jeter.

Jeter: Tim's comments raise an interesting philosophical question: how do you know the difference between a crazy person and a person who just has different ideas from what ordinary people have? I think the difference is that a genuinely crazy person doesn't wind up writing 40 books and making close to a quarter of a million dollars a year. A crazy person has crazy ideas and winds up eating out of trash dumpsters behind supermarkets. And since Phil never did that--instead he did the thing of writing the 40-plus books and making a lot of money--I think that if he were crazy, we should all be so crazy. Tim's quite right, that it's something of a calumny to hit somebody with, if you think their ideas are strange, to call them crazy. Their ideas are just different from what most people have.

I don't know, maybe the panel would actually be a little more entertaining if we could segue into all sorts of our old war stories about Phil... I mean I've seen my friend Tim here a couple of times retell to people in tones of shock and horror, the anecdote that shows up in *VALIS* where the one character forces the Phil Dick character to listen to an lp recording of farts and belches.

Powers: It's pretty shocking. **Jeter:** Yeah, yeah, Tim retells this story as some kind of indictment of me. [Audience laughter.] I'm not going to deny it, it actually did happen, but I'm going to deny that it's an indictment of me.

What happened was that-- whatever Phil's virtues were, he did have a fault of sometimes falling into suicidal depressions. Suicidal depression is, of course, an unfortunate state. And I took the position, and people with actual therapeutic degrees and much education in the subject will say, that any emotional response is

better than suicidal depression. Anger and rage is better than suicidal depression. So if you force somebody, if you trick them to listen to an lp recording of farts and belches, over extravagantly expensive stereophonic headphones--Phil had these headphones that were like *three thousand dollar* headphones! And I saw that he was into a sudden depression, and--this is an actual recording, it was made by some people who were in the British hard rock group Soft Machine, they did an album called *Music from the Body*. Most of the album's pretty good. The first track is all farts and belches, and I told Phil, he's sitting there all glum and suicidally depressed, and he's got his \$3000. electrostatic headphones there, and I said, "Phil, I came across this record, it's extraordinary. And I know there are people out there who are going to make a movie out of one of your books." I said, "Phil, you've got to listen to this record, so you'll be able to talk to people at the Ladd Company and tell them, *this* is the soundtrack for the movie to be made out of your book. You've got to listen. This is the most transcendental music you'll ever hear in your life."

Powers: I don't mean to interrupt, but Jeter said, "Phil, you're really down? I'm sorry to hear it. I have some music that will just--"

Jeter: No, no, you weren't there.

Powers: Well this is how I heard it. "It'll really calm you down..."

Jeter: And I said, "Phil, this is transcendental, and it'll be the perfect soaring, majestic soundtrack to whatever movie they make out of your book," and he gets all, "Ohhh, okay," and he puts on his \$3000 electrostatic headphones, and I drop the needle on the first track of the record and-- he was no longer suicidally depressed. Matter of fact, he was not depressed the whole time he was chasing me down the street.

So that's a story that I think indicates that Phil was a complex human being, and you had to take sometimes devious tactics to maintain your friendship with him. It's a war story, I guess; and sometimes I think that people who knew Phil, we feel like veterans afterward, that we were all there in the Phil wars, you know, we were out on the battlefield and we fought along and we did what we had to, and now years later, after the war is over, we've got our ribbons and our scars to show and all these other things-- I mean, sometimes it was not easy being a friend of Philip K. Dick. Sometimes you had to put up with things from him. He could be an abrasive person. And other times he could be the most giving, saintlike person you could imagine.

Blaylock: KW, earlier you said that people often mistakenly thought that Phil was a little bit strange because he had these strange ideas. One thing that's true, I think, is that I never thought he was strange because I didn't know that his ideas were any more strange than... One night he convinced Powers and I that they discovered a fossilized man in San Diego. As Powers remembers it, I think the guy had three noses. Is that right? **Powers:** Two noses and one eye.

Blaylock: Two noses and one eye. I kind of remember that he had a third eye in the middle of his forehead. It was one or the other. **Powers:** But he had many noses. **Blaylock:** And I knew that that one was a little bit off. **Powers:** Not at the time.

Blaylock: Well no, at the time I was petrified. And I don't remember why I was petrified, but I remember it was very scary. He got me worse, though, with a much more credible story one night. I was real gullible when it came to this sort of thing. He convinced me, at first happily, that nuclear weapons were passé. We might as well just toss them all in the ocean because they weren't any good to us anyway. Because the Soviets had discovered a madness ray, which was impervious to horizons, you just shoot it straight through the Earth. You point it at Los Angeles, for example, and boom! you turn it on for a millisecond or so, and the entire population of Los Angeles would be dancing in the streets, taking frogs out of their hair, all the things that suddenly mad people do. Consequently, they weren't going to bother with nuclear weapons, they would shut all that down and wait for the Soviets to walk in.

And somehow it was utterly convincing. I think that was one of the things about Phil, I never really knew whether he was convinced, or he saw that I was so incredibly gullible that he'd...

Jeter: I don't know if this is a Phil Dick story or a Tim Powers story, but there was a period when Phil Dick was living in Santa Ana, and Tim still lived in Santa Ana, and I was living in Santa Ana, and I dropped in on Tim at his apartment. And Tim was in a state. I mean, just shaking; I mean, white as a sheet of paper, you know, knocking them back... in a bad way. **Blaylock:** Weeping. **Jeter:** Weeping, weeping. "Tim, God, what happened to you?" He says, "Oh God. I was over at Phil's last night, and he told us that Russian scientists have discovered that gravity's coming to an end. And we're all going to float away!" So after I'd tried to calm him down, I went over to Phil's. "Phil, you know, you *can't* go around telling Tim things like that. The man is a wreck!" And in regards to the question as to whether Phil ever actually believed that, I have never heard anybody go "hee hee hee hee hee" for about fifteen minutes straight the way he was going.

I think at his heart of hearts, Phil had a touch of the joker in him, more than anything else; and when that joker got translated into novels, Phil did tremendous japes on the universe. I mean, *The Man Who Japed* could have been the title of the definitive Phil Dick biography.

Powers: That's a neat story. I'd like to say it didn't occur, but-- I was *fairly* alarmed by the message that gravity was about to cease, but I wasn't frantically weeping...

It was rough trying to keep track of the guy, and trying to keep up with him. It was easier for us, his male friends--and our wives and lady friends that he wasn't in pursuit of--but I think it was real rough on the young ladies he decided he was in love with. They had a terrible time.

I remember I was there when Phil proposed to his last wife. We were at Disneyland, and we had done the whole works and we were walking out, we were on Main Street and there's a place there where you can sit down and have a sandwich. We were with a number of people, but me and Phil and this young lady Tess were in the vanguard of the group, and so we sat down to wait for the rest of the crowd. I'm on one side of the table and Phil and Tess are on the other side, and we had a hamburger or something, kind of sitting there waiting for the rest of the people to catch up. And Phil looks over to Tess and says, "Tess, will you marry me?"

