

Kaleidoscope

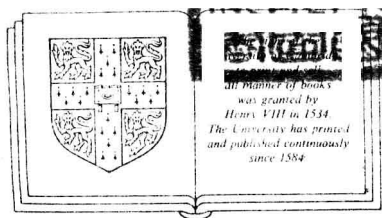
An anthology of English varieties for upper-
intermediate and more advanced students

Michael Swan

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Introduction

Written English is not just literature, newspaper reports and magazine articles. During a typical day our eyes take in an enormous variety of written messages: business letters, bills, advertisements, notices, personal letters, train timetables, parking tickets, bank statements, political slogans, book-jackets, road-signs, shopping lists, graffiti, the labels on beer bottles . . . the list is endless.

One purpose of this book is simply to provide examples of this variety. The student of English abroad can find plenty of 'good writing' in his textbooks, but it is not always so easy for him to get the taste of practical everyday communication in English. It is certainly a fine thing to study Hemingway's prose style or Galbraith's views on economics, but it can also be interesting to see how a London estate agent advertises a house for sale, or what kinds of thing English children find in their comics. The texts reproduced here have therefore been chosen deliberately in order to include as many kinds of communication as possible. They differ widely in subject-matter, purpose, style and visual presentation. Not all of them are in 'standard' English, nor are they all of British or American origin. Although the emphasis is on written communication, there are also a number of transcriptions of spoken language.

A second purpose – equally important – is to entertain, amuse, inform, surprise, move and occasionally shock the reader. As far as possible, I have chosen texts not only because they illustrate certain types of communication, but also because they have some interest in themselves, either alone or in combination with the texts that come before and after them. Each extract is linked with the next by some kind of association (for instance, similarity of subject-matter or style). The book has the same loose organization as a 'train of thought', and wanders, not very systematically, over perhaps forty or fifty topics. There is no need to start at the beginning or read from left to right: the book is meant to be picked up, dipped into, put down, and (I hope) picked up again later. Brief vocabulary explanations are provided as a quick aid to reading; they should not of course be regarded as complete explanations of the meaning or use of the words explained.

I have tried to provide a reasonably balanced selection of subjects and attitudes, so that the book should contain something for everybody. Obviously, any collection of this kind is personal, and must to some extent

reflect the editor's tastes, interests, and political and social concerns. No one person can be expected to share all my likes, dislikes and enthusiasms: I hope at least that most readers will enjoy most of the texts.

A number of people have helped me with suggestions, advice and criticism: I should like to thank all of them, and particularly H. A. Swan, Claire Boasson, Stuart Hagger and my wife.

Note for teachers

A collection of short authentic texts like this is obviously particularly suitable for extensive reading practice outside the classroom. However, it can also be used as a basis for various kinds of classwork. Examples of possible activities are:

Class discussion: a text or group of texts can be used as a jumping-off point for discussion of the writer's ideas and attitudes.

Lecturettes: individual students can each choose a text and tell the rest of the class about their reactions to it.

Vocabulary study: students can work intensively on the words and expressions contained in a text, distinguishing (with the teacher's guidance) between items that are useful for recognition only and items that can become part of their active vocabulary.

Guided composition: students can practise writing in the same style as the text, or using the vocabulary of the text to express their own ideas on the subject.

Stylistic analysis: a class can discuss the style of a particular passage, or compare the styles of different texts on the same subject.

Background study: texts can provide a useful basis for discussion of British and American cultural attitudes, institutions, etc.

To my mother,
who likes anthologies.

Kaleidoscope

, the 11th le.

(r)/ *n* Δ (colloq) (offe.

person.

