

# SYNAPSE

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## DENDRITES

It's murder when the month with the mailing deadline begins on Saturday. To further hamper the lastminute drive, Albuquerque SF Club meetings are taking place on first Sundays.

Missing from our last meeting was Mike Vassy. He found some punks breaking into his car outside his home, and in driving them off got a knife in a lung, which hospitalized him.

The club had more of a planned program than usual: We conducted a dowsing experiment.

We were joined by a contingent from St Johns College. We're building up fanpower here. Albuquerque in 1972!

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|                        |    |
|------------------------|----|
| Mailing 128 Epimetheus | 2  |
| Fashion and Function   | 10 |
| Se Dice                | 12 |

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Mailing 128

## EPIMETHEUS

## FANTASY AMATEUR

Don't use those stencils again for the constitution without correcting the spelling of Fantasy Amaturer.

## DETOURS (Jon White)

What, are there not words enough in the language, that you must deliberately duplicate someone else's title? It has been done before by accident, but upon discovery of the duplication a new title was usually adopted.

## STUPEFYING STORIES

What group were you proposing to sample, fankind or Americans? If the group is small enough, a small sample is adequate.

"Friendlies"-and-"Hostiles" has the disadvantage that there are other meanings, and I suspect you of sneakily evoking them.

Many Establishment people are likely to believe what newspapers tell them, and newspapers have been telling people for generations that politicians are crooks.

Attribution to "a professional physics teacher" in New York ill preserves anonymity.

The graphs and layout were well designed for clarity.

## STUPEFYING STORIES

Is lip-synch used in all the skin movies? I noticed in a movie by WRotler that it was very apparent they didn't record on the film.

Battles & Leaders and Lee are a poor source for "Yankees are paper Tigers". Davis's Rise and Fall of the Confederacy would be better.

## KIM CHI

I saw a TV program on kim chi not long ago.

I like that cheapy Colortone paper you use.

"ConSymps Raeburn." Watch those commas. "... the nice work for Dick?"

You speak of "Fearless Liberal" as if it were included in "The extreme left". Did you perhaps mean Radical to scatch and find a Capitalist Beast?

"What's an anarcist?" What's a scatch?

Commenting on Horizons, you of-course as much as he.

"a few years' back when he was at his wit's end ... some year's back".

I can't find Dinkelspiel in my dictionary. What's it mean?

## SELF PRESERVATION

I've bought from Edmund Scientific, and I'sh'd over Edmund catalogs the way I used to wish over Johnson Smith & Company. There is a curious difference in emphasis in "science" as seen from various suppliers. Edmund is heavy on optics. The American Basic Science Club, which advertised in Analog, emphasized electronics. The pb Dictionary of Science is concentrated in biochemistry.

Why is 30 August Huey Long Day?

Nothing in the awful field of advertising irritates me more than the Va Slim commercials and ads. They epitomize the worst of presentday America.

"boundries". Like quandries, huh? " My Britannica says the Garden of Eden has been located everywhere from Scandinavia to the South Seas. It is impossible to fit any place to the description in Genesis. I suppose the faithful have an explanation for that, in alterations of Earth's surface by the Deluge. For sources of the myth, I would scratch everything such as China which is beyond the horizons of fourth-century Jews (that's when the Hexateuch was written). Your suggested modification of the Mesopotamian myth with the Levites' sojourn in Egypt is plausible enough. But don't expect to find anything in actuality corresponding to the river with four heads. It is not true that there is truth in every myth. There is a creation myth in fandom, for which I bear the responsibility, which goes approximately as follows:

In the beginning, there was one fanzine on the east coast and one on the west coast.

Ackerman made a trip from the west coast to the east coast, and fandom was born.