And I thought, "Oh Jesus. God, I don't want to be, I'll shoot my chair back, you know, I don't want to be part of this." I wanted to put up a screen across the table. So I reached over to his plate and took the pickle off the plate, and I kind of leaned back and just started munching the pickle. And Tess, having heard "Tess will you marry me?" she's like this-- you know, she's about to say, "Yeah, I'll marry ya"-- and he goes, "Just a second. Powers, what are you doing with the pickle?"

And I say, "Well, you weren't eating it." And he says, "Well, I was about to eat it." And I say, "Well, I'm sorry, man, I'll get the waitress to bring another pickle over, okay?" And he says, "I don't want it, you don't need to bother the waitress to bring another pickle. I just--" I say, "Well here, have the rest of it." "You been chewing on it, man, I don't want it after you've been chewing on it." I says, "Well, maybe she'll bring another." He says, "No, I

don't want to bother her, I don't want the chewed end of your goddamn pickle, I just want to point out to you that you shouldn't be like reaching across, picking stuff off people's plates, if you don't ask their permission first."

By this time, of course, all our friends had arrived, so we all got up and left, and poor Tessa's still here, like, ready to answer the proposal. Eventually he asked her again, I wasn't there to, I don't know, trip over the table or something, and they did get married.

Jeter: [later, in response to a question about Dick's mystical experiences] There is a theory about some of those events that Phil was suffering from a stroke at that time, either a mild stroke or a pre-stroke condition. However Phil, because of his medical condition, was very well conversant with those "symptoms"; and talking to other people medically trained, there's really no evidence that whatever happened it was related to a stroke or pre-stroke condition. Whatever it was, whatever happened, it was not a medical catastrophe happening.

Powers: And I'd say, I think it was God. I think he did have some real serious experience. I hope you don't think I'm all crazy...

[Audience member: Would someone explain the experience?]

Powers: What happened was in March of '74 he went to the dentist and had a huge shot of sodium pentathol; and after it wore off, and the pain started coming back, he got some painkillers delivered to his apartment. And the girl who delivered the package had one of the Christian fish sign things on a chain around her neck. And like the sun caught it or something, and for the next 48 hours he just would-- he got his balance shifted toward an intense hallucination of sort of seeing, in this pink light, seeing everything on the walls and chairs kind of reweaving themselves, and kind of constantly shifting. And then, what brought him down, he suddenly knew that his kid, who was less than a year old, had some specific sort of hernia. And he, I don't know, did a whole lot of business stuff and fired his agent and a bunch of things like that, and for several months had the idea that there was another person living in his head, from--goddamn, this all makes him sound so crazy--from Rome? Greece? From Apostolic times, right. And from then on, from '74 on, through his death in March of '82, he continued to have these visions, which he incorporated into every book since-- Even things like FLOW MY TEARS, which was actually written before that time, he rewrote into it some things having to do with this.

And he always would vacillate in what he thought happened. Half the time he'd say, "I got it, it was God, God talked to me"--I mean, I know that sounds nuts, I can't help it--and then he'd say, "No, it was just acid flashbacks." And then he'd say, "No, it was some kind of"--I don't know--"genetic memory triggered by the sodium pentathol." And so on. But it continued for the rest of his life.

William Blake and Allen Ginsberg, and you could probably find half a dozen more, have had real similar experiences, where they've had the impression that a version of self, from like the future, a version of themselves much older than they were at the time, came and talked to them. Ginsberg's vision of this is described in John Clellon Holmes's novel *Go*, and I forget where Blake's was described, but they're very consistent, and it might just be some kind of psychosis, some kind of specific neuron net in the brain, you know, rotting away-- But as I say, I think it's God, I think God talked to him.



NEWS

by Paul Williams

Recall Gossip & Opening Chitchat. Hello, everybody. Since last issue was a pamphlet, there hasn't been a news column since August, and the kipple is piling up. Nothing really major here—for once no new PKD books are scheduled during the next year. Some more long-range projects are coming together, however, possibly including a first book of selections from the Exegesis. We'll keep you posted. 1989 will see publication of two Philip K. Dick biographies (Larry Sutin's *Divine Invasions* from Harmony Books in July, and Gregg Rickman's *To the High Castle* from Fragments West "any time now"), so it isn't as though there won't be stuff to read and talk about.

And by year's end...well, who knows? But as of now, Carolco (producers of *Rambo*) say their film *Total Recall*, directed by Paul Verhoeven (*RoboCop*) and starring Arnold Schwarzenegger, is scheduled to start production in Mexico City in April 1989. The film is based on PKD's 1966 short story, "We Can Remember It For You Wholesale," which is so PhilDickian in concept (a travel agency that sells implanted memories to make you *think* you've been to Mars; a customer who remembers that he didn't really go, except it turns out he did...) that some essence of Dick will probably come through in the finished film no matter how they mess with it. William Gibson is quoted in *Locus* as having seen the set designs (for "the big construction camp on Mars")—he says they're "first rate." Projected budget is \$50 million. Hmmm.

More on *Total Recall*: John West sends an *LA Times* clipping that puts the budget at "\$30-plus million" but also notes that pre-production costs on the previous attempt (director Bruce Beresford left the project in late '87, two weeks before production was to start) may have run \$8 million. The *Times* says, "Verhoeven's first film since *RoboCop*, *Recall* is set on Earth and Mars 100 years from now. It will star Arnold Schwarzenegger as a man who journeys to Mars to investigate inexplicable images of the Red Planet that have troubled his consciousness. Once there, he makes a startling discovery about his past—and present." And they ask Verhoeven what attracted him to this "money-gobbling project."

V's reply: "I thought there was something metaphysical there. The theme is about reality—what's real and what isn't. ...This film isn't as 'dark' as *Blade Runner*. This has a lighter vision. Dick uses the future with a kind of playfulness. I hope we can bring that across." (See PKDS #17, page 9, for the story of PKDSer Jerome Piroué's meeting with Verhoeven in Jan. '88.)

Okay, so let me see what else I've got here. And keep those clippings and items coming, folks—we get less duplication than you'd think. You could be the one to save some vital bit of information from certain oblivion. Eventually we hope to have all known phenomena cross-referenced to the appropriate PK Dick novel, story, interview or coffee-table scribbling. Somebody's got to create some order in this sloppy universe!

Dr. Smile Shows Up. It does not particularly please me to report that the world around us is starting to look more and more like the future PKD projected in THE THREE STIGMATA OF PALMER ELDITCH. I don't think anyone was talking about the Greenhouse Effect and global warming trends when Dick wrote the novel 25 years ago (your letters correcting and castigating me will be welcomed cheerfully), and of course we now have designer drugs (nothing yet specifically geared for transubstantiation into a Barbie doll, though, as far as I know).

Anyway, Kevin Parent sends along a story from the Dec. 14, 1988 *New York Times* entitled "For Those Who Need Something to Talk to": "GREENWICH, Conn. Dec. 12— When Lyn Conlan's personal problems began interfering with her job at the U.S.T. corporate headquarters here, she met with the newest therapist in the company's employee assistance program: a computer nicknamed Dr. Bob. 'My first reaction was, "A machine? You want me to sit down with a machine?"' said Ms. Conlan, a stock option plan administrator. 'I thought it would take a lot of the personalness out of it.'"