(r)/ *n* Emperor (esp of Germany

.δ).

rono /'kækr'məʊnəʊ/ *n* Japanese painting

a hanging scroll of silk or paper.

ale, kail /keil/ *n* kind of curly-leaved cabbage.

ka-leido-scope /kə'laidəskəʊp/ *n* [C] **1** tube containing mirrors and small, loose pieces of coloured glass. When the tube is turned, constantly changing patterns are seen through the eye-piece. **2** (fig) frequently changing pattern of bright scenes: *Sunlight and shadow made the landscape a ~ of colour.* **ka-leido-scopic** /kə'laidə'skɒpɪk/ *adj* quickly changing.

kal-ends /'kælendz/ *n pl* \Rightarrow calends.

kam-pong /'kæmpɒŋ/ *n* (in Malaysia) e- space; village.

kan-ga-roo /'kæŋgə'ru/ *n* Australi

that jumps along on its strong

female has a pouch in which it

\Rightarrow the illus at large. \sim **cr**

authority by workers

someone whom th

against their inter

kao-lin /'keɪə'

making por

ka-pok

(fron

c'

ka,

cove.

covere

ke-bab /k.

small pieces

skewers.

ked-gere

eggs

ker

(Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English)

Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds



Picture yourself in a boat on a river with tangerine trees
And marmalade skies.

Somebody calls you, you answer quite slowly, a girl with
kaleidoscope eyes.

Cellophane flowers of yellow and green, towering over your head.
Look for the girl with the sun in her eyes and she's gone.

Lucy in the sky with diamonds. Ah, ah.

Follow her down to a bridge by a fountain where rocking horse
people eat marshmallow pies.

Everyone smiles as you drift past the flowers that grow so incredibly high.

Newspaper taxis appear on the shore, waiting to take you away.

Climb in the back with your head in the clouds, and you're gone.

Lucy in the sky with diamonds. Ah, ah.

Picture yourself on a train in a station, with plasticine porters with looking glass ties.

Suddenly someone is there at the turnstile, the girl with kaleidoscope eyes.

Lucy in the sky with diamonds. Ah, ah.

Lennon & McCartney

Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds: the initial letters of the title are supposed to be a reference to the hallucinogenic drug LSD

tangerine: fruit like a small orange

cellophane: transparent material used for wrapping

rocking horse: toy wooden horse that rocks

marshmallow: kind of soft sweet

plasticine: soft material used by children for making models

looking glass: mirror

turnstile: turning gate made of metal bars

Paul McCartney and Wings

Wembley

Clive Bennett

Paul McCartney is surely the most gifted songwriter of the post-war period. No one else captures so expressively the vulnerability of new love or so poignantly the loneliness in our society. He is no less successful using pulsating rock rhythms to express happiness. When his talent is coupled to a real performing skill the result is, and on Tuesday was, unstoppable.

McCartney and his band Wings have been playing their 2½-hour set more or less constantly round the world for the past 13 months. By now they have polished their lighting and stage effects to a rare pitch of excellence and their simple performance style follows suit.

Despite its familiarity, they showed no signs of boredom with their set. In any case, it was too inventive and the audience response too positive for there to be much danger of that. Most of the songs came

from McCartney's post-Beatles days, though there was a sprinkling of the older numbers. Significantly, two he performed in his solo spot, "Blackbird" and especially "Yesterday", came from that period and received the loudest applause, and the first piece really to get the audience going was another, "Lady Madonna".

The set was in two parts. The first opened with McCartney appearing Apollo-like from a cloud of dry ice, descending bubbles and simple but effective lighting. It reached a climax 10 songs later with "Live and Let Die", the stage shrouded in a mass of perfectly timed smoke bombs seared by a laser beam. After the applause the band took up their acoustic instruments for a selection of simpler songs before a return to electrical instruments and a scintillating version of "You Gave Me the Answer".

A word of praise for the members of the band. All of them took their solo spots as expected, but the extra highlight was in the backing brass quartet and especially Tony Dorsey, the trombonist.

(The Times)

vulnerability: a vulnerable person is easily hurt

poignantly: movingly

coupled to: joined to

pitch: level

follows suit: is the same

a sprinkling: a few

a cloud of dry ice: steam from frozen carbon dioxide

shrouded: covered

seared by a laser beam: with a very intense beam of light (produced by a special physical process) burning through the smoke

acoustic instruments: instruments played without electronic amplifiers

scintillating: sparkling, brilliant

The Sex Pistols

[The Sex Pistols are a punk rock group.]