Two-thirds of this myth was (innocently) false when it was written, within a decade of the events to which it related. Small wonder if half or three-fourths of the Garden of Eden geography is nonexistent, written down thousands of years after what it purported to describe. " Why, other than the coincidence of names, should there be any connection between Seth and Set? Seth was before the Flood; only in Noah's children did the Jews begin to distinguish Egyptians et cetera. For some speculation about Set, see 7 Britannica 717 (that's the 9th edition, always worth checking in obscure scholarship). It has nothing to say about Seth.

Is head shape hereditary?

#### MOONSHINE

Moffatt:

Your secret was safe. Not even I remembered "that has to Heaven went".

This is the second time in this mailing that "dig" is used in its original meaning, "savvy" rather than "grok". " And you spell "moneys" correctly (only thing is, I'm not sure why it needs to be plural at all). " In this voting system you describe, are all the second-place votes counted when there's not a majority of first-place votes for any location? Are the second-place votes then added to the first-place votes? There might still be no majority of the double total.

Sneary:

I haven't read any further in All Our Yesterdays, but will plunge into your comments anyway. " Tucker sent me a clipping from Linn's Weekly Stamp News for 3 Feb 69 showing a committee of the Wisconsin Federation of Stamp Clubs. One of those shown is identified as Claude D. Degler. It could possibly be Don Rogers, but if so he's aged badly. Do you know anything more, Bob? " "Picnicking" is correct, and fanac would probably be analogous. Indeed, as I mentioned to someone, I think picnicking was the misspelled word in a rather complicated and silly runoff in a contest (of the Hood Rubber Company?) circa 1930. " I should think the main weakness of Young Fandom was that there's no future in being young. " I somehow had the impression that one meaning of Outlanders was that you did not consider yourselves in the inner circle of the LASFS, quite aside from geography. " After the Portland convention at which the sticky gentleman made a pass at Sandy Kadet, he visited Seattle for several days. He did not seem disturbed by the incident, nor did he seem to regard fan as gauche and uncultured. He had a lively interest in fandom and seemed gung-ho for fanac. It was a surprise to hear no more of him.

I acquired recently a copy of The New Adam bound from the pulp, and started it. Bored and bogged down.

Woolston:

The pet subjects or repeated themes of fanzines are a limited class. At one time they were practically limited to "Is it Science fiction or science Fiction?", sex in s-f, and "Should fandom get back to the fundamentals of discussing stf?" If one avoided those, almost anything he said was new. With the enormous number of fmz now being produced, not to mention those in the archives, it may not be so easy to avoid repetition.

Character-series stories and TV shows involve coincidence more outrageous than the worst 19th-century fiction. The coincidence is, first, that the same person should encounter exciting adventures so frequently (nearly every week in the case of Star Trek, even allowing for the fact that its TV run wasn't quite as long as its five-year mission); and second, that he should again and again escape death by a hair.

Who's Pike Pickens?

#### RAMBLING FAP (Calkins)

Well, you might aim for having the greatest number of items in a single FAPA bundle. Who now holds the record for that?

I wouldn't make the same wishes as Buz. The permanent high for everybody would involve so much of a break with the me and how that i would have to regard it, in prospect, as something bestowed on someone else, in some other continuum. Likewise the Golden Rule installed as Prime Directive. And i doubt i'd waste a wish on the elixir of youth, because that could doubtless be obtained by the use of what i would wish for, timetravel. Perhaps one wish would have first to be spent to find out whether and in what sense this is possible, for i'd have little desire to be locked onto an unalterable world-line. But assuming that timetravel necessarily implies branching time, that would give me just about all i'd want. The third wish perhaps should be spent on taking care of my family and similar obligations, for, once a person travels in branching time, he can never go back to those he left. He can go back to almost identical duplicates of them, but not the originals.