Dr. Bob is apparently not yet available in a suitcase (unless you have a portable computer), but I'm sure that's coming. A nice Dickian touch is that U.S.T., believed to be the first private corporation to employ a computer as therapist, is actually the old U.S. Tobacco Company, a major producer of snuff. And you can almost see the warning label on the Ubik floppy disk in this paragraph: "Mr. Fuller cautioned that the computer program—the Therapeutic Learning Program (TLP)—should not be used for employees with personality disorders, serious psychological ailments like schizophrenia, or profound depression."

PKD's Dr. Smile, of course, was actually designed to help clients reduce their ability to withstand stress, so they could fail their draft physicals (I mean, *mentals*) and not get sent to a colony planet. Dr. Bob, according to the *Times*, plays the more orthodox role of "uncovering the source of stress and developing a course of action for resolving it," but I'm sure it wouldn't take a very clever hacker to redirect him. TLP, huh?...

While I'm noting depressing news about Dick's accuracy as a prophet (this stuff was supposed to be black humor; can't the universe take a joke?), the November 28, '88 issue of *The Nation* has a long story about Pentagon money subverting academic computer science research. The following sentence brought to mind that heart-warming 1953 novella "Second Variety": "Both the fear and the money emanate from the Pentagon, which is enlisting the country's brightest computer hackers to help create weapons that think, new electronic brains for killer robots that would roam battlefields distinguishing friend from foe and dispatching the latter."

And nothing can go wrong, because the robot warriors will have their own computer therapists. Oh la.

Guns n' Roses Meet Sonic Youth. PKDS members with good memories (and the patience and magnifying glass required to read these news columns) will recall that PKD's books have been acknowledged as favored reading matter and pervasive influences by such distinguished rock and rollers (an oxymoron) as Mark Smith of the Fall and a plurality of R.E.M. Now add to that list the megaplatinum (that means they sell a lot of records), not-precisely-heavy-metal L.A. band Guns n' Roses. PKDSer Gregory Lee has called my attention to a Robert Hilburn interview in the *LA Times* with GN'R lead singer Axl Rose: "If life on the street provided much of the themes for the *Appetite for Destruction* album, Rose—who writes most of the band's lyrics—said his writing style has been shaped by reading novelists like Stephen King or the late Philip K. Dick, whose *DO ANDROIDS DREAM OF ELECTRIC SHEEP* was the basis for the film *Blade Runner*."

(How about a Dick/King connection? Bhub Stewart points to this paragraph on page 574 of King's novel *The Tommyknockers*: "...No. Not sleeping. Something else. Organic cold storage. *Do*

batteries dream of electric sheep? he thought, and uttered a cracked cackle.")

Guns n' Roses was voted Best New American Band in the 1988 *Rolling Stone* Readers' Poll. (They also came in second in the "Worst Band" category.) Sonic Youth, a New York band whose interest in PKD has been documented before in these pages (they're subscribers), released a 1988 lp called *Daydream Nation*, which tied for third best album of the year in *Rolling Stone's* Critics Poll. Sonic Youth got a big (three page) write-up in the January '89 issue of *Spin* Magazine (slick "alternative" music mag published by the son of *Penthouse's* publisher), in which PKD is given a lot of attention. In fact, the article begins:

"It's 1974 and sci-fi writer Philip K. Dick's tooth hurts like a bitch. He calls the pharmacy, and when he answers the door to receive his medicine, he notices the woman's golden necklace, the familiar Christian fish sign used by the persecuted members of the early churches to secretly identify themselves to one another. He is transfixed by the necklace, and his reality implodes. He finds himself in Roman times, communicating clandestinely with the woman, in deadly fear." The paragraph goes on, describing Dick's experiences with "VALIS" in some detail, ending with the words, "In 1976, VALIS leaves him."

Paragraph two (of this *Spin* article by Erik Davis), reads:

"It's 1987, and Sonic Youth release *Sister*. The album is rife with images and ideas from Dick's later books, most of which deal with his VALIS experience. Dick is thanked on the lyric page. The insert also contains sigils used in Haitian *vodun* (voodoo) rituals, and a strange drawing Dick made, a hybrid of the Christian fish sign, the eye of Shiva, and the double-helix of DNA."

Davis goes on to make a most interesting connection/association that I at least had not thought about before:

"It's 1981, and Philip K. Dick publishes *Valis*. In it, he asserts that VALIS crossbands with humans. 'As living information, the plasmate travels up the optic nerve to the pineal body. It uses the human brain as a female host in which to replicate itself in an active form.' The divine virus is camouflaged, and doesn't obviously alter the humans that it enters into symbiosis with. VALIS replicates itself 'not through information or in information—but as information.'

"It's 1988, and one week after Blast First/Enigma/ Capitol disseminates *Daydream Nation* worldwide, a virus program infects Arpanet and Milnet, huge computer networks that service research and data management for America's military-industrial complex. The virus steals passwords and disguises itself as a legitimate user. The program spreads throughout networks around the globe, replicating its information up to hundreds of times in each machine it reaches."

Later in the article (copyright 1989 by Camouflage Publishing Inc.; oh, and thanks to Jeremy Crampton who sent me a Xerox): "The viral network of information is the social paradigm of the '80s, one that has a horrifying downside. AIDS makes viral metaphors dangerous and yet, all the more inevitable. ...AIDS and VALIS are opposing forces, one too real and one not quite real enough, under the same form."

Later Davis lets Sonic Youth talk about PKD: "'Philip K. Dick understood and wrote about the schizophrenic experience better than anybody,' Thurston [Moore, vocals, guitar] explains. 'He's definitely important on *Sister*. The lyrics to "Schizophrenia" and "Stereo Sanctity" were really taken from, like, *Radio Free Albemuth* (an earlier version of *Valis*). "I can't get laid because everybody's dead" is right out of *Valis*.'

"'He's like a modern day philosopher,' Kim [Gordon, bass] says. 'His books can be depressing, but I feel very centered whenever I read him.'

"'He was very well-read,' Thurston points out, 'but he writes in common speech, not like an academic. Dick was really compulsive. He'd change his mind all the time. I suppose he turned a lot of people off because he'd hop on any religious thing that came his way. Schizophrenia's just another word for cosmology.'"

If you want a copy of the Jan. '89 *Spin*, send \$2.50 to *Spin*,

Box 1712, Riverton, NJ 08077. Sonic Youth's albums (and GN'R's) are available at your local information supermarket.

Publishing News. Volume One of THE COLLECTED STORIES OF PHILIP K. DICK, BEYOND LIES THE WUB, has been released in hardcover by Gollancz, London at £12.95. The other four volumes will follow at the rate of one or two a year. PKD's primary paperback publisher in the U.K., Grafton Books, will eventually be reprinting the volumes in paperback, one at a time, so that we can expect that all of Dick's stories will someday be in print in paperback in the English language.