So the Stones now are the elite of the rock 'n' roll establishment and the Sex Pistols are the new people knocking at the door. They're knocking the Stones, basically. The Stones are the Establishment to them. They're starting from there, or that sort of premise.

A lot of kids of 16 to 18, the Stones and groups of that era don't mean a thing to them. They're too old for a start. They're all over 30, and the kids want some young people they can identify with and maybe don't play so good. (Laughs). I mean, a lot of people criticise the Sex Pistols for not playing that good.

Well, for a start they've only been playing for about eight months anyway, so that's probably a fair criticism tech-

nically, but I think a lot of kids watch them and think "yeah, I could get up there and do that. Let's form a group." Again, that hasn't happened for a long time because groups are too good.

The musicianship is so high that for kids of 16 there was no way they could think, "I can get up there and do that." They'd have to play for ten years, or maybe never do it. But the Sex Pistols are very instant, where anybody could form and have a go.

It may not work, but at least kids are being encouraged to form a group, almost like the youth club syndrome of the Shadows era. Already there's about 12 groups started in London directly inspired by the Sex Pistols.

(From an interview with Nick Mobbs of EMI records, reported in *Melody Maker*)

the Stones: the Rolling Stones pop group

elite: people at the top

establishment: people with power and authority

knocking the Stones: attacking the Stones

premise: basis

era: period

instant: immediate

syndrome: fashion

Sir,—The action of the man who tore up his Guardian (Letters, December 11) in response to reading about the man who smashed his television set while watching the Sex Pistols interview so infuriated me that I stamped on my reading glasses.—

John Flanagan.

16 Daisy Bank,
Quernmore,
Lancaster.

(Guardian)

(i) *Les Illuminations* (song cycle), *Op. 18*; (ii) *Serenade for tenor, horn and strings*, *Op. 31*.

*** Decca sxl 6449. Peter Pears (tenor), English Chamber Orchestra, the composer; (ii) with Barry Tuckwell (horn).

This superb interpretation of the *Serenade* by Peter Pears appeared first in coupling with Britten's *Young Person's Guide*, but this pairing with the earlier song cycle is clearly more logical. Pears's voice is so ideally suited to this music, his insight into word-meaning as well as into phrase-shaping so masterly, that for once one can use the word 'definitive'. With dedicated accompaniment under the composer's direction and superb recording this is a disc to recommend to all who have yet to discover the magic of Britten's music.

(Penguin Stereo Record Guide)

Op. 18: *Op.* is the abbreviation for the Latin word *opus* (= work), used in numbering musical works

in coupling with: on the same record as

definitive: the word suggests that this interpretation is 'final'; it could not be improved

have yet to discover: have not yet discovered

THIS WEEK'S TOP TWENTY

- | | | |
|----|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| 1 | YES SIR I CAN BOOGIE | THE JET SET |
| 2 | BLACK IS BLACK | THE JET SET |
| 3 | YOU'RE IN MY HEART | THE JET SET |
| 4 | SILVER LADY | DAVID NIVEN |
| 5 | NAME OF THE GAME | THE JET SET |
| 6 | ROCKIN' ALL OVER THE WORLD | THE JET SET |
| 7 | BLACK BETTY | THE JET SET |
| 8 | HOLIDAYS IN THE SUN | THE JET SET |
| 9 | I REMEMBER ELVIS PRESLEY | THE JET SET |
| 10 | STAR WARS THEME | THE JET SET |
| 11 | CALLING OCCUPANTS OF INTERPLANETARY | THE JET SET |
| 12 | NO MORE HEROES | THE JET SET |
| 13 | WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS | THE JET SET |
| 14 | BEST OF MY LOVE | THE JET SET |
| 15 | 2.4.6.8. MOTORWAY | TOM ROBINSON |
| 16 | I REMEMBER YESTERDAY | DONNA SUMMER |
| 17 | NEEDLES & PINS | SMOKE |
| 18 | WONDROUS STORIES | YES |
| 19 | WAY DOWN | ELVIS PRESLEY |
| 20 | VIRGINIA PLAIN | ROXY MUSIC |

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