When Linus broke the lamp with his toy airplane and asked, "Couldn't I blame it on society?", he didn't really think he could. Properly, "normal" means coming up to a norm, a model. In this sense, a society is rarely normal for the people within it. Whether the discontent is so great or widespread that it is proper to call the society sick is a highly subjective judgment. The statement that in present America more right things are done by and to more people than in any other society ever, though i most powerfully and potently believe it, presumes to count what does not occur in units, and ignores the equally necessary and impossible task of weighing one against another so that they will not be considered as uniform in importance (which they are not). (By "they" i mean the acts of kindness, not the persons to whom they are done.) I question your statement that any earlier societies had more religious freedom than ours, but that is beside the point. The main basis for people saying ours is a sick society is not comparison with other cultures, but comparison with the speaker's idea of what ours ought to be and could be. A lesser basis is a prophecy in the speaker's mind that American society is riding for a distinct downfall.

"Like reading all of the current fanzines". Does anyone do that? One's imagination generally tends to underrate what is out of sight, and it is a shock to me whenever i come face to face with the volume of fmz that do not usually cross my path, as when Roytac gave me a box of surplus N'APazines to store at Outrider

Hut. " If you're talking about taking it with you, i don't see that common stock, however gilt-edge, would rob the world of anything if buried with you. The stock remaining above ground would just have that much more voting power and, indirectly, would get the dividends due on yours (they money would stay in the business and generate more income). And in the end, capitalism will be abolished anyway.

How much useful information could you have stored in the synapses that remember all those data about baseball? " Why is Andy Capp your idol? Because he doesn't let his woman get the upper hand (the way American husbands, including Fred Flintstone, do)? I can halfway see why some guys like the strip (something i've never been able to see about BO); but my own reaction is a numb horror that this is what England has come to, thirty years after its finest hour.

Upon reading your comments to Andy Main, i asked my son, seventh grade, Margaret Ann, and a fifteen-year-old. Far from being pressured to pop a joint, they've never been offered any kind of dope; the other girl just knew of someone that had. So if Andy really said that unisolated children will be turned on by the time they're fifteen, he was talking through his hat, mistaking his milieu for the universe, and probably not even seeing that, clearly.

To "rather suspect" that the speed of light is not ultimate is a poor substitute for reasonable belief. Incidentally, i think i have found the answer to a question i asked in FAPA a few years ago. I wanted to know the point at which the commonsense Newtonian universe failed to square with the facts and necessitated Einstein. I think the answer is the Michelson-Morley experiment: The velocity of a body is not added to the speed of light going out ahead of it.

Previews, or trailers (though why that which goes ahead should be called a trailer i don't understand). I think rushes are the day's shootings being viewed by moviemakers. " Since someone has already pointed out that the friendliest thing two people can do did not originate with Willis, i trust i will not be accused of downgrading him when i say that the self-abuse simile has been used by at least one other writer i've come across (somewhere in mundania). That is the trouble with working in an old field like literary criticism: anything you say is very like to have been said before. One of the advantages of pioneering a new field, which s-f has been within our lifetime, is that it's easy to be original. If you're privileged to be present at the creation, as i virtually was with fandom, you can by simple application of ideas from outside score a series of firsts such as polling, history, and encyclopedia. (Not to mention less successful ones, e g filksinging and decimal classification.)

RAMBLING FAP

"Well, didn't he ramble" seems to have been lettered by Rotsler. I thought he sent such drawings blank, to be filled in at need.

"a pretty uninspiring crop of nurses". Is this the Fap who said women start with 'good' and go up from there? " At this point i came across your oily remark, and stopped to give my tripewriter a drink for the first time in as many years. Is there any viable increase in stencilcutting performance?

If you're willing to get as far away from major job sources as Durango, i think your fears of being crowded out of camping land are unfounded. The population explosion is a serious matter, but we have recognized it in time, and are dealing with it successfully, on both technological and ideological levels. The population of New Mexico is static; unusual in the US, i know, but it would have kept growing without any immigration but for the Pill. And you can still pick up land here as low as \$5 an acre if you're informed and lucky. Not woodland, to be sure, but as well endowed naturally as that in Los Angeles county, and within twenty-some miles of Albuquerque, if that's important.