Grafton also continues its program of reprinting Dick novels in paperback; CONFESSIONS OF A CRAP ARTIST, long unavailable in English, has just been reissued by Grafton at £4.50 (Adrian Clay, who doesn't miss a thing, sent us a copy of the Bristol/Bath *Revue* of 17th Feb. '89, showing CONFESSIONS at #7 on the weekly Bristol bestseller list.) Other recent Grafton reissues: UBIK and A HANDFUL OF DARKNESS. A Paladin trade paperback (published by Grafton) of MARY AND THE GIANT is forthcoming. Also in the U.K., look for a new edition of A CRACK IN SPACE from Sphere by 1990.

Gollancz, certainly PKD's primary hardcover publisher in the U.K. (and the world, at this point), has had considerable success with NICK AND THE GLIMMUNG. A Gollancz U.K. hardcover edition of THE BROKEN BUBBLE is forthcoming.

Very good news for German-language PKD readers. Haffmans Verlag in Zurich (Switzerland) will be publishing THE COLLECTED STORIES (roughly one volume a year), with all new translations. Haffmans is an excellent literary publisher that has not previously done science fiction; the editors there are great appreciators of Dick's work and have ambitions to see not just the stories but as many of his novels as possible eventually be published in new, top-notch translations. This is particularly exciting because German science fiction publishing is known for its quick and cheap translations, and it is widely held that most of the present translations of Dick's works in German are quite unsatisfactory.

In the United States, Macmillan Books is launching a new trade paperback science fiction line of classic reissues (apparently as part of its Collier Books line); one of the first four titles (now



father & son



mother & son

scheduled for fall '89) will be PKD's *EYE IN THE SKY*. Carroll & Graf's U.S. paperback of *CLANS OF THE ALPHANE MOON* is now available; they plan to do *THE PENULTIMATE TRUTH* later this year.

A Japanese translation of my book about PKD, *Only Apparently Real*, will be published by Atelier Peyotl in 1989. The same publisher is preparing a Japanese edition of Gregg Rickman's *PKD: The Last Testament*. They also publish a magazine, *Silve'star Club*, which is planning a special PKD issue in the next year.

Also in Japan: Hayakawa Shobo has just reissued *FLOW MY TEARS*. Scheduled for publication are *NOW WAIT FOR LAST YEAR* and *THE ZAP GUN*, both from Sogensha, and a short story collection (edited in Japan) from Shinchosha. (Thanks to Zenji Ohtani for this information.) In Japan, as in England and France, most of PKD's books are or have recently been in print. The situation in the U.S., of course, is sadly different.

More news from Japan, from our faithful friend Hidetoki Akiyama: the (very professional-looking) sf fanzine *Paradox* recently published his translation of Richard Lupoff's interview with PKD (from *Science Fiction Eye*) in its 26th issue, illustrated with photos from PKDS. And *Hayakawa's SF Magazine* in its 2/89 issue has a reader survey of "All Time Best SF." PKD was ranked 4th on the best writer list (after Heinlein, Clarke, and Asimov). On the list of 50 best novels, five are by PKD: *ANDROIDS* (#9), *MARTIAN TIME-SLIP* (#26), *UBIK* (#42), *THREE STIGMATA* and *HIGH CASTLE* (tied at #44). Most of the authors are American, a few are British, Stanislaw Lem has two books on the list, the Strugatskys have one. Presumably the voting was limited to books by foreigners. Interesting to see Bruce Sterling's *Schismatrix* at #23, and two Fredric Brown novels on the list. Most of the books included are typical new and old sf "classics." *Neuromancer* is #11.

And Shigeki Kimura sends along a Japanese girls comic entitled, "Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheets?" "Dr. Hauer succeeded in making a completely humanoid android. But he modelled it after his fiancée Menou; now she's left him, and he finds himself surrounded with many androids that look like Menou..."

Greg Lee spotted a big write-up on PKD in the "Rights"

column in *Publishers Weekly*, 1/27/89; it's the lead item, headed "Posthumous Performance" and the first paragraph reads, "Although Philip K. Dick died nearly seven years ago, his popularity continues undiminished. In fact, according to the agent for his estate, Scott Meredith, Dick's works now spin off more income annually than during many years while he was alive." This is followed by mentions of the Mabou Mines *FLOW MY TEARS* play (it says they have plans to tour it); the *VALIS* opera; *Total Recall*; *THE COLLECTED STORIES* ("plays a key role in the spread of Dick's readership"); and various international rights sales. The piece ends, "Writing about the future, Dick seems to have carved himself a niche in it." (Readers, when you see stuff like this, please don't assume I have it already; for example, the Agency didn't send me a copy of this piece, and if Greg hadn't bothered to send it I wouldn't have seen it.)

Matinez Roca in Spain is publishing *THE COLLECTED STORIES*, starting with the first volume. They're also going to bring out a translation of *PUTTERING ABOUT IN A SMALL LAND*. Denoel in France has been making its own PKD story collections, and now UGE of the Presses de la Cite' publishing group is also putting together a 25-story collection.

One of our Polish readers, Slawomir Osada (ul. Obroncow Westerplatte 7 M 30, 91-809 Lodz, Poland) would like to correspond "with fans who want to exchange sf books (cheap paperbacks by Dick, Farmer, Spinrad, Gibson, Silverberg, Moorcock and others) for Polish sf posters (underground editions too) or stamps or Polish comics or Polish editions of works by Lem or others." He sent a copy of his 1986 fanzine *XYX-5* which features translations of two Dick stories, "The War with the Fnools" and "The Father-Thing," and is hoping to publish a fanzine called *Dickland* with material from PKDS. (He'd probably have it out already if I weren't so slow answering my mail.)

Monsieur Dillinger Christophe (17, rue d'Arsonval, 62600 Berck sur mer, France) kindly offers to copy the PKDS tape for other French PKDS members who may not have a copy. He sent an excellent checklist of PKD books in French (33 on the list; it doesn't presume to be complete) which I'll be glad to copy for anyone who wants it and sends a self-addressed stamped envelope. He reports, "Dick seems to be as appreciated here as before. J'Ai Lu has begun a republishing of Dick books, with new covers, more attractive. Le Livre de Poche has started a Dick line with *THE ZAP GUN*, *DOCTOR FUTURITY*, and *THE WORLD JONES MADE*, published before by Le Masque SF and not available for a long time." He says Denoel plans to publish all of Dick's stories in eight volumes, including some never published before in France; each book begins with a non-fiction piece: "How to Build A Universe that Doesn't Fall Apart Two Days Later" in *LE CRANE* (stories from '52 and '53), and "The Android and the Human" in *LE GRAND O* (stories from '53).

More Music. All kinds of stuff here. To begin with, how about two unrelated independent labels called Ubik Records? (We are everywhere.) Greg Shaw, founder of the seminal rock 'zines *Mojo Navigator* and *Who Put the Bomp*, and co-head of the wonderfully independent and prolific Bomp Records in Southern California, recently launched Ubik Records in London. The new British company has so far reissued several volumes of the *Pebbles* collections of rare 1960s garage band tracks, but will be concentrating primarily on new music. Watch this space for further developments.

In Boston, Jim Dimino of Beyond Productions has put out at least two cassettes under the name Ubik Records: an extended single by the Demon Brothers called "Pussy, Pussy" (Dimino: "originally a joke...it even offends me sometimes but isn't that what rock is all about I mean who needs feminist friends or a career?"), and a four-song EP by Hank Crimson called "Back from Eternity." A line on the cassettes informs us "Remember UBIK records are safe if used as directed." Stuff sounds pretty good actually (EP the better of the two). For info: Ubik Records, Box 1954, Cambridge, MA 02238.

