



Anne McCaffrey

Anne McCaffrey, pictured here with her horse, Mr Ed, is probably the best known of the contributors to this month's Main Selection *Futurelove*. She is a winner of both the Hugo and Nebula Awards and is best known for her story *The Ship Who Sang* and the Dragon series set on the planet Pern. *The White Dragon*, the third in the series and a best-seller in the United States, will be published in the UK soon. Asked for biographical details and information about her story *The Greatest Love*, Ms McCaffrey responded:

By the time the children of her marriage were securely at school daytimes, she had already achieved enough success with short stories to devote full time to writing. Ms McCaffrey lives at Dragonhold, in the hills of Wicklow County, Ireland, with her grey hunter, Mr Ed, four cats, two dogs, and two pretty mares to bear Mr Ed company. Of herself, Ms McCaffrey says, 'I have green eyes, silver hair, and freckles: the rest changes without notice.'

I wrote the first draft of *The Greatest Love* back in 1956: one of my many attempts to write 'science-fictional'. However, the story was, in those days, not far-out enough for current science fiction, and too far

out for modern women's literature. It was with some amusement then, that I saw an article in the *Ladies' Home Journal* (an American slick magazine) on the attempts of an English physician to place a fertilized ova from one sister, who continually aborted at three months, into her sister's womb for gestation. Highly pleased with my own foresight, I sent the manuscript to LHM, thinking that they might like a fictionalised version of what was now factual, and speedily got the manuscript back with the printed slip stating that this manuscript was unsuitable for publication in their magazine!

Undaunted, I put the story aside until Roger Elwood approached me for a story about love for a volume Gordon Dickson finally edited. My estimable agent, Virginia Kidd, suggested I redraft and update *The Greatest Love*, a story which she felt had possibilities, especially now in the 70s. I did so, considerably strengthening and correcting the data in the story. (Originally my obstetrician, Bert Brooks, helped me work out the 'method' by which exogenesis could be accomplished but Dr Jack Cohen of Birmingham University improved my understanding of the difficulties involved and one huge boo-boo was amended.) (No, I won't tell you which fact I had wrong. But I'll tell you if you're right!)

I do object to the recent headline 'test-tube baby' because it is wrong. One sees a poor unborn child crammed into a hideous long test tube (or even a fat squatty one) and it's wrong. The method used was 'exogenesis' — extra-uterine conception.

What I do wonder about is — do doctors involved read science fiction? Or did they, with compassion for the woman who cannot conceive, or bear a child of her own womb, arrive independently at a similar solution?

So, dear readers, now that you know the history of my story, do not say scornfully — 'Why, that's already been done!' Exogenesis has been achieved, but I wrote my yarn about it 22 years before it actually happened!*

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* Anne wrote her story 22 years ago — and it's still a very good story!

NEWS BULLETIN

● **FILMS AND TV: BATTLESTAR GALACTICA**; the first three hours were recently shown on US television to a mixed reception. Some critics have called it a *Wagon Train* of the stars with characters who are almost clones of those in *Star Wars*. It remains to be seen whether such reactions will re-open old wounds. Some months ago 20th Century Fox, who own the copyright to *Star Wars*, announced that they were suing Universal (MCA) because *Galactica* was so like *Star Wars* that it infringed the copyright.

STAR WARS: And whilst on the subject, the sequel to *Star Wars* — and the makers do not call it *Star Wars 2*, the working title is *The Empire Strikes Back* — is in pre-production and will soon go into production at Elstree. The budget is \$10 million, the script by the late Leigh Brackett, and release is scheduled for June 1980.

STAR TREK — THE MOTION PICTURE: Shooting started some time ago. The cast remains the same as the TV series. They have new uniforms though — to hide the changes of the passing years since the series folded? The plot seems simple enough: the dastardly Klingons have inadvertently released an alien force which is heading for Earth. Only the refurbished *Enterprise* stands between us and total destruction. Can it save the world?

Lester Goldsmith, a former story-editor at Paramount, has founded Lime-light Films. He hopes to produce twelve high calibre SF films: the first — Asimov's *The Bicentennial Man* (if you haven't read it, it's contained in *Nebula Winners Twelve*, SFBC £3.75 REF 8646) — and the second — Harry Harrison's *The Stainless Steel Rat* (the latest Rat adventure, *The Stainless Steel Rat Wants You*, is available from the SFBC at £1.70 REF 5149).

And ATV are shooting a new TV series at Elstree called *Sapphire and Steel*. It stars Joanna Lumley and David McCallum and could be screened in early 1979.

● **MAGAZINES: PULSAR**: A couple of months ago I mentioned rumours that Playboy was planning to launch an *Omni*-like SF magazine called *Pulsar*. Inquiries have revealed this to be untrue — although Playboy did comment that *Pulsar* sounded like a good name for a magazine. **DESTINIES**: Ace Books, good people that they are, have sent me an issue of their 'paperback magazine of science fiction and speculative fact' called *Destinies*. I haven't had much time to look beyond Spider Robinson's book reviews — which are alone worth the \$1.95 cover price — but it looks good with stories by Roger Zelazny, Poul Anderson, Clifford Simak, Spider Robinson and Gregory Benford, and a couple of non-fiction pieces by Anderson and Jerry Pournelle. Don't know whether *Destinies* will be widely available in the UK. Inquiries in progress.

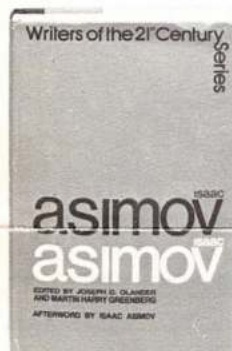
● **CONVENTION UPDATES**
YORCON. 30th British Easter SF Convention. GOH Richard Cowper. Dragonara Hotel, Leeds, April 13-16. Write: c/o Alan Dorey, 20 Hermitage Woods Crescent, St Johns, Woking, Surrey GO2 1UE
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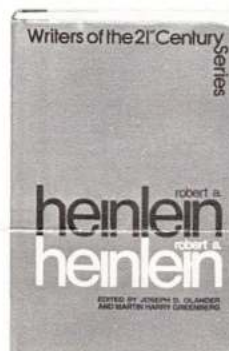
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