I am horrified to hear that you discard all but selected items from the FAPA mailings. For that you should be expelled. The few times I purged my collections I threw away things I soon regretted (nothing like fanzines, you understand, but for instance Roget's Thesaurus, which I regretted just tonight, when Ed came in looking for the word he wanted for class distinctions). Seriously--as seriously as we ever talk under the reign of serious constructive insurgentism--Don't throw away fanzines. Above all, don't throw away FAPazines. Before you know it, along comes someone like Silverberg, to whom even picked-over mailings would be much better than none at all, and he must curse you for the vandalism. If there's no room to store the stuff in LA, send it out to NM, where there's still plenty of room. I'll store it till Outrider Hut fills up or falls in, and by that time I should have found another old house for another \$25. Not just store it either; having depoted Roy's surplustock, I've now found an N3F official close at hand who will put the N'APazines in missionary bundles. I would try to dispense FAPazines discriminatngly.

Which is the place that you feel home-nostalgia for? Salt Lake City? Or Daggett? When you speak of a ghetto up near the university in SLC, do you mean a slum, or a place where scholars are isolated from the general population?

Your remarks on the problem of movies express my thoughts. A while back Margaret Ann while visiting a girl friend went to see The Graduate. We didn't stop her, but would have rather that it was not available. "I got one of those United Farm Agency catalogs a couple of years ago. I looked at it yesterday (5 Nov) to see what land was selling for in your corner of Colorado, and also in Oklahoma, where my father recently gave me thirty acres of pecan land. It's even farther from substantial population than your Montrose goodie, and I can't think of anything to do with it. Maybe we could cover it with fanzine and prozine storehouses.

I wouldn't consider those "pretty important events" important except within the very narrow world of baseball. How could you talk like that on the eve of the Apollo 11 flight? I can see what you mean about the complexity of baseball-watching. But there are other fields equally complex, and equally requiring a knowledge of past data, and they serve a purpose beyond themselves and are therefore more deserving of an intelligent person's time.

Fandom is probably going to move toward more hiring-out of the mimeograph work. "No, the Hebrews (unlike, apparently, the Moslems) assumed the existence of many gods. They (until late times) only contended that Yahweh was bigger than the others. This is reflected in the first commandment, "You shall have no other gods before my face." This is henotheism, not monotheism. "Why don't you at least go over your stencils after they're cut, catching typos (e.g., "thing" for "think" twice on page vi) and such horrors as this: "it is really rather surprising that some of the best fan writers--notably Walt Willis as the outstanding example--really don't make an intense effort towards selling their efforts."?

You haven't done very well on your house, in an area where I thought one was still assured of some appreciation in real estate. Your house has nominally gained about 10 percent in value during three years when inflation has totaled more than that.

#### HORIZONS

Approaching, at, or beyond the age of sudden death? In our forties? What mortality tables are you looking at?

Would you explain what is McLuhanish about old-fashioned joke books? All I know of McLuhan is a quick look at The Medium is the Massage.

Want to make a bet about that far-right sweep to power? I'll bet it doesn't happen.

When Whacky appeared in FAPA, I assumed it was the work of a Futurian, probably Lowndes, possibly Kornbluth. I see no reason to think otherwise now.

This turned out to be a short issue of Horizons for me, I having read the original Milton. However, I went thru it looking at your parentheses. Was the one on idiots savants yours? It wasn't foreknowledge of Degler that helped generate the superman discussion; it was the superman discussion (Campbell editorials etc) that helped generate Degler. Has the Battle Cry of Freedom the same tune as Marching Through Georgia? I see I wasn't the originator of folksinging after all; well, give me credit for an assist on the first costume ball. I believe Blitzkrieg has already been reprinted in FAPA.

DESCANT (Clarke, remember?)