Also from the Boston area, a group called A Scanner Darkly

(mentioned before in this column) has released their *This is the Way* album—I haven't seen it, but it's enthusiastically reviewed by Tim Riley in the *Boston Phoenix* 8/19/88 ("the first gloom-rock record in memory I haven't hurled across the room... As the perfect soundtrack to this unbearable heat wave, A Scanner Darkly makes even relentless sluggishness seem worthy of celebration"). New EP rumored.

The mail brings a well-produced cassette which presumably would have unsettled Horselover Fat if he'd found it in his mailbox: *Rivers and Veins* by a group called King Felix (the fish sign is included on the title spine). I like it—I guess you could say it's in the experimental European art-rock tradition (i.e., not garage band). For info: Hagia Sophia Arts, 760 Albany Road, Shreveport, LA 71107.

Eager to feed our ever-growing list of rock trivia, Brian Trinkhaus sends along a flyer from a defunct (early '80s) Orange County, CA top 40 group called Etcetera, Etc. whose guitarist went under the name Palmer Eldritch. //Probably I've told you before of the mid-'70s Santa Cruz group—they put out a neat EP, I've got it here somewhere—called JJ-180. (Reference: NOW WAIT FOR LAST YEAR.)

Spin tells us (probably Byron Coley, though I can't tell from the clip J. Crampton sent) that a recent lp called *Route 666* by the Reverb Motherfuckers contains a song based on DR. BLOODMONEY.

Bhob Stewart sez: "I don't believe you have ever carried an item noting the influence of PKD on French guitarist/synthesizer composer Robert Pincus (Richard Pincus?). This is awesome music, and if you can tell me how to get, I would appreciate." Can anyone add info?

From Portugal, PKDS member Jose' Manuel Mota has very kindly sent to me *and* to Keith & Valerie in the UK copies of an album by the Portuguese experimental/jazz group TELECTU, called *In Memoriam P.K. Dick*. This was released in 1984 by EMI, and is apparently unavailable now even in Portugal. There are eight tracks, all named after PKD books: "Solar Lottery," "Ubik," "Dr. Bloodmoney," "VALIS," "The Simulacra," "Eye in the Sky," "Martian Time-Slip," "Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?" Jose' says the leader of the band, Jorge Lima Barreto, "has a degree in philosophy but has been for long an experimentalist musician...he has written on the subject (one of his books is called *Anar-jazz*)." I'm listening to the tape now, and am in danger of becoming quite fond of it.

It goes on. Ray Torrence provides a xerox of a circa 1984 album by Kim Wilde called *Teases & Dares* that includes a song called *Bladerunner*. And a nice note from Dorothy Anthony, who bought a copy of Stuart Hamm's lp *Radio Free Albemuth* (PKDS 18) and confirms, "It is great."

Comics. New PKDSer Malcolm Warren reports: "Members of PKDS might be interested to know that a PKD-related comic story appeared in the DC comic *Wasteland* #10, published in the summer of '88 and still available in many comic shops or from mail order companies. The story, 'Life's Illusion,' by Del Close, John Ostrander, and David Lloyd (artist), stars a portly, bearded man named Dick Phillips, who begins to doubt the reality of his apparently ordinary suburban environment. As the story progresses the reader is gradually shown more and more of the underlying truth behind the appearances of this world. It turns out what Mr. Phillips thought was reality was actually an elaborate hoax made up of androids and flimsy 'sets.'" Malcolm sent along a Xerox. It's kind of an obvious piece—already done far better by Theodore Sturgeon in "Yesterday Was Monday" back in 1941—but a nice tribute anyway.

Matt Howarth himself sends along a copy of his comic *The Savage Sword of Mike*, #1 and only, May 1988, Fandom House (PO Box 1348, Denver, CO 80201; also the source of Ferret's great *Phoenix Restaurant*). "Mike" is an obsessive comic collector; chapter two of the main story is called "Mike out of Joint," and offers more sophisticated (and silly) PKD-descended forms of

reality shifting. Pleasant weirdness.

Hotels & Nightclubs. Ah, an exciting new category of PKD collectibles. Malcolm Edwards, director of the Gollancz science fiction line, sends along a nine-page article from *New York Magazine* (10/31/88) called "Starck Reality, The Cutting-Edge Style of the Royalton Hotel," with a note: "The Royalton used to be the fleapit Gollancz editors stayed in while in NY. No longer, I suspect!"

PKDS readers may remember Philippe Starck, the French designer who names chairs after characters from *UBIK*. The thrust of this article is that he is now the leading international superstar in the world of design, and his latest creation is New York's Royalton Hotel (opposite the Algonquin, W. 44th between 5th and 6th), "A run-down, second-rate residential hotel until Steve Rubell, Ian Schrager, and their partner Philip Pilevsky bought it for \$30 million and hired Starck to direct a \$10-million renovation."

The first page of Phil Patton's article introduces the PKD angle: "He [Starck] would prefer to be riding [his Harley-Davidson]—slicing through the New York atmosphere, which sometimes seems to him a great gray-green aquarium, sometimes a set out of one of his favorite films, *Blade Runner*, based on a novel by his favorite writer, sci-fi visionary Philip K. Dick."

The article dwells on Starck's philosophy, as well as his success, his life-style, and the radical design elements of the just-reopened Royalton. "Starck claims not to be interested in finished products, in the physical realities of his creations, but in the symbolism, the dreams that lie behind them, the souls with which he has invested them. 'It is a hotel, of course, but it is an imaginary world. It is part of dreams. It is not the future or the past. When you arrive, you cannot know what time it is,' he says."

Reading the article, one can imagine Starck, like so many of us, identifying with PKD, projecting himself into Dick's novelist role, simultaneous creator and observer (and, somehow, victim) of the superreal but unfinished worlds his characters inhabit. He is engaged in creating Dickian realities, not in stories but by designing environments or elements of environments. The article's climax addresses this directly:

"The future now is no longer sleek and chromed and impossibly romantic, but something precarious."

"No wonder Starck's favorite writer is Philip K. Dick, whose tawdry, polyglot future worlds, like that in *Blade Runner*, tremble with paranoia. Starck named many of his furniture designs after characters in Dick's novel *UBIK*—people who are in suspended animation but believe they are living real and mobile lives, people who can imagine they are everywhere when, in fact, they are nowhere at all. In *UBIK*, eternity is a product that comes in a spray can. The reader never knows whether the events and phenomena of Dick's novel are 'real' or a vast and malign simulacrum in the mind of a narrator."

"Starck does the same thing to aerodynamic and streamlined cliches as Dick does to utopian sci-fi cliches: He reveals them as dreams that verge on nightmares."

We haven't been able to arrange a special PKDS rate for the Royalton, but you might want to check out the lobby next time you're in Manhattan.

