

vendetta against Red, a series of attempts to kill him when he stops overnight along the road. This is not one of Zelazny's best books; his fans will probably want to wait for the inexpensive paperback. Nevertheless, Zelazny is one of the best SF writers going and *Roadmarks* is definitely worth the read.

Neal Wilgus

Pitching Words

Every morning for five years Michigan State University American Thought and Language professor, Michael Steinberg, arose before dawn to participate in an informal baseball hitting clinic conducted by MSU exercise physiology Ph.D. and Minnesota Twins pitcher, Mike Marshall. At first, Steinberg, who is an ardent softball player, balked at the way his friend put his "pupils" through a variety of simultaneous drills. There didn't seem to be enough time to master one skill before another came spinning at him. Soon, however, Steinberg began to marvel at how productive his lessons were and began to look for ways to apply Marshall's approach to a writing program he and MSU English professor, Clinton Burhans, were formulating.

Burhans, an expert in language acquisition and language processing, had set up a successful six-year language arts program in two Michigan school districts which replaces the traditional grammar-oriented writing curriculum (the one some of us learned to write in spite of) with a cognitive, meaning-centered approach. They combined Burhans's holistic strategy with Steinberg's revision and rewriting

methods into a real-world worktext which stresses simultaneous pre-writing, drafting, and rewriting; and, about the time Marshall was collecting his league-leading thirty-second save last fall, the pair was putting the final touches on *The Writer's Way* (Spring Press, \$15.95), the first writing book ever dedicated to a Cy Young Award-winner.

Students who follow this worktext (so called because students read and summarize spirited explanations and complete exercises right in the book's perforated pages) are asked to adhere to a vigorous schedule of simultaneous writing tasks designed to give conscious control over all three integrated steps of the writing process. Any given week will find the student immersed in several stages: drafting a fable or application letter; polishing off some existential sentences or haiku; peer-editing, revising, and rewriting exercises encompassing techniques from sentence structure to similes; and, at the same time, keeping a writer's journal.

Writing instructors will be happy to find an accompanying teacher's guide outlining a suggested grading system that encourages students to write frequently, while freeing the instructor from counter-productive "theme correcting." With all that going for it, *The Writer's Way* looks like this year's MVP.

Timothy Yost

A Female James Bond

Americans love a good conspiracy. We all want to know if the CIA did plan the assassination of JFK and why the government is hiding the truth about flying saucers. In *Speed of Light* (Simon & Schuster, \$9.95)

Gwyneth Cravens describes a grand conspiracy that links together Adolf Hitler, EST, a Governor Brown clone, and some sorcerers who are vintage Carlos Castaneda, and also, amazingly enough, manages to make sense out of two recent events: the Russian invasion of Afghanistan and the terrorist attack in Mecca.

Ella Speed is an unlikely heroine who quits her job because she yearns for something better. Her travels lead her to a cave deep below Mexico, the holy city of Mecca, and finally to Afghanistan. She even learns to travel outside her body.

Cravens is able to make us believe in the power of sorcerers. She even reveals testimony from the Nuremberg trials to show that Hitler believed that whoever ruled Central Asia would rule the world. Deep in the hills of Afghanistan is a secret cult that nourishes itself on human hysteria and death.

Ella Speed is a tough woman, a survivor who adapts whether the role is an Anthropology graduate student, a topless bar maid, a hardboiled journalist, or a secret agent. After two decades of James Bond books and movies, Speed is a welcome relief. Cravens is able to write a female version of *From Russia with Love* and make us ask for more.

Stanley Schatt

Vidiot

Station Identification: Confessions of a Video Kid is a 215-page post-mortem of one man's love affair with the tube. Mark Bowie takes us on an extended walking tour of his life beginning with early childhood, passing through an extended adolescence and coming of age while

watching Edward G. Robinson on a hotel room TV screen with a woman Bowie picked up in a local singles bar. Along the way Bowie plays his tour guide role to the hilt, rather like a native hyping local history for the unenlightened visitor.

As might be imagined, the scenery leaves a good deal to be desired. After all, most people born in the United States within the last thirty years have spent a great deal of time watching TV. Why should they fork over \$9.95 to read about someone else's video addiction?

The author seems to recognize this contradiction and he takes steps to insure the reader's interest. Before we are halfway through the first chapter Bowie is playing doctor with the little girl next door and explaining the significance of *Howdy Doody* in early sexual development. This pattern of titillation is repeated throughout the book. Whenever the going gets a little too thick, usually after some profound sociological point has been attempted, Bowie throws in something lurid to keep our attention.

Bowie generalizes about an entire generation from his own peculiar experience. Thus, we are informed that the turbulent political and social outcry of the 1960's was nothing more than a kiddie show rerun. The emotion and tragedy of that decade are degraded to the level of a high school wild oats episode.

It is as if everything is to be viewed as the latest TV series while social and political issues are merely occasional variations in programming. This superficiality pervades the entire book. *Station Identification* tries to make us laugh at this sort of spiritual lobotomy, but it is a little too sad, too pathetic and too true.

W.B. Reeves

There's Something New In The Air....

AWK

Soaring High into The 80's
on Inspired Composition
and Unique Instrumentation



Produced by Daniel Bortz,
Paul Edwards and Marty Lewis

Direction: Gary Borman Management

ON EMI-AMERICA RECORDS

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AMERICA