Why should Czechoslovakia have depressed you? According to Ted Pauls, it was a great thing, demonstrating how people who refuse to fight back can cause the invader intense embarrassment, while preserving their infrastructure.

You misspelled undoubtedly "undoubtedly".

And I guess if you used only a little butter, you'd call it a burrito. "But isn't the essence of wine and cognac very volatile, so that it vanishes (or the corresponding term for the gustatory senses) in cooking?"

DAMBALLA

When you say someone keeps his counsel, you are using a word related to "consult". "council"'s second element is related to "call".

Maybe the non-Sherlockian drawing required no comment, but it needed copying of the words. Those thermal stencils are not so hot when it comes to lettering. I've seen them advertised in Mishek and similar catalogs. If they work, they should be a great improvement costwise on electric stencils.

I don't believe I had anything in the egoboo poll period either, and some kind soul mentioned me.

"hard way". Is that like in "Oi weh"?

HOW ARE THEY ALL ON ZUBENELGENUBI IV (Foyster)

It had been my impression that except in Ursa Major, the stars were lettered in order of brightness. It is therefore surprising to see stars bearing letters in the second half of the alphabet given names while there are no names for stars in the same constellation back to epsilon and even beta. And what of the stars bearing only arabic numbers; what magnitude are they? And those bearing roman single letters for designation? I suppose tau<sup>2</sup> indicates a binary.

The spelling "Tzhu Chiang" puzzles me. I have heard two different theories about Chinese pronunciation as represented in roman. One is that an apostrophe, as in ch'ien, means just what you would expect, a puff of breath. The other is that without the apostrophe the consonant is voiced, so that chien would be pronounced jien, and only with the apostrophe is ch'ien pronounced beginning with the surds. Thus Chiang Kai-shek is pronounced Jang Gai-zhek. Well, anyway, what I wonder is why any spelling system would put together two such inconsistent sounds as T and zh, as above. Are we supposed to pronounce it Dzhu (Ju) or Tshu (Chu)?

SNICKERSNEE (Silverberg)

"I am not a minion.....I am a free woman." is a beautiful insert, from the Prisoner no doubt, but who is this VC who has taken over reproductive functions for you? Viet Cong? Hey, maybe it was Our Man Flint instead of the Prisoner.

You are no true fan if you spent all that time rescuing cats while your collection was burning. " I believe your statement that you will pay surprising prices for back mailings. I swapped a rare Weinbaumemorial volume to Gerry de la Ree for one that I was missing. Your offer may represent the highest price that will ever be paid, in commodity dollars, for the mailings you lack. Someone who has lived the mailings cherishes them more than one to whom they are dead antiquities. " Is there any truth in the idea that worry causes gray hairs? I must lead a very tranquil existence.

That's certainly a cliffhanger ending for Snickersnee. I can hardly wait to find out whether you escaped alive.

*Rest, rest, perturbed spirit.*

SAMBO (Martinez)



Assuming the theory was correct, stepping up the rate of vibrations in the atoms might accelerate one in the time stream, i.e. make his subjective time slower than that in the outside world. This would have the indicated effect, that one could only "travel" futureward, for stepping the vibrations down would only cause time to pass more slowly than normal. It couldn't turn things backward, not because "The past was permanent, unchangeable", but because of limitations inherent in the method. It is really 37.7, Time-rate differences, superspeed, not 60., Deviations from the time stream. " "It took a long time, but soon everything was ready" sounds as if the writer's sense of time got confused.

SERCONS BANE

I wasn't exactly using body English as the Eagle landed, because I was driving a car. But I startled oncoming cars by pounding the horn at the first words from Tranquillity Base. We were passing a pueblo at the time, Indian children were walking along the shoulder, and it seemed most strange that anyone was not hanging on a radio or TV while the Eagle tried to clear those hazardous grounds.

You trying to sell Volvo a slogan, "The car's on your side"?