And then of course you'll have to head downtown to the Club Mars. *The New York Times* tells us, "Few people who saw *Blade Runner*...can forget the director's vision of the city of the future: monstrous skyscrapers overshadowing littered, rain-soaked streets packed with people. This gritty film inspired the design of the new Club Mars in the Far West Village [13th St. & West Side Hwy]. The former meatpacking plant, now outfitted with five levels of dance floors and bars, will open New Year's Eve. Setting the tone are Chinese lanterns fitted with flashing police-car lights, walls made of rusting metal detritus and discarded televisions combined with African masks. Rudolf, the club's 42-year-old director whose credits include the Tunnel, conceived and designed Club Mars for its proprietor, Toshiaki Umeda of Tokyo. 'We are looking for states of mind that are restless,' Rudolf said."

Science-Fiction Studies. A major new collection of essays on PKD has appeared: the July 1988 issue of the scholarly journal *Science Fiction Studies* is a "Special Issue" devoted to Philip K. Dick (the magazine had another special Dick issue in March 1975, *SFS* #5).

The issue is primarily made up of papers delivered at the conference on PKD held at the Chateau de Morigny, outside Paris, June 27-29, 1986. There are several very interesting essays examining the reasons for Dick's popularity and great critical reputation in France, including one that suggests that he became a sort of after-the-fact "prophet" of the political/cultural "revolution" of May 1968: "The scent of May 1968 appeared to waft from his pages. The nostalgia born of a failed revolution, of a rendezvous with history that never took place, engendered a passion for Dick that prolonged the dream of liberty."

Contents: Carl Freedman, "PKD and Criticism"; Roger Bozetto, "Dick in France: A Love Story"; Daniel Fondaneche, "Dick, the Libertarian Prophet"; John Huntington, "PKD: Authenticity and Insincerity"; Eric S. Rabkin, "Irrational Expectations: or, How Economics and the Post-Industrial World Failed PKD"; Scott Durham, "PKD: From the Death of the Subject to a Theology of Late Capitalism"; George Slusser, "History, Historicity, Story"; John Rieder, "The Metafictional World of TMITHC: Hermeneutics, Ethics, and Political Ideology"; Emmanuel Jouanne, "How 'Dickian' Is the New French Science Fiction?"; Jean-Pierre Barricelli, "The Morigny Conference"; Gary K. Wolfe, "Not Quite Coming to Terms" (review of P. Warrick's book); Jean-Noel Dumont, "Between Faith and Melancholy: Irony and the Gnostic Meaning of Dick's 'Divine Trilogy.'"

There are a lot of stimulating new ideas about PKD's work in this set of essays; without necessarily agreeing with the authors' conclusions, one can find new insights here and new ways of talking about Dick's material that are quite exciting. (There are also a few pieces, but not many, that may seem impenetrable to the nonacademic reader.) I like Huntington's comments, for example: "In reading Dick we trap ourselves. It is because we invoke categories with weighty consequences that Dick becomes a problem for us. He is an innocent, profoundly askew from mainstream values, but wanting to succeed, wanting even to cooperate. His mechanical version of wisdom creates a picture of reality to which we have to respond and thereby pose for ourselves difficult puzzles about the nature of reality and will."

There is a lot to discuss here--Slusser's piece attempting to reclaim Dick as an essentially American writer, for example--and perhaps I can give this more space in a future issue. I'd like to share with you the lovely poem Rabkin finds hidden in the prose of *UBIK*. For now, given the contents of this issue of *PKDS*, I do need to respond to the conclusion of Rabkin's piece, which says "Frankly, I think [Dick] did go insane," and portrays him as having been driven mad after the *SCANNER* period by "a world in which the sum of individual choices killed off his individual friends, devalued his ideas, made honest emotion indistinguishable from dissimulation."

This may be poetic, but it is flatly wrong--not a matter, I say, of interpretation, but simply a reflection of a lack of biographical information on Rabkin's part (and/or a flagrant misreading of that information). Linda Levy and I, in this issue of *PKDS* and in my introduction to *THE DARK-HAIRED GIRL*, have opened the issue of the essential madness in Dick's perception of other people in his life, specifically women/love objects (a skewed and at times destructive perspective that, we both suggest, can not and should not be rationalized or made light of by the apologist in each of us). This issue having been opened, it also needs to be said very clearly (in response to Rabkin) that Tim Powers is right to say that Dick certainly was not insane in the sense implied by people confused by his metaphysical writings, and for a critic to say he was "driven mad" based on what that critic finds in the *VALIS*-related books is irresponsible and badly misleading. Those who knew him know that there was not any deterioration in Dick's mental or emotional state during the last eight years of his life. The picture in the *VALIS Opera* of a healing taking place, while romanticized, is

somewhat closer to the truth.

Science Fiction Studies #45 is available postpaid for \$5.00 U.S. or \$7.50 Canadian from Prof. R. M. Philmus, English Dept., Concordia University, 7141 Sherbrooke St. W., Montreal, Quebec, Canada H4B 1R6. Make checks out to *SFS Publications*. Recommended. (Thanks, D. R. Hiller, for calling this to our attention.)

VALIS Opera Disc Press. Bridge Records has done a great job of publicizing their CD/cassette release of Tod Machover's *VALIS Opera*, and PKD has been mentioned prominently in most of the stories. Briefly, let's see what I've got here:

The 1/89 issue of *Interview* has a full page story, titled "Music from Big Pink." "How many worlds do we exist in simultaneously?" is the question at the core of an astonishing new science-fiction opera...

7 Days magazine refers to the opera as being based on "one of the more remarkable works of America's arguably best science-fiction writer."

Alan Rich in the *Los Angeles Herald Examiner* is enthusiastic about the opera and the book ("glorious, exuberant fantasy--an inward drama of alternative existence"). He points out that "where the classic composer's task was to simplify a literary source in order to insert his music, Machover has worked to compound the complexities of the original." Unfortunately he identifies PKD as "that troubled California genius who drugged himself to death in 1982." (PKD, as most of you know, actually died of complications resulting from a stroke; he was not a heavy user of drugs during the last ten years of his life.)

The *Boston Globe* ran a long story and review by Richard Dyer on 10/16/88, calling the recording superb, and concluding "No event of the spring seems more promising than the opportunity to hear 'Valis' live." This is a reference to a planned concert performance in the Boston area; a "fully-staged" version is unlikely before 1990. Dyer says of Dick, "In 1974, he had a mystical experience in which a pink light collapsed time and brought him into contact with past and future in a series of bewildering images that he devoted the rest of his life to trying to understand, explain and communicate to others."

Bill Vernon noticed a piece on hyperinstruments, mentioning the opera and PKD, in *MacUser*, a magazine for owners of Macintosh computers. Stewart Brand's recent book on MIT's Media Lab mentions the opera as a project that originated there. *Newsday* describes PKD's experience in somewhat lurid terms, but says "there's no denying the mystical power and apocalyptic vision" of Machover's opera.

And there's lots more. Bridge Records reports articles appearing in or planned for *Omni*, *Byte*, *Ear Magazine*, *The New Scientist*, *Billboard*, and magazines in Italy and Japan. The opera has been aired on CBC in Canada, major PBS and Pacifica stations in the U.S., and on Radio France Culture. Various radio stations in the U.S. and Italy are playing the "rock song" from *VALIS*; a 25-minute excerpt from the opera was performed at the Contemporary Music Festival at Tanglewood (Mass.). *Jules Verne Magazine* in Stockholm calls it "a beautiful and ravishing work," and London's *Hi Fi News* says "VALIS will knock you out if you've ever enjoyed any form of space-rock, be it Hawkwind, Germanic synth material, much heavy metal or even early Bowie." Phil, who was fervently ecumenical in his musical tastes, would appreciate the musical boundaries that are being broken down here.

Thanks to Bridge Records, Marc Landau, John Gaither, and others who sent clippings. (Matt Hargreaves also points out, for collectors, that there's a CD promo disc featuring four tracks--ten minutes--from the opera.)

Work proceeds towards possible productions of the opera in New York, Boston, and Tokyo, perhaps in 1990.

New Pathways Plug. Well, okay. Issue #12 (10/88) of *NP* includes "Dick on Dick"--the first publication of three Philip K. Dick letters from 1976, one about his marketing ideas for *A SCANNER DARKLY*, one a humorous account of how he

dislocated his shoulder in '72 (a Linda story), and one a newsy letter ("only pulp adventures happen to me") to a friend in Sweden. Also in this issue is "Bloated Capitalist Pig," the first published story (a very funny, somewhat chilling dig at the rock and roll industry) by PKDS' editor Andy Watson. Plus stuff by Matt Howarth, Brian Aldiss, John Shirley, Marc Laidlaw, and Misha.

Then there's #13 (Winter 88/89), which includes among its strangenesses a short story ("Ocean of Glass and Fire" by Rob Hollis Miller) about deprogramming a member of the PKDS cult. "The Dickheads unlike most cults do not restrict the movements of their members, and, in fact, there are those who claim the Dickheads are not a cult at all since they have no apparent tight, hierarchical organization. This appearance is deceptive. The Serpent is subtle." Well, jeez. (\$3.50 for either issue or \$10 for 4 from MGA Services, P.O. Box 863994, Plano, TX 75086.)

Bottom of the Barrel Stuff. The 1988 *Locus* poll (based on over 1000 replies, which is pretty good) again had a Best All-Time Author category; PKD moved up to #5 (after Heinlein, Asimov, Clarke, and Tolkien). Only Heinlein and Tolkien received more first-place votes.

THE COLLECTED STORIES came in third in the Best Collection (of '87) category of the poll, and editor Charles Brown commented, "The complete collection of Philip K. Dick stories was surely the most outstanding accomplishment by a small press publisher in decades." Patricia Warrick's book about PKD, *Mind in Motion*, placed 9th in the Best Nonfiction category.

The 1989 Philip K. Dick Award nominees are: *Orphan of Creation* by Roger MacBride Allen, *Neon Lotus* by Marc Laidlaw, *400 Billion Stars* by Paul J. McAuley, *Becoming Alien* by Rebecca Brown Ore, *Wetware* by Rudy Rucker, and *Rendezvous* by D. Alexander Smith. The winner will be announced at Norwescon in late March.

Paperback Parade #11 ("the magazine for paperback readers and collectors"), 2/89, contains an informative article by Marty Halpern on "Philip K. Dick and the PKD Memorial Award." Included are some nice photos of early PKD paperbacks, a list of award winners, and a brief interview with the first winner, Rudy Rucker. Unfortunately there are an unusual number of typos in the piece, as Marty pointed out in a letter to me, including his name and PKDS' address. Ah well. This imperfect but well-intended magazine is available for \$4. from Gryphon Publications, Box 209, Brooklyn, NY 11228.

Michael Bishop's *Philip K. Dick Is Dead, Alas* is one of seven books short-listed for the Arthur C. Clarke Award for best sf novel of 1988 published in Britain.

Russell Galen, PKD's (and his estate's) literary agent, was recently named a vice president of the Scott Meredith Literary Agency.

Very impressive: the Steampunk issue of *Nova Express*, another Texas fanzine—this is #6, winter 88, and it includes excellent (separate) interviews with K. W. Jeter and James Blaylock, plus an appreciation of Blaylock by Lewis Shiner and good bibliographies of Jeter, Powers, and Blaylock. Jeter mentions that all three of 'em were students at Cal State Fullerton at the same time, and took classes from a (real good) writing instructor named John Schwartz. KW calls Bruce McAllister "the most underrated writer in the science fiction field." Jim tells how he writes his books. Wonderful. (\$3.00, or \$8. for 4, from *Nova Express*, 1115 Drava Ln, Houston, TX 77090.)

Roy Squires, a friend of Phil Dick's and a much-loved book collector and publisher of limited editions, died in September, 1988, at the age of 68. In an appreciation written for *Locus*, Tim Powers says, "Philip K. Dick once said that visiting Roy Squires was the only prospect that could get him to drive to Los Angeles."

The New York Review of Science Fiction is an intelligent, informal, monthly magazine of reviews and articles, now in its fifth issue and a lot of fun. The first issue included a long essay by Samuel R. Delany called "Flow My Tears... Theater and Science Fiction," which discusses the Mabou Mines production in considerable detail to illustrate the contradictions inherent in

creating a science fiction play. It's a subtle, clear exposition which also says a lot about the implicit relationship between the written medium and its readers (and Delany's ideas interact interestingly with several of the issues raised in the Dick issue of *SF Studies*). Delany is weakest when he tries to discuss the thematic content of the novel directly—I don't think he has a solid sense of what the novel is really about for most of its readers (it's emphatically not about solipsism)—but his piece is excellent, and particularly worth our attention because PKD's works evidently hold a strong, continuing attraction for playwrights and experimental theater people. Any effort to really translate PKD to the stage (Delany is fairly convincing in his analysis of the ways in which the Mabou Mines production fails; I haven't seen it myself) would have a much better chance of being artistically successful if the principals read and truly attempt to assimilate what Delany is saying here. The essay also could be taken as having some bearing on what makes PKD a "science fiction" writer even when he is writing purely mainstream fiction. (NYRSF #1, \$2.50 or \$24. for 12, from Dragon Press, Box 78, Pleasantville, NY 10570.)

Good review of NICK AND THE GLIMMUNG in *Locus* by Tom Whitmore ("a distillation of themes that Dick worked out in his adult novels...the illustrations are a perfect complement: humorous, sketchy, and improbable, but with great charm"). *The New York Times Book Review*, on the other hand, didn't think much of THE BROKEN BUBBLE ("without the humor or wisdom of Dick's science fiction, this portrait of 1950's anomie is dominated by its bleak naturalism and soap-operatic earnestness") (sez George Blooston). Interesting profile of PKD and a (typical?) PKDSer in the 9/88 Richmond, VA free paper *Throttle*, written by A. T. Maygarden.

Much chatter about PKD on UseNet (online computer fandom), according to Linda Levy.

As mentioned before, the first volume of Gregg Rickman's biography of PKD is at the printer; we'll tell you when we actually see a copy. Price will be \$19.95 + \$2. shipping, paperback, 485 pp, we recommend it but suggest you order from Ziesing or DreamHaven or Drumm or your local dealer, when the time comes. If you have a problem with Gregg's publisher, he suggests you write to the new person there and she should be able to straighten things out: Jennifer Grassberge, Fragments West, 2705 East 7th St., Long Beach, CA 90804.