BLUSH (Foyster)

"E&OExpected." ?

"at university" falls oddly on the ear, though we have "at college" in America. Likewise we have "entered college" but not "entered university". I guess "college" must be more a collective noun to us, while a "university" is a specific institution. I believe grammarians call the former the generic form of a noun.

SYNAPSE

There are still publications giving the lyrics of current popular songs. I looked at one recently, and was surprised how different the words were from what I had doped out.

"a little hard how" should have been "a little hard now". " There are sentence modifiers, like "Frankly" in "Frankly, it stinks", and the latter part of "My life will be no longer in knowing that", but "hopefully" as currently used (there are instances in this mailing) is horrid for some reason. " I would find it easier to believe that the chroma-key technique is what's used in the Enterprise's transporter room.



NASTROND (Hulan)

I type a heading just to commend you on the only correct use observed in this mailing of the English equivalent of chez: "at the Trimble's".

DIGHTING PERMIT (Stiles)

One can see one's way through most of the typo fog, but i got lost on "I took it for granted that that I had nothing against taking reasonable precautions against waltzing around with would-be murderers."

If low on cash, why would one live on potato chips? Potatoes, perhaps, to get the most for your money, but potato chips?

Maybe the obligations of a TAFF winner are too heavy to make running attractive in this affluent age. One could practically fly to London for that \$138 the kid paid for an original.

OF CABBAGES AND KINGS AND BABY TURTLES (Pavlat)

What's Nebraska Land? A huckstering deal like United Farm Agency?

GRUE

How nice to end the mailing on this. Unlike other ex-subzines in FAPA, which seem heavily loaded toward the pros, Grue can be enjoyed by all.

"I felt sorry for Dean and I." Is "me" a dirty word? "couldn't find room to lay down". Who's down?

Because your pages aren't numbered, i can't tell whether i'm lacking part of the astrology article. My horoscope ends with the 20th. You wouldn't want one of the almost-complete collections of FAPA mailings to be incomplete in this respect, would you?

I thot strawberry was the first ersatz preserve, and that it was therein that you find the fake seeds.

I hope that even though the OE is not a mere Honda-hop away, you will see your way clear to keep the Grue flowing.

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'Fermented pecan oil --- Man, that's powerful stuff!'

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It's Thursday now, and as if in response to some of the remarks supra, i noticed in the New Mexico Review a comic called Sergeant Fury. In the first panel, a hoglike capitalist says: "As the facilities at Disneyland expand, more and more parking space is needed ... This much needed space can be readily supplied by making what is now the state of New Mexico into one vast parking lot!" In the final frame, one of his hoglike tools is saying: "Them mountains is the Sangre de Christos" (they spell badly) "- I want yez ta bulldoze 'em into the Rio Grande!" In this episode Sergeant Fury is still disguised as a janitor at St Johns College. While the hogs' horrendous undertakings are afoot, the scholars at St Johns are depicted as concerning themselves with such as these: "If a tree falls in the forest, and nobody is around to hear it, does it make any noise?" "Which weighs more - a pound of feathers, or a pound of lead?" "The nature of ultimate reality can be compared to an orange ..." "Is doom man's fate?" "How do I know that my hand is my hand, if I'm not looking at it?"

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"Si, Senor, Esta Nina Es la Mia."

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# FASHION and FUNCTION

This involves the basic problem of esthetics. I might as well state my belief at the outset (though I hope the discussion will not depend on your agreement):

Beauty is function. We may think that sights or sounds have esthetic appeal apart from that given by usefulness associated with them, but this is because we have not traced the connections, in some instances, cannot.

Sometimes the connection is abstract: regularity or variety may be generally useful and therefore pleasant. Sometimes the connection with usefulness is perverse, as in the canons of conspicuous consumption, but the connection is there. Much of what is considered to be beauty arises from mere Pavlovian association with usefulness, rather than necessary connection. Many styles have acquired arbitrary meanings by association, such as the largely fictitious associations of Edwardian styles, and these of course are not to be ignored.

The viewpoint of this article is the good of society as a whole. Individuals may find it expedient to go with fashion in many respects. It is possible for persons to spend so much time fighting superficial conformity that they have little time left for more important experimenting. Perhaps one who conforms in the non-essentials will encounter less resistance to his original thinking.

## The Uses of Fashion

Fashion in itself serves purposes that may or may not be desirable. Thus, it is easy to date old movies on television, for good or not, by the length of skirts and the shape of cars.

By association, a fashion can become a uniform. Then a person by putting on the uniform is able to convey to the world that he wants to be regarded as part of the group for which it is the uniform.

To the extent that fashions do not supplant others but coexist with them, fashions introduce greater variety into the world. It is sometimes helpful to be able to say, e.g., "I mean the girl in the cerise dress" (assuming that cerise is a color distinguishable to the normal person).

## Clothes

Al Ashley used to say that progress was a moving on to something new. I always felt this was an inadequate description, but the kind of progress we see in clothing nowadays doesn't even meet the criterion of newness.

Ways in which present fashions do not merely repeat the past are some colors and fabrics that were not available in the previous reigns of certain forms. It is theoretically possible that a style heretofore outgrown may deserve to last when combined with fluorescent colors or plastics, or when just put in a new combination with other old elements. However, when one has seen skirts go through several cycles of length, and ties through cycles of width, and has seen fads such as bell bottoms come and go more than once, that possibility seems remote.

It would be a worthwhile inquiry, what clothing styles are really the most functional. One simple function is covering up, aside from the mutable canons of modesty, though this is not beyond controversy. Some may argue that ugly (i.e., dysfunctional) parts of ugly bodies should be covered; Wylie argued that it was time Mom's sag became known. Assuming a function to be served by clothing, it would seem that for men, sport shirts and shorts may be about as good as any style for hot weather. In cold weather, the functional criteria are warmth and freedom of movement. Army fatigues have been groping for this ideal for generations.

It may be stated with assurance that high heels and pointed toes (except on cowboys) are bad.

Hair

From the practical standpoint, the best haircut is probably either a crew cut or a pony tail. Some inbetween styles may have the virtue of simplicity, or of looking about the same after being windblown, but hair that hangs in the eyes damages the cornea. Sudden shaving of the head may leave the person cold, but probably the body can adapt to a naked scalp as to a naked face.

In days when hair on the head does not serve the function of distinguishing sexes, a beard has the use that it shows the wearer is a man. This may violate the unisex ideal, but it is useful information. Sideburns' only advantage is that if a man is turning grey, the information will show soonest in this hair. A similar function would be served by crew cuts.

The best treatment of facial hair may be either the clean shave or the full beard. A mixture of the two, as in the moustache or the goatee, combines the worst of both: the need to shave every day, and the presence of hair.

Beards are sometimes used to conceal a weak chin, or to give the impression that one is older than he is. Such concealment of "ugliness" involves the utility of truth being known. Where a sign (weak chin) is not true, the remedy is for society to learn that it has no such meaning (weak will).

One of the current popular beard styles, running from corner of nose to corner of mouth, emphasizes the sullen lines of the face. This style is a way of showing one's attitude, assuming that these sullen lines have permanent significance.

Et Cetera

In all of this, it is presupposed that false hair deserves the same contempt as lifter shoes and falsies. Hair dye (or any euphemism for it) is likewise unjustifiable from the viewpoint of the general good. Similarly the case for cosmetics is, in the absolute, indefensible.

It scarcely needs to be said that the criterion of function, ruthlessly applied, would wipe out nearly every automobile. A decision should be made on the degree of gasoline economy and quiet that results from streamlining, and a scale of accommodations with the expense and inconvenience of the streamlined shape offered.

It would be superfluous to spell out the application of the criterion to lettering styles.

Language

In the ideal language, each word would have only one meaning, and each meaning would have only one word for it. We are far away from that, but the ideal provides some standards for judging neologisms.

Most neology consists of new meanings for old words. If we decide to use an old word for a new meaning, the new meaning should be sufficiently different from the old that the context will make clear when the new meaning is intended. The use of "dig" ("understand") to mean "enjoy", and "split" to mean "depart", violate this standard.

If there is already an adequate word for a meaning, we should be slow to turn other words to that meaning. When the only reason for adopting a new word is novelty for its own sake, or flinching away from the meaning, such substitutions condemn themselves. The current uses of "bread" and "commode" are examples. New uses of old words should especially be avoided when the old word is already overloaded with meanings. "Thing" is a prime example.

What has been said about words applies also to phrases. "Making out" is ambiguous because it has an established meaning, "getting along". Some recently adopted expressions achieve distinctiveness by a fixed modifier, "own thing", or

(Continued at bottom of page 12)

## SE DICE

Stan Woolston:

I appreciate your corrections in Synapsis, concerning numbers, etc. Being specific in area (numbers) helps. As you might surmise, other flaws are due to haste. /"consistency in number" referred to singular subject being used with singular verb, etc. All of us at times say "they" when the only antecedent in sight is a singular, noncollective noun, or none, but there are limits on what will sound right. ...

The Japanese syllabary is something that confused me, as was the use of numbers (Arabic) & letters of the alphabet in their material. But the Japanese-English dictionary I have is strictly one set of characters. I am reminded of the EARLY Egyptian alphabet & LATER use of ideograms--according to some information. ...

Dick Wilson at Syracuse:

I was a wire service man (Reuters) until April Fool's Day 1964, when I came up here. When I was in Washington with another wire service, now defunct (Transradio Press), the other Richard Wilson and I were in the same building and I once went to a cocktail party because his invitation was delivered to me. I met him only once (to give him some misdelivered mail) and he was about 15 years older than we then too.

... Imagine you having annotated The Girls from Planet 5! I'm glad to stand corrected on Texian. I did try to do a little research--wrote the Dallas C of C for information but never had a reply--so I made up stuff out of my head. Two years ago when I visited Dallas for the first time I found I hadn't been wrong enough (geographically, anyway) for it to have mattered by the time of the book (1999-2000). The Girls was sold to Hollywood and never filmed and has just appeared in hardcover in Britain.

I can't believe "huh-uh" as a negative or positive but people's ears hear differently. I am offended by academic jargon and have been keeping a file of such terrors as "classroom-type space" for classrooms; "instructional activity" (teaching), "tutorial type of instruction" (tutoring) and a grand and glorious phrase by an academic planner: "...spinning out the assumption with respect to the freshman input and the undergraduate-graduate mix...". Same fellow made the "assumption that the present will continue into the future." Optimist. A man who'd built a teaching machine in electrical engineering said that until a student pushed a certain button the answers "are not accessible to the student's view." He meant the student couldn't see them. I made a note at the time: Jargon expands to fill the loöway permitted to it.

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in terms of getting orientated to this group. <sup>1</sup>

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word order, "putting me on". But it is not always easy to leave these thus frozen. One may need to make a noun. "That broke me up" is more expressive than "At that I couldn't keep from laughing", but "the breakup" is not distinctive.

### Conclusions

If you feel that this has been a too-minute examination, perhaps you are close to my feeling that fashion is unimportant. What shall we say, then, of people who spend a great deal of time on the unimportant? A person who changes a style he wears or speaks is making a deliberate choice, sometimes at considerable cost, diverting at least time and energy to nonessentials.

But there is an important fault in fashion: its emphasis on appearances. The fact that they can be changed means that these appearances are not intrinsic, do not go to the essential nature of the person or thing. They are therefore at best an indication of how he wants to be regarded, at worst deceptions.