Meckler Corporation still hasn't sent us a review copy of their "Revised Edition" of Daniel Levack's indispensable *PKD: A Philip K. Dick Bibliography*. Reliable sources say it is *not* revised, however. At \$45. plus shipping, you'd do better to get a fellow PKDSer to Xerox their copy of the 1981 original for you, have it elegantly hand-bound, and still save money. A great book, though; I'm glad it's back in print.

—Paul Williams



father & daughter (Isa, 1977?)

(continued from page 11)

Gave her her first job and she worked for me for two years.)

Through Phil Dickian twists I evolved into a Swedenborgian minister and realize that Phil Dick may save us all yet.

I would like to buy a copy of *The Dream Connection* by Scott Apel but cannot locate it anywhere. [Send \$20 (includes postage) to Permanent Press, Box 700305, San Jose, CA 95170.] Also, please run this in your classified: WANTED: one copy of 90-minute cassette of Philip K. Dick. Please call Bob Hare (818) 999-3738.

Marc Landau (Brighton, Massachusetts):

I was rereading "What the Dead Men Say" in *THE PRESERVING MACHINE* and I came across an interesting passage. It appears at the beginning of chapter IV (p. 278 in the Ace edition and p. 362 in the Grafton edition).

"Do you think Gam has a chance this time?" Kathy asked.

"No, not really. But miracles in politics do happen;

look at Richard Nixon's incredible comeback in 1968."

The reason this passage is unusual is that the book credits the story as having been published in June, 1964, four years before the 1968 election which saw Richard Nixon win in a landslide.

Is this an amazing example of political prognostication or did Dick inset this passage after its appearance in *Worlds of Tomorrow* in 1964 and before publication of *THE PRESERVING MACHINE* in 1969. Anyone know the answer?

[Yes. The comment was included in the original magazine story (written in early '63). Dick's prediction is mentioned by Steven Godersky in the Levack bibliography.-- PW]

Frank R.F. De Cuyper (Gent, Belgium):

I have noticed that most bibliographies mention only two university dissertations on PKD, one by Claudia Krenz Bush and one by Kim Stanley Robinson, so I thought I should let you know about five other dissertations I know of, including my own. I have a copy of each of these dissertations.

Two of them are French:

Bernard d'Ivernois: *Approche psychopathologique de l'oeuvre de Philip K. Dick*. University of Montpellier, 1975, 75 pp.

Marcel Thauon: *Essai psychoanalytique sur la creation litteraire. Processus et fonction de l'ecriture chez un auteur de science-fiction, Philip K. Dick*. University of Aix-en-Provence, 1981, 284 + xxxi pp.

The three other ones are Belgian, one of them written in English, two in Dutch:

Guido Van Turnhout: *De subjectieve vizie in de romans van Philip K. Dick*. University of Antwerp, 1978, 45 pp.

Frank R.F. De Cuyper: *Out of Joint: het maatschappij-beeld in de dystopische romans van Philip K. Dick*. Een literair-sociologisch onderzoek van science fiction-literatuur. University of Gent, 1981, 153 pp.

Gilbert De Meester: *The Universe of Philip K. Dick--Systemic Analysis*. University of Antwerp, 1982, 48 pp.

My own dissertation mainly concerns the dystopian elements in Dick's work; it discusses the social, economic, political and military aspects of Dick's societies, and how these aspects connect with the ontological issues to be found in Dick's world. This approach makes it somewhat different from most studies of Dick's work.

David Kleist (Bethlehem, Pennsylvania):

Philip K. Dick was a coffee lover. So am I. And tho' I live in what Rand McNally's *Places-Rated Almanac* calls the 190th best metro area in America to live, there isn't any easy place at hand to get high-quality and affordable coffee.

There may be other PKDS members in similar situations, so here's the plug: Porto Rico Importing Co., 201 Bleecker St., New York, NY 10012. They sell about 60 kinds of gourmet coffee, and their house blend (which is terrific) is only \$3.99/lb. If you're not in a major metro area, they may be an answer to the question (Phil

no longer being with us), "Shit--now where am I going to get a good cup of coffee?"

Write and ask for their free catalog. Good for high-quality teas, too. [All knowledge is contained in the Newsletter.]

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vital information

This is the 20th issue of the Philip K. Dick Society Newsletter, dated April 1989.

Our address is: PKDS, Box 611, Glen Ellen, CA 95442 USA.

This newsletter is available only to members of the Philip K. Dick Society. Membership is \$6.00 per year, anywhere in the world. Overseas members who wish airmail subscriptions instead of surface mail pay \$10.00 per year. A year is defined as four issues of the newsletter, however long we take to put 'em out. Back issues are available in sets: 1-4, 5-8, 11-14, 15-18. Each set is \$10., postpaid. #9/10, the 90-minute cassette of Philip K. Dick, is sold out. #19 & 20 are \$2.50 each. Make checks payable to PKDS. Overseas send cash, or checks payable through a U.S. bank. All sums in U.S. dollars only, please, unless you are doing business with one of our local representatives.

U.K. members: send £3.5 or (£6 for airmail) to Valerie Buckle & Keith Bowden, 47 Park Avenue, Barking, Essex, IG11 8QU, England. Make all cheques payable to "Ms. V. Buckle re PK Dick." // In Australia, contact Gabriel McCann, 39 Cox Ave., Bondi Beach, Sydney 2026, NSW. Make cheques payable to him.

Editor: Paul Williams. Managing Editor: Andy Watson. Editorial assistants: Robert Lichtman, J.B. Reynolds, Donna Nassar, and Jonathan Lethem. Thanks also to Mark Hoffmeister, Karen Howell, John Fairchild, Suzy Shaw, and Greg Shaw, who helped with last issue's mailing. Robert L. gets credit for our new typeset look. This is probably the only 20-page issue of the Newsletter there'll ever be, so enjoy it. PKDS logo by Jay Kinney. Rubber stamp art by and from the collection of Donna Nassar. Headings: pp 1, 2, 12 by AW, 14 by DN. Photos this issue from PKD's files, photographers unknown except for p. 19 which is by K. W. Jeter. Entire contents of this newsletter are copyright © 1989 by the estate of Philip K. Dick. Copyrights are hereby assigned to individual contributors. Letters to the editor and items for the news column are always welcome; forgive us for not being able to write back most of the time.

Classified Ads.

WANTED: Desperate for Levack's PKD Bibliography in any readable condition, even Xeroxed. Will pay up to \$50 plus postage. H. Collon, 28, Rue d'Hauteville, 75010 Paris, France.

NEW PATHWAYS. The SF magazine for the rest of us. Aldiss, Bishop, Dick, Shirley, Rucker, Jeter, Howarth, Misha. \$10/4 issues (\$3.50 for sample). Checks payable to: MGA Services, PO Box 863994, Plano, TX 75086.

"I think," Morgo said, "that my ability to replace sections of living organisms with my own ontological substance will frighten